

WHAT AN  
INCLUSIVE  
POSTSECONDARY  
EDUCATION  
PROGRAM CAN DO  
FOR YOU



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# WHAT ARE INCLUSIVE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

Inclusive Postsecondary Education or IPSE programs are designed specifically to allow students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to continue learning on higher education campuses alongside their neurotypical peers.

IPSE programs typically have:

A prominent employment readiness component that includes both classroom instruction and internships/ work-based learning.

Opportunities for students with IDD to take or audit courses in general education classrooms together with peers who do not have disabilities.

Opportunities for students with IDD to build independent living and advocacy skills inside and outside the classroom.

Opportunities for students with IDD to participate fully in campus life.

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# WHAT CHARACTERIZES AN IPSE PROGRAM?





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## “INCLUSIVE” MEANS

- The program takes place on a tradition college or university campus.
  - The program provides college-age students with intellectual disabilities opportunities to engage in the same activities as any other student.
  - The key here is that the students with intellectual disabilities engage in these activities **TOGETHER WITH** their peers who do not have disclosed disabilities.
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# ACTIVITIES THAT INCLUDE:



Taking academic courses



Obtaining an internship or student employment



Using the library, computer lab, gym, learning support and other campus amenities



Playing or watching athletics

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# AS WELL AS



Eating in the dining hall  
and living in campus  
housing where available



Joining clubs and  
performance groups



Accessing student health  
facilities

Exploring Greek and  
other societies

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# PROGRAM- SPECIFIC CONTENT

IPSE programs may have program-specific content or courses that are designed for and available only to its own students with intellectual disabilities; however:

Social, recreational and employment activities, in particular, should occur in an inclusive setting.

This content should support learning and activities that program students pursue in an inclusive context. For example, the program may have its own office hours, labs or tutoring sessions to help students better understand content and break down assignments from inclusive courses or

This content should be of a nature that is relevant only to students with disabilities; for example, how to navigate paid employment while receiving Social Security disability or Medicaid benefits and

Students should spend less time in program-specific courses learning program-specific content than they do in inclusive settings learning alongside typical peers.

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# POSTSECONDARY MEANS

- The students with intellectual disabilities are learning age-appropriate post-high-school material with necessary modifications.
- They are NOT merely repeating or practicing concepts that they already learned in high school and or transition.
- They have access to a range of courses that include general education or “core” subjects as well as “enrichment” subjects.



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# “EDUCATION” MEANS

- The students with intellectual disabilities are in the program to LEARN, not just to have a “college living experience.”
- What the students are learning are practical hard and soft, general and industry specific skills that will enable them to work in competitive, integrated employment and live as independently as possible.
- Students are also learning to “adult” in the same way as their same-age peers.





Q. What distinguishes and IPSE program from any post-high-school educational opportunity offered by an adult disability service provider agency?

A. Students with intellectual disabilities are learning the **SAME** content **TOGETHER** **WITH** same age peers, even if they are doing so at an individualized level of difficulty and detail.

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# PRACTICALLY SPEAKING, HOW DOES THIS WORK?

Students with intellectual disabilities attend IPSE programs because they would not be successful pursuing a typical degree-seeking programs.

IPSEs exist to provide students with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to learn what, when and where their peers are learning.

PARA  
DOX

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# ADVISING AND AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN OF STUDY



As with any college student, each IPSE student should have an academic advisor.



The Plan should spell out:

Which courses the student will take each term for credit or audit. Courses should advance the student's career goal(s).

Accommodations that the student will use.

The internship or paid employment opportunities that the student will use to explore careers.

Tutoring and additional support that the student will receive.

Social opportunities and campus activities that the student wishes to pursue.

Individualized instruction as needed.



Because IPSE's are expected to be person-centered, each IPSE student should have an individualized plan of study that works backwards from her/ his career and life goals.

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# SAMPLE SCHEDULE: GREEN = INCLUSIVE SETTING

Year 1, Semester 1					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00			English Composition		
10:00	Freshman seminar	Internship/employment	(Inclusive Course)	Internship/employment	Studyskills
11:00	(Inclusive course)	(Inclusive)		(Inclusive)	(program-specific)
12:00					
1:00			Instructor's office		
2:00	Studyskills (program-specific)	Internship/employment	hours or campus	Work-integrated	Self-advocacy
3:00		(Inclusive)	learning support	learning	(program-specific)
4:00		Campus activity		Campus activity	Campus activity
5:00		(Inclusive)		(Inclusive)	(Inclusive)
6:00					

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# FOCUS ON A CAREER GOAL



- The student works with her/ his advisor to discern a career objective; for example, work with young children in a daycare or before/ after school care staff position.
  - Student and advisor select courses from the college or university course catalogue that will build professional knowledge:
    - Early child development
    - Pre-literacy for young children
    - Health and nutrition
  - The program employment team helps the student find an internships or even paid employment in an on- or off-campus childcare setting.
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# FOCUS ON A CAREER GOAL



- The student works with her/ his advisor to discern a career objective; for example, working in patient transport at a medical facility..
  - Student and advisor select courses from the college or university course catalogue that will build professional knowledge:
    - Communication course
    - Introduction to Eldercare
    - First aid/ CPR certificate
  - The program employment team helps the student find an internships or even paid employment in an on- or off-campus patient transport setting.
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# LEVERAGING GENERAL CAMPUS RESOURCES

Accommodations that are arranged by the University's Office for Student disability services:

- Extended time for assignments,
- Extended time for exams,
- quiet, individual location for exams,
- access to assistive technology, etc.

Access to learning supports offered to all university students.

- Online or in-person subject-matter tutoring
  - Writing workshops or labs
  - Study groups or tables
  - Instructors', teaching assistants' and lab assistants' office hours
  - Library research and reference assistance.
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# COLLABORATION WITH INDIVIDUAL COURSE INSTRUCTORS



Modification of course learning outcomes. The instructor, student and program team determine which are most fundamental and the student focuses on those.



Access to instructors notes or outline, permission to record lectures, “guided” notes in which notes are prepared in advance for the student to fill in blanks with key words.



Shortened or otherwise modified exams (oral or multiple choice in place of short answer or essay).



Less, shortened or modified assignments. For example, a 3 paragraph paper or a PowerPoint slide deck in place of a 5 page paper.



All supports on the previous slide.

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## PEER MENTORS PROVIDE SUPPORT IN THE CLASSROOM AND ON CAMPUS



- Recruited from relevant majors including Social Work, Educator Preparation, Psychology, Occupational Therapy and similar
  - Mentors receive 20 hours of training at the beginning of the program and continuing education throughout.
  - Peer mentors may receive fieldwork or practicum credit within their respective major programs or
  - Peer mentors may be paid through Federal Work Study or as graduate assistants or as general student worker
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## JOB COACHES PROVIDE SUPPORT IN INTERNSHIPS/PAID EMPLOYMENT

- Job coaches act as primary liaisons to each student's internship site.
  - Job coaches support students to master new tasks and navigate the workplace environment.
  - Job coaches support site supervisors to work effectively with a worker with intellectual disability as a member of their team.
  - Job coaches assist site supervisors to identify and implement natural supports in the workplace.
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# COMPETITIVE, INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT IS A KEY OUTCOME FOR IPSE PROGRAMS

Only 34% of individuals with intellectual disability between the ages of 18 and 64 are working

Only 18% are working in competitive employment\*

The unemployment and underemployment statistics are even lower for adults of color with a disability

In comparison, over 50% of people with intellectual disability are competitively employed after attending a postsecondary education program.\*

Moreover, workers with ID who had attended a postsecondary program had higher earnings than those who did not.

As a result, they required less Supplemental Security Income (SSI) than their counterparts who had no postsecondary education.

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\*Avellone et al., 2021; Sannicandro et al., 2019

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# PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WITH POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION WORKED MORE AND EARNED MORE

<b>Vocational Outcomes</b>	<b>No HS Diploma</b>	<b>Special Ed</b>	<b>HS Diploma</b>	<b>Postsecondary</b>
Weekly Wages (SD)	\$85.65 (\$127.52)	\$98.88 (\$123.10)	\$118.58 (\$134.85)	\$197.68 (\$183.31)
Hours Worked (SD)	10.2 (14.6)	11.8 (13.8)	13.7 (14.4)	20.1 (15.6)
Hourly Pay (SB)	\$8.40 (\$1,70)	\$8,34 (\$1.71)	\$8.57 (\$1.83)	\$9,56 (\$2,79)

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Type of Occupation	No HS Diploma	Special Ed	HS Diploma	Postsecondary
Computer and Mathematics	--	--	--	0.7
Community and Social Services	--	0.4	0.2	1.9
Legal	--	--	--	2.4
Health Practitioners/ Technical	0.4	0.2	0.5	1.2
Healthcare Support	2	1.4	1.7	7.8
Protective Services	0.2	0.4	0.5	1.7
Food Prep and Serving	25.2	22.2	23.9	17.2
Cleaning & Maintenance	19.1	20.6	17.9	8.5
Personal Care and Service	4.3	5	6.3	10.1

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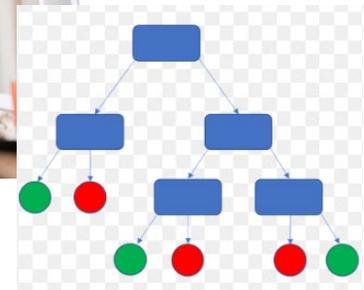
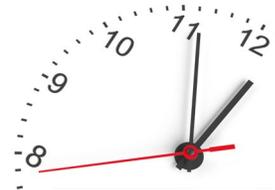
AND WORKED IN A WIDER VARIETY OF FIELDS INCLUDING MORE “PROFESSIONAL” JOBS

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# NUMBERS ARE NOT THE WHOLE STORY

From my experience as an IPSE instructor and administrator, students with intellectual disabilities who attend IPSE programs build considerable strength in:

- Self-advocacy & self-confidence
- Oral and written communication
- Computer skills
- Navigation
- Goal setting
- Choosing a career
- Decision-making
- Time and money management



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# EXAMPLES OF STUDENT SUCCESSES

- A student from a small-town setting learned to navigate downtown Chicago.
- A student who interned in undergraduate college was chosen to design newsletters and activity posters seen by the whole campus.
- A student participated alongside peers as Jumpstart volunteer teaching pre-literacy skills to young children from low-resource neighborhoods.
- A student received offer to work full-time at university medical facility.



# EXAMPLES OF STUDENT SUCCESSES



- A student acted as teaching assistant for occupational therapy class, sharing lived experience.
- Multiple students took English composition, public speaking and other undergraduate courses for credit and passed.
- Several students acted Avallone as co-researchers on a grant to study the access that student have to IPSE programs.

# EXAMPLES OF STUDENT SUCCESS (GENERAL)

- Students learned how to advocate for themselves across campus and access campus amenities.
- Students took the opportunity to educate faculty, staff and their peers about the capabilities and goals of students with intellectual disability.
- Students learned the independent living skills they need to live largely on their own or with roommates



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# PAYING FOR IPSE PROGRAMS

IPSE programs range in cost from a few thousand dollars per term at community colleges to \$50,000 or more per year for students living in campus housing at large universities.

Students receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) payments can use these to cover part of the cost.

Students who have a funded ABLE account can use funds from the account to pay for IPSE tuition, fees and living expenses.

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# PAYING FOR IPSE PROGRAMS

## Use

Students and families can use traditional 529 plans to pay for tuition, fees, supplies and with certain limitations, on-campus living expenses.

## Obtain

Students can obtain campus student employment, sometimes as an element of the program's work-experience component.

## Use

Students can use income earned from summer or off-campus term-time jobs.

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# WHAT ARE COMPREHENSIVE TRANSITION AND POSTSECONDARY (CTP) PROGRAMS?



Certain IPSE programs have applied to the US Department of Education to be designated as CTP programs. To be a CTP, the program must meet the following definition\*:



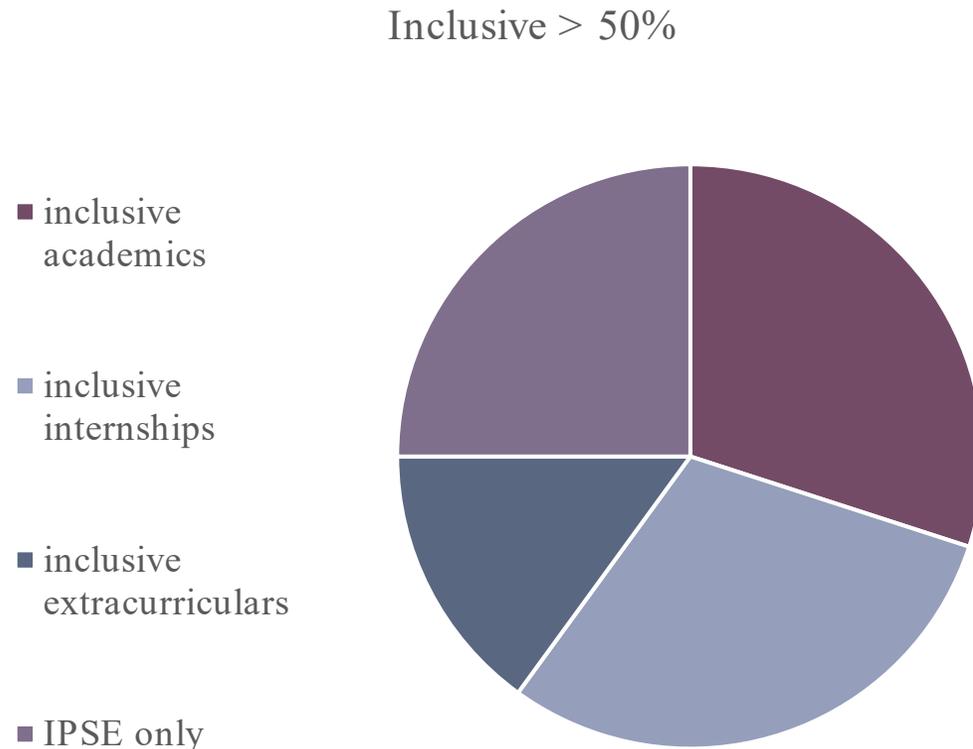
A CTP program for students with intellectual disabilities means a degree, certificate, or nondegree program that is offered by a college or career school and approved by the U.S. Department of Education.



CTP Programs offer academic advising and a structured curriculum.

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## WHAT ARE COMPREHENSIVE TRANSITION AND POSTSECONDARY (CTP) PROGRAMS?



CTP Programs require students with intellectual disabilities to participate, for at least half of the program, in

- regular enrollment in credit-bearing courses with nondisabled students,
- auditing or participating (with nondisabled students) in courses for which the student does not receive regular academic credit,
- enrollment in noncredit-bearing, nondegree courses with nondisabled students, or
- internships or work-based training with nondisabled individuals.

STUDENTS  
WITH  
INTELLECTUAL  
DISABILITIES  
WHO ATTEND  
CTP  
PROGRAMS

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Are eligible to use Federal and State financial aid in the form of grants. For Illinois, this means PELL and MAP. Students and their families must complete a FAFSA.

May be eligible for Federal Work-study employment, depending on the college or university's situation.

May be eligible for discretionary financial aid from the university or college.

Since 2024 may be eligible for Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) funding.

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# AS AN ASPIRING IPSE STUDENT OR A PARENT, WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I BE ASKING?

Choosing a college or university program is a big decision. For an IPSE program you want to know:

What percentage of academic learning takes place in an inclusive setting?

What are examples of the inclusive courses that IPSE students take?

What support do students receive in these courses?

Do they take these course for credit or audit them?

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# AS AN ASPIRING IPSE STUDENT OR A PARENT, WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I BE ASKING?

Choosing a college or university program is a big decision. For an IPSE program you want to know:

What is an example of an individualized plan of study?

When do students begin their internships/ work experience and how many hours do they intern throughout the program?

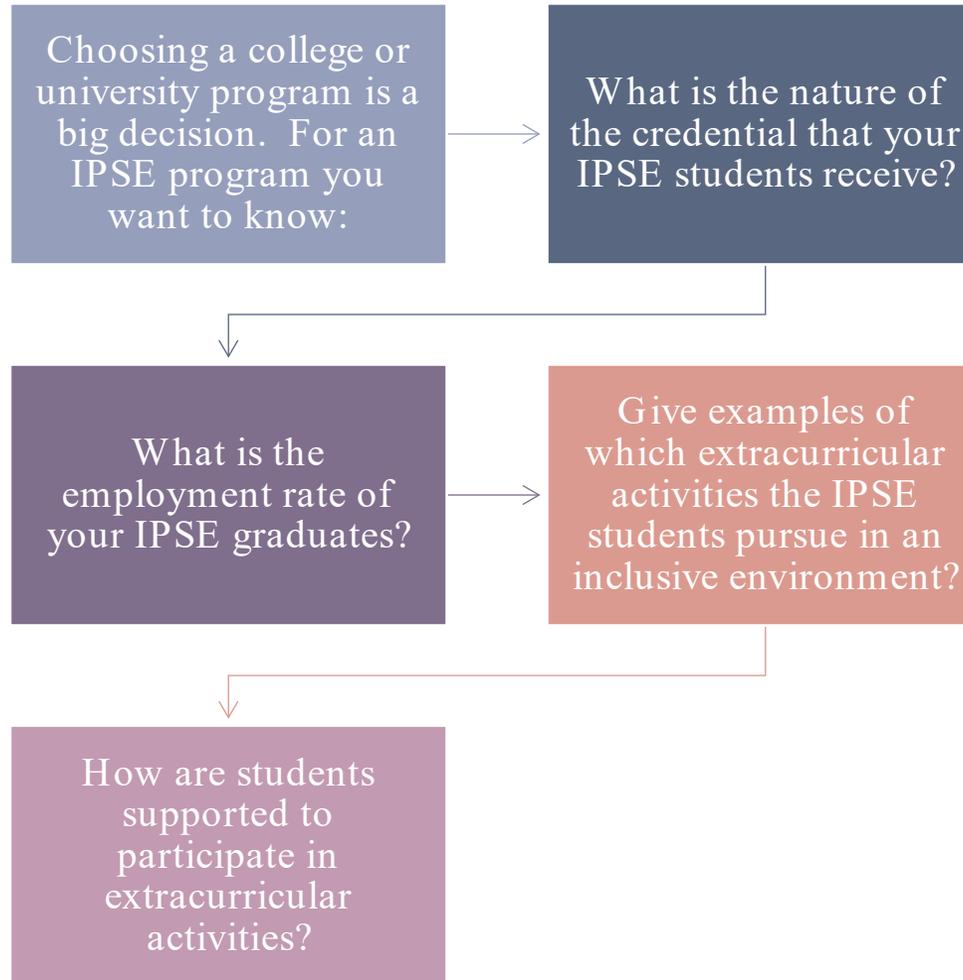
Does the internship/ work experience take place in an inclusive setting?

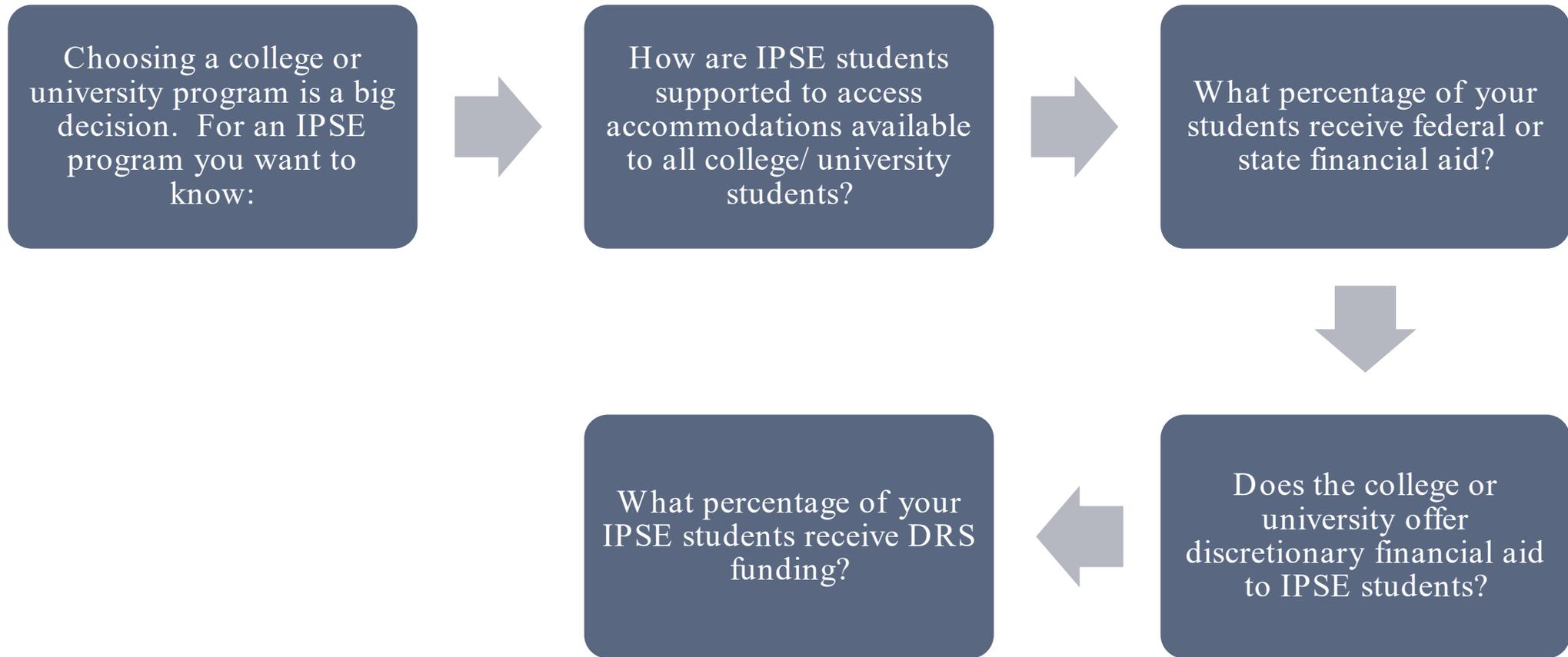
How are students supported at their internship/ work sites?

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AS AN ASPIRING IPSE STUDENT OR A PARENT, WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I BE ASKING?

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**Take the time.  
Do the research.  
Make an informed  
choice.**

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