



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin



IMPACT
BELONGING
INCLUSION
ABILITY

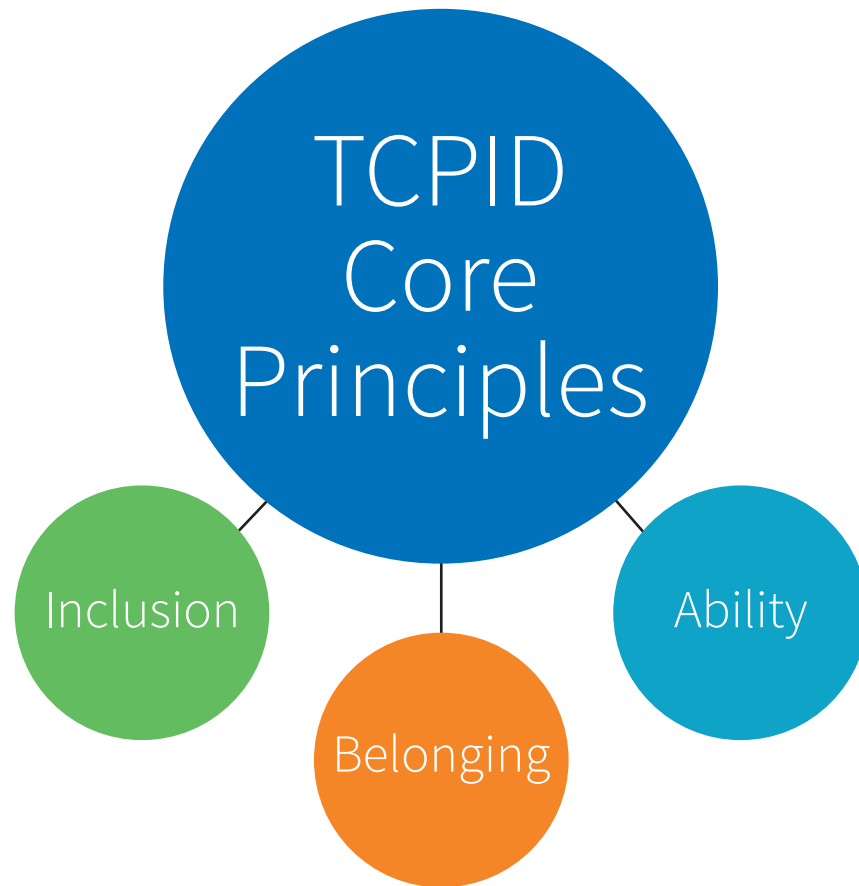


TCPID MENTORING GUIDE

Emer Murphy, Senior Occupational Therapist
Marie Devitt, Business Partnerships Manager

What is in this booklet?





The Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID) is based within the School of Education in Trinity College Dublin. The TCPID provides a post-secondary accredited Level 5 Certificate in Arts, Science and Inclusive Applied Practice for students with intellectual disabilities.

The TCPID work with our Business Partners to help promote inclusion in the workplace for people with intellectual disabilities. Our partners support us by providing opportunities for student work placements and paid graduate internships.

The key person in the success of all of our placements and internships is the mentor. We are incredibly grateful to all the TCPID mentors over many years who have provided support and guidance to our students and graduates. This booklet aims to capture some of the key learnings over the past 7 years and more than 100 graduate internships to date.

TCPID Internships

We believe that people with intellectual disabilities have a lot to offer in the world of employment.

While they experience particular challenges, we believe they have talents and capabilities and they deserve the opportunity to experience the world of work and learn new skills.

We believe they deserve to have the same opportunities everyone else has.

We are extremely grateful to you, our TCPID Business Partners for offering our graduates the opportunity to do an internship with your company. We will support you through every step of the internship to ensure you have everything you need.

Our overall goal is for our graduates to learn as much as possible during the internship, to develop new skills and to grow in confidence.

Throughout this document, we will refer to the TCPID graduates as 'Interns'.



Intellectual Disability

An intellectual disability affects the brain's ability to perform mental processes. These are activities like thinking, maintaining attention, remembering things, understanding information, understanding abstract ideas like numbers or time or concepts like justice or consent. Other actions like problem solving or using information we hear today for an event in the future are also affected. This means that these actions can be harder for the person to do or learn.

It is important to know that the person's disability does not depend only on their diagnosis or health condition. There are lots of factors which can happen during the person's life that support them to fully participate and be included in society. These include a supportive environment where the person is challenged and supported to try new activities and experiences where they will learn. Having a job is a huge part of that!

People can be affected by an intellectual disability differently.

Some people have **severe or profound intellectual disabilities**. These people have a lot of difficulty understanding very basic information. They need help with every part of their lives like getting dressed and feeding themselves.

Some people have **moderate intellectual disabilities**. These people can learn to understand basic information and may have some reading or counting skills. They can follow routines and are good at repetitive activities or going to familiar places.

Some people have **mild intellectual disabilities**. These people can develop new skills. They can engage socially and travel independently.

Remember! A disability is only a part of a person. A person is not a disability. People with and without disabilities are unique and different and can learn and develop different skills and abilities.



Mentoring

Mentoring is a relationship, usually between two people. One person is committed to supporting the other person develop their skills and capabilities and succeed. The other person is open, willing to learn and grow and become the best version of themselves they can be. Like any relationship there are good times and challenges.

Mentoring is a skill. It can be learned and developed. Good mentoring happens when we are aware of what we need to do to be a good mentor. There are lots of tools and techniques we can use. Good mentoring can lead to improved effectiveness and productivity at work.

- > Mentors are not power figures.
- > Mentors are not authoritarian in their approach. Mentors help someone else learn something quicker and more thoroughly than if that person is left to figure it out by themselves.
- > Some mentors encourage, some advise and some are like teachers.
- > Mentoring requires a lot of time and energy to help another grow.

Mentoring Skills

A mentoring relationship takes some work. It is important to build trust and understanding with your mentee. This can take time and effort, but when it works well it is really rewarding!

Connect! Use effective listening.

- > Build your relationship.
- > Keep your focus on what is important.
- > Talk about perceived limits and barriers and aim to get past these
- > Help someone grow.

- > Invest in your mentoring relationship.
- > Maintain appropriate boundaries.
- > Have empathy.
- > Active listening skills.
- > Give lots of time.





Effective Listening

- > What is your mentee saying?
- > Use open ended questions.
- > Clarify what they say and what they mean. Read the situation.
- > What is not being said is as important as what is being said.
- > Show empathy.

Building Trust

- > Talk about confidentiality up front.
- > Maintain integrity e.g. I won't say anything about my mentee that I wouldn't want them to hear.
- > Share some personal information e.g. about your dog, family, interests etc.
- > Understand what drives and motivates your mentee, get to know them, their likes, dislikes etc. Talk about the mentoring. What is working / not working?

Focus

- > What is important for your mentee to work on?
- > Talk to your mentee so that they can get the most value from those conversations.
- > Think about the overall objectives.
- > What is causing issues? Distractions or loss of focus?
- > Encourage them to focus on areas that benefit them and lead to success
- > Be open and flexible to adapting your focus and goals

Perceived Barriers and Growth

- > Professional knowledge and language: e.g., what is Q1?
- > Connections, relationships.
- > Barriers self-limiting beliefs e.g., I'm not good at....
- > Help them by increasing knowledge, understanding and showing them what they can be good at.

Feedback and Difficult Conversations

- > Begin with the end in mind. What do you want to get out of the conversation?
- > Think about your attitudes, biases and ideas and be aware the other person might be different. Be clear about your message.
- > Think DESK:
 - Describe what happened
 - Evaluate effect on things
 - Show desired behaviour
 - Know consequences



Communicating Effectively

How people are affected by Intellectual Disability

People with an intellectual disability are not “child-like” or lacking ability to make decisions or think for themselves. They may have difficulty processing information. This means that it may take longer to listen and to understand. This is why clear communication, rules and routines make life easier.



Think about how you talk

Jokes and sarcasm can be misunderstood by people with an intellectual disability. Jargon and language that is used by your company will also need to be explained. Some phrases like “blue sky thinking” etc may not be understood well either.

Be specific with instructions and information. For example: You have a 15 minute break. Come back at 11.15 etc.

Always use digital time. Say eleven thirty rather than half eleven. This is clearer and more widely understood.

Don't say maybe when the answer is no. This leads to confusion and the intern will keep wondering.



Reinforce professional behaviour from the outset.

If the intern says or does something that is not appropriate for the office, please tell them immediately. You can say “It is not okay to when we’re in work.” For example, if the student uses a swear word, you can say, “I see that you are annoyed, but it is not okay to use bad words in work”. Then move on.

Of course you need to model the correct behaviour, because if it is not okay for the intern, then it shouldn’t be okay for anyone!

*In the unlikely event that the intern does something utterly inappropriate example stealing, please treat this seriously and contact TCPID as soon as you can.

Don’t be nice, be consistent

Tell the intern your expectations for time keeping, dress code etc from the start. For example, don’t let the intern’s late coming slide for the first week. Tell the intern if they are late to text you or someone on the team.

Similarly if the intern makes a mistake with their work, show them the correct way to do it. This will help them to learn. The intern will be confused if one week it is okay for them to be late and another week it is not okay.

Communicate these expectations with your team as well to ensure that everyone is getting the same message.

Establish good practice for lateness/earliness.

Have an allocated person that the intern can contact by phone if they are running late. Texting is easier than emailing, especially if the intern is running late and feels stressed.

Have an allocated space that the intern can go to if they arrive early. They can go to the canteen or to a nearby coffee shop if this is available, or they can wait in reception and look at their phone/listen to music if they are early.

You should not feel under pressure to have the intern start ahead of time because they are early. Planning when to arrive and sticking to an agreed schedule are important skills.

Instructions - Tell, Show, Practice

Explain instructions to interns using **short** phrases and **simple** language. Demonstrate what they must do. Get the intern to practice tasks under mentor supervision to check their understanding. Have them complete each step as you talk them through it. Then get them to practice alone, with you watching. Try to intervene before they make a mistake so that they learn how to do the task correctly.



Email to remind about instructions

Always follow up with an email or get interns to put reminders on their phone. This is important if there is a change in routine or to a previously agreed message.

For example, if the following week they have to go to a different floor or work with a different person.

Encourage interns to make a mistake rather than do nothing

The interns are often afraid of making mistakes. Remind the intern this is their first try and just to do their best. Try to reassure the interns that everybody makes mistakes and that is how we learn. A mistake is not a disaster. Getting positive feedback and acknowledging the intern's work increases their confidence. Point out the parts of the task that were done well and the parts that need to be fixed.

Refer back to TCPID training

The interns will complete a workshop on being an intern/mentee. They will learn about professional behaviours at work. Ask them to refer back to this training if necessary.

**Visual reminders**

The interns benefit from the use of images to explain tasks. This can be an image and a short sentence describing the task. Other interns can follow a list of clear simple instructions. The TCPID can guide you on this.

Inclusive Practices

The interns are adults and are working with you as colleagues. It is not appropriate to call or text with their parents. Parents or others can be recorded as Emergency Contacts and should only be contacted for a genuine emergency, where the intern is not physically capable of calling themselves.

It could harm your relationship with the intern if they think that you are talking about them behind their back. It may also create a parent-child dynamic which will probably lead to problems with behaviour.

The intern should not be the centre of attention where colleagues fuss over them or give them special treatment. The intern does not need to be entertained or just do work that is fun and interesting. Their work should be meaningful, but some parts of their job will be less interesting than others. It is important to learn that work is not always enjoyable, but you are getting paid and should do what you are asked to do.

Personal Space

It is okay to ask if you want a bit more space from someone. You can say do you mind sitting there so I can type?

It is good to check if someone wants to hug you or shake hands with you. Some people are very uncomfortable with touch so it's good to follow their lead.

Even if someone is very upset and crying, always ask permission before you touch them.

Be Supportive - Do not rescue

When the intern is trying to do or learn something, support them to figure it out. Tell them what to do and teach them each of the steps of the task. This may take time and you might have to do this a few times while the person is learning. Don't do it for them as this will make them think that they can't do it and they will keep relying on people to help them.

Communication Styles

Some people feel uncomfortable making eye contact and prefer to walk and talk or sit side by side and talk while they do a task. Other people do not change their facial expression or tone and it can be hard to know what they are feeling. The TCPID can guide you on this, but it is important to know that just because someone does not look excited, it does not mean they are not feeling happy or interested and if someone is feeling stressed, they may not show it either. The TCPID will alert you to this so you are aware, and you can support the intern.





Task Supports

The interns are very keen to work and to learn new skills. However, it may take time for them to learn all the information and to practice it.

Repetitive tasks are great, because they are always the same and they allow the intern to gain confidence in doing a particular thing.

If the task or parts of the task change, you will have to teach the intern again.

Do not assume that they will apply learning about one task to another different situation.

Time: Give yourself lots of time to teach the task, to demonstrate it and to let the intern practice it while you are there.

Make it interesting: Tell a story, use an engaging tone, show the steps while you are explaining them.

Remove Distractions: Close off distractions before beginning. For example: Don't have the computer open if you are talking, turn away photos of family members or dogs. Close the loop on distractions, example if other questions are asked, answer it quickly, then say we are going to work on this now. Try to find a quiet place to work.

Explain and demonstrate: Get the intern to do the task themselves while you guide them, get them to do it on their own, then get them to do it on their own while you move further away.



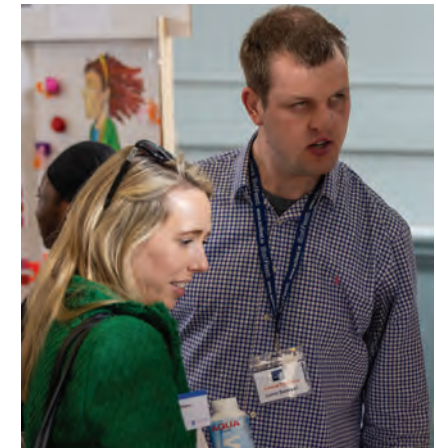


Speak slowly: Try to speak slowly, pause frequently after each part and check for understanding. Give the person time to think about what you said. Reinforce key parts of the task.

Use memory aids: Take photos of the steps (as appropriate), write simple instructions with images, repeat the task. Go over the key points of the task before beginning.

Environment: Think about the environment. It should be quiet, and distractions should be limited. There should be someone nearby who can help. Helping through Teams is less helpful.

Repeat and Reinforce: If the intern has just started the task the day before or the week before, go over the main points of the task. Make sure they remember what to do.



Easy Read

Easy Read is a way of making written information easier to understand.

Easy Read documents usually have short sentences with simple, clear images to help explain the content.

Easy Read can also be useful for people who speak English as a second language; people who find it hard to read and write; people who have memory problems; or people who are in a hurry or are stressed.

We use Easy Read because we think people have a right to access information in a way that they can understand it. This means they can make decisions and have access to information about education, health, leisure activities and so on.



Here are some basic guidelines to think about if you are making a document Easy Read:

Think about your reader	<p>Write for the correct age group of your audience. Do not patronise people by using childish language.</p> <p>Think about the person you are giving the document to. What can they understand? Maybe they don't need pictures, maybe they understand some difficult words.</p> <p>Do not patronise the person, do not over explain and do not censor the information.</p>
Content	When you are making an Easy Read document think about what you want to say. What is the main idea? Think about the length of the text. Too much text can be intimidating, but you can break it up.
Everyday language	Avoid jargon or difficult words. Jargon means words that are used in specific circumstances or situations. Use words that people know.
	If you have to use jargon or difficult words, explain what they mean. If you want, you can make a glossary of words at the back of your document. Avoid metaphors, idioms, and other vague words. These can be easily misunderstood. Instead, use everyday examples to explain a point.
Acronyms	Be careful with acronyms. Spell out acronyms every time they are used unless they are very familiar – for example, HSE, RTE.
Consistency	Be consistent in your choice of words. Use the same word or phrase throughout the document. For example, if you use 'HR department', do not change to 'Talent Management department' later.
Pronouns	Check your use of pronouns. A pronoun is a word that replaces a noun. For example, 'he', 'she', 'it', 'that', 'those', 'which', 'hers'. Is it obvious who 'he' or 'she' is?



Numbers	<p>Put numbers in figures, not words.</p> <p>For example, '1', not 'one'.</p> <p>Avoid percentages and big numbers. Where possible, use words like 'most', 'few' and 'a lot'. You can also use 'half', 'quarter', 'three quarters'.</p>
Format Suggestions	<p>Use subject verb object sentence structure as much as possible. For example, Emer and Marie will do a workshop.</p> <p>Include images that match your text.</p> <p>Use do not instead of don't. Do not use contractions.</p> <p>Address the reader. For example: You have to bring money to the work outing.</p> <p>Use full stops and commas. Do not use other punctuation.</p> <p>Keep your sentences short.</p>

TCPID Supports

Mentor Workshop	<p>Mentors will have an opportunity to learn more about intellectual disabilities and will be provided with useful information about communication and planning for internships.</p> <p>Mentors will also have an opportunity to network with other mentors.</p> <p>The TCPID and the mentors will work together to plan a series of drop-in calls to discuss mentoring and internships.</p>
Occupational Therapist Support	<p>The Occupational Therapist (OT) will schedule calls or visits with the mentors and the interns. These will be arranged with the mentor and the intern.</p> <p>The OT, the Mentor and the Intern will work as a team to make sure that learning is taking place.</p>
Half-way Review Meeting	<p>This is a meeting with the OT and the Pathways Coordinator that will occur at the mid-point of the internship.</p> <p>At this stage, we can start to explore whether the internship will finish as scheduled after the 6 months is up or whether there might be the possibility of any further extension to the contract.</p>
Plus	<p>Meetings with the OT and Pathways Coordinator before the internship.</p> <p>Meeting the Intern with the OT and the Pathways Coordinator before the internship.</p> <p>Additional Training: This can be offered as required and tailored to the needs of the mentor and their team.</p> <p>Support from the Occupational Therapist and Pathways Coordinator throughout the internship as needed.</p> <p>Drop in calls to talk about common topics like goal setting, motivation, feedback, communication etc.</p>

Useful Links

TCPID Website: <https://www.tcd.ie/tcpid/>

TCPID Online Mentor Training:

<https://www.tcd.ie/tcpid/business-partners/online-mentor-training.php>

Easy Read Resources:

<https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read/>

Let's get started...

Welcome to the start of your adventure!

It will be challenging, interesting and we will learn a lot from each other along the way!

We are here to support you at every stage.

030

Notes





Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

Contact Us

Marie Devitt

Business Partnerships Manager 087 666 4548
devittma@tcd.ie

Emer Murphy

Senior Occupational Therapist 086 084 0930
murphe78@tcd.ie

The TCPID programme is funded under the Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) Strand 4 (or PATH 4)



TCPID

TRINITY
CENTRE FOR
PEOPLE WITH
INTELLECTUAL
DISABILITIES

Ionad na
Tríonóide do
Daoine le
Míchumair
Intleachtacha

Learning without Limits
For an inclusive society

School of Education, Trinity College Dublin