

Academic Profile

Technical & Computer Operator – Grade 5 1C – Specialist Mentor

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

Specialist mentors provide highly specialist, specifically tailored, one to one support which helps students address the barriers to learning created by a particular impairment, e.g. mental-health conditions, or autistic spectrum disorders. This could include a range of issues, for example, coping with anxiety and stress situations, how to deal with concentration difficulties, time management, prioritising workload and creating a suitable work-life balance.

Mentors should have a mature approach, a working knowledge of confidentiality issues, excellent interpersonal skills, and be able to work both independently and as part of a professional team. Mentors will be required to complete administrative and record keeping duties attached to the role.

Specialist Mentors should not act as advocates or counsellors. Their role is to help students recognise the barriers to learning created by their impairment and support them in developing strategies to address these barriers, particularly at times of transition, e.g. when starting at university or when planning to move on from it. For some students this support will need to be ongoing while for others it might be gradually phased out or only be required at certain points of their course.

Principal Duties

1. Orientation: Ensure students have the necessary the information required to successfully navigate the campus to arrive at scheduled sessions (fresher’s week sessions; lectures, seminars and workshops; appointments at finance office etc) in time and to provide the information and skills necessary for them to complete administrative tasks required by the Institution.
2. Transition: Use knowledge of the University’s structures and procedures to guide and support students transitioning through University from their arrival, breaks in study, through to transition out of University life in preparation for employment.
3. In collaboration with the student, record and maintain an up to date version of their timetable and of course related and other significant appointments; ensuring this is in an agreed, regularly updated accessible format for the student; also monitoring student continuing participation in the weekly schedule.
4. Providing regular opportunities for students to check email, Blackboard and any other relevant sources of information and

communication from academic or service departments and to record and encourage the student to act on these as necessary.
5. In collaboration with the student, plot assignment deadlines (identifying any converging deadlines) to support the student in managing their study action plan. You will use formats and communications agreed in negotiation with the student. You will plan for the regular (usually weekly) monitoring and review of progress for all goals and tasks.
6. Providing the information and support required for students to develop their own skills in planning, identification of priorities, goal setting, and time management; similarly for their recording, storage and organisation of key information for ease of retrieval as it is needed (e.g. use of assistive technology and hard copy files of lecture notes etc).
7. Anticipating any access needs that may arise for the individual as a result of unexpected developments (late changes to rooms or session changes), receiving and acting on communications relating to these to ensure their progression and minimise negative impacts on the student.
8. In collaboration with the student, to take a lead in guiding students with aspects of research and data collection where specific mentoring functions have been highlighted in individual learning plans, study needs assessment reports or their equivalent.
9. Assessing the needs of the student in order to refer the student to relevant specialist support staff, departmental and University administrative.
10. Guiding the student to implement, monitor and review their use and development of strategies recommended in their study needs assessments; strategies may relate to aspects of study tasks or organisation of physical resources.
11. Monitoring the student's engagement with their course of study and identifying any shortfall in relation to the student's current support provision recommendations.
12. Build a working relationship with the student to quickly identify any difficulties that may arise in order to signpost to suitable support to prevent disengagement from their course of study and to empower the student to make decisions relating to their progression.
13. Manage decision-making appropriately where it affects individual students, either through independent decisions or through adhering to University policies and procedures.
14. Liaising with departmental colleagues (i.e. Accessibility Advisers, Wellbeing Adviser and Study Skills Tutor) and where appropriate

to liaise with Academic Department staff and external support workers.

15. Providing responsible guidance, working with sensitivity to the particular requirement of the disability to advise in skills that will assist the student to meet their own aspirations for participation and fulfil their study and personal potential.

16. Encountering potentially difficult and challenging health and wellbeing issues and responding with sensitivity, diplomacy and de-escalation skills.