



# Supported Education

## 3.7.1 Information for students

### What is Supported Education?

Supported Education is the provision of individualized, practical support and instruction to assist people with psychiatric disabilities to achieve their educational goals

### What are the principles of Supported Education?

Supported Education is based on the following principles:

- Improvement in educational outcome for persons with psychiatric disabilities
- Hope is an essential ingredient of the Supported Education process
- Self-determination: a focus on students making choices (setting their own educational goals) and accepting responsibility for their educational process
- Students are actively involved in all phases of their Supported Education process, determining the criteria for success and satisfaction, as well as evaluating their progress toward meeting their goals
- Partnership between participant and Supported Education professional
- Services match participant's preferences
- Equal/fair access for everybody
- Development of participant skills and of environmental support
- Bridging with mental health services
- Support as long as needed

### What are the essential components of Supported Education?

Supported Education is based on the choose-get-keep model of the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation of Boston University.

- *Choose*: to select an educational or training course compatible with the participant's values, skills, aptitudes, career interests, finances and learning objectives
- *Get*: to secure enrollment in a preferred course.
- *Keep*: to sustain enrollment and maintain an acceptable level of success and satisfaction until completion, through skills and support development.

**What can you do yourself to remain at college or university?**

Obtain an overview of all relevant resources catering to your needs, both those geared toward special needs and those designed to help all students in the educational setting. It is also advisable to evaluate to what degree you may want to disclose your situation and disability to key people at your institution. This may allow for individually designed support, both socially and with respect to taking exams and participation in mandatory seminars.

**Resources: Who and what will support you in your educational process?**

First and foremost, check to see if your educational institution or other collaborating institution provides a Supported Education program. In addition, higher educational institutions have a duty to help students with special needs aspire to their own educational goals.

Student counseling offices are to be found on most campuses and here you will find professionals with local knowledge about student services and you may also qualify for individual and sustained help. It is also advisable to speak with your teachers and/or tutors if you have thought through the possibility of disclosing your situation. Friends and family, mental health practitioners and community health personnel can function positively as a team to help you with your higher educational degree. Many urban environments have user-driven organizations with resources over a wide range of support, and many students find validation in an environment where others have similar challenges. (Fountain House is an example of such an organization). Financial support, housing and collaboration with trusted mental health practitioners are all central to obtaining the stability needed to achieve a degree. Many local communities provide services catering for those with a psychiatric disability, and there you may find both users and competent mental health professionals who can function as supports.

**For more information**

Information about Supported Education can be found at [www.supportededucation.eu](http://www.supportededucation.eu)