

INDIVIDUAL PLACEMENT AND SUPPORT (IPS) – CURRICULUM

Relationship between the IPS curriculum and the IPS competence framework

Competences outlined in this document, both general and specific, are detailed in the *Individual Placement and Support Competence Framework*, accessed at:

www.ucl.ac.uk/core/competenceframeworks and www.rcpsych.ac.uk/improving-care/nccmh/other-work/ips.

The curriculum is closely mapped to the competence framework, the latter providing a more detailed account of the knowledge and skills associated with the IPS model.

Outline structure of the curriculum

The curriculum is laid out in three sections, each containing a number of units. The first section sets out areas of knowledge relevant to IPS; the second identifies professional competences; the third identifies the specific competences needed to deliver IPS in practice.

Section 1: Underpinning areas of knowledge

UNIT 1.1	Practitioner's stance, values and style of interaction in IPS
UNIT 1.2	Knowledge of the recovery model
UNIT 1.3	Knowledge of the rationale for IPS
UNIT 1.4	Knowledge of IPS, its principles and their implementation in practice
UNIT 1.5	Knowledge of mental health presentations and their impact on functioning
UNIT 1.6	Knowledge of legislation relevant to employment

Section 2: Professional competences

UNIT 2.1	Operating within professional and ethical guidelines
UNIT 2.2	Working with issues of confidentiality and consent
UNIT 2.3	Assessing capacity
UNIT 2.4	Sharing information to maintain safety
UNIT 2.5	Working with difference
UNIT 2.6	Making use of supervision and support

Section 3: Putting IPS into practice

Communication skills	UNIT 3.1	Communication skills with clients and their families
	UNIT 3.2	Fostering and maintaining the working alliance
	UNIT 3.3	Communication skills with team
	UNIT 3.4	Completing a monthly progress note
	UNIT 3.5	Using psychological strategies to support IPS
Engagement and initial steps	UNIT 3.6	Engaging clients with the IPS process
	UNIT 3.7	Providing information on benefits system and the financial implications of employment
	UNIT 3.8	Discussing disclosure with client and employers
	UNIT 3.9	Constructing a vocational profile
	UNIT 3.10	Constructing an individualised employment plan
	UNIT 3.11	Providing support for job applications
Working with employers	UNIT 3.12	Gaining knowledge of local employment opportunities
	UNIT 3.13	Employer engagement
	UNIT 3.14	Profiling the job setting
Gaining, supporting and maintaining employment	UNIT 3.15	Conducting a job search
	UNIT 3.16	Providing individualised job support
	UNIT 3.17	Supported education

OVERARCHING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

AIMS

- a) To increase trainees' background knowledge relevant to the application of IPS
- b) To provide practical and detailed skills training for working with people who are seeking competitive employment in the context of IPS

OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course trainees will be able to:

- i. Identify and reflect on their own values and attitudes to people with mental health conditions and the implications this has for engagement in IPS
- ii. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the rationale for IPS, the principles that underpin IPS practice and the ways in which these principles are reflected in practice
- iii. Demonstrate knowledge of the application of professional competences and the ways in which these assure practice that is ethically sound and accords with national standards
- iv. Demonstrate effective communication skills with clients
- v. Demonstrate effective communication skills with the mental health team and other relevant agencies
- vi. Demonstrate a capacity to engage clients with the IPS process
- vii. Demonstrate a capacity to carry out all the processes associated with a personalised IPS intervention, from initial engagement through to support for employment
- viii. Demonstrate a capacity to work closely with employers in order to identify and support job placements
- ix. Manage challenges arising in the implementation of an IPS intervention
- x. Demonstrate self-direction in tackling and solving problems that arise in the course of an IPS intervention
- xi. Demonstrate an ability to adapt IPS interventions sensitively to the needs of each individual client, and assure equitable access for people from diverse cultures and with different values
- xii. Understand the importance of multi-agency and inter-professional working and collaboration and work effectively with other professionals

LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY

The specific learning and teaching strategy will be decided by the training provider. An overarching teaching strategy would usually link learning within teaching days with supervised practice, and include:

- i. Didactic, experiential and skills-based workshops providing students with a strong foundation in the clinical procedures of working with people with mental health problems who are seeking competitive employment.
- ii. Skills-based competences developed through experiential work and role play
- iii. Self-directed study to include general and specific reading for each module and reading for each teaching session plus reference to online resources.
- iv. Use of clinical vignettes, client involvement and problem-based learning

It is strongly recommended that appropriate supervision with health professionals with specific expertise in IPS is integrated with training.

Usual structure of training

Training is expected to be spread across a number of days (to facilitate learning between teaching sessions, and to help services to release staff to attend).

Assessment of competence/training evaluation

Specific details of formative and summative assessments of learning and clinical competence will be for programmes to identify, in part dependent on whether and how credits for the programme are assigned. However, it is assumed that supervision of practitioners will include direct observation of their practice, in turn affording competence-based feedback, with local arrangements in place to manage any areas of significant concern.

CURRICULUM FOR INDIVIDUAL PLACEMENT AND SUPPORT (IPS)

SECTION 1: UNDERPINNING AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE

UNIT 1.1 Practitioner's stance, values and style of interaction in IPS

Aims: To help practitioners reflect on their beliefs, values and attitudes in relation to IPS and the clients with whom they will be working.

Competences covered in this unit:

Ability to draw on knowledge that:

- the IPS model rests on the foundation of a collaborative relationship with clients, their families and carers
- IPS interventions focus on the strengths, resources and assets of clients and their families/carers
- practitioners should work with each client to agree a shared language that embodies the ways in which they understand their problems and concerns

Ability for practitioners to draw on knowledge of the importance of:

- operating in a spirit of hope and optimism, and an ability to foster these attitudes in clients, their carers and any professional teams with whom the practitioner is working
- working in a manner consistent with the belief that clients have a right to employment in competitive (as opposed to sheltered) employment
- focusing on the whole person, their social context, and their individual, cultural and spiritual and religious preferences.
- reflecting on their own beliefs, attributions and assumptions about the factors that contribute to clients accessing and maintaining employment
- reflecting on (and moderating) their emotional and behavioural responses to the client, and in particular their beliefs about the client's difficulties and the practitioner's ability to help

Ability to draw on knowledge of the importance of:

- maintaining a style of interaction that is consistently open, responsive and transparent
- addressing the risk that clients feel disempowered by working towards a relationship in which all parties can respect and learn from each other's expertise and perspective

UNIT 1.2 Knowledge of the recovery model

Aims: To ensure that practitioners have knowledge of the recovery model and its relationship to IPS.

Competences covered in this unit:

Ability to draw on knowledge that the recovery model underpins the work of IPS services

Ability to draw on knowledge of the key principles of the recovery model

Ability to draw on knowledge that engendering hope, gaining a sense of control and being afforded opportunity are key elements of the recovery model

Ability to draw on knowledge of the importance of helping clients to become active participants in their own care

UNIT 1.3 Knowledge of the rationale for IPS

Aims: To ensure that practitioners have knowledge of the evidence base and the rationale for IPS.

Competences covered in this unit:

Ability to draw on knowledge of the evidence base for the effectiveness of IPS

Ability to draw on knowledge of the rationale for IPS and its focus on helping clients gain and sustain employment:

- that employment is an important and socially usual role for adults
- that gaining (and/or regaining) employment is an important part of recovery
- that most people with serious mental illness want to work

Ability to draw on knowledge of the potential benefits of paid employment

Ability to draw on knowledge of the potential negative impacts of unemployment

Ability to understand and interpret the IPS Fidelity Scale

UNIT 1.4 Knowledge of IPS, its principles and their implementation in practice

Aims: To give practitioners an understanding of the principles underpinning IPS and the ways in which these influence its implementation.

Competences covered in this unit:

Ability to draw on knowledge of the basic principles that underpin and structure IPS:

- that IPS is open to every person with severe mental health problems who wants to work
- that the goal is for the person to obtain competitive employment (jobs that exist in the open labour market)
- that the search for a job starts soon after a person expresses interest in working
- that the client's preferences guide decisions and are honoured
- that the intervention includes counselling about benefits
- that employment specialists systematically develop relationships with employers
- that support is offered in the long term (and individualised)
- that employment services are integrated with mental health services

Ability to draw on knowledge of the IPS Fidelity Scale and its application in monitoring service implementation and measuring progress

UNIT 1.5 Knowledge of mental health presentations and their impact on functioning

Aims: To give practitioners an understanding of mental health presentations seen in IPS services and the ways in which these affect a client's functioning

Competences covered in this unit:

Ability to draw on knowledge of mental health presentations in people with whom employment specialists will be working

Ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which serious mental health problems present

Ability to draw on knowledge of the social, psychological, family and biological factors associated with the development and maintenance of mental health problems

Ability to draw on basic knowledge of the psychological and pharmacological interventions usually offered to people with mental health problems

Ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which mental health problems can affect functioning and individual development

Ability to draw on knowledge of factors that promote wellbeing and emotional resilience

Ability to draw on knowledge that, when contrasted to the general population, people with severe mental health problems have a higher risk of developing physical illnesses

UNIT 1.6 Knowledge of legislation relevant to employment

Aims: To give practitioners basic knowledge of employment legislation relevant to employment.

Competences covered in this module:

Ability to draw on basic knowledge of employment legislation, and particularly the Equality Act 2010, and the ways in which this sets out fundamental rights in relation to:

- the recruitment process
- the terms and conditions set out in employment contracts
- the definition of 'disability'
- expectations relating to reasonable adjustments
- procedures relating to the disclosure of disabilities

Ability to draw on basic knowledge of employment legislation regarding the provision of flexible working patterns in order to assure equal opportunities

Ability to draw on knowledge of appropriate resources, when there are complex legal or mediation issues which need to be resolved

SECTION 2: PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES

UNIT 2.1 Knowledge of, and ability to operate within, professional and ethical guidelines

Aims: To give practitioners knowledge of professional and ethical guidelines that govern IPS practice.

Competences covered in the unit:

Ability to draw on knowledge of the need to interpret and apply ethical and professional guidance to each person with whom the practitioner works

Ability to draw on knowledge of mental health legislation relevant to professional practice

Ability to draw on knowledge of the relevant codes of ethics and conduct that apply to all practitioners, and to the profession of which the worker is a member

Ability to draw on knowledge of national policies and their local implementation in relation to:

- capacity and consent
- confidentiality
- data protection

Autonomy

Ability for practitioners to work autonomously while also recognising the limits of their own competence and not attempt to practise an intervention for which they do not have appropriate training

Identifying and minimising the potential for harm

Ability to respond promptly when there is evidence that the actions of a colleague put a client or another colleague, at risk of harm

Sharing information to maintain safety

Ability to draw on knowledge of the conditions under which it is appropriate to breach confidentiality

Ability to judge when it is in the best interests of the person to disclose information, taking into account their wishes and views about sharing information

Ability to judge when sharing information within and between agencies can help to manage risk

Ability to discuss concerns about disclosure with colleagues

Safe return to work planning

Ability to develop a safe return to work plan which identifies relevant risk and safety issues and how they can be mitigated and managed

Maintaining appropriate standards of conduct

Ability to ensure that clients are treated with dignity, respect, kindness and consideration

Ability to maintain boundaries

Ability for practitioners to recognise the need to maintain standards of behaviour that conform with professional codes of conduct both in and outside the work context

Ability for practitioners to accurately represent their qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience

Maintaining standards of competence

Ability to maintain and update skills and knowledge through participation in continuing professional development

Documentation

Ability to complete a record for each client that is maintained in line with local and national policy and guidance

Ability to ensure records are stored securely, in line with local and national policy and guidance

Ability to complete service templates (e.g. vocational profile, action plans)

Ability to provide accurate and timely data for service reports

Advocating for users of services

Ability to work with others to promote the health and well-being of clients, their families and significant others in the wider community

Ability to respond to complaints about care or treatment in a prompt, open and constructive fashion

UNIT 2.2 Knowledge of, and ability to work with, issues of confidentiality and consent

Aims: To give practitioners knowledge of policies on confidentiality and information sharing both within and between teams or agencies.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge of national and local policies on confidentiality and information sharing, both within and between teams or agencies

Ability to draw on knowledge relevant to the capacity of individuals to give consent to IPS

Gaining informed consent for an intervention

Ability to give clients the information they need to decide whether to proceed with IPS

Ability to invite and to actively respond to questions regarding IPS and to address any concerns or fears regarding IPS

Drawing on knowledge of confidentiality and information sharing

Ability to draw on knowledge of parties to whom a duty of confidentiality is owed

Ability to draw on knowledge of conditions under which sharing information does or does not breach confidentiality

Ability to draw on knowledge of the conditions under which it is appropriate to breach confidentiality

Assessing the client's capacity to consent to information sharing

Ability to gauge the client's capacity to give consent to information sharing

Informing relevant parties about issues of confidentiality and information sharing

Ability to explain the limits of confidentiality and circumstances in which it may be breached

Ability to inform all relevant parties about local service policy regarding the ways in which information will be shared, and to seek their consent to these procedures

Ability to draw on knowledge that safeguarding needs usually take precedence over issues of consent and confidentiality

Sharing information appropriately and securely

Ability to draw on knowledge of national and local guidance when sharing information

Ability to share information securely, in line with national and local policies

UNIT 2.3 Ability to assess capacity

Aims: To give practitioners knowledge of capacity and the ways in which it is assessed.

Competences covered in this unit

Knowledge of how capacity is defined

Ability to draw on knowledge of the legal definition of capacity

Ability to draw on knowledge that capacity should be assessed in relation to major decisions that affect people's lives

Ability to draw on knowledge that incapacity can be temporary, indefinite, permanent or fluctuating

Ability to draw on knowledge that diagnosis alone cannot be used to make assumptions about capacity

Assessment of capacity

Ability to ensure that judgements regarding capacity take into account any factors that make it hard for the client to understand or receive communication, or to make themselves understood

UNIT 2.4 Sharing information to maintain safety

Aims To give practitioners knowledge of local policies and procedures for managing risk and maintaining safety (specifically, the risk of harm to self and risk to others).

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge that it is appropriate to breach confidentiality when withholding information could place the person at risk of significant harm

Ability to judge when it is in the best interests of the client to disclose information, taking into account their wishes and views about sharing information, but holding in mind:

- that disclosure is appropriate if it prevents serious harm to a client who lacks capacity
- the immediacy of any risk of suicide or self-harm

UNIT 2.5 Working with difference

Aims: To give practitioners knowledge of the issues relating to working with difference.

Competences covered in this unit

Knowledge of the significance for practice of specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles

Ability to draw on knowledge that the demographic groups included in discussion of 'different' beliefs, practices or lifestyles are usually those that are potentially subject to disadvantage and/or discrimination

Ability to maintain an awareness of the potential significance for practice of social and cultural variation across a range of domains

Ability to draw on knowledge of the relevance and potential impact of social and cultural factors on the effectiveness and acceptability of IPS

Knowledge of social and cultural factors which may have an impact on access to the service

Ability to draw on knowledge of cultural issues that commonly restrict or reduce access to interventions

Ability to draw on knowledge of the potential impact of socioeconomic status on access to job-related resources and opportunities

Where people from a specific sociodemographic group are regularly seen within a service, an ability to draw on knowledge of relevant beliefs, practices and lifestyles

Ability to identify protective factors that may be conferred by membership of a specific sociodemographic group (e.g., the additional support offered by an extended family)

Ability to develop an understanding of clients' culture and world view, and the implications of any culturally specific customs or expectations for the ways in which problems are described and presented

Adapting communication

Where the practitioner does not share a person's language, an ability to identify appropriate strategies to enable their full participation in the assessment or intervention

Ability to adapt communication with people who have a disability

Demonstrating awareness of the influence of the practitioner's own background

Ability for practitioners of all backgrounds to draw on an awareness of their own group membership and values and how these may influence their perceptions of the client, their problem and the relationship between the client and the employment specialist

Ability for practitioners to reflect on power differences between themselves and the client

UNIT 2.6 Making use of supervision and support

Aims: To give practitioners knowledge of the ways in which they can contribute to, and gain from, supervision and support.

Competences covered in this unit

Working collaboratively with the supervisor

Ability to work with the supervisor in order to generate an explicit agreement about the parameters of supervision

Ability to distinguish clinical and IPS supervision and to identify ways to access both when needed

Ability to help the supervisor be aware of the practitioner's training needs

Ability to present an honest and open account of the work being undertaken, including reflections on the emotional impact of the work

Ability to discuss work with the supervisor as an active and engaged participant

Ability to present material to the supervisor in a focused manner
Ability to contribute information relevant to fidelity monitoring

Self-appraisal and reflection

Ability to reflect on the supervisor's feedback and to apply these reflections in future work
Ability for the practitioner to be open and realistic about their capabilities and to share this self-appraisal with the supervisor
Ability to use feedback from the supervisor in order to further develop the capacity for accurate self-appraisal

Active learning

Ability to follow through suggestions regarding relevant reading or additional training made by the supervisor, and to incorporate this learning into practice

Using supervision to reflect on developing personal and professional roles

Ability to use supervision to discuss (and reflect on) the personal impact of the work

SECTION 3 PUTTING IPS INTO PRACTICE

UNIT 3.1 Communication skills: Communication skills with clients and their families

Aims: To give practitioners knowledge regarding communication skills.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge of the role of basic communication skills as a way for the listener to gain an accurate sense of the concerns and needs of the person

Ability to apply communication skills that help to engage clients in a collaborative discussion of their circumstances and immediate needs

In order to gain an accurate sense of the person's account, ability for the listener to be aware of (and avoid) any 'filters' they may find themselves imposing

Ability to convey an attentive stance through body language

Ability to listen attentively to the person by using active listening skills and trying to make sense of their experiences, behaviours and feelings, and the social context in which these arise

Ability to help the person expand on or explore relevant issues

Ability to judge when questioning is being experienced as helpful and when less so (e.g. where the person is feeling 'grilled')

Ability to listen 'empathically' to the person

Ability to maintain an awareness of one's own perspective or frame of reference in order not to inadvertently impose it

Ability to convey a basic and empathic understanding of what has been said or conveyed

Ability to check the person's understanding by asking them to summarise the discussion and/or any decisions that have been agreed

UNIT 3.2 Communication skills: Ability to foster and maintain a working alliance

Aims: To give the practitioner a practical understanding of the working alliance.

Competences covered in this unit

Understanding the concept of the working alliance in IPS

Ability to draw on knowledge of the three components of the working alliance

Knowledge of practitioner factors associated with the alliance

Ability to draw on knowledge of practitioner factors which increase or reduce the probability of forming a positive alliance

Knowledge of client factors associated with the alliance

Ability to draw on knowledge of client factors which affect the probability of forming a positive alliance

Capacity to develop the alliance

Ability to listen to the client in a manner which is non-judgemental, supportive and sensitive, and which conveys an accepting attitude

Ability to validate the client's experiences

Ability to gauge whether the client understands the rationale for IPS

Ability to help the client express any concerns or doubts they have about IPS and/or the practitioner

Capacity to grasp the client's perspective

Ability to apprehend the ways in which the client characteristically understands themselves and the world around them

Ability to hold the client's world view in mind throughout the course of an IPS intervention

Ability to hold the client's world view in mind, while retaining an independent perspective and guarding against collusion with the client

Capacity to recognise and address threats to the working alliance ('alliance ruptures')

Ability to recognise when strains in the alliance threaten the progress of IPS

Ability to use appropriate interventions in response to disagreements about tasks and goals, or in response to strains in the bond between practitioner and client

UNIT 3.3 Communication skills: Communication skills with the mental health team

Aims: To give the practitioner a practical understanding of communication skills in the context of team working.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge of the roles, responsibilities, culture and practice of the other professionals in the mental health team

Ability to help the team understand and implement the IPS model

Ability to communicate relevant information to members of the team

Ability to ensure that information sharing is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure

Ability to record what information has been shared, with whom and for what purpose

Ability to update the team regularly on clients' progress in gaining and maintaining employment

Ability to communicate specific clinical issues that have emerged during the process of gaining employment that are not currently being addressed, and which may challenge employability

Ability to be aware of team dynamics that may challenge effective communication, and to develop strategies to manage these
Ability to discuss challenges to team communication with the employment team leader/supervisor and to consider how these can be best managed

UNIT 3.4 Communication skills: Completing a concurrent record of progress

Aims: To give practitioners practical understanding of the importance of maintaining a concurrent record of progress.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge that a progress note for each client should be entered into the clinical record (usually after each contact), in order to:

- document progress
- communicate pertinent information to other members of the team

Ability to write a progress note that:

- summarises the activity that has taken place to date
- addresses the goals and objectives set out in the employment plan
- outlines the client's wellbeing and any significant issues or concerns that have arisen

UNIT 3.5 Using psychological strategies to support IPS

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of basic psychological strategies that can be used to support the employment process.

Competences covered in this unit

Where clients have difficulties, worries or concerns that have an adverse impact on their capacity to take up or maintain employment, ability to use psychologically informed strategies that can help them:

- identify and specify the relevant issues
- generate and implement adaptive solutions

Ability to be alert and responsive to implicit or explicit expressions of worry about any aspect of employment by helping clients discuss these

Ability to implement psychologically informed strategies to focus on potential barriers to employment

Ability for the employment specialist to:

- understand and work within the limits of their knowledge and training in psychological techniques
- maintain a focus on issues that relate to supporting employment (rather than to broader aspects of the client's functioning)

UNIT 3.6 Engagement and initial steps: Engaging clients with the IPS process

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of the initial engagement process.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to discuss with the client the nature of the support they will be offered and the role of the employment specialist, with the aim of building their interest in IPS

Ability to ensure that the client understands:

- that the employment specialist is part of the mental health team
- the ways that information will be shared between the employment specialist and the mental health team

Ability to spend time getting to know the client, identifying their goals, along with their interests and concerns

Ability to help the client discuss their motivation for gaining employment, and understand how this fits with their values

Ability to meet with the client in a range of settings (e.g. in the office, in the client's home and in community settings) in order to:

- demonstrate the employment specialist's commitment and improve client engagement
- learn how the client relates to others outside the mental health setting

Ability to pace the initial sessions to match the client's needs and capacities (e.g., working towards identifying their goals at a slower pace if this is indicated by the client's responses)

UNIT 3.7 Engagement and initial steps: Providing information on benefits system and financial implications of employment

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of the ways in which information about the benefits system (and its implications for employment) is offered to clients.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge that benefits advice should be offered as one of the first stages in the IPS employment process

Ability to draw on basic knowledge of the operation and application of employment and other benefits

Ability to discuss with the client the financial implications of gaining employment or becoming self-employed

Ability to recognise when formal benefits advice is required in order to accurately appraise the financial implications of seeking and gaining employment

Ability to maintain up-to-date information about the availability of, and access to, benefits advisors in local services

Ability to signpost the client to benefits advice and ensure that they access this

Ability to discuss the outcome of formal benefits advice with the client, and help them consider its implications for taking up employment

An ability to help clients access support for budgeting, if required

UNIT 3.8 Engagement and initial steps: Ability to discuss disclosure of a disability and other personal information with the client and with employers

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of issues relating to the disclosure of a disability and other personal information.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge that disclosure of a disability is not a legal requirement, nor a condition of working with the client

Ability to draw on knowledge that the purpose of disclosing a disability and other relevant personal issues should be to benefit the client, and decisions about disclosure should be aligned to this principle

Ability to describe the ways in which disclosure of a disability links to the identification of reasonable adjustments and the role of the employment specialist in communicating and negotiating this with the employer

Ability to draw up a personal information plan which outlines how and what information will be discussed with an employer, and by whom

Ability to help the client consider and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of disclosing disability and other personal information to a potential or current employer
Where clients are unwilling to disclose disability, ability to discuss the reasons for this in a manner that respects their decision but also helps them explore (and so review) their concerns

Where the client agrees to disclosure of a disability and/or other personal information, an ability to discuss the specific information that will be disclosed and to document this in a personal information plan

Ability to describe to the employer the nature of a client's health issues and other relevant personal information (as agreed in the personal information plan)

Ability to restrict disclosure to the areas agreed with the client

Ability to discuss the possible implications of the client's disability for their functioning in the workplace, and to negotiate the reasonable adjustments that could be put in place to support them

Ability to signpost the employer to services that can advise on adjustments relevant to specific disabilities

UNIT 3.9 Engagement and initial steps: Constructing a vocational profile

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of the content of a vocational profile.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge that the aim of a vocational profile is to gather information that establishes a clear picture of the client's strengths, resources and needs, and identifies the type of work and work environment that may be right for them

Ability to draw on knowledge that the vocational profile is built up over time and continues to be elaborated in the light of the client's responses to the process of gaining employment

Ability to draw on knowledge that building the vocational profile is part of the process of helping clients learn about their capacities and interests in the context of work, and so identify jobs that are optimal for them at any one time

Ability to draw on a comprehensive range of sources of information to construct a vocational profile, including the client, the mental health team and (with the client's permission) the client's family/cares

Ability to help the client identify their short- and long-term vocational goals

Ability to identify the client's

- work history
- current level of adjustment
- interpersonal resources
- work skills
- job-seeking skills
- specific vocational skills
- characteristic work-related behaviours

An ability to draw on labour market research to inform decision-making around employment goals and to connect clients to job opportunities

Ability to identify factors that may influence decisions about the type of work for which the client is suited

Ability to identify contacts the client could use to facilitate the job search

UNIT 3.10 Engagement and initial steps: Constructing an individualised employment plan

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of the content of an individualised employment plan.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge that an individualised employment plan needs to be drawn up for each client, and that the plan sets out the course of action, including:

- the client's short- and long-term goals(s), written using the client's own words
- the steps that will be taken to achieve these goals

Ability to draw up a plan that is behaviourally specific, establishes the actions that will be taken and contains enough information to permit other employment specialists who do not know the client to pick up the work

Ability to review and amend the plan on a regular basis

Ability to ensure that the employment plan is integrated with treatment plans developed by and with the relevant clinical team

Ability to ensure that clients are actively engaged with IPS support, and that action plans are proactive (ensuring that goals are achieved in a timely manner)

UNIT 3.11 Engagement and initial steps: Providing support for job applications

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of the support offered for client's job applications.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to judge the degree of support from which the client may benefit, ensuring that this maximises their autonomy and capacity to draw on their own resources

Ability to identify the areas of support from which the client may benefit, e.g.:

- identifying suitable employers/jobs by using social media, digital and hidden job market routes to employment
- preparing/updating/editing CVs
- helping the client to complete application forms
- discussing how to account for periods of unemployment or absence from the job market
- helping the client to research the employer and the role for which they are applying
- modelling and role-playing interview strategies
- providing follow-up after an interview
- planning ahead for the possibility of rejection (and so mitigating its impact)

UNIT 3.12 Working with employers: Gaining knowledge of local employment opportunities

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of the ways in which employment specialists gather information about local employment opportunities.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on multiple sources of information in order to identify local employment opportunities, e.g.:

- maintaining active links with job centres
- linking with advisors from other supported employment services
- making links with local recruitment agencies
- making links with local chambers of commerce
- regularly reviewing job sites, social media, local papers and trade magazines
- attending jobs fairs and making contact with stallholders

Ability to actively seek out information about potential employment opportunities that may not be formally advertised

UNIT 3.13 Working with employers: Employer engagement

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of the aims of, and skills involved in, engaging with employers.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge that the aim of employer engagement is to build a relationship that enables the employer to trust that the employment specialist understands their specific workforce needs

Ability to draw on knowledge that employer engagement is a core area of activity for IPS employment specialists that:

- involves making multiple (rather than one-off) visits
- requires a range of engagement strategies, adapted to the type and size of employer
- involves a commitment to maintaining ongoing contact
- aims to position the employment specialist as a resource both for the employer and for the client
- is usually focused on supporting an individual client to obtain a job
- involves negotiating job opportunities that map on to the client's strengths, skills and job interests (including job carving)

Ability to draw on knowledge that initial contacts should focus on learning about the employment context and the employer's recruitment needs, rather than on attempts to place a specific client

Ability to formulate and execute a planned strategy of employer engagement that is individualised to each employer and client needs

Ability to use social media, digital and hidden job market routes to uncover job leads and opportunities

Ability for the employment specialist to make an initial introduction to employers

Ability to communicate an initial message that identifies the aims and goals of the service

Ability to gain an in-depth understanding of the employment context and the employer's recruitment needs

Ability to convey key messages that stresses the potential benefits of involvement with an IPS programme

Ability to adapt the approach being taken to the emerging information being presented by the employer

Ability to identify and respond to concerns about the IPS service raised by the employer

Ability to present a realistic and measured account of the IPS service

Ability to describe the ongoing support that the IPS service will put in place for both the employer and the client

Ability to follow up initial visits by a variety of planned contacts

On the basis of a good understanding of the employment context and the employer's needs, an ability to help employers create jobs

Ability to identify clients for whom the job opportunity would be a good match and initiate introductions to the employer

Ability to respond actively when placements are under strain and act as a mediator in order to identify the source of difficulties, manage any conflicts and problem solve the situation

UNIT 3.14 Working with employers: Profiling the job setting

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of the issues to be considered in profiling job opportunities.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to profile the job setting so as to arrive at a clear picture of the demands of the position and its suitability for the client, including:

- interpersonal characteristics and demands
- job tasks, responsibilities and expectations
- level and type of support, management and supervision
- the work schedule
- the working environment
- financial arrangements
- accessibility
- health and safety

UNIT 3.15 Gaining, supporting and maintaining employment: Conducting a job search

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of the issues to be considered in conducting a job search.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge that:

- people are more likely to maintain employment when supported to obtain a job consistent with their preferences
- the availability of a position should not be the main determinant of job choices
- the aim of the job search is to arrive at the best match between the person and the job

Ability to discuss (and agree with the client) who takes responsibility for the job search

Ability to draw on knowledge of available positions and the characteristics of these positions, based on:

- employer engagement
- knowledge of the local job market
- job profiling

Ability to identify potential matches between the client's interests and abilities and available positions

Ability to make a direct approach to an employer in order to advocate for the client

UNIT 3.16 Gaining, supporting and maintaining employment: Providing individualised job support

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of the provision of individualised job support.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge that:

- people with serious mental health problems may have difficulty maintaining employment without ongoing follow-on support
- the goal of job support is not only to help the person maintain employment, but also to improve their quality of life
- the offer of job support always includes support to the employer

Ability to judge when to offer support to the client and when to foster independence and their capacity for self-management

Ability to make use of the vocational profile in order to anticipate likely support that the client will need

Ability to develop an in work support plan with the client and other relevant stakeholders

Ability to ensure that:

- when there is positive feedback about the client's progress this is communicated to them
- when there is feedback about areas that need attention, this is framed in a positive way that enables the client to learn from their experience

Ability to monitor placements in order to identify and troubleshoot initial and ongoing issues

Ability to respond promptly to any problems that emerge

Ability to match the intensity and timing of support to the client's needs and to judge whether and when to increase or decrease the level of response

Ability to identify interpersonal issues that may have emerged and to work with the client and the employer in order to resolve them

Ability to offer support directed to any emerging difficulties

Ability to offer psychologically informed support directed at any emerging emotional issues or difficulties

Ability to offer support to the employer

Ability to offer direct support in the workplace

Ability to discuss with the client (and the mental health team) issues that emerge in (and have an impact on) their work environment and which relate to the client's mental and physical health

Where the client raises the possibility of leaving their post, an ability to judge the most appropriate response

Ability (with the client's consent) to liaise with the client's family/carers to consider how they can support employment and identify any challenges to this

Ability to support clients already in employment who wish to return to work after a period of absence by developing a return to work plan with the client, their employer and relevant health and social care professionals

UNIT 3.17: Supported education

Aims: To give practitioners a practical understanding of the provision of supported education.

Competences covered in this unit

Ability to draw on knowledge that supported education:

- is only offered when this directly supports vocational goals
- focuses on training and education opportunities open to all members of the community
- is offered only to clients who require significant help to maintain training/education
- should be considered for clients of all ages
- should include access to resources provided by educational agencies

Ability to help clients enter and sustain training/education, for example by helping them:

- discuss their goals and interests, and identify relevant educational/training programmes
- identify and learn about potential programmes of study
- consider the benefits and disadvantages of disclosing a disability, and to whom a disclosure would be made
- consider how best to present themselves in an application
- make links with disability services within educational institutions to identify potential reasonable adjustments
- identify and consider how to manage symptoms and/or interpersonal issues that make studying and/or the educational experience difficult
- discuss and learn from difficulties that they are encountering and work towards implementing potential solutions