



JOB DESCRIPTION

Research Assistant Student Support and Development Fixed Term Contract up to Ten Months

Dublin City University

Dublin City University (www.DCU.ie) is a young, ambitious and vibrant University, with a mission 'to transform lives and societies through education, research, innovation and engagement'. Known as Ireland's 'University of Enterprise and Transformation', it is committed to the development of talent, and the discovery and translation of knowledge that advances society and the economy. DCU is the Sunday Times Irish University of the Year 2021.

The University is based on three academic campuses in the Glasnevin-Drumcondra region of north Dublin. It currently has more than 18,000 students enrolled across five faculties – Science and Health, DCU Business School, Computing and Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences and DCU Institute of Education. DCU is committed to excellence across all its activities. This is demonstrated by its world-class research initiatives, its cutting-edge approach to teaching and learning, its focus on creating a transformative student experience, and its positive social and economic impact. This exceptional commitment on the part of its staff and students has led to DCU's ranking among the top 2% of universities globally. It also consistently features in the world's Top 100 Young Universities (currently in QS Top 70 Under 50, Times Higher Top 150 Under 100).

DCU is placed 84th in the world, in the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings – measuring higher education institutions' contributions towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Over the past decade, DCU has also been the leading Irish university in the area of technology transfer, as reflected by licensing of intellectual property.

Overview of the department

Student Support & Development (SS&D) provides professional, academic and personal support and development opportunities to students in DCU and is a busy and diverse Unit which includes the Student Advice Centre, Counselling & Personal Development, Student Learning, the INTRA work placement office, the Student Health Centre, the Disability & Learning Support Office, the Access Office and the Inter Faith Centre. Further information on SS&D can be found at:

<http://www.dcu.ie/students/index.shtml>.

Role Profile

The Institute of Education at Dublin City University (DCU) is the largest body of expertise on education while Mary Immaculate College, Limerick (MIC) is one of the oldest and most experienced

providers of teacher education courses in Ireland. Funded by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), the research is a collaboration between the DCU Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS) and MIC Access Office. Collectively, DCU and MIC remain steadfast in our commitment to widening access to higher education and to fostering a learning environment where all students have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. The number of students with disabilities, significant on-going illnesses and or specific learning difficulties, progressing to teacher education programmes has increased, due to key programmes such as the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) and policy initiatives that prioritize students with specific health conditions or statuses of disability – physical/sensory for example. Most notably, in 2019, the first cohort of students who are deaf commenced their studies on DCU's - DC005: Bachelor of Education; Irish Sign Language Pathway. It is within this context that it is timely to assess the experiences of students with disabilities, of the school placement process, and the experience of key stakeholders within that process, and to conduct a comparative analysis of experiences in two higher education settings.

SS&D is currently seeking a Research Assistant and the role will be based in the Disability Office for the duration of the project which is focused on exploring the experiences of students with disabilities on school placement, with a view to developing evidence-based good practice guidelines and an online module for placement coordinators and host schools'.

This Research Project Aims to:

1. Enable DCU and MIC to further enhance the supports they provide to students with disabilities on school placement
2. Give students, disability officers, academics (lecturers, supervisors, coordinators of school placement) and key stakeholders (participating host schools, principals, class teachers) an opportunity to identify 'what works well' in the school placement process
3. Indicate areas where supports could be developed further
4. Develop a School Placement module (non-accredited) and publish guidelines of good practice in assisting students with disabilities on teaching placements.

Duties and Responsibilities

Reporting to the project Principal Investigator or nominee, the duties and responsibilities will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Design and develop a mixed methodological research study assessing stakeholder experiences of the school placement process
- Develop quantitative and qualitative data collection tools (including semi-structured interview guides, and quantitative survey)
- Liaise with both external and internal stakeholders, including academics, undergraduate and postgraduate students, external supervisors and host placement schools
- Preparation of project outputs, interim and final reports as required by the project schedule
- Be proficient in the use of statistical data analysis and qualitative data analysis tools (e.g Qualtrics, SPSS, N-VIVO or equivalents)
- Present the findings of the research at project meetings and conferences as required

- Engage in dissemination of results at project events, national and international conferences and support the publication of research
- Carry out administrative work associated with the programme of research as necessary

Variation of these duties and any other relevant duties as assigned by the Principal Investigator and/or his/ her immediate supervisor.

Qualifications and Experience

Essential:

- A primary degree in education, social science or a related area
- Excellent written and verbal communication and interpersonal skills
- Strong organisational and administrative skills.

Desirable:

- Postgraduate qualification in social research, education evaluation, or related discipline
- Fieldwork experience with and in schools.
- Excellent qualitative and quantitative data analysis skills and proficiency in statistical analysis (using Qualtrics, SPSS, or equivalent packages).
- Ability to work as part of a team and on an individual basis

Mandatory Training The post holder will be required to undertake the following mandatory compliance training: Data Protection (GDPR) and other training may need to be undertaken when required.

This post is subject to Garda Vetting.