

THE LIFE OF A FIRST YEAR OPTOMETRY STUDENT IN DIT KEVIN ST.

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Back in September we did not know what to expect when we started our first year at college as Optometry students. We had done a lot of research into the course throughout our Leaving Cert year but we never anticipated the course to be as interesting and exciting as it is.

The transition from second level education to third level is often one that many students struggle with and while the majority of our old classmates have been faced with lectures of over two hundred people, we are lucky to be blessed with the lovely number of eighteen of us in first year.

This is a major benefit as we all have gotten to know each other so well and have made friendships that will last a lifetime. The lecturers have gotten to know us on a first name basis which is so great compared to just being a number in a sea of hundreds. The lecturers are all so helpful and supportive to our needs.

D.I.T has many great facilities including the National Optometry Centre which is equipped with the best equipment to help us in our professional training. We get to go into the N.O.C. this year for our Dispensing labs which we all enjoy



very much . When we are in third year we will begin seeing patients in the N.O.C but we have a long way to go before we get there.

First year mainly consists of general science modules like Physics, Chemistry and Cell biology but we also have modules such as visual science and dispensing which we enjoy the most. It is in these lectures and labs that we have started to learn some of the core skills that we will use on a daily basis for the rest of our lives. The course is intensive with lots of hours but we are all there to help each other through the good and bad days.

The small numbers in the course means we get the opportunity to talk to the older years. They are all very helpful and willing to give us lots of advice. There are many social events where we all get to mix with each other.

The Optics society have already thown some memorable nights and all us first years are greatly looking forward to the annual Eyeball.

We had a great evening recently at the A.O.I meet and greet evening at the Radison Blu Hotel. Optometry is a great community of people and

we have been made feel welcome and a part of it since our first day of college.

As well as being involved in the network within D.I.T. and Ireland we also are provided with the oportunity to get involved in the wider network of Optometry. D.I.T is currently involved in the Mozambique eyecare project. The optometry students regularly fundraise for Optometry giving sight and at the start of the year we all got involved in the annual street collections on World Sight Day.

We would recommend this course to anyone considering it. We wouldn't look back on choosing Optometry as our life career. We are currently having the time of our lives and thoroughly enjoying every minute of it. Its a long hard road ahead but we look forward to facing the coming years together, whatever they may throw at us.

