

BLuE – Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Programme for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Background of our organization and the project

University of Education Salzburg is responsible for teacher training as

- ✓ Elementary teacher (master programme)
- ✓ Primary teacher (bachelor and master)
- ✓ Secondary teacher (bachelor and master)
- ✓ Inclusive education teacher (bachelor and master)

BLuE ...

... is the first inclusive post-secondary education programme for students with intellectual disabilities in Austria and it exists since 2017.

The essence of BLuE

Blue means **B**ildung (Education) **L**ebenskompetenz (Life-competence) **u**nd (and) **E**mpowerment and is a fully inclusive programme. BLuE is, like all other programmes at our university, a four years programme and every year two students start with the programme.

The innovative aspect of the project

BLuE is the only programme in Austria. There are only a few programmes in Europe, but almost 300 in the United States of America. BLuE is a win-win situation because students with disabilities get support from students without disabilities and students without disabilities learn for their future job as teachers.

What is the impact of BLuE?

Employment on labour market

- ✓ 2-3 academic courses
- ✓ Vocational internship (10h/week, 12 weeks/semester)
- ✓ We have developed an official job descriptions with the Austrian Chamber of Commerce: **Pedagogical Assistant**

Strengthening of Life Competences

- ✓ BLuE-course „Life competences“ (inclusive with the tutors)
- ✓ Social activities (personal interest)

Strengthening of Empowerment

- ✓ BLuE-course „Empowerment“ (inclusive with the tutors)

The success factors, details, examples, "life stories"

Tutor-system

Each BLuE-student has a team of tutors and one tutor per team acts as chief-tutor. All tutors develop a weekly plan and prepare and debrief courses. Tutors get credits for their work (ECTS). Until now all BLuE-students are supported by their families.

The Financing

- ✓ BLuE students do not have to pay any study fees by the rectorat (regular students don't pay study fees in Austria).
- ✓ Tutors and staff are working voluntarily.
- ✓ Until now our students live with their families in Salzburg (no additional costs for the university).
- ✓ BLuE students finance all their expenses (e.g. computer, material, public transportation).

Challenges

In Austria we need a legal basis that facilitates students with ID the same rights and possibilities like everybody else, resources for mobility and housing (on-campus/offcampus) and resources for social work (e.g. through cooperation with service providers).

The next steps for the project

2020/21 is the fourth year of the programme and the first student will graduate. We have to strengthen the focus on labour market and the cooperation with other service providers like the Austrian Labourmarket Service (AMS), the Social Ministry Service (SMS), Service providers (e.g. Lebenshilfe), ...

Internationally we are working on an ERASMUS+ funded project with Ireland, Iceland, Germany and Switzerland and we are collaborating with the Fulbright specialist Prof. David Westling in the USA.

Curriculum

Generally the course content is developed on an individual basis according to the needs of the students with ID.

The aim of the BLuE university programme is to prepare students for an independent and inclusive life and vocational training for an assisting profession.

The course enables participants to take part in university life and learning. This possibility corresponds to the teaching and study culture of an inclusive university.

First year

Part 1 - Entrance Phase I

- ✓ Content: Orientation in the higher education learning and social environment, discovering pedagogical fields of action.
- ✓ Objectives: The objectives of the individually chosen courses from the regular curriculum are adapted.

Part 2 - Life Skills, Empowerment and Practice

- ✓ Content: Work with tutors, internship at the University of Teacher Education.
- ✓ Objectives: Competence building for higher education learning and for practical work.

Part 3 - Entrance Phase II

- ✓ Contents: Orientation and formation of interests in relation to a professional profile, discovering pedagogical fields of action.
- ✓ Objectives: The objectives of the individually chosen courses from the regular curriculum are adapted.

Part 4 - Life Skills, Empowerment and Practice II

- ✓ Contents: Work with tutors, internship at the University of Teacher Education.
- ✓ Objectives: Competence building for university learning and practical work, social activities.

Self-study elements in the first year

- ✓ Preparation and follow-up of courses with and without tutors, preparation for exams, final papers, etc.
- ✓ Life skills / tutors
- ✓ Time management and planning meetings
- ✓ Internship reflection meetings, keeping an internship diary
- ✓ Development dialogues
- ✓ Binding social activities

Total teaching units: 360 hours

Total self-study elements: 340 hours

Second year

Part 1 - Pedagogy I

- ✓ Content: Basic education of pedagogical basic competences.
- ✓ Objectives: The objectives of the individually chosen courses from the regular curriculum are adapted.

Part 2 - Life Skills, Empowerment and Practice I

- ✓ Content: Work with tutors, internship.
- ✓ Objectives: Competence building for higher education learning and for practical work.

Part 3 - Pedagogy II

- ✓ Contents: Basic education of basic pedagogical competences, discovering pedagogical fields of action.
- ✓ Objectives: The objectives of the individually chosen courses from the regular curriculum are adapted.

Part 4 - Life Skills, Empowerment and Practice II

- ✓ Contents: Work with tutors, internship.
- ✓ Objectives: Capacity building for higher education learning and practical work, social activities.

Self-study elements in the second year

- ✓ Preparation and follow-up of courses with and without tutors, preparation for exams, final papers, etc.
- ✓ Life skills / tutors
- ✓ Time management and planning meetings
- ✓ Internship reflection meetings, keeping an internship diary
- ✓ Development dialogues
- ✓ Binding social activities

Total teaching units: 360 hours

Total self-study elements: 340 hours

Third year

Part 1 - Pedagogy I

- ✓ Content: Individual focus formation in relation to the chosen assistant profession.
- ✓ Objectives: The objectives of the individually chosen courses from the regular curriculum are adapted.

Part 2 - Life Skills, Empowerment and Practice I

- ✓ Content: Work with tutors, internship.
- ✓ Objectives: Competence building for higher education learning and for practical work.

Part 3 - Pedagogy II

- ✓ Contents: Individual focus in relation to the chosen assistant profession.
- ✓ Objectives: The objectives of the individually chosen courses from the regular curriculum are adapted.

Part 4 - Life Skills, Empowerment and Practice II

- ✓ Contents: Work with tutors, internship.
- ✓ Objectives: Capacity building for higher education learning and practical work, social activities.

Self-study elements in the third year

- ✓ Preparation and follow-up of courses with and without tutors, preparation for exams, final papers, etc.
- ✓ Life skills / tutors
- ✓ Time management and planning meetings
- ✓ Internship reflection meetings, keeping an internship diary
- ✓ Development dialogues
- ✓ Binding social activities

Total teaching units: 360 hours

Total self-study elements: 340 hours

Fourth year

Part 1 - Pedagogy I

- ✓ Content: Consolidation in the chosen focus from the course BLuE III, career transition, beginning of the examination of writing and designing a final thesis for the completion of the BLuE university programme.
- ✓ Objectives: The objectives of the individually chosen courses from the regular curriculum are adapted.

Part 2 - Life Skills, Empowerment and Practice I

- ✓ Content: Work with tutors, internship.
- ✓ Objectives: Competence building for higher education learning and for practical work.

Part 3 - Pedagogy II

- ✓ Contents: Consolidation in the chosen focus from the course BLuE III, career transition, beginning of the examination of writing and designing a final thesis for the completion of the BLuE university programme.
- ✓ Objectives: The objectives of the individually chosen courses from the regular curriculum are adapted.

Part 4 - Life Skills, Empowerment and Practice II

- ✓ Contents: Work with tutors, internship.
- ✓ Contents: Capacity building for higher education learning and practical work, social activities

Self-study elements in the fourth year

- ✓ Preparation and follow-up of courses with and without tutors, preparation for exams, final papers, etc.
- ✓ Presentation of the final thesis for the completion of the BLuE university programme (BLuE certificate/professional training 'Pedagogical Assistant' or another assistant profession).
- ✓ Life skills / tutors
- ✓ Time management and planning meetings
- ✓ Internship reflection meetings, keeping an internship diary
- ✓ Development dialogues
- ✓ Binding social activities

Total teaching units: 360 hours

Total self-study elements: 340 hours

For more information please contact:

Ms Sabine Harter-Reiter: sabine.harter-reiter@phsalzburg.at