The Role of an Equitable Learning Services Liaison in Inclusive Practice

Ms Irene Victor[1]
[1]RMIT Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

Biography

Irene Victor is an educator and Equitable Learning (ELS) liaison in the School of Languages and English at RMIT Vietnam. She teaches English and is also responsible for identifying students with learning difficulties, advising and running awareness workshops for teachers, supporting teachers with ELS registered students and working closely with managers to improve the referral system. She has experience in the healthcare field in Singapore and Australia and makes use of the acquired skills to support students at RMIT. She holds a Bachelor of Applied Sciences in Medical Radiations (RMIT, Melbourne), the Cambridge Certificate for English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) and the British Council Certificate in Applying approaches to special educational needs.

Overview

Purpose - The purpose of this presentation is to share experiences as an Equitable Learning Services (ELS) Academic Liaison in an Australian university at a campus located in Vietnam, to highlight the importance of this role in educational departments and how it was developed. This role is more than just being a point of communication between departments and the ELS. It requires a caring and empathetic person with a background in education to understand the needs of students, as well as teachers and provide strategies and support where needed. Such a liaison can support the University wide framework of Diversity and Inclusion.

Approach - The implementation of this role contained a multi pronged approach and these will be described further during the presentation. These included development of accessibility standards while a new curriculum was being established, developing relationships through sustained awareness raising and providing training, mentoring and advice around diversity and inclusion.

Findings - The implementation and sustainability of this role has significantly improved communication and interpersonal relationships between the School of Languages & English and Wellbeing, which has directly and positively impacted on the student experience - a key strategic focus of the University.
Teachers report feeling empowered and more confident in the classrooms; they also feel better able to carry out their duty of care towards students.

Conclusion - The approach outlined in this case study is highly transferable, and provides a practical direction for achieving accessibility, improving relationships, and promoting diversity and inclusion.

Recent Developments in Accessible Information for all

Mr Brian Conway[1], Ms Sonali Marathe[1]
[1]*Round Table On Information Access For People with Print Disabilities, Baulkham Hills, Australia*

Biography

Brian has been an educator and administrator in vision impairment for over 30 years. From 1981 – 1992 Brian taught students with multiple disabilities and was Deputy Head at RIDBC Alice Betteridge School. Since then he has been the Co-ordinator of RIDBC School Support Service (Vision Impairment). He has, however, also continued to maintain a teaching role within this program. Over the years, Brian has completed a general teaching qualification, a Graduate Diploma in teaching students with vision impairment and a Master's Degree in the education of students with sensory disability.

He was President of Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities for 6 years and remains on the Executive. He is a strong advocate for the rights of people with print disabilities to have access to all information at the same time as the rest of the community and at no additional cost.

Overview

Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities (RT) is a not-for-profit umbrella organisation that has as its membership a broad range of education, government, business, alternative format producers, and community and disability organisations throughout Australia and New Zealand. One of the most important sub-committees of RT is the Australian Braille Authority (ABA). Much of RT's work involves the development of guidelines to assist organisations and individuals to produce materials that are fully inclusive and accessible to all.

The purpose of this short presentation will be to inform those attending Pathways14 with the body of work that has already been produced by Round Table, to speak of the projects that are currently being undertaken, and to inform the audience of how it can freely access the guidelines and standards that have already been produced. These guidelines and standards of both RT and ABA are of significant value to all those who are involved in the education and quality of life of people who have print disabilities.

The presentation will also address international developments such as the Marrakesh Treaty, and local developments such as the recent amendments to Australia's copyright legislation that will have an impact on the availability of accessible and usable information for people who have print disabilities.

Inherent Requirements in Context

Mr Trevor Allan[1]
[1]*Atend, Primbee, Australia*

Biography

Trevor Allan was a leader in the disability sectors for over 20 years. His roles have included RDLO for the Hunter and North Coast regions, Manager of Disability Services at ANU, Head of Student Equity, Welfare and Disability Services at UWS until his retirement in 2013. He chaired the NSW DEAN Steering Committee and was the DEAN Chair for its first 3 years.

Trevor has written extensively, presented papers, including Keynotes, at many conferences, coordinated research projects and been a member of government advisory committees.

He was a key contributor to the UWS Inherent Requirements projects.

Trevor was awarded the Vice Chancellor's Award for Career Achievement at the 2006 ANU Staff Excellence Awards, a UWS Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Award in 2011 and a UWS Outstanding Contribution to Teaching & Learning Award in 2012. In 2014 he was became the first Life Member of the Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability.

Overview

Over recent years, Inherent Requirements had become a major topic for discussion and activity in the higher education sector. Some people are passionate supporters, working to develop and implement inherent requirements in the universities, while for others it has been the source of criticism and resistance.

In this presentation, Trevor Allan, one of the architects of the University of Western Sydney inherent requirements projects, will examine the historical, legal, academic and disability access issues around Inherent Requirements and place them in a global context in order to foster a genuine understanding of Inherent Requirements.

Without such an understanding and context, there is real danger of misunderstandings, misinterpretations and misapplication of inherent requirements to the detriment of all concerned and an increased risk of successful litigation.

By addressing the context, the myths and the realities Of Inherent Requirements, Trevor hopes to encourage an informed and balanced discussion of this significant issue in our sector.

Translating models of practice into service delivery to maximise student growth and outcomes

Geetha Krishnakumar[1], Hayley Torabi[1], Tom Arthur[1]
[1]*University Of Canberra, Bruce, Australia*

Biography

Geetha works in the Inclusion & Engagement team at the University of Canberra (UC). Geetha is passionate about rights based practice aimed at empowering people with a disability to achieve their potential. She has worked in the community sector and disability services in NSW, ACT and QLD and specialises in mentoring teams in the implementation of quality & practice initiatives.

Overview

As more students with disabilities and health conditions exercise their right to access post-secondary education, disability support teams are grappling with how to effectively implement reasonable adjustments at scale whilst encouraging students to retain control and ownership over their student journey. This is especially pertinent as we strive to align our service delivery with the goals of the NDIS. In this presentation, we reflect on the values and philosophy that drive our services and review models of practice that will enable better student choice, control and capacity building. We will look at a bottom up approach to building systems to meaningfully translate your values, philosophy and chosen model of practice into services for students with a disability. We outline how we have used this approach to embed person centered practice into the systems the Inclusion & Engagement team use at University of Canberra and how this has impacted the way we work. Case studies will be used to demonstrate the impact this approach has had on student outcomes. We will also review the constraints and realities that can make it difficult to adopt such an approach. This session will provide you the opportunity to reflect on the values and philosophy that underpin your services and give you practical tips on how you can integrate these into service delivery.

Inherent Requirements in Context

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Promoting student agency for ALL learners using digital tools. An essential component for change in education

Mr Greg O'Connor[1]
[1]Texthelp, East Lismore, Australia

Biography

Greg has been actively involved in education for over 30 years. During this time he has worked as a classroom teacher, school executive, regional education manager and leader with a large public education department in Australia, and as a consultant and technology coach. He is currently a member of the Asia Pacific Texthelp Team, supporting technology innovation and implementation

Overview

Creating learning environments that accommodate, foster and challenge ALL learners, regardless of the barriers that currently exist for them around the literacy demands of school, is an essential requirement for schools, TAFEs and universities.

This session will introduce core understandings and practical strategies using digital tools to promote student agency, support active learners and enable their busy educators to personalise learning opportunities.

Academic Learning Plans, a best practice analysis

Mr Jack Crane[1]

[1]*The University Of Sydney, Bondi Beach, Australia*

Biography

Jack is an experienced accessibility and equity officer with a passion for social justice and currently a Disability Support Officer at The University of Sydney.

A background in broadcast journalism, Jack led 2ser into the Digital Radio change over to program 24 hours of radio, 7 days a week focusing solely on sex, sexuality and gender diverse content.

A small contract at UTS, writing and creating the staff intranet, soon saw Jack take on a role UNSW as the Disability Support Officer; Spearheading student mentoring programs, facilitating the operation of the unit and pushing creative programs to promote and advocate for students with disability.

Jack then began his work in face to face support for students with Disability at UTS transitioning over to The University of Sydney. He currently serves as a secretary on the Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability, focused on the development of practitioners skills and networking.

Overview

Students with disabilities who registered with a disability service in their higher education institution will all have some engagement with an Academic or Learning Plan.

How these are delivered, what they encompass, how they facilitate support, where they're stored and who is responsible for them will vary across the sector.

Over the second half of 2018 I will conduct research to collate information on how these plans differ at higher education institutions and compare this with student satisfaction surveys (where available) to disseminate what aspects garner the most positive outcomes.

In my discussion I will highlight some the beneficial modes of operation and look into services that may have garnered a negative response from students.

The aim of the talk will be to assist professionals facilitate reflection of their practice and how, if needed, they might be able to instigate change to improve their work and the wellbeing for their students.

Pick Me!

Dr Manisha Amin[1]
[1]Centre For Inclusive Design, Sydney, Australia, [2]Hudson, Sydney, Australia

Biography

Dr Manisha Amin, the CEO of the Centre for Inclusive Design is a thought leader in the power of thinking from the edge. With over 20 yrs. experience in strategic marketing, communication, transforming cultures and creativity, she brings together an impressive team of industry experts and global partners to focus on the areas ripe for disruption where we can make the greatest impact. Manisha previously worked in the technology sector and with various government departments in environmental advocacy. She is passionate about social justice and business growth, and believes that when we combine the two, we get gold. She has a PhD in Arts and Social Science, a Masters in Professional Writing, and a Bachelor of Business (Marketing), from the University of Technology, Sydney. Manisha is also on the Board of ADHD Australia and is a published novelist.

Overview

Technology, online assessment and AI, are increasingly used in recruitment. However, technology can help or hinder people with disability when it comes to finding mainstream work. This is especially the case when it comes to large selection processes like graduate recruitment.

The rising awareness of the benefits of an inclusive workplace make this an opportune time to make the process of recruiting more inclusive so Hudson and Centre for Inclusive Design have created a pilot to engage with new technology to create opportunities rather than barriers in this area.

The aim is to make graduate recruitment as accessible as possible. Hudson is the largest privately opened Talent solutions company in Australia, completing more than 30,000 face-to-face and psychometric tests each year. So, the aim of the collaboration is to work at the mass market level to embed inclusion in recruitment and graduate placement post recruitment.

Rather than looking for the perfect, the focus is first on finding solutions so current graduates can get work rather than being locked out until a perfect system is developed.

This presentation will include:

- Trends in recruitment and technology that can aid or hinder people experiencing disability and the hacks that will help level the playing field
- How recruiting for difference helps in recruiting for everyone
- Practical examples of what has worked and what hasn't
- What disability practitioners, NDCOs and others can do to support students with disability to identify and remove barriers to graduate recruitment

GradWISE: a collaboration between WISE Employment and Swinburne University to improve employment outcomes for students living with disability

Mr Anthony Gartner[1], Mr Matt Lambelle[2]
[1]*Swinburne University of Technology, Hawthorn, Australia,* [2]*WISE Employment, North Melbourne, Australia*

Biography

Anthony Gartner is a social worker with a passion for the education and success of students living with disability. For the last 8 years he has led a small team of AccessAbility Advisers to provide individualised services to students in both Vocational and higher education.
Matt Lambell is the CEO of WISE Employment, a national not-for-profit employment service provider in disability employment and jobactive. With over 700 staff and over 28.5% of their workforce identifying as living with disability, WISE placed over 1,945 people living with disability into employment in 2017/18FY.

Overview

Swinburne University have been collaborating with WISE Employment with the aim of increasing the number of students living with disability that are able to access internships whilst they are studying and thereafter gain meaningful and commensurate employment once graduated. We know that the DES model has traditionally struggled to adequately support graduates with disability in sustainable employment. Our collaboration, GradWISE, has developed and piloted a new model of 'in-reach' partnership to assist students to develop the necessary skills for employment whilst they are studying and create links into appropriately supported roles with organisations who are willing to engage and support students and graduates with disability.

Our presentation will discuss the process of collaboration, the challenges faced, solutions developed and the outcomes to date.

ConnectAbility – Connecting regional high school students with disability to future pathways in tertiary education and training

Ms Natalie Vonthien[1]
[1]*CQUniversity, Mackay, Australia*

Biography

In her current role, Natalie supports CQUni students who are living with disability, medical or mental health conditions, illness, injury to achieve their academic goals by providing a range of individualised services and support strategies. Starting her career in complaints management and organisational learning in a national disability provider in the UK, Natalie's eclectic career pathway has included leading good practice networks and coordinating projects in education, youth and the arts sectors. Natalie is passionate about inclusion, and making change happen to improve access to opportunities and participant experience. Natalie moved to Australia in 2010 and is settled in Mackay in North Queensland where she strives to make a difference in student experience through her work at CQUniversity.

Overview

CQUniversity is a dual sector education provider established in Rockhampton, Queensland with a footprint of campuses and study hubs throughout Australia. CQU recognises the specific barriers that young people with disability face in regional areas, particularly in accessing appropriate information about tertiary options and support services.

CQU's Inclusion and Accessibility Service and CQUni Connect outreach team has partnered with the Mackay Regional Transition Network (Heads of Special Education Services from secondary schools in the Mackay region) to develop and implement a pilot program for high school seniors with disability. ConnectAbility is a community-initiated transition experience program developed in response to identified gaps in information and resources.

ConnectAbility delivers pre and campus-based experiences that aim to:

- Connect high school students to their strengths, abilities and future possibilities
- Raise awareness about diverse training and education pathways
- Build links to relevant support services
- Deliver inclusive taster sessions
- Introduce prospective students and their families to current CQUni students and their support networks to hear more about lived experiences of post-school education and training

Nat Vonthien, Disability Adviser, will provide an overview of developing community partnerships with schools, project scoping with students linked to Special Education Units and collaborating with university staff to deliver CQUni's ConnectAbility pilot program. Nat will share insights into developing a program that aims to remove some of the barriers to successful transition to further education & training.

Transition from school to work/tertiary education for students with disability

Mr Robert Lawson[1]
[1]*Department Of Education NSW, Sydney, Australia*

Biography

I am an experienced and passionate educator who has worked in tertiary, secondary and primary education. I am currently in the role of Student Pathways Adviser in the State Office of the NSW Department of Education.

I manage state programs such as the annual School to Work Report, Transition Adviser Training and workplace learning programs and resources.

With the support of a Churchill Fellowship (2017) I have completed an international research tour that looked at best practice programs that support students with disability to gain employability skills and transition into employment or further vocational/tertiary education.

Countries visited included the USA, Ireland and the UK.

Overview

Dear Sir/Madam

With the support of a Churchill Fellowship I will be engaging on a research tour to look at best practice programs that support students with disability to gain employability skills and transition into employment or further vocational/tertiary education.

New knowledge and concepts will inform the development of programs/resources that can be delivered in Years 7-12 with the view to extending to a K-12 approach.

I will be visiting Ohio in USA, Ireland and the UK. I have meetings booked with the relevant Departments of Education and specifically Ohio's Supported Employment and Transition Unit, the UK's 0 -25 Special Education Needs and Disability Unit and Ireland's Special Education Unit. While in Ireland I will also be meeting with the support team at Trinity College.

I will be engaging with students and staff in schools in Ireland and the UK with a focus on employment related curriculum and the partnerships that the schools have developed to support their program delivery within the school.

While in Ohio I will be visiting Project SEARCH which is located in Cincinnati Children's Hospital and other partner organisations and a major distribution centre in Columbus which partners with Ohio's DoE to provide supported employment.

From this research I will present Information on the three DoE directions, supports and partnerships and information on external programs.

Kind regards
Robert Lawson

Trauma-Informed Practices in Trade Teaching - optimising safety, accountability and active participation in VET

Mrs Meredith Jackson[1]
[1]Tafe Queensland - Skillstech, Acacia Ridge, Australia

Biography

Meredith Jackson manages Disability Services for TAFE Queensland (TQ) Skillstech. Meredith is the TQ ATEND representative and a committee member of Brisbane's NDCO Fresh Futures Expo. Meredith is passionate about developing the capability and confidence of individuals and groups in both facilitating and accessing inclusive learning and development. Meredith's VET journey began 24 years ago; taking her from its origins in Adelaide to Coober Pedy, Normanton, the Fraser Coast, the North Burnett and Brisbane. This journey has seen Meredith facilitate and support vocational learning to priority learners including those with a disability; disengaged youth; migrants and people in regional and rural sectors. Taking a lead in developing and rolling out the Qld Inclusive Learning Framework and RPL Skills First initiatives; Meredith has also facilitated corporate learning and development to many government, industry and community sectors including TAFE QLD (TQ), local councils, the disability sector, VELG and Southern Cross Care.

Overview

Mental health issues remain prevalent in our skilled trades industries such as Construction, Plumbing, Auto and Engineering. Mates in Construction identify that workers in these professions may find it difficult to discuss feelings and emotions at work and the nature of the work makes social support challenging. These issues are widespread in the vocational environment – where our tradespeople are commencing their careers.

Trauma can impact an individual's mental and physical state. Vocational trade students exposed to trauma can remain hidden whilst experiencing diminished coping and learning capabilities and feeling extremely vulnerable and insecure.

PWCs recent Environmental Scan (ES) "Inclusion of People with Disability in VET Cross Sector Project" (17 Jan 2018) identify "People with disability in Australia consistently encounter barriers to equal access and inclusion across a variety of different contexts. Such barriers hinder the effective participation and engagement of people with disability" –particularly in regards to vocational education and training (VET).

An ES outcome is the creation of a skill set for all VET practitioners (teaching/support services) aimed at addressing skill and knowledge gaps towards creating an inclusive learning environment through a collaborative strengths-based approach that integrates implementing inclusive practice and universal and accessible design.

Using the QLD Inclusive Learning Framework as the "foundation" and the draft "Deliver training to learners with disability skill set" as the "framework" this session explores our "unearthing" practices and builds awareness and capability in trauma-informed practices in a VET trade environment.

USEP: enhancing success for students with disabilities in graduate employment

Ms Gabrielle O'Brien[1], Mr David Swayn[2], Ms Natalie Searson[3], Ms Kate Carroll[4]
[1]*Griffith University, Nathan, Australia,* [2]*National Disability Coordination Office, Cairns, Australia,*
[3]*Mylestones Employment, Gold Coast, Australia,* [4]*University of Wollongong, Wollongong, Australia*

Biography

The contributors to this abstract have a wealth of experience across a wide range of areas to support people with disabilities in education and employment. David Swayne is National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) North Queensland working with the STEPS Group to enhance people with disabilities. Gabrielle O'Brien is the Manager, Student Diversity and Inclusion at Griffith University supporting students into higher education and in reaching their goals. Ms O'Brien has been leading implementation of USEP at Griffith. Natalie Searson from Mylestones Employment is the USEP Consultant at Griffith University. In this role she has working one-on-one with students to develop employment outcomes as they work towards their employment outcomes and graduate goals. Kate Carroll is an Equity Careers Counsellor from University of Wollongong (UOW)'s supporting students from equity backgrounds through their degree pathways. Ms Carroll has been responsible for implementing USEP at UOW.

Overview

Research shows the national enrolment share for students with disabilities (SWD) has been rising significantly (Koshy, 2016). Greater awareness around access and pathways, increased support for students (Koshy, 2015, p. 10), and greater flexibility in learning modes (Kent, 2015) being main contributors.

However, SWD can experience greater challenges in securing employment. The *2017 Graduate Destinations Report* showed graduates with a disability in full-time employment at 61.5% compared with those without a disability at 72.4%. Barriers include employer attitudes, lack of accessibility, and lack of specialised employment services (WHO, 2011). Anecdotally, low awareness of university careers services and Disability Employment Services (DES) may also be a factor.

The **University Specialist Employment Partnership (USEP)** was first trialled from mid-2016/2017 by Griffith University in a tripartite collaboration with National Disability Coordination Officers (NDCO) Program and Mylestones Employment. The program provides currently enrolled university students and recent graduates with specialised support from a USEP consultant to find employment after graduation.

The program's aims include: connecting students with employment opportunities in a timely manner; promoting strong linkages between stakeholders; and fostering cross-referral and training of university careers advisors and disabilities advisors with the needs of students with disabilities in mind.

James Cook University, University of Tasmania, and University of Wollongong (UOW) in conjunction with local Disability Employment Services (DES) have now taken up USEP to provide similar support.

Results to date from Griffith and UOW have shown success with students gaining employment or on a path to employment. The student's ability to develop their professional identity and career aspirations, become familiar with career support and DES providers, and negotiate disclosure being crucial. This presentation provides a blueprint for good practice in supporting graduates.

Transitioning students with Autism Spectrum Disorder into higher education

Mrs Susannah Gregory[1]
[1]*University Of Sydney, Camperdown, Australia*

Biography

Susannah Gregory completed a Bachelor in Applied Social Science, (Counselling), and has worked as a Family therapist and generalist counsellor with adolescents at risk of homelessness and their families before moving into Higher Education. While working within the sector, Susannah has supported students in a variety of roles including learning support, PASS program Co-Ordinator for both face to face and online delivery, before moving into a Disability Advisor role. This role supported students with a wide variety of supports needs, across several disciplines. In 2016, Susannah moved to the University of Sydney as a Disability Services Officer to continue working with students across a greater number of disciplines.

Overview

At the University of Sydney, students with Autism Spectrum Disorder were identified as a cohort of students, requiring additional support when transitioning to higher education.

Historically, group workshops were a successful way to assist many students, however, as the landscape changed, a review was undertaken to assess the best method to support this cohort of students. As social situations are commonly difficult for this cohort of students, an individualised transitional program was thought to be more effective in meeting their needs and optimising engagement.

The program was advertised to all stakeholders as well as the student body in addition to Disability Services registered students, to open up referral pathways, assist with inclusion, provide a point of contact and to facilitate appropriate and effective communication between all parties involved in their educational journey.

The presentation will include how we carried out:

- Assessment of individual needs

- Focussed support on common areas of difficulty

- Co-ordination with other relevant services as necessary

- Provide expert advice to relevant stakeholders and encourage a feedback loop.

- Anecdotal evidence collated from the participants.

- Research to support the program's success.

- Future vision of the program.

Towards Consistency

Ms Lee Papworth[1]
[1]*University Of Melbourne, Parkville, Australia*

Biography

Lee manages stakeholder interests within the University of Melbourne and beyond, putting students at the centre of questions relating to equity and disability to ensure the answers best meet their needs.

Overview

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make it fair for all

diversity shuns sameness

elegant framework?

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Reasonable adjustments as suggested by ADCET demonstrate variation in international standards. How can we explore ways of ensuring consistency amongst staff decision making whilst recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our students?

This presentation explores one institution's path towards consistency of equitable adjustments. The University of Melbourne is unique in Australia, the only university to have both process driven special consideration applications and long-term registration for adjustments managed within one team by the same people.

How does the University include students to innovate with systems and processes? How to manage person-centred services alongside document driven processes? In times of constant change, we need robust, trustworthy systems. Learn how we aim to remove the burden of administration from the student, respond to inherent requirements and achieve equitable student experiences.

NDIS - Making it Happen – Learning, Living and Leading

Mrs Lorraine Rodrigues[1]
[1]*InclusivED, Melbourne, Australia*

Biography

Lorraine Rodrigues is a passionate advocate in the field of Inclusive Education and parent of a young man with a disability, who currently receives an NDIS package and is studying at University pursuing an Arts degree. She is Principal Consultant for InclusivED, a consultancy aimed at supporting families on the NDIS. Lorraine is currently teaching at RMIT University in the School of Education.

Overview

The NDIS has been a much talked about, ground breaking world-first social reform this country has seen. For people with a disability and their families it is the comfort of knowing the future does not appear as bleak as it was before the Scheme was introduced. One family's journey of using the NDIS efficiently for their son continues to reap its rewards - social, emotional, academic, general health and wellbeing. This personal reflection is a review of the journey - facing those challenges early on when faced with an unworkable, incomprehensible and enigmatic NDIS Plan, to building new alliances, exploring new possibilities and pursuing individualised goals. This presentation highlights some of the current practices in place to allow for an individualised plan of learning with supports (equipment, funding, staffing, timetabling) to promote participation and access. Finally, the success and determination to 'Make it Happen'.

Building trust: Why students do not disclose disabilities at university

Dr Colin Clark[1], **Ms Rita Kusevskis-Hayes[1]**, Mr Matthew Wilkinson[1]
[1]UNSW Sydney, Kensington, Australia

Biography:

Ms. Rita Kusevskis-Hayes is the Senior Project Equity Manager for Student Life (DVCE) at UNSW and has previously been employed in a number of organisations, such as the NSW Department of Education, Vision Australia, University of Sydney, University of New South Wales and TAFE NSW. She manages various support services for students including the Disability Services Unit. Rita has been actively involved in Equity & education for more than 20 years in a range of contexts.

Rita has introduced digital innovations such as (NavigateMe) assisting students to boost their performance and access support across faculties as well as an online self-assessment tool for academic language proficiency. Rita has taken a systemic approach to interventions and data analysis in equity and student support—using quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the impact of interventions. She has provided information for HEPPP, the Academic Board and the UNSW Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Board

Overview

This study investigated the factors that influenced self-disclosure by university equity students, including students with disabilities, in Australia. The findings are based on a 12-month study of current university practices, student motivations for disclosure and reasons for concealing equity status. The purpose of this research was to estimate the rate of non-disclosure and propose ways for universities to ensure that disability services are made accessible to students who are eligible to receive them. Students with disabilities recognise the need for adjustments, but often wait until a crisis moment to seek help. We advocate removing barriers and improving communication with students and moving away from a 'medical model' of support (Shakespeare and Watson, 2002). Our guidelines urge universities to adopt inclusive practices to reduce reliance on self-disclosure, and to define equity groups in a practical and understandable way. We propose educating staff and students to improve their understanding of equity groups. Where disclosure is necessary, we propose that universities should offer options for levels of disclosure so students can retain control of their data. They should explain programs and services with clear guidelines for benefits and preserving confidentiality. Finally, they should explain the need for disclosure and allow noncommittal responses during enrolment, with later follow up.

What happens when attachment issues create unhealthy dependence between a client or student and the professional support staff?

Ms Berinda Karp[1], Ms Roz Casey
[1]Autism Step Australia, East Kurrajong, Australia

Biography

Berinda has over 35 years' experience working with people with disability in education and community services sector. Her qualifications include M.Ed,
Advanced Certificate of Integration studies, Bachelor of Education, Grad Dip Special Ed and the beginning of a PhD in Autism. She was a Teacher Consultant at TAFE for 27 years. Currently Berinda has a private practice Autism STEP Australia specialising with Autistic Youth and Adults requiring Behaviour Intervention and management.
Roz currently works in private practice as a therapist in Melbourne, who specialises in working with people with disabilities and other complex comorbidities such as mental health issues and trauma. Roz is one of 27 play therapists worldwide, contributing to a children's clinical counselling book to be published in the USA, 2019. She also has extensive teaching experience. Roz is also a casual academic for a Masters of Education (Special Education) degree and a social science undergraduate degree.

Overview

People with disability may have many different 'support' people in their lives creating a cacophony of interpersonal relationships. This presentation will reflect the dynamics of partnerships between various agencies such as NDIS, tertiary education, community links, support workers, therapist with the individual so that they can be inclusive and harmonious.
We will explore the dynamics of unhealthy attachment issues between the individual and their support personnel. In presenting the background issues and real case studies we will suggest strategies to create healthy relationships between all parties to promote self-determination, empowerment and independence with those on the Autism Spectrum.

Adults with Autism often demonstrate a struggle with self- determination, developing and maintaining personal agency, autonomy and resilience. Previously learned family relationship interactions (negative and positive) can be transferred to other settings, resulting in an adult with Autism projecting their issues on to support people, thus creating over reliance or co dependence on the support person. This can be viewed as 'attachment'. There is healthy attachment and unhealthy attachment when the balance is compromised.

The literature review conducted by the presenters has discovered very little research investigating attachment between carers/ support personnel, practitioners and their clients with disability.

The impact of the implementation of the NDIS in Australia has created an industry of casualised, often unskilled and low experienced support workers that may have difficulties with boundaries.

We will provide some proven strategies to help develop structure that are crucial to developing professional healthy relationships with clients/students on the Autism Spectrum.

Collaboration for improved career development decisions for students with mental health conditions

Mrs Julie Rogan[1]
[1]*Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia*

Biography

Julie Rogan has had a long and varied career in the disability area, beginning her career in the human services arena majoring in disability. In a break from this she took on a Post Grad Diploma in Career Development and moved into vocational rehabilitation then private practice and community. This sparked her interest in working with clients with a mental health condition making career decisions. She is now in a position she loves as a Disability Support Officer at Griffith University, where she feels she can combine some careers in the disability space. Her dream role would be a combination, supporting students with a disability through their studies, as well as offering career development strategies.

Overview

Without a holistic approach to the entire career choice, beginning with study are we setting students up to fail? Collaboration between disabilities and career services is essential for students with disabilities to ensure they fulfil degree inherent requirements

This partnership begins with the initial registration to university disabilities services and brief questioning on how/why their degree decision is made.

In many schools career counselling is minimal and the student may apply and enrol without considering all aspects of the career (e.g. People with depression doing shift work and presentation anxiety in a teaching role). Disabilities services have a role in collaborating with careers services to initiate these conversations. A process of case management which encompasses career development and/or personal counselling and other relevant support services is essential for a holistic wrap-around service.

The recent *Higher Education Standards Panel (HESP) Report - Improving Retention, Completion and Success in Higher Education (2018)* has major recommendations around better career advice and institutional-wide mental health strategies for better degree choices and improved retention. Many other studies report mental health constructs are directly correlated with dysfunctional career thoughts.

Griffith's Disabilities Service has a range of activities which support positive career choices. Including widening participation activities for high school students, disability-specific employment initiatives, and case management practice with academic areas to support work-integrated learning. Working with students with mental health conditions across the student life-cycle is key to addressing 'career under-preparedness'. This presentation will discuss these and other best practice for students with mental health conditions.