

**Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Átha Cliath
ARDSCOIL AN CHEOIL AGUS NA DRÁMAÍOCHTA**

**Dublin Institute of Technology
CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC AND DRAMA**

**Junior Conservatory of Music
Ardcoil an Cheoil Shóisearaigh**

HANDBOOK



September 2016

Welcome to DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama **– *the home of Ireland's future musicians and actors!***

For over 120 years DIT Conservatory has been setting standards of excellence in music education in Ireland. We are the leading national provider of music and drama education in the country, with multiple hubs of performance activity in Dublin.

Our Junior Conservatory of Music offers the highest quality music education for children and young people aged 3-18. We also deliver full-time degree programmes and part-time Continuing Education opportunities for students over 18.

It is essential that musical talent is identified early and developed to its fullest potential by excellent teaching, in a stimulating and supportive environment. At DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama, we have the professional expertise and a proven track record of educating high calibre musicians, many of whom enter the profession both at home and abroad.

This Handbook is designed to introduce you to life at the Junior Conservatory. Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the information. Please do not hesitate to contact one of our members of staff for further information or if you would like to discuss your child's progress.



Dr Orla McDonagh
Head of Conservatory

Website: www.dit.ie/conservatory

Email: conservatory@dit.ie

Telephone: 01 402 3572/3467

What is a Conservatoire?

DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama is a conservatoire – a place of highly specialized learning in music and the performing arts. The conservatoire-learning environment is quite different from school, with an emphasis on 1:1 or small group learning and teaching. Studying at the Junior Conservatory requires a high degree of commitment and motivation, intensive daily practice and, especially in the early years, supports at home to nurture and develop emerging talent.

What you can expect of us ...

- high quality music education from experienced professionals
- a structured and individualized approach to music education
- a quality-assured system of graded examinations, recognising progress and achievement
- a stimulating and performance-centred learning environment

What we will expect of you as a Junior student ...

- dedication and enthusiasm!
- regular daily practice
- regular performances
- listening at home and homework

What we will expect of you as a parent/guardian ...

- active support for your child's musical education
- encouragement and monitoring of practice and homework (see 'Guidelines for Practice' below)
- the provision of all necessary books and other learning materials; and access to a suitable instrument and practice space

The Junior Conservatory Music Curriculum

All Junior students take a Practical Lesson (instrument or voice) and a Musicianship class. In addition, orchestral and vocal students participate in Ensembles. All instrumental students have an opportunity to participate in choir. These activities are described in greater detail on the following pages.

Practical Lessons

The Practical Lesson is the core activity for all students. Weekly lessons are delivered on a 1:1 or group basis. It is through these lessons that students learn essential performance techniques and the skills of musical communication. For this reason, students are not permitted to study with teachers outside of the Conservatory.

Practical lessons are delivered through the Departments of Keyboard Studies; Orchestral Studies; and Vocal, Opera and Drama Studies. Students will be entered for Conservatory grade examinations as part of their study.

For students up to Grade 5, weekly 1:1 practical lessons are of at least 30 minutes' duration. For students beyond Grade 5, weekly 1:1 practical lessons are normally of 45 or 60 minutes' duration, depending on timetabling and staff availability.

Guidelines for Practice

All students are expected to apply themselves in a conscientious manner and to prepare work for each practical lesson as outlined by their teacher. This work is particularly crucial in the early, formative years when good habits and skills are being established. Teachers are more than happy to devise practice plans for students. Parental support and encouragement is vital. It is equally important for students to develop a sense of personal responsibility and commitment regarding the quantity and quality of their practice time.

The following minimum daily practice-time allocation is suggested for each level. Please check with the teacher for any additional requirements. Extra time should be allowed in preparation for examinations, concerts and competitions.

Initial Grade	20 minutes per day
Primary Grade	25 minutes per day
Grade 1	30 minutes per day
Grade 2	40 minutes per day
Grades 3 and 4	45 minutes per day
Grades 5 and 6	1 hour per day
Grade 7	1 hour 15 minutes per day
Grade 8	1 hour 30 minutes per day

These suggested daily practice sessions may be divided into shorter sessions, as appropriate to the needs of each student.

As a parent/guardian, you can help by:

- ensuring that practice facilities are pleasant, inviting, free from distractions and well ventilated;
- reminding your daughter/son to practise, and make space in their day for practice;

- helping your daughter/son to practise effectively, following the teacher's guidelines;
- asking your daughter/son to perform scales or pieces being studied.

It is important that you keep in contact with the relevant teachers. If you wish to consult with a teacher about your child's progress, please do so during the lesson (rather than before or after the lesson, to avoid inconvenience to other students). Alternatively, you can arrange an appointment with the teacher.

Normally, parents do not attend lessons. However, parents may attend lessons if invited to do so by the teacher. In such instances, parents are expected to observe quietly without interrupting the lesson. Under no circumstances should a lesson be recorded unless prior consent is given by the teacher.

Instruments and Equipment/Books

All orchestral and keyboard students are expected to have daily access to an instrument, and to practise regularly. Students are expected to equip themselves with relevant materials (books, manuscript paper, etc.) as directed by their teachers.

Making Progress in Practical Lessons

Progression at the Junior Conservatory is structured into four 'cycles', spanning 11 levels ('grades') of progress in musical attainment:

Junior Cycle	Initial, Primary, Grade 1 and Grade 2
Intermediate Cycle	Grades 3, 4 and 5
Senior Cycle	Grades 6, 7 and 8
Advanced Cycle	Advanced Levels 1 and 2

Students are normally expected to complete each Cycle (Junior, Intermediate, Senior and Advanced) within four academic years of the commencement of the first grade in each cycle.

- To progress from the Junior Cycle to the Intermediate Cycle, students are required to gain a mark of at least 80 in the Grade 2 practical examination.
- To progress from the Intermediate Cycle to the Senior Cycle, students are required to gain a mark of at least 85 in the Grade 5 practical examination. A mark within the band 80–84 may be considered.
- Progression from the Senior Cycle to the Advanced Cycle is dependent on audition and a satisfactory teacher's report.

In all cases, teachers' reports and attendance at Musicianship (except where an exemption has been granted) and Ensemble (where appropriate) will be taken into account for the purposes of progression.

Where a student fails to progress from one Cycle to the next within four academic years of commencing the Cycle, their studies may be terminated.

Musicianship Classes

All Junior students attend a Musicianship class. In providing a holistic music education, the purpose of Musicianship classes is to support learning and teaching in the Practical Lesson. Through the Musicianship programme, students develop a range of core music skills including aural awareness, sight-singing, theoretical understanding, critical listening and appreciation of music. The Musicianship programme is carefully structured so that students develop these skills and knowledge sequentially, according to a graded syllabus.

Students attend a weekly class at the appropriate level. The class duration varies according to the grade of study:

Initial and Primary Grades	30 minutes
Grades 1–3	45 minutes
Grades 4–5	1 hour
Grade 6	1 hour 15 minutes
Grades 7–8	1 hour 30 minutes

Students are expected to complete weekly homework, which may take the form of written work, or practice (e.g. sight-singing, memory work etc.). Parent/Teacher meetings are normally held in February. This is an ideal opportunity to meet your child's Musicianship teacher and to discuss her/his progress.

Musicianship Assessments and Examinations

End-of-year Musicianship assessments take place in May. Grades 1–8 end-of-year assessments have two components: a written examination, focusing on theoretical knowledge and understanding; and an aural examination, covering aural, sight-singing and critical listening skills.

Initial and Primary Grades: a short combined oral/aural assessment; students must pass to progress to the next level.

Grades 1–3: written exam (50%) and aural exam (50%); students must achieve a minimum of 65% (pass) in **each** exam to progress to the next grade; in-class assessments are zero-weighted (formative).

Grades 4–5: two in-class assessments (15% each); end-of-year written exam (35%) and aural exam (35%); students must achieve a minimum of 65% (pass) in **each** end-of-year exam to progress to the next grade.

Grade 6: 2 portfolio submissions (10% each) OR One Assessment and One Portfolio (10% each-at the Teacher's Discretion); in-class aural assessment (10%); end-of-year written exam (35%) and aural exam (35%); students must achieve a

minimum of 50% (pass mark) in **each** end-of-year exam to progress to the next grade.

Grade 7: 2 portfolio submissions (10% each) OR One Assessment and One Portfolio (10% each-at Teacher's Discretion); Mid-Year Aural Assessment (10%); end-of-year written exam (35%) and aural exam (35%); students must achieve a minimum of 50% (pass mark) in **each** end-of-year exams to progress to the next grade.

Grade 8: 2 portfolio submissions (5% each); in-class aural assessment (10%); special assignment (15%); composition assignment (5%); end-of-year written exam (30%) and aural exam (30%). Students must achieve a minimum of 50% in **both** end-of-year exams to pass Grade 8.

Students are obliged to attend all assessments and examinations. Teachers make every effort to carry out assessments on a day that suits all students in the class. If you foresee a problem with regard to assessment dates, please inform the class teacher as soon as possible to allow time for alternative arrangements to be made. Should a student miss an assessment, a mark of zero will be recorded. Should a student miss an end-of-year examination, they may not be able to progress to the next grade. In the event that a child in Grades 4-8 misses the End-of-Year Written Exam and the Alternative Sitting of the Exam, which follows, due to medical reasons, a medical certificate must be provided in order to make arrangements in the re-scheduling of their Written Exam.

Students receive a written report from their class teacher at the end of the year.

Changing Musicianship Class

While all classes within a particular grade deal with the same syllabus during the year, individual teachers may cover the material in different ways and in a different order. For this reason, requests to change from one class to another will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Should a student need to change class, please contact the Administration Office and complete a 'Change of Class' form.

Books and Class Materials for Musicianship Classes

A theory book is recommended for Initial and Primary Grades only. Since no one theory book on the market fully suits the Conservatory's Musicianship syllabus, teachers produce their own worksheets and handouts for all other grades. It is therefore very important that all students have a folder in which they can keep this material safe and neat. We recommend a ring-binder folder and plastic pockets, and we ask that parents check these folders on a regular basis. Lists of other books and class materials required are circulated at the beginning of the year. In addition to the folder, please ensure that students have a pencil and eraser in every class.

Musicianship Exemptions

Exemption from Musicianship may be granted where:

- the student holds an approved diploma in music for which a theoretical paper is a requirement; or where
- the student has successfully completed Grade 8 Theory/Musicianship (DIT Conservatory or ABRSM); or where
- the student is studying for or holds a third-level music qualification.

Exemption from Musicianship may also be granted for one year where:

- the student is studying Musicianship on an individual basis in the Conservatory; or where
- the student is in her/his Junior Certificate or Leaving Certificate year.

Exemption Forms are available from the Administration Office or on the Conservatory website. The Junior Musicianship Co-ordinator will consider applications for exemption.

Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Music Courses

These one-year courses are designed for students studying for Junior Cert and Leaving Cert examinations at school.

Applicants to the Junior Cert class should normally have reached a minimum standard of Grade 2 Musicianship/Theory; Grade 4 Musicianship for the Leaving Cert course. Junior Conservatory instrumental/vocal students are given priority enrolment; a small number of places may be available to external applicants.

These courses prepare students for the Listening and Composing components of the Junior and Leaving Certificate syllabuses. The Performing requirements are catered for in the Practical Lesson.

Attendance

Students must attend all classes/lessons/rehearsals (etc.) punctually. The Junior Conservatory maintains detailed attendance records, and these are taken into consideration for progress purposes. If your child will be absent (e.g. due to illness or some other unavoidable prior engagement), please inform the teacher(s) affected directly, preferably by email or by phone. Students who are late or absent without permission shall have no claim for the missed lesson(s). Where a student is absent from lessons for two weeks without satisfactory explanation, her/his studies may be suspended or terminated.

Ensembles

Participation in ensembles is an important means of developing musical communication and of learning and practising performance skills. The Conservatory has a number of high quality ensembles, including:

- DIT Symphony Orchestra
- DIT Camerata
- DIT Sinfonia
- DIT Sinfonietta
- DIT Prelude Strings
- DIT Play Strings
- DIT Junior Choir
- DIT Prelude Winds
- DIT Concert Band
- DIT Wind Ensemble

We also encourage students to take part in smaller chamber music groups. We are proud to have the internationally renowned Vanbrugh Quartet lead our chamber music provision.

All orchestral and vocal students must attend the ensemble(s) to which they are assigned. Absences and/or lateness may lead to suspension or termination of studies.

In exceptional circumstances, Junior students may be exempted from a certain amount of ensemble participation. Exemptions are not transferable from year to year – a new application must be made for each year of study.

Exemption Forms are available from the Administration Office or on the Conservatory website. The Ensembles and Concert Manager will consider applications for exemption.

All Junior Conservatory students have the opportunity of joining the Preliminary Choir (6–10 years) or the Junior Choir (10–15 years).

Concerts

The Conservatory runs regular concert series open to the public, including lunchtime concerts (normally given by third-level students), and musical evenings featuring students of all levels. We also promote our ensembles through our annual 'All Together Now' concerts in the National Concert Hall.

Students are expected and encouraged to participate in concerts and other performance opportunities. Details will be posted on notice boards and on the Conservatory website. Students are required to perform at Conservatory concerts when called upon to do so and are expected to be present for the duration of the performance.

Timetables

The Head of Department has responsibility for all practical lesson timetables in consultation with the Head of Conservatory, taking account of the availability of staff and space, and the needs of classes. Continuing Education students may be required to take lessons outside peak times so that Junior students may be accommodated when they are available.

Entering for Grade Examinations and Competitions

Practical grade examinations and Musicianship assessments and grade examinations are an important and integral part of learning in a conservatoire environment, and they help staff to monitor students' progress.

Practical grade examinations take place in December; Initial and Primary examinations for Keyboard and Strings (only) take place twice annually, usually in December/January and May/June.

Mid-year Musicianship assessments take place during class time in December and in February/March. End-of-year Musicianship examinations (written and aural) are held in May. It is important that students are present for all Musicianship assessments and examinations.

Junior and Senior competitions take place in Semester 2. A full list of competitions and regulations is circulated by the relevant Head of Department well in advance.

Closing dates for examinations and competition entries are published in advance. Application forms must be submitted to the relevant office by 4.30pm on the closing date; late applications will not be accepted. Please consult the Junior Conservatory Calendar for closing dates for exams and competitions.

The Conservatory's graded music examinations are currently being considered for recognition through the National Framework of Qualifications.

Students are encouraged to enter for external examinations and competitions (e.g. Feis Ceoil), but may only do so with the permission of their instrumental/vocal teacher and Head of Department.

EARLY YEARS MUSIC PROGRAMME AT THE JUNIOR CONSERVATORY

The child-centred approach, which underpins the Early Years Music Programme, emphasizes holistic development whereby each child has the opportunity to nurture and develop musical, physical, conceptual and social skills appropriate to her/his age. Children learn through active music-making. There are three levels of classes:

- Kids' Club 1 (for pre-school children)
- Kids' Club 2 (for children in Junior Infants)
- Pre-Instrumental Classes (for children in Senior Infants and 1st Class)

Kids' Club 1 and 2

During these 45-minute classes, children are engaged in active music-making, participating in singing, movement, musical games, storytelling, percussion-playing and much more, to nurture and develop music skills and to stimulate the imagination. The classes are led by specialist teachers.

Pre-Instrumental Classes

In preparation for learning to play an instrument, these 45-minute classes engage children with music in stimulating and playful ways. Through active music-making, the course is carefully structured to introduce children to the basic elements of music fundamental to learning to play an instrument, including singing, awareness of pitch and rhythm, as well as preparation for music literacy. Classes consist of singing, games, movement, playing percussion instruments, and listening to music. In addition, children have an opportunity to 'meet' and hear the instruments of the orchestra.

Recorder Classes (for 7–9 year olds)

Recorder classes provide children with the opportunity to develop skills in playing a wind instrument. Children who take this course will be offered priority enrolment (subject to audition) as students of wind and brass instruments in following years. Older children can apply for recorder ensemble classes where they will learn to play the larger recorders and ensemble repertoire. Classes take place on Saturday morning and afternoons in Rathmines.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Fees

Students are enrolled on a year-by-year basis for a full academic session and, as such, must pay the relevant fees for the full academic session. A facility is available within the academic session whereby tuition fees can be paid in two instalments; 50% before the end of August, prior to commencement of classes and 50% by 31 January. Students who have not paid 50% by end of August or 100% by 31 January may have their studies suspended or terminated.

There is no fee reduction for applicants who commence studies late (e.g. through being offered a place in mid/late September).

Withdrawal and Deferral

Continuing Education students and the Parents/Guardians of Junior students must notify the Administration Office in writing of their intention to withdraw from a course. Fees will only be refunded where a course does not commence.

Junior or Continuing Education students who take a break from their studies may resume their studies, but must re-apply for entry to the Junior Conservatory in the normal way (i.e. including audition).

Child Safety and Student Conduct

Junior Conservatory students are the responsibility of the teacher for the duration of their class only. **Prior to class and once the class is over, all students under the age of 16 are the responsibility of their parent(s)/guardian(s);** the Conservatory takes no responsibility for students before and after classes. Parents and siblings are requested to wait in the foyer of each building (or the canteen in Rathmines) during lessons.

Students are expected to behave in a responsible manner with due regard for their health, safety and wellbeing, and that of other students and members of staff. Students may not enter classrooms without authority except to take their lessons and then only when the teacher is present. Inappropriate behaviour by a Junior student will be reported to the Junior Conservatory Management Group and/or Head of Conservatory, and appropriate action may be taken, including informing the student's parent/guardian. Repeated occurrences of inappropriate behaviour may result in the student's tuition being terminated.

Food and drink may not be consumed in teaching/practice rooms. Smoking is strictly forbidden. Please do not post notices of any kind without permission. Practice facilities are not available to students aged under 16.

The foyer and corridor areas are designated as 'quiet zones' in order to ensure that the environment is compatible with learning and teaching. For safety reasons, students are not permitted to play in the outside courtyard areas or to run in the foyers and corridors. Stairwells are to be kept clear at all times.

In accordance with DIT's Child Protection Policy, the use of video and audio equipment at DIT events is strictly prohibited.

Child Protection Policy

Please refer to the DIT Child Protection Policy which is available on the Conservatory website and at <https://www.dit.ie/hr/hrpoliciesproceduresandguidelines/>

Personal Data, including Photography and Video

Personal information will be used only for the purposes of administering the Junior Conservatory. Personal data will never be passed to third parties.

Photographs and videos of Conservatory events, commissioned by the Conservatory, may be used for internal staff development and for publicity, including the printing of flyers, posters and other publications, and for publication on the Conservatory's website and social media accounts. Such images may feature Junior Conservatory students engaging in musical activities organized by the Conservatory.

During the application and re-enrolment process you are asked to accept these Terms & Conditions, which includes giving your consent to the use of personal data, including photographs and videos, for the purposes stated above. Should you wish to withhold or withdraw your consent at any time, please contact the Head of Conservatory directly.

Transferring Practical Lesson Teacher

Great care is taken to place students with teachers, and it is important for the sake of continuity in their musical education that students should not change teacher unless absolutely necessary. Before considering transferring to another teacher, please discuss your child's progress with her/his teacher in the first instance and then (if necessary) with the relevant Head of Department. If you then decide that it would be best to change from one instrumental/vocal teacher to another, please apply for a transfer by writing to the relevant Head of Department, **before 1 April each year**. Transfer applications are considered on a case-by-case basis, following

successful re-audition, and taking account of staff availability. Please note that students must re-apply online in the normal manner in order to be re-auditioned, and that the result of the re-audition has a direct impact on the transfer process. If a transfer is recommended by the instrumental/vocal teacher, the same process of re-application and re-audition applies.

Additional Needs and Disability

The Junior Conservatory welcomes applications from students who may require additional support. If your child has a disability or additional support needs, please state this on the application form. If your child is a current student and has recently received a diagnosis, which requires her/him to receive additional support, please contact the Head of Department/Head of Conservatory and submit the relevant documentary evidence. We endeavour to put any necessary reasonable adjustments in place in order to accommodate the student's needs both in lessons and during exams.

Re-enrolment

Students are enrolled on a year-by-year basis. Re-enrolment is subject to satisfactory attendance, progress and behavior at lessons and ensembles if assigned to one; and subject to the requirement that students are normally expected to complete their current Cycle (Junior, Intermediate, Senior and Advanced) within four academic years of commencing the first grade in that Cycle. In cases where a student's attendance and/or progress is not satisfactory, re-enrolment may be subject to a re-audition.

When re-enrolling, Junior students do not need to submit a separate application form for Musicianship; however, they do need to register for a Musicianship class. Registration takes place on-line at the beginning of September and choice of class is allocated on a 'first-come, first-served' basis. We cannot guarantee that practical lessons and musicianship classes will take place on the same day.

Instrument Bank

Over the years, the Conservatory has built up an instrument bank of lower strings, wind and brass instruments. Conservatory instruments are made available to talented students for limited periods of time through an instrument loan scheme.

Library Facilities

The Conservatory has an extensive library, located in the Rathmines building. Students over the age of 16 are welcome to use the library facilities, including borrowing materials, on production of a student card. (Please apply for a student card.)

Practice Facilities

Limited practice facilities are available to students over the age of 16: rooms are available from the Porter's desk, on production of a student card, on a 'first come, first served' basis, with priority given to third-level students. The pianos in the Theatre in Rathmines and in the McCann Hall in Chatham Row are not available for practice without permission from the Head of Department. Steinway pianos are not available for practice.

Parking

Parking spaces are not available for Conservatory students/parents of students. Reserved parking spaces are strictly for staff use only. Please co-operate with the parking attendant/porter at all times.

Fire Regulations

It is each teacher's responsibility to ensure that her/his students are aware of the fire drill (emergency exits and meeting points). In the event of an emergency, the teacher is responsible for taking her/his student(s) out of the building through the nearest emergency exit. Parents should wait for their children at the designated meeting point outside the building. For more information, please visit the DIT Health and Safety website at <http://www.dit.ie/healthsafety/>

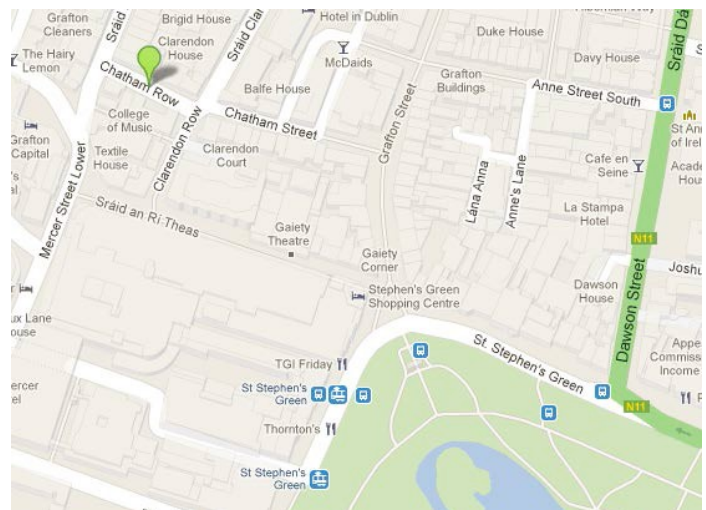
Locations

The Conservatory's activities take place at two main locations: Rathmines Road and Chatham Row. We also have a superb 400-seater concert hall (the Gleeson Theatre) in our Kevin Street building. All lessons will take place on DIT premises. Exceptionally, lessons may take place at recital and competition venues, with the permission of the relevant Head of Department.

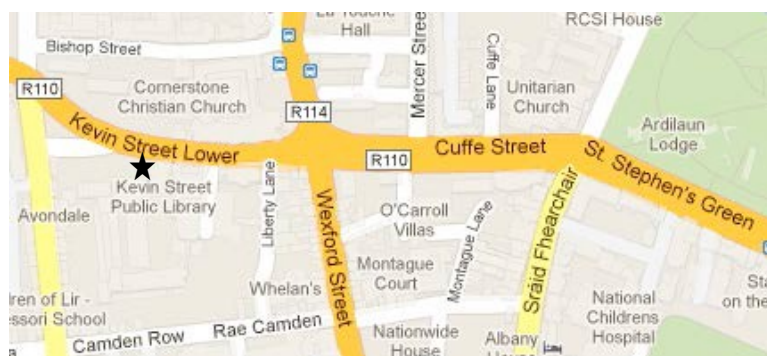
Rathmines Road



Chatham Row



Gleeson Theatre, Kevin St.



Communications

It is very important that we have your up-to-date contact details. We will normally correspond with you by mail or email. In cases of class cancellation or other urgent information, we may send a text message or call. Please ensure that we have your:

- home and mobile telephone numbers
- home email address
- home postal address

You can keep up-to-date with Conservatory news by:

- checking our website (www.dit.ie/conservatory)
- liking our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ditconservatory)
- following us on Twitter (@DITConservatory)

If you wish to discuss your child's progress, or if have any queries or concerns about your child's education at the Conservatory, please contact her/his practical teacher or relevant Head of Department (for Practical Lessons), or the class teacher or Junior Musicianship Co-ordinator (for Musicianship Classes).

Head of Conservatory	Dr Orla McDonagh orla.mcdonagh@dit.ie	t. 402 7815
Head of Keyboard Studies	Dr David Mooney david.mooney@dit.ie	t. 402 3593
Head of Vocal, Opera and Drama Studies (Acting)	Ms Jennifer Hamilton Jennifer.hamilton@dit.ie	t. 402 3471
Head of Orchestral Studies	Dr Cliona Doris cliona.doris@dit.ie	t. 402 3597
Head of Academic Studies	Dr Kerry Houston kerry.houston@dit.ie	t. 402 3478
Chair of Junior Conservatory Management Group & Junior Musicianship Co-ordinator (Acting)	Dr Julie Maisel julie.maisel@dit.ie	t. 402 7830
Ensembles and Concerts Manager	Mr Rónán Grant ronan.grant@dit.ie	t. 402 3570 t. (086) 360 6869
Events Manager	Dr Claire Connell claire.connell@dit.ie	t. 402 7857
Administration: Rathmines	registrations.conservatory@dit.ie	t. 402 3467
Administration: Chatham Row	conservatory@dit.ie	t. 402 3572
Porter: Rathmines		t. 402 3451
Porter: Chatham Row		t. 402 3576
DIT Health and Safety Officer	edel.niland@dit.ie	t. (086) 389 1080
Occupational Health Officer (College of Arts & Tourism)	orlaith.waters@dit.ie	t. (087) 980 9131

