



Quality reference for Supported Employment – Part 1. Employment Agencies

*Quality and Training for Supported
Employment in Europe*

Quality and Training for Supported Employment in Europe (QUATSEE)

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INTRODUCTION.

All Supported Employment Agencies should be committed with these essential principles:

- The job is the best place to learn a trade.
- The Supported Employment is working to resolve some of the political, social and behavioral barriers, and politics that exclude certain groups of remunerated employment.
- Such employment is regular work in integrated work places.

All agencies should offer a combination of these elements:

- Customer Commitment: Initial Marketing of the agency to prospective clients in order to secure an agreement between them.
- Professional Profile: Assisting in the identification of skills and job preferences of individuals.
- Development of the job: Finding a preferred job for the individual through an exploratory survey of companies.
- Job Analysis: Getting additional information about the workplace, such as coworkers and supports that the individual may need in the employment context.
- Supported employment: Identification and provision of creative aids, information and support to both the employee and the company, sufficient to ensure job success and the development of independence with the help of natural supports.
- Professional support: Provision of support to both the employee and the company, so that both take into account the employee's job progression through structured assessments and development plans.

1. AIM AND AREA OF APPLICATION

This International Standard specifies the requirements for developing the supported employment services from agencies of supported employment, and the requirements for the collaboration of these agencies with contracting companies.

In the second part of this standard, principles and values of supported employment are found.

In the third part, there is a glossary of terms.

Parts 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 collect the requirements to fulfil in the provision of the service of supported employment.

Part 9 supplies general recommendations for agencies of supported employment.

2. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES BASED ON SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT:

Supported Employment is entirely consistent with the concepts of empowerment, social inclusion, dignity and respect for people. Under the Supported Employment framework,

these concepts can be defined through a set of values and principles present in all phases and activities of supported employment. These values and principles are:

Individuality

Supported Employment believes that each person is unique, with interests, preferences, conditions and biographies of themselves.

2.1. Respect

The activities associated to supported employment are always appropriate for the age of the person, and provide them dignity, these activities are rewarding.

2.2. Autonomy

Supported Employment helps people to define their interests and priorities, to express their preferences, and to draw a personal plan of life and employment according to their personal and circumstantial conditions. It also promotes the principles of self-defense from the service users.

2.3. Well-informed choice

Supported Employment helps people to understand their opportunities, so they can choose according to their preferences and with full understanding of its consequences.

2.4. Empowerment

Supported Employment helps people to make decisions about their way of life and participation in society. Also, these people are fully involved in the planning, evaluation and development of services.

2.5. Confidentiality

Servers of supported employment consider confidential the information provided by users. Users also have access to all personal information held by the server and any disclosure of such information is subject to the discretion of the individual and only if there has been a prior agreement.

2.6. Flexibility

Staff and organizational structures of supported employment services may change depending on the needs of users. Services are flexible and sensitive to the needs of people and therefore they can be adapted to incorporate specific requirements.

2.7. Accessibility

The Supported Employment services, information and facilities are fully accessible to all disabled people.

3. DEFINITIONS.

3.1. Supported employment: action of providing support to people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups to secure and maintain a paid employment in the open labor market.

3.2. Supported employment coach: people belonging to the supported employment agency, that perform advising to users and contracting companies in the supported employment service.

3.3. User: groups of people who, because of their disability, are outside of the regular labor market, that is, people who can contribute with their various skills, but need support, guidance and monitoring, to execute the tasks of the job.

3.4. Supported employment agency: organization that provides advice and guidance services necessary for job search to its users (see 3.3.).

3.5. Contracting company: the company receiving supported employment services that agrees to a valid and stable contract directly with the user.

4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

The organization shall establish a management system to ensure the performance of the steps listed in the "Provision of the service" part.

4.1. Policy and aims

The organization should develop a policy based on the principles of integrated employment, social inclusion and "zero" exclusion. This policy should be communicated and understood within the organization, and should be reviewed for its continuing suitability.

It should be implemented a strategic plan with short, medium and long term aims for the development of services. The organization must ensure that they are established in the relevant functions and levels within the organization. Objectives should be measurable and consistent with the policy, and should be communicated at all levels of the organization.

4.2. Users

All beneficiaries must be clearly informed of the available options.

There should be a system to ensure confidentiality and data protection. During the provision of a service, all personal and confidential information must be protected under the applicable law.

There should be ensured the equality of opportunities, equal participation and non-discriminatory practice in all aspects of their services.

The organization shall maintain a Service Agreement with users. The organization must have a Bill of Rights that is accessible to all. The organization must comply with this in all its aspects.

It should be respected the right of individuals to express their beliefs and opinions and make decisions at all levels. Individuals should be provided with support for the conquest of their labor rights.

5. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The organization shall identify legal and statutory requirements applicable to the target activity covered by this standard.

6. DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Documents and records required by this standard shall be controlled. The organization must ensure that:

- a. Documents are approved for adequacy prior to its emission,
- b. Documents are reviewed and updated when necessary and approve them again,
- c. The relevant versions of applicable documents are available at points of use,
- d. The documents remain legible and readily identifiable,

7. AVAILABLE RESOURCES

7.1. Human resources

The organization shall designate a member of the organization who, regardless of other responsibilities, shall:

- a. Ensure that the necessary processes are established, implemented and maintained to the management system required by this standard
- b. Inform Management about the performance of the management system and any need for improvement, and
- c. Ensure that awareness of user requirements at all levels of the organization is promoted.

The organization should offer a variety of jobs of supported employment coahes that demonstrate a strong commitment to the principles of supported employment. Each of the

jobs within the organization must have clearly defined their competences and responsibilities. Competences of the coach staff of supported employment must be as specified in Section 3.2 of this document.

The organization shall maintain a staff ratio of supported employment coach / users that is appropriate and safe, in accordance with what is stated in paragraph 3.2 of this document.

It should be encouraged and facilitated a learning culture in which creativity, innovation, and decision-making with risk are favoured, and where both staff and individuals feel important. This training must be planned.

It should be maintained appropriate records of education, training, skills and experience.

7.2. Material resources

The organization must have a system for the creation, allocation, control and evaluation of financial resources to ensure the safety of the Company in a long-term and meet the needs of all.

The organization shall provide and maintain the necessary infrastructure to provide an adequate service to users. The infrastructure should include, when applicable:

- a. Buildings, workspace and associated services,
- b. Process equipment (both hardware and software), and
- c. Support services (such as transport, communication or information systems).

The organization shall determine and manage the work environment needed to provide an adequate service to users, including physical, environmental and other factors.

8. PROVISION OF THE SERVICE

8.1. 1st phase: initial contact

The service must be located in an accessible building, to which the individual can access and use without jeopardizing his/her dignity, and at the same time is in an integrated community. In any case, the organization must meet the applicable legislation on accessibility and removal of architectural barriers.

The supported employment coach must receive the individual always maintaining a friendly, positive and respectful mood.

The supported employment coach must determine the communication needs of the person providing the necessary support to deal with them.

User must check meeting details such as date, time, participants and agenda.

The user should receive all the support needed to ask questions and to express their views and opinions.

The user must have access to all available information about the service, the process of supported employment and local labor market.

8.2. 2nd phase: professional profile

All meetings must take place in an affordable and private place where the individual can communicate easily. In any case, the organization must meet the applicable legislation on accessibility and removal of architectural barriers.

The communication and feedback methods used must be appropriate to the capacity of understanding and communication of the user at the same time it must provide all the support that he/she may need in this regard.

It should help the user to understand the purpose of providing information.

It should help the user to identify people who may be appropriate to assist in the process.

The user must own all the information provided and therefore the use of such information must not be allowed without his/her prior authorization.

The supported employment coach must chart a professional profile of the individual, including all information provided by the user and an individual action plan.

Individual profiles and individual action plans must show that:

- a. Users should explore employment opportunities according to their interests, abilities and needs.
- b. Users must have access to a range of employment opportunities at a local level.
- c. A user should be helped to understand the requirements associated with various jobs and the opportunities they provide for the development of certain skills.
- d. Individuals should be provided with the opportunity to participate (with the support required) in papers like " shadow" and working trials of limited duration , in order to help them to make a well-informed decision .
- e. Users should be provided with opportunities and supports to help them to develop their capacity for personal self-determination and the ability to make decisions .
- f. Users should be helped to use their knowledge and experience in the decision – making process.
- g. Individual plans should develop and agree with the user and result in an accessible format.
- h. The user must be supported throughout the process of developing the plan.
- i. Plans should reflect , in all its aspects , interests , aspirations and capabilities of the user.

- j. Plans should set a goal and employment targets and detailing options to achieve them.
- k. Plans should clearly define the support and resources that the user needs to reach his/her goal and objectives of employment.
- l. Plans should identify other suitable persons who can assist the user to achieve his/her goal and objectives of employment.
- m. Plans should contain a reasonable timescale.

The supported employment coach should help users to be they who direct their own personal plan.

Plans should be updated, when appropriate, as the advice to is progressing. The organization shall keep records of such changes and updates.

All users must keep a signed copy of their own personal plan and should be the ones to decide who receive a copy.

8.3. 3rd phase: job search

The supported employment coach must provide the user training and supports so as to find a job, so that:

- a. The user must have training opportunities and support to carry out a series of activities related to job search.
- b. User must check their level of participation in the process of applying for jobs and recruitment.
- c. User should be helped, whatever his/her level of disadvantage is, to participate to the maximum in the specification of his/her own job as well as contacts with the company.
- d. User should be helped to prepare and negotiate with the company employment conditions that meet their own specific needs.

In order to help users to find the best job:

- a. The organization shall establish contacts with local companies, and / or local business groups.
- b. Current employment trends should be reflected at local and regional level, and include plans for the development of training and employment opportunities.
- c. An appropriate position for the user must be identified making use of the professional profile and analysis of the workplace.
- d. User should be communicated with the results of the search for suitable jobs.
- e. User should be helped to make well-informed decisions about existing employment opportunities, while he/she should be provided with support in the step to the next phase.

The organization shall keep individual action plans updated as the phase of job search progresses.

The various activities related to the job search should be subject to continual development and revision.

8.4. 4th phase: company's implication

The organization should support the hiring company to find the best person for the job. In order to do this, the company's needs, job requirements and work environment must be clearly defined in the **Company Profile** prepared by the supported employment coach.

The organization must ensure that:

- a. The functions of the agency of supported employment are clearly exposed to the contracting company .
- b. Information, advice and awareness training are included in all practice on disability, handicap and anti-discrimination .
- c. Support and training is provided to workers in the workplace so that they can support the disabled worker .
- d. People who suffer disadvantage are positively promoted by the company.
- e. The contracting Company is helped to determine appropriate supports through the use of techniques of job creation.
- f. Assistance and training is provided to individuals suffering disadvantage for conducting awareness efforts within the contracting company.
- g. The contracting company has continued access to the Supported Employment Service.
- h. Opportunities are created to develop employment tests, "shadow" papers and visits to the workplace.
- i. Contacts "Company-company" are established.
- j. The supported employment coach works with the contracting company throughout the process.
- k. Feedback from the contracting company on their experiences in relation to supported employment is collected.

The organization shall keep the Company Profile updated throughout the process.

8.5. 5th phase: support in and out of the workplace

The organization shall ensure that the training and support provided to the user are adequate and effective, while independence in the workplace and promotion are encouraged. In order to do this, an accessible Training and Action Plan must be prepared.

The organization must ensure that:

- a. The supported employment coach works with the user to determine the preferred learning and training perspective to fit his/her personal needs.
- b. The supported employment coach adopts a series of preferred approaches and learning support which are of discrete nature.
- c. All supports and assistive technologies used are appropriate for the workplace while enable an improvement in the performance and the status of the user.

- d. Users have training and flexible supports, designed to facilitate the relationship with others inside and outside the workplace.
- e. The user has training and support headed to make him/her easy the participation in social events organized by the company, inside and outside the workplace.
- f. User is helped to take part, along with other non-disabled employees in all the phases / activities typical of a new job such as induction, probation and performance and development procedures.
- g. User is helped to negotiate the conditions of employment in accordance with their personal needs.

The organization shall keep the accesible Training and Action Plan updated throughout the process.

8.6. Results

The organization shall ensure that there is a valid and stable work contract agreed by user and employer. The employment contract must collect worker preferences regarding working days, working hours, vacation, work patterns and payment. Employees should receive the same payment and benefits as other employees performing equal work.

The user must remain in the job for a minimum period of six months.

The organization must ensure that:

- a. Both the company and co-workers provide a series of 'natural supports'.
- b. The user maintains good relations with coworkers.
- c. The user has the opportunity to participate in social activities with other colleagues outside the workplace.
- d. The user has professional development opportunities. As the employee is developing his/her skills, development opportunities and career development are explored.
- e. User is helped to consider career opportunities, both internal and external.
- f. Assistance is provided to the user to participate in professional development training.

9. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

9.1. Inner audits

The organization shall conduct internal audits at planned intervals to ensure compliance with the requirements of this standard. Records of these audits should be kept.

9.2. Monitoring and measuring

The organization must continuously, carry out the monitoring and measure the characteristics of the service to verify that requirements of this standard are met. It must be maintained evidence of compliance with the requirements of the service.

It should be collected and analyzed data on effects on users and on contracting companies, staff productivity, satisfaction of users (including complaints and suggestions), cost efficiency, and other ones related to process and outcome.

The organization shall ensure regular performance reviews of all staff coach members of supported employment, and the provision of necessary support to fulfill its obligations and achieve the desired results. Records of such reviews must be kept.

9.3. Corrective actions

The organization shall implement corrective actions when:

- a. The objectives of the provision of the service are not met.
- b. The reactions of users are not satisfactory.
- c. Implications associated with the service, the staff or the infrastructure of the organization are identified.
- d. Nonconformities arising from internal audits are detected.

It should be recorded the results of the actions taken, and review the effectiveness of those actions.