As I Am

The DCU Autism Summer Programme

Katie Quinn-AslAm Autism Friendly HEI Coordinator Fiona Earley - DCU Autism Friendly Coordinator

Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin City University

DCU

Aslam Autism Friendly HEI Award



"Every autistic child needs the opportunity to grow up confidently autistic"

Dr Mary Doherty - Irish Consultant Anaesthetist and Clinical Associate Professor

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Understanding the Autistic Student Experience

In 2016, Dublin City University (DCU) began an 18 - month research study which aimed at creating a learning environment that would allow autistic students and staff to take part fully in college life and gain employment afterwards.

- Additional supports are needed:
- Communication, Socialisation, Information processing, Life skills.
 - Navigation (of the physical campus)
 - Accessing quiet spaces and quiet times at events.
- Knowledge and awareness raising across the whole DCU community Securing Internships and Employment

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9 Principles of an AslAm Autism Friendly HEI

Encourage and enable students to transition into and participate in HEI programmes. Support and build capacity to equip autistic students to meet the academic challenges of everyday HEI life.

Support and build capacity to equip autistic students to meet social challenges of everyday HEI life.

Seek to establish an Autism friendly operational environment. Seek to combat the stigma around autism and recognise the diverse experience of autistic students.

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Develop understanding and relevant knowledge and skills within the HEI community.

IRELAND'S **AUTISM** CHARITY Establish channels so that autistic students can have a voice in various aspects of HEI life.

Increase employability of autistic graduates. Build capacity throughout the HEI to support autistic employees.

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AslAm Autism Friendly Award

Third level institutions which receive the AslAm Autism Friendly HEI award are understanding of the needs of autistic students and staff, open to making adaptations to being more accessible, have a positive celebratory culture towards autism, and invite a whole campus approach to being autism friendly.

AslAm were designated DCU the world's first autism-friendly university,



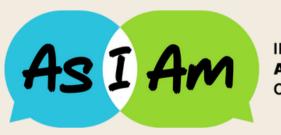






Understanding the Autistic Student Experience - Transition to Higher Education

- The first principle of the award aims to remove barriers for autistic students transitioning into higher education.
- Moving away from support systems in Secondary School
- Reduced structure and routines
- Embarking on new friendships
- Worries about accommodation and fees
- Balance between academic demands and self-care



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Understanding the Autistic Student Experience - Transition to Higher Education

- Relationship between students stress level during their transition and 6 months later during their studies (S. M. Pancer, B. Hunsberger, M. W. Pratt, and S. Alisat, 2000).
- Encouraging early connection with the third level students and institute.
- Experience of college so students are prepared for new teaching and learning experiences.
- Experience physical and social environments





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Thankyou



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