

Case Study

Title:

Supporting a disabled student from UCD to participate in an Erasmus exchange

Overview:

UCD and Partner University provide ongoing support to a student with severe physical disabilities

Case Study Background/Context:

A UCD student with severe physical disabilities is currently on an Erasmus exchange. Even before applying for his exchange, this student contacted the UCD Access Centre and UCD International to discuss his options regarding going on exchange. As he has a very good GPA, he was confident of getting a place in his preferred destination. This student is a wheel-chair user and also has hearing and sight impairments.

The European Programmes Officer began to liaise with our partner, contacting first of all their International Office and also the Department to which he would be attached. UCD was put in contact with the partner's Student Disability Services and after a number of emails, a Skype call was set up with this office, with the student, UCD International and the Access Centre also participating. This clarified a number of issues for the student and he was confident that he could go ahead with his exchange.

Once he was formally selected by UCD, he was nominated to the partner and UCD International also contacted their Department and Student Disability Services to confirm that he would be attending in the coming year. UCD International also used Erasmus funding to allow the student and his father visit the partner and meet the relevant staff there.

The partner university was extremely supportive at all times and assisted the student with all his arrangements. The student's parents were also involved as they needed to be sure that his needs would be met adequately.

The student also applied to the HEA for additional financial support and was granted funding. As he was granted less than he applied for, UCD International and Access Centre have agreed to make up the shortfall. The student is away for the full academic year, and is getting on well.

Summary:

Disabled student supported to go on exchange
Several offices involved in both home and host institutions
Good planning and co-ordination meant exchange could proceed

Measuring Success/Outcomes of Case:

Student has actually gone on his exchange
Additional funding was secured for him
Home and host institutions worked well together to ensure he would be supported before and during his exchange

Three tips from your institution for other HEIs:

Maintain good relations with your Access office
Inform students of supports available if they need them
Be aware of forward planning – you cannot wait for deadlines to arrive