TRINITY DISABILITY INCLUSION PATHWAY

Responding to the needs of students with disabilities and their transition into employment

Introduction

Trinity Disability Service, in collaboration with Trinity Careers Service, successfully delivered a pilot initiative last year from September to December 2021. 35 students participated in a specialist programme aimed at supporting students with disabilities with limited work experience to develop the skills necessary for transitioning into the workplace.

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Background & Need

The OECD (2011) emphasises the importance of preparing students with disabilities in higher education institutes for the world of work.

Opportunities need to be made available to students with disabilities to allow for the development of vocational skills and experiences during their time in education to allow them to compete on par with their peers in their field of study, putting them as attractive candidates when seeking employment.

Objective

To support participants to develop skills in the area of employability through vocational work experience, participation in disability and career specialist led workshops, and peer supported reflective practice.

Programme Structure

2 x skills based workshops & 10 hours extra curricular work

CV Review & reflective assessment on work experience

Compete for a paid internship role with the Disability Service

Results

20 Awardees of 1 or more Levels

35 participants

2 Paid Internships

58 Applicants

Discussion

Participants benefitted from a practical and collaborative approach between student services to support the development of skills necessary to succeed in the workplace and accessing employment opportunities.

During various events delivered through “DIP” it was clear that students benefitted from having a safe and supported space to introduce themselves to expectations of the working life in the company of others with similar concerns.

2 participants were able to continue this learning experience within a live working environment when completing their paid internships, showcasing the skills they have developed through the Disability Inclusion Pathway.

Conclusion

Participation in work-based learning experiences can be an integral part of ensuring success after graduation. Using a strategy which encourages students to engage in group work, extracurricular activity, and practical work through skills based workshops, will provide students with ample opportunities to develop employability skills (e.g. leadership/team-working) which are not always readily available to students within their course of study.

Trinity Disability Service will be launching the second Disability Inclusion Pathway this semester, collaborating with Trinity VDP to further resource learning through volunteering and community engagement.

Feedback

"I signed up for the pathway to better prepare myself for post lice college and these were the type of tasks that I found were really helping me with achieving that goal."

"The pathway taught me what skills an employer is interested in and how to communicate these in a job interview."

Related Literature


Rachel Murphy, Graduate Intern with the Trinity Disability Service

Evan Cryan, Summer Intern with the Trinity Disability Service