

DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTING

**The Final Year School of Electronic Engineering
Students'
Most Frequently Asked Questions
Booklet**

Academic Year: 2010/2011
Expires 30th June 2011

Programmes:

Digital Media Engineering

Information and Communications Engineering

Electronic Engineering

Mechatronic Engineering

4th Year Tutor:

Martin Collier

School of Electronic Engineering,
email: martin.collier@dcu.ie



Research and Engineering Building, DCU

Most Frequently Asked Questions:

Who is the Head of Faculty/School?

Jim Dowling is the Dean of the Faculty of Computing and Engineering. His office is located in room L118 on the first floor of the Computing Building.

Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Computing	Mr. Jim Dowling		e-mail: jim.dowling@dcu.ie
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Dr. Noel Murphy is the Head of the School of Electronic Engineering. His office is located in room S347 on the third floor of the Research and Engineering Building.

Head of School of Electronic Engineering	Dr. Noel Murphy		e-mail: Noel.Murphy@dcu.ie
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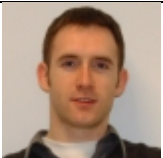

What and who is the year tutor?

If you have academic issues that concern all the students from your year or that have not been solved by your personal tutor/mentor, you can talk to the 4th year tutor: **Martin Collier**.

4 th Year Tutor	Martin Collier		e-mail: martin.collier@dcu.ie Room: S321
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Who is in charge of my Degree Programme?

There is a programme chairperson in charge of each of the programmes as follows:

Digital Media Engineering	Dr. Robert Sadleir		e-mail: robert.sadleir@dcu.ie
Electronic Engineering, Information and Communications Engineering, Mechatronic Engineering	Dr. Conor Brennan		e-mail: brennanc@eeng.dcu.ie

What do I do if the Fire Alarm rings?

Leave the building immediately via the nearest fire exit!

- do not stop to retrieve belongings
- do not use lifts
- assemble at the nearest assembly point (not at the doorways)
- do not reenter the building until given the all clear by fire wardens.

Please note that it is intended that every student occupied building on campus will have a Fire Drill during the first two weeks of the new academic year.

How much time should I spend studying? Can I have a part-time job?

This is a full-time degree. It is designed assuming that students will spend a full working week at DCU (five days, 9am to 6pm). It is very important to make sure that you keep up with what is happening in lectures, tutorials and laboratory classes. If you can't do the tutorial problems for a particular subject, then you aren't doing enough work for that module!

Many students **have** to work substantial hours every week just to pay rent and feed themselves. Many others work to pay for their social life and a car. However, this is your **final** year, it is worth some financial/lifestyle sacrifice for the gains that you will enjoy in the future as a result of obtaining a good degree.

If I get sick and miss a Lab, what should I do?

Talk to the lecturer. S/he will discuss the matter with you.

I have been sick for much of the term and/or around exam time?

If you have on-going health issues, or have been sick at a time that might affect your exam performance (or make you absent from an exam) it is vital that you document your illness and inform someone (your personal tutor, the 4th year tutor, your programme chair, or the faculty office). We can only account for your illness in assessing your progression if we are aware of it and have appropriate documentation. If you miss multiple continuous assessments due to your illness, you should also discuss this with your lecturer.

I am completely stressed out; what do I do?

It is not unusual for students to experience stress during their studies, due to course related and/or external factors. If you are feeling enough stress that it is affecting your work and/or your quality of life, you should seek help. Counselling services are available on campus (see <http://www.dcu.ie/students/counselling/index.shtml>). As with illness, it is vital that you document your condition and inform someone (personal tutor, 4th year tutor, programme chair, etc.) of your condition in order for us to take account of it in assessing your performance.

When is it acceptable to work together with other students?

Unless specified (as in group projects or assignments), it is expected that work submitted for assessment is solely the work of an individual (yourself). Typically, for assignments you will be asked to sign a cover sheet ([available here at time of writing](#) but it is *your* responsibility to find it on our website if this link breaks) which among other things has the following statement:

“I hereby declare that the attached submission is all my own work, that it has not previously been submitted for assessment, and that I have not knowingly allowed it to be used by another student. I understand that deceiving or attempting to deceive examiners by passing off the work of another as one’s own is not permitted. I also understand that using another student’s work or knowingly allowing another student to use my work is against the University regulations and that doing so will result in loss of marks and possible disciplinary proceedings.”

You can find the university policy at the following URL:

<http://www.dcu.ie/info/regulations/plagiarism.shtml>. This means that you must not copy more than one sentence of someone else’s work and if you do use one sentence (or plot, graph, picture, equation) that is not your own, it **must** be referenced correctly. You may describe someone else’s work **in your own words** but you still must use a reference. The penalties for being found guilty of plagiarism are very severe and can lead to the termination of your registration on your programme.

But what about study groups?

Discussing course material with your friends is an excellent way to study course material. There is a great benefit in pooling resources either in having someone explain something that is confusing you, or in having to explain something so they also understand it. We strongly support the formation of these groups. **However**, assignments are to assess **your** grasp of the material, not the group’s, so all of the above applies. So, **please do** discuss the concepts pertaining to the assignments, but try to **avoid** sitting around in a group doing the assignment at the same time, as this will potentially lead to worryingly similar looking assignments.

What are the subjects/modules I will attend and their requirements?

This information is maintained centrally, and a list of modules is available on the web at the links below. You should confirm with your Programme Chair whether the information on the links is current (since changes made by the Programme Board will not be immediately reflected on the web).

Programme	Module List
Electronic Engineering	here
Information and Communications Engineering	here
Digital Media Engineering	here
Mechatronic Engineering	here

Where can I find the University regulations regarding examinations and awards?

These regulations are recorded in the “Marks and Standards” document, maintained by the Registry [here](#), where you can also find the University policy on copying and plagiarism. Any questions and answers below relating to academic performance represent *one interpretation* of the version of these regulations in force at the time of writing – you should consult the documents maintained by the Registry for the definitive text of the regulations, and for any changes made to these regulations.

How many attempts at a module do I have?

You must pass a module within two academic sessions of first registering for it. This usually maps to a two year period, but might vary if, for example, a formal deferral is sought and approved. If you do not present for assessment (e.g., by taking an end-of-semester examination) without having previously applied for a deferral this is recorded as an attempt.

Resits and Repeats

The University's rules on resits and repeats are documented in Section 7 of the University Marks and Standards, available on the Registry's web site (see above link). You should consult this document for the precise wording of these rules. The key points (at time of writing) are broadly as follows (but verify this in the official document):

- If you fail a module in Semester One or Semester Two, you can **resit** the module the following autumn. This means that you sit the examination again, and any continuous assessment marks are carried forward. If you fail an Autumn re-sit you must **repeat** the module during the following academic year.
- However, if the module is 100% continually assessed, you must **repeat** the module the following academic year as it is not possible to repeat continuous assessments during the summer period.
- Repeating a module involves full attendance, i.e., both continuous assessment and examination (as applicable). You cannot carry marks from any element of assessment when repeating a module.

How is my overall mark in final year calculated?

The following mechanism is used for the EE, ICE and DME programmes.

	credits	Weighting (%)
Non-project modules	45	63.75
3rd year contribution	-	15
Final Year Project	15	21.25

The following mechanism is used for the ME programme.

	Credits	Weighting (%)
Non-project modules	45	56.25
2nd year contribution	-	10
3rd year contribution	-	15
Final Year Project	15	18.75

Note that "credits" are a measure of workload. The core and elective modules (which contribute to your final mark) add up to 45 credits of workload, although some may be 7.5 credit modules, and others may be 5 credit modules. An individual module's contribution within this set of 45 credits to your overall mark will be in proportion to its credit weighting, so the "non-project module" contribution is itself a weighted average.

It is important to note also that, if you fail a module, but subsequently pass it and meet the other requirements to be eligible for the award of a degree, the module mark used in calculating your overall mark will be the one you obtained *at your first attempt*.

How is the third (second) year contribution calculated?

15% of your degree mark will be based on your third year contribution, and (for Mechatronic Engineering only) 10% will be based on your second year contribution. Your average mark from the total third year (resp. second year) diet (taken at the first attempt) will be used, subject to a minimum value of 40%.

What are the current Award Classifications?

The following bands of marks apply for degree classification in this academic year.

Classification	Mark Band
H1	70 % and over
H2.1	60 – 69 %
H2.2	50 – 59 %
H3	40 – 49 %

Where can I find out information on the Final Year Project (FYP)?

EE, ICE, DME

Full details on the selection, allocation, schedule and regulations for FYPs are located at www.eeng.dcu.ie/~fyp. The staff member coordinating final year projects is Martin Collier. You can request any additional information you need from him or your project supervisor.

ME

The staff member coordinating final year projects is John Geraghty.

How much is the FYP worth?

The project is worth 25% of the overall degree mark. It is marked according to the following structure: Report 60%, Performance 20%, Presentation 10% and Interview 10%.

What is the schedule for the FYP?

Final year project selection is in October and project work formally starts in November.

The following are the key dates for final year projects:

- Projects Begin 3rd November 2010
- First Semester Assessment Week beginning 7th February 2011
- Presentations Week beginning 21th February 2011
- End of Lab Work 8th April 2011
- Draft Report to Supervisor Friday 15th April 2011
- Final Report to Supervisor Thursday 21th April 2011
- Project Interviews Tuesday 26th April – Friday 29th April 2011
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Note that these dates are subject to change so keep in touch with your supervisor.

What do I do if I have a long-term personal situation and it is affecting my performance in the FYP?

The first thing to do is to contact your project supervisor. If you have supporting documentation, your supervisor may discuss the option of deferring your project with you. This will only be allowed in situations where clearly documented extenuating circumstances exist.

If I defer my project, can I still graduate with my class?

If a final year student **defers** their project by following the correct university procedures for doing so, then that student will be given the opportunity to complete their project work no later than 4 weeks after the final Semester 2 exam date and to submit their report 2 weeks after the completion of their project work. This student will be able to graduate with their class. A student who has deferred their project and requires more than 6 weeks after the final date of the Semester 2 exams to complete their project must undertake their project work in the next academic year. Students continuing with a project **may** be allowed to submit their deferred project in time for consideration for the next available graduation ceremony.

If I fail my project, can I compensate?

No! The project is worth 20 credits and so, compensation does not apply. A student who **fails** their final year project with a mark $\geq 35\%$ must repeat their project in the next academic year. The student will be allowed to continue working on their original final year project if a) they wish to do (they may choose to start a different project otherwise) **and** b) if the original project supervisor has no objections. Students continuing with a project will be allowed to submit their repeated project in time for consideration for the next available graduation.

If I fail my project, can I continue with the same project?

It depends. If a student **fails** their final year project with a mark $\geq 35\%$ then see the question above. If a student **fails** their final year project with a mark $< 35\%$ s/he must repeat the project element in the next academic year. The student must begin a new project and will only be allowed to submit their repeated project for consideration at the Summer Progression and Awards Board.

If I fail my project at the first attempt, but subsequently pass the project module, how is my overall mark in final year affected?

The mark you received at your *first* attempt will be used in calculating your overall mark.

What is an external examiner?

All programmes run by the School are scrutinised by at least one external examiner; this is an expert in the relevant discipline from another higher level institution. Part of the external examiner's duty is to ensure that exam papers are set at the appropriate level and that marking schemes are fair. At the end of the academic year, the external examiner visits the University and looks through the scripts and projects of the years that contribute to the final degree award (2nd year for ME, 3rd and 4th year for all).

What is the external examiner to me?

The external examiner's rôle is to confirm that your programme and its assessment are of the required standard. In cases where a student is borderline for a degree award (e.g. a student has 58.9%), the external examiner may look at the student's work for the year and make a recommendation as to whether the student should be awarded the degree for which they automatically qualify (a H2.2, in the above example) or whether they should be awarded the next level (a H2.1 in our example). In order to come to a recommendation, the external examiner tends to look very closely at the final year project and will usually ask to interview the student. He/she may also wish to interview other students, to form a view of the academic standard of the student group.

When would an interview with the external examiner take place?

Interviews typically take place the day before and/or the day of the Progression and Awards Board (final examination board). In 2011, this will be some time in the week beginning Monday 20th June.

What happens if I am not available then?

If you are not available for interview, the external examiner will make a recommendation based on the evidence of work at his disposal. However, many students have benefited from being able to personally present themselves and their ability to the external examiner at interview. If given the opportunity to attend an interview with the external examiner, students are **very strongly advised** to attend.

What about life after I get my degree?

Following completion of your final exams you will need to choose between a number of career options. The Career Services Centre at DCU offers a wide range of supports to help you make your choices and help you get prepared for finding a job. You are strongly advised to register with the careers office at <http://www.dcu.ie/students/careers/index.shtml>. When you register with the careers service you will have access to a careers advisor who will assist you in planning your career. The careers service offers advice on getting a job, undertaking further study, taking time out, or starting your own business. The service also runs seminars, presentations and other career events on campus. There is also an excellent careers library located on campus.