



Disability support within the University of Limerick Ireland

Case study overview

With the University of Limerick, a range of supports have been established to support students with disabilities. A dedicated Disability Support Services (DSS) office is operated which is part of the Student Academic Administration (SAA) function of the university. The university has established an institutional disability policy which identifies the university commitment to widening participation and the inclusion of students with disabilities into the academic, social and cultural life of the university. The DSS provide a range of information for students and staff. All documentation is publically available. DSS provide the interface between the students, university administration, academic departments and external bodies. The disclosure of a disability is a personal choice for the individual. Therefore, a student may or may not disclose a disability and students would be considered as having:

1. No disability.
2. A disability which is not disclosed.
3. A disability which is disclosed prior to joining the university.
4. A disability which is disclosed once the student has joined the university.

When a student wishes to utilise the university support services, they would firstly undertake an independent **needs assessment**. Based on the outcomes from the needs assessment, the appropriate supports can be provided. However, the university will provide a **reasonable**



accommodation (which means that goods and service providers must take reasonable steps to provide special treatment or facilities where it is very difficult or impossible for people with disabilities to access the goods and services being provided). Therefore, the university will make a **reasonable accommodation** for each student. In addition to the support measures, there is a complaints procedure established which allows a student to make a complaint (under the Disability Act 2005 legislation). Support for the student takes different forms. The key areas of support are:

1. On Campus Accessible Transport.
2. Accessible accommodation.
3. Assistive Technology.
4. Audio Support.
5. Exam Supports.
6. Funding.
7. Learning Support.

References

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