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An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection



DCU Ability 'Works for Me' Campus Course

Information booklet for families and support
people



1. The DCU Ability 'Works for Me' course

The DCU Ability 'Works for Me' campus course runs on DCU Glasnevin campus part-time over 16 weeks, on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 10am to 1pm.

The course aims to build on learners' understanding of work, and to support them to explore ideas for their own working future.

The 'Works for Me' course begins with a 6-week training periods. Learners then participate 6-week work placement with a DCU campus employer. In the final 4 weeks of the course, learners reflect on their learning from this experience. They prepare personalised documents to support them in taking their next steps in work when the course has ended.

Training Weeks 1 to 6	10am-1pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays
Placement Weeks 7 to 12	2 to 3 mornings or afternoons Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays
Training Weeks 13 to 16	10am-1pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays

Learners will be offered the opportunity to undertake a QQI Level 3 accredited qualification during 2022 (QQI 3N0587 Work Experience).

2. Course requirements

Learner course requirements

In order to attend the course, learners will have:

- An interest in work and some prior work experience
- Availability on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays for the duration of the course
- Support to travel to DCU Glasnevin campus, or capacity to travel to campus independently
- Time to complete occasional extra coursework at their service or at home if required

Role and commitment of the support person

Service staff may be asked to attend the campus course to support their learner or group of learners during the course. This may involve supporting aspects of the work experience placement as appropriate.

There will be occasional coursework that learners can complete in their own community.

3. Course aims and objectives

	Course Objective	Course Objective (broken down)
1.	Build on knowledge and understanding of the concept of work and how it relates to daily life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To learn about what work is• To learn about why I want to work
2.	Make choices about preferences in relation to work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To think about things I would like in work
3.	To build on my understanding of my abilities and strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To think about things I am good at
4.	Identify and practice workplace-related skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To practice things I am good at for work.
5.	Prepare for, and undertake a work experience placement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To get ready for work experience• To do work experience
6.	Reflect on learning and insights gained during work experience placement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To think about things I liked and didn't like at work experience
7.	To develop the tools for future work and progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To think about what kind of work I want to try next• Make my All About Me at Work and My Work Plan

4. Course delivery

Weeks 1-6 (classroom based)

Learners attend a six-week programme in class (9 hours per week) on DCU campus. This part of the course aims to develop learners' understanding about work, and of their personal skills and interests relating to work.

Learners also use this period to become familiar with the Ability Team and DCU campus, and to make preparations appropriate to their assigned work experience placement on campus.

Weeks 7-12 (work experience placement on DCU campus)

Learners undertake a supported work experience placement over a 6-week period. Work experience placements are offered by a variety of employers based across 3 DCU campuses (DCU Glasnevin, All Hallows and St. Patricks). Placement hours vary based on the employers and individual abilities and support needs of learners.

Learners complete supported work experience placements. This means that placements are not shadowed, but that the DCU Ability team is available at all times during placement hours if required. Learners are supported by the DCU Ability team in a variety of ways during this period.

Week 13-16 (classroom based)

When learners have completed their work experience placement, they return to the classroom for the final part of the course. This part of the course focuses on building on learning gained from work experience placement and the course so far, and preparing for the next steps after DCU Ability. There is a mix of whole class activities, and 1:1 work including meetings with the team.

5. Course intake process

The intake process is completed before learners start the course. The intake process aims to establish the learner's eligibility to attend DCU Ability under the programme requirements, and to gather information about the learner so that appropriate supports can be put in place to ensure they can access the course and work experience placements.

Please see a step-by-step description of the course intake process below:

1. Application form:

- a. Candidates who are interested in coming to DCU Ability fill in an easy read application form and return this to DCU Ability. This is reviewed by the team. If the candidate meets the minimum eligibility requirements for DCU Ability, a site visit is scheduled to the learner's day service.
- b. Communication profiles and support person reports are also sent out to the candidate and their natural supports.

("Natural supports" are people in the learner's life who can support them towards work, e.g. a key worker or family member.)

2. Site visit:

- a. The occupational therapist visits the candidate in their day service or training centre to observe them within a familiar environment, and gather information from the candidate and their natural supports about the candidate's abilities and support needs.
- b. Assessment of Work Performance is completed based on observations of candidate's functional skills.

3.DCU Visit:

Candidates are invited to visit DCU for an informal meeting in the DCU School of Nursing, where DCU Ability classes take place. This offers candidates an opportunity to explore DCU, meet with the team, and to discuss their work interests with the team.

This visit is also an opportunity to form an idea of candidate's commitment to work and in particular the commitment and interest of their wider support. Additional registration forms for DCU Ability are completed at an induction session with candidates and their natural supports.

6. Next Steps: Transition from DCU Ability

Learners take part in a transition meeting at the end of the course, to discuss their next steps relating to work. The learner has a range of resources that they have developed and will take away at the end of the course, including:

1. Personal 'All About Me at Work' document

'*All About Me at Work*' is a document similar to a vocational profile that details learner's contact information, and their top skills, interests and ideas about work. '*All About Me at Work*' is written in an accessible style using photos. It can serve as a prompt or reference document that learners can use to share important information about themselves in work, e.g. when meeting an employer. A hard copy and editable electronic version will be provided.

2. Personal 'My DCU Ability Story' booklet

'My DCU Story' is a photo and comment record of each learner's work over the course.

3. 'Next Steps' Toolkit (Learner resource pack and Support person guide)

The 'Next Steps' toolkit provides a continuation from the course. The toolkit focusses on finding opportunities which can increase the learner's experience of work, enhance skills for work and move closer to paid employment if this is the learner's goal. It consists of a Support Person Guide and Learner Resource Pack. Further interventions can be provided in the future where appropriate by the DCU Ability team.

4. Accessible CV document

5. DCU work experience reference and course letter of support

6. DCU Ability Certificate of completion

7. A small DCU memento

8. How to apply and further information

It is hoped that a new 'Works for Me' course will run in early 2022. Course dates for will be announced on the DCU Ability website and Twitter account as soon as they are confirmed.

Interested learners should complete the 'I want to do the course' application form. This form is available by email or on the DCU Ability website:

<https://www.dcu.ie/ability/how-apply>

Please note, the form is a 'fillable PDF', which means you can download it and fill it out using Adobe Acrobat reader, or you can print it and scan/ send a photo of the completed form. Completed forms should be sent to the course tutor:

mary.petrie@dcu.ie

The DCU Ability team is available to respond to queries, and to offer further information and support about the course:

Mary Petrie, specialist tutor: mary.petrie@dcu.ie

Schira Reddy, careers advisor: schira.reddy@dcu.ie