



## **Programme Director**

### **DCU Student Information System**

#### **Fixed Term Three Year Contract**

DCU is a young, dynamic and ambitious university with a distinctive mission to transform lives and societies through education, research and innovation. Since admitting its first students in 1980, DCU has grown significantly both in student numbers and size. DCU currently has in excess of 18,000 students and operates across six campuses in the Glasnevin and Drumcondra areas of Dublin.

DCU's excellence is recognised internationally with the University being ranked highly among leading global institutions. DCU is the only Irish University which has been ranked in the QS Top 50 Universities in the world under 50 years old out of a total of almost 10,000 universities established since 1966.

The University is currently engaged in a €250m campus development plan with funding in place from the European Investment Bank, the Ireland Strategic Investment Fund and philanthropic supporters of the university to finance the further expansion of the University to meet the continued growth in student numbers.

#### **The DCU Student Information System (SIS)**

The existing DCU Student Information System was developed as a standalone system over 20 years ago when DCU was a single campus University. Since that time DCU has expanded enormously with significant growth in student numbers across a number of new campuses. In addition, with advances in technology and the evolution of portable devices, internet applications and social media, the way in which students wish to interact with the university has changed immeasurably. The potential future student's first interaction with the University is often through the Student Information System and therefore it is critical that the system presents the desired view of DCU to the potential student and ensures that they have a positive first experience in dealing with the University. Throughout a student's period of study with DCU, the Student Information System is a key element of the student experience and therefore it is critical that the system underpins the DCU strategic objective to continue to provide an excellent student experience.

The requirement for student information in all of its guises has permeated throughout DCU, leading to a plethora of systems being utilised across the university to capture relevant parts of student information in individual departments. This has led to duplication of effort, manually or through spreadsheets or other systems, multiple sources for the same information and sometimes differences between the same data held in different locations.

## **Objectives of the Student Information System Programme**

The SIS Programme is a critical, multi-year change project for the University that will enable us to transform how students interact with us and will support us in creating an excellent experience for both staff and students.

From the Programme's inception, it was recognised that technology alone would not result in transformation. In this context, the University developed an Operating Framework, the overarching blueprint for our future model of operation. The Operating Framework provides the coherent context within which our processes will be (re)designed, making optimal use of the affordances of the technology we have acquired. The SIS Programme seeks to fundamentally change the way in which DCU, its staff and students interact with each other and utilise student information to achieve excellence in service and effective utilisation and exploitation of student information.

Within the context of our Operating Framework, the fully integrated solution we have procured will provide students and staff in DCU with multiple digital modes for capturing and disseminating student information in a comprehensive way, ensuring in turn excellent service provision, better management of resources, and enabling better informed, data-driven decision-making.

DCU's key objectives of the SIS Programme can be summarised as follows:

1. Reimagine our academic-related processes, optimising the affordances of the technology we have acquired, to achieve excellence in service
2. Optimise the efficiency and effectiveness of our academic-related processes
3. Adopt a fully integrated approach to student information, enabling the seamless inter-operability of data, in line with emerging standards
4. Significantly enhance customer service interfaces for students and staff
5. Exceed the expectations of our digitally literate students regarding mobile, internet applications and social media functionality
6. Replace, as appropriate, stand-alone systems which have been implemented across the university, to address some student information deficits.
7. Seamlessly enable multiple, varied modes of curriculum delivery, ensuring that requirements associated with evolving, future commercial models and related modes of delivery can be met.

In addition, DCU is currently implementing a core element of the University strategy which is the development of a 21st Century Digital Campus that provides a state-of-the-art IT environment supporting pioneering technology; enhanced education and research, and an excellent student experience. All of the core principles of the DCU strategic plan are built on the fundamental prerequisites of Academic Excellence and Operational Excellence.

## **Progress to date**

At the point of Programme initiation, DCU appointed PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) as the consultants to assist DCU on this transformation Programme. Following establishment of a Programme Management Office and preparatory phase governance structures, DCU engaged in a comprehensive public procurement process on foot of which it selected a suite of integrated solutions provided by a single vendor, Ellucian, in 2019. In the period since then, the following milestones have been achieved:

- High level Programme mobilisation and planning progressed
- Operating Framework developed
- “As-is” fully analysed and documented
- Implementation of CRM Recruit Project (Phase 1) completed

## **Current Status**

Detailed planning is on-going and full-scale Programme mobilisation is in train.

## **Programme Director Role**

DCU wishes to appoint a highly experienced project manager to the role of SIS Programme Director.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

The Programme Director will:

- Assume overall management responsibility for the Programme, working with Programme sponsors and key stakeholders to ensure that that it is delivered on time, to scope and within budget.
- Build, manage, motivate and provide overall leadership for multiple teams within the Programme’s matrix structure
- Ensure necessary resources are in place at Programme and project level to realise individual project milestones and overall Programme objectives.
- Assume responsibility for the Programme Roadmap and related detailed project plans, including resourcing plans, delivery milestones and success criteria
- Monitor progress and ensure key stakeholders are kept informed about progress and expected outcomes, establishing and maintaining appropriate Programme and project management structures and ensuring appropriate tools are in place to support this
- Ensure the successful delivery of all individual projects within the Programme, assuming direct responsibility for individual projects where relevant.
- Manage Programme risks and issues.
- Proactively avoid delays and costs and ensure quality.
- Assume overall responsibility for effective stakeholder engagement, working proactively with stakeholders to ensure continued excellent cooperation with the Programme.
- Manage the vendor relationship ensuring delivery in accordance with DCU’s requirements.

- Manage other third party service providers to ensure their use is optimised and their required deliverables are met.
- Ensure effective communication across the organisation in relation to the Programme.
- Liaise with all stakeholders to ensure requirements are understood, while managing project costs, resources, delivery schedules, scope, risks, issues and assumptions.

## **Person Specification**

### **Requirements**

Applicants must possess:

- A primary degree or equivalent (NFQ level 7) with substantial (c. 7-10 years) programme/project management experience for large scale business transformation, ideally reflective of, multidisciplinary experience including project management, business process design, testing the solution and end user training.
- Strong Project Management skills including planning, financial management, scheduling, reporting, resource management, communications and risk management
- A PRINCE2 Practitioner or equivalent agile or traditional project management qualification.

In addition, the ideal candidate will possess:

- Experience of managing projects combining substantial Change Management, IT and operational elements.
- A professional approach, clear-thinking under pressure and a thorough, diligent approach to project management.
- Ability to cope with tight schedules in a calm and effective manner and manage the delivery of multiple deliverables concurrently.
- Excellent stakeholder management and communication skills with a track record in managing complex stakeholder programmes;
- Ability to build strong relationships across all levels of an organisation
- Ability to quickly assimilate to new knowledge
- High level of attention to detail and structured approach to work.
- Excellent troubleshooting skills with the ability to get to the root cause of problems
- Excellent team and line management skills.

### **Reporting**

The SIS Project Manager reports to the Programme sponsor who is the Vice President for Academic Affairs (Registrar). They are accountable for delivery to the SIS Steering Committee.

### **Mandatory Training**

The post holder will be required to undertake the following mandatory compliance training: GDPR and Compliance. Other training may need to be undertaken.