



Ollscoil Chathair
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University

DCU Ability

'Works for Me' Campus Course
Information 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. Our next course will run between March 22nd and July 7th 2022.

The course aims to build on learners' understanding of work, and to support them to explore ideas for their own working future. Learners will be offered the opportunity to undertake a QQI Level 3 accredited qualification during 2022 (QQI 3N0587 Work Experience).

The 'Works for Me' course begins with a 6-week training period. 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 March 22 nd to April 27 th
Placement Weeks 7 to 12	2 to 3 mornings Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays May 3 rd to June 9 th
Training Weeks 13 to 16	10am-1pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays June 14 th to July 7 th

Please note that required attendance for some weeks of the course may vary in line with service closures and public holidays, for example during Easter week.

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.
- Commitment to attend the course for all sessions
- 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 ● To 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 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

(Closing date Monday February 14th at 12pm)

- 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. The Ability team may request further information by email and/or phone call with the candidate's support person additional to the application.
- b. A site visit will be scheduled for learners prior to confirmation of a place on the course. Communication profiles and support person reports are also sent out to the candidate and their natural supports in advance of the site visit.

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

Please note that due to very limited places on our course, it may not be possible to proceed to the next stage of the course intake with all eligible candidates.

It is intended that another 'Works for Me' course will run from September to December 2022, and eligible candidates who do not progress with this application will be invited to join the course waiting list.

2. Site visit

(Week of February 21st)

- 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. Observations of candidate's functional skills will be completed.

3. Zoom meeting with the DCU Ability team

(Week of February 28th)

Candidates are invited to meet with the DCU Ability team to hear more about the course, and to ask questions before final confirmation of their place. This offers candidates an opportunity to meet with the team, and to discuss their work interests.

Candidates will be given time to accept or decline their place on the course after the call.

4. Course orientation

(March 10th)

DCU Ability will host an informal Coffee Morning on Campus to welcome our new learners on March the 10th at 10 am. The first week of the course (March 22nd- 24th) will also support our new learners in becoming familiar with DCU campus and our learning spaces. Learners will be introduced to one another, to the DCU Ability team, and to the DCU community. Class schedules and resources will be shared.

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 focuses 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

DCU Ability will run a course information session for learners on **Tuesday February 8th from 11.30am to 12pm**. If you are interested in attending with your learner, please email the team at ability@dcu.ie

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 Ability email address:

ability@dcu.ie

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

Iara Faria Synnott, senior occupational therapist: iara.synnott@dcu.ie

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

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

DCU Ability
dcu.ie/ability
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