

ThirsTea Café (Work Immersion Programme)

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Abstract

The Work Immersion Programme (WIP) is a multi-disciplinary approach that was designed specifically to meet the needs of the graduating Secondary 4 students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities in APSN Katong School. WIP was implemented in the context of the 'ThirsTEA Café'; a café that was set up collaboratively by the Secondary 4 form teachers and students. It opened once a week, involving all graduating students and integrated skills covering various subjects – English, Mathematics, Vocational Education and Self-Management. WIP was conducted in Semester 2, over a span of five months. The structure of WIP is divided into four phases 1) Self Awareness, 2) Preparation, 3) Implementation and 4) Review and Closure.

It aims to develop students work competencies, work ethics and values which would prepare them for transition to post-Secondary vocational education and eventually the working world. Through the use of carefully-designed scenarios, WIP aims to provide invaluable opportunities for the students to apply their competencies in situations that simulate authentic work environments, such as through the running of an in-house café. These are further supplemented by workshops that help students to develop and enhance key soft skills, such as interview skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills, customer skills as well as work ethics.