

10 Tips for Supporting Students with ADHD

ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. There are several subtypes of ADHD. As such, there is no singular ADHD experience. Students with ADHD may experience differences in attention, sustaining focus, time management, and emotional and sensory regulation. To create an inclusive Trinity environment in which ADHD students can achieve their potential, consider the following tips:



Understand and destigmatise accommodations.

Different students will have different needs, experiences, and preferences. Conversations with students and subsequently offered supports or solutions ought to embrace and reflect these differences.



Account for sensory needs.

Students may face additional challenges during the transition into university, such as managing time effectively and adapting to an environment with decreased structure. Clear information around expectations and available supports is vital.



Address executive function challenges.

Students with ADHD may have invisible workloads, such as masking and advocating for their needs. Spread awareness of the early signs of burnout and learn about the supports for students on campus.



Promote sustainable academic strategies.

Some students with ADHD may experience self-doubt and internalised stigma. Staff can help boost their confidence through constructive feedback and teaching self-compassion, which is key to academic and personal growth.



Challenge stigma and promote community.

Recognise the potential challenges and stressors students might face when going on placement or seeking career information. Encourage students to avail of the guidance offered by Trinity's Careers Service

Some students may hesitate to register with the Disability Service or seek student supports due to fears of stigma, misunderstanding, or a lack of knowledge about available supports. Staff should understand and discuss accommodations as tools for equity.

Tailor supports: one size does not fit all.



Students with ADHD may experience sensory sensitivity or may prefer more sensory input. Encourage students to use resources like the TCD Sense Map and to feel comfortable using tools like fidgets.

Ease the transition into university life.



ADHD may impact a student's executive functions, such as planning, focus, and task-switching. Support students in their implementation of strategies such as reminders, time-blocking, and scheduling techniques.

Recognise signs of burnout and invisible workload.



Policies that punish late work may not reflect the efforts of students with ADHD to manage their time and academic demands. Strategies such as study accountability groups and structured academic planning may help build resilience.

Build self-confidence and self-compassion.



Misunderstanding of ADHD is widespread. Staff should work to better understand ADHD and students' lived experiences, challenge stereotypes, and foster inclusive spaces.

Support career and placement navigation.

