

Staff Guidance

Disability: Schizophrenia

Characteristics: Schizophrenia is characterized by disintegration of thought processes and of emotional responsiveness. Symptoms can include hallucinations (auditory and visual), delusions, disordered thoughts and speech as well as problems with feelings, behaviour and motivation. The cause is not clear. In many people symptoms recur or persist long-term. Treatment includes medication, talking treatments and social support.

Schizophrenia is not related to having a split personality and the vast majority of people with schizophrenia are not violent.

Effects on self and study

Schizophrenia can severely impact on a person's ability to maintain a 'normal' life while unwell. This can mean that studying becomes very difficult. They may also require hospital-based support which might mean they have to take time out from their studies.

Students may lose touch with reality and not know which thoughts and experiences are true and real, and which are not. They may display disorganised or catatonic behavior, inappropriate emotional responses to normal events, paranoia and self neglect.

They may have difficulties with stress and may have difficulties of anxiety or low mood which can also impact on studying. Periods of high stress may contribute to triggering an episode.

They may have difficulty planning, problems with memory and loss of train of thought.

Medications can have a number of side effects including a sedative-like effect.

Potential Reasonable Adjustments

- *1:1 with a mentor to support in relation to recommendation from DSA
- *Regular contact with academic adviser through email or 1:1
- *Flexibility to attend medical appointments
- *Extensions for coursework
- *Material on blackboard or handouts in advance
- *Extra time in exams
- *Extra support will be needed following any intercalations

Each student is an individual and as such may only require some of these adjustments or none at all. These are guidelines of things that could be considered however some courses may require more specific adjustments. It is advisable that students, academics and the MH Co-ordinator work together to achieve appropriate adjustments. Some courses involve Fitness to Practice requiring students to achieve professional competencies to qualify.