

Summer Internship Program: Providing a holistic learning opportunity for equity students

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Abstract

The Summer Internship Program is a support initiative for equity students at the University of New South Wales, Sydney. The program provides equity students the opportunity to be involved in a unique holistic learning experience. Students were paid to complete a two-week intensive internship alongside staff in Student Life at UNSW. These students developed job-ready skills, resources and conducted research. The program was developed as a result of a review into new and opportune ways of directly supporting equity students. Those who completed the internship were found to have embraced a range of opportunities elsewhere as a direct result of the skills they developed.

Introduction

First-year student support can be pivotal in influencing academic performance (Jacobi, 1991). Additionally, the term *Early Intervention* is internationally recognised (Fenske, 1997) and has been a popular phrase for describing support initiatives in education for low SES students since the early 1980s. Support initiatives should facilitate graduate attributes. McKenzie & Schweitzer (2001) recommend that support interventions should be aimed at improving academic achievement over social activities.

Description

The Summer Internship program was specifically targeted at students who fall under the equity umbrella. The Early Intervention team at UNSW engaged in this project by defining Equity and an analysis of 'domestic low SES'. This definition included domestic students in enabling and pathway programs, students with disabilities and disadvantaged schools. Five initiatives formed the internship program: 1. Developing Resources for Self- Advocacy and Disability Disclosure, 2. Content Marketing for Co- Circular Experiences, 3. Re-Engage Community Partnership Project, 4. Student Welcome Initiative and 5. Student Marketing and Communication Research.

References

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