

NAGCAS ALTC Project: *Career Development Learning: maximising the contribution of Work Integrated Learning to the student experience*

## CASE STUDY: Bachelor of Applied Science (Disability Studies), RMIT

### Description

The Bachelor of Applied Science (Disability) degree equips graduates to work in a very diverse range of roles within the Disability field. In Victoria there is currently no professional accreditation for disability workers and graduates from this course are expected to be work ready. Graduates will be required to manage case loads and run programs with immediate outcomes.

The degree program has been in existence for 20 years and has always had Work Integrated Learning at its core. More recently an additional double degree has been introduced Bachelor of Education/Bachelor of Applied Science (Disability Studies)

The mission of the course is to “build individual capacity within a framework of community development”.

A feature of this degree program is the way that Career Development Learning and Work Integrated learning are integrated across the life of the course.

### Work Integrated Learning Structured experiences and assessment

- **First Year: Examines the individual with a disability**  
Prof. Practice 1A & 1B = 80 hours per subject per semester x 2 semesters
- **Second Year: Service Delivery system (how the field is organised and service delivered)**  
Professional Practices 2A and 2B: 26 hours lectures/26 hours tutorials\*  
Practice A & B = 100 hours placement per subject x 2 semesters\*

*\*These two subject run parallel to apply theory to practice.*

- **Third Year: Project Based**

Advanced Professional Practice (3<sup>rd</sup> year): Student lead lectures and seminars.

Placement within an organisation across the semester: equivalent of 1 day per week.

These Work Integrated Learning subjects are assessed through the use of reflective diaries with guided questions, weekly case conferences, supervisor evaluation, tutorial presentations.

### **Career Development Learning**

The program incorporates the four elements of career development learning (self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision making and transition Learning).

i) 1<sup>st</sup> year:

- Visits from a range of organisations in preparation for 2<sup>nd</sup> year practice
- Volunteer work
- Students often gain casual employment in the field in 1<sup>st</sup> year
- 1<sup>st</sup> semester focus on whether this is the right field & 2<sup>nd</sup> semester examines the types of roles.

ii) Diary reflections on experiences: why, what interests them, values and what has changed by the end of the year.

iii) Weekly Tutorial to reflect on placements and whether they like it (why/why not?)

### **Career Development Learning**

- Electives and assessment support career choices e.g. if they have an interest in autism they can follow this interest.
- Job search skills (assessed)
- Reflections on project and where they are going.
- By third year most students are in part-time work in the field and upon graduation move into more senior roles in the field.
- Past students use facebook to advertise jobs (networking)
- Biennial Careers Fair

### **Critical Success factors**

- Relationship with the venues/organisations - would not be able to equip graduates with the necessary skills otherwise.
- Graduates being work ready.