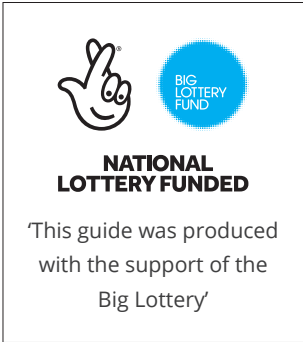




Inclusive Employer Good Practice Guide

Creating workplaces that work for everyone



'This guide was produced with the support of the Big Lottery'

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Introduction

Aim of this guide

This Good Practice Guide has been developed as part of SUSE's 'More than the Sum of the Parts' project. Our members work with hundreds of employers across Scotland every day and they told us that employers are keen to know more about how to support people with disabilities or long term conditions in the workplace.

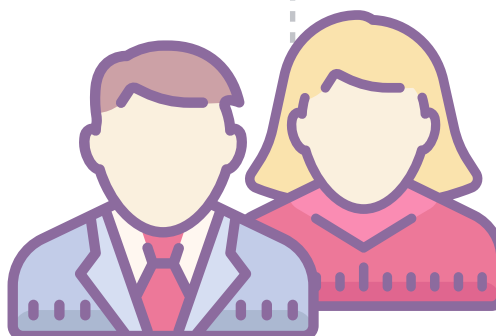
We know that the vast majority of employers want to create opportunities for people who have disabilities but they may not know how to go about this. There are many myths around employing disabled people and a lot of fear about getting it wrong. The Good Practice Guide is intended to offer some practical advice for employers, challenge some mistaken beliefs and start a conversation about how we can work together to get this right.

SUSE members are available and ready to help employers and have a lot of experience and knowledge to share. If you want the support of a local organisation we can help you to connect with them. You can contact us at info@susescotland.scot

From September 2018 our website will host a searchable database of supported employment organisations across Scotland – this will enable employers to find out what is available in their local areas and make direct contact with providers.



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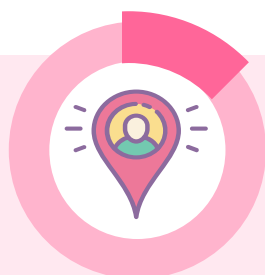


Aim of this guide

Around

20%

(around 1 million people of working age) of the population of Scotland have a long-term activity limiting health problem or disability.



40%

of disabled people aged 16-64 are working compared to around 80% of non-disabled people.



Only

21%

of disabled people with mental health issues are employed and only 16% for people with learning disabilities.



You can explore all the sections or dip in and out depending on your needs. Exercises are also available throughout to help you reflect on your practice yourself or as a team.

Before you get started, see how much you know about disability in the workplace:



www.suse.org.uk/employers/good-practice-guide/aim-of-this-guide/take-the-quiz/

What success looks like with the Supported Employment Model

More disabled people want to be in work than are. Supported employment can help shift the focus from what they can't do, to what they CAN do. The Supported Employment model can provide help for people with disabilities who are at a distance from the labour market. It plays an essential role in empowering and facilitating individuals to lead ordinary lives and is also a major route to social inclusion.

Supported Employment providers ensure that an employer's recruitment requirements and concerns are dealt with in an efficient and professional manner. Qualified Job Coaches or Employment Support Workers work with employers and jobseekers to create a job match.



Success through Job Matching

Through detailed profiling, the skills and interests of the job seeker are matched with the requirements of the job. The successful job match will result in success for both the job seeker and the employer.



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What success looks like with the Supported Employment Model



Success through support

Through Supported Employment, appropriate support will be provided to the job seeker, the employer and co-workers. The support provided may be of a mentoring nature, although in some cases it may be possible to identify financial assistance where available. The frequency of the visits that an Employment Support Worker will make to the new employee will depend on their needs and the needs of the employer and co-workers. Supported Employment services can be accessed by both public and private sector employers of all sizes.



Impact on the workplace culture

Experience shows that work colleagues welcome and encourage people recruited through the Supported Employment process and that good working relationships are developed. Customers appreciate the social approach and repeat business is can be increased. The Employment Support Worker can help your company to develop procedures for the systematic induction and development of employees.



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What success looks like with the Supported Employment Model



Benefits to you

- Access to appropriate potential employees who can actually complete the tasks that you as an employer need.
- Access to continuous support for you and the new employee. This will ensure that the job match continues to be successful.
- The Employment Support Worker will enhance your recruitment and selection process by matching the right employee to the right job.
- Access to all the necessary advice and guidance on the incentives and grants that may be available to you.
- Assistance to co-ordinate any training the new employee may need.
- Enhancement of your company's profile, promoting you as an equal opportunities employer.
- Employing a person with a disability may lead to an increase in business and profits, i.e. increase in custom from the general public and local community.
- Employers can demonstrate their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility.



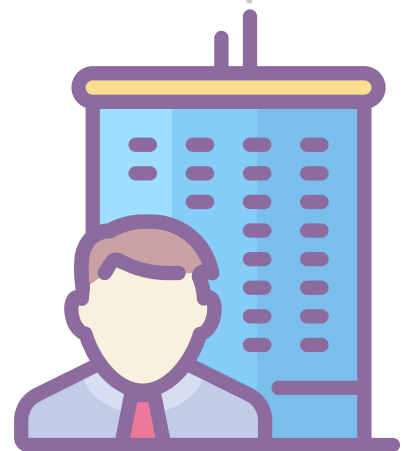
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What success looks like with the Supported Employment Model



Financial benefits

The Supported Employment service is a professional, quality service provided free of charge. You will save money, as you will not have any advertising or recruitment expenses, for example, you will not have to trawl through dozens of CVs and job application forms. Training for prospective employees will be provided on the job where necessary and at no cost.



Definitions

A person is disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

1 Mental impairment

Mental impairment – covers a wide range of impairments relating to mental functioning. Conditions affected include:

- Anxiety
- Autism
- Phobias
- Depression
- Schizophrenia
- Bipolar disorder
- Eating disorders
- Learning disabilities
- Obsessive compulsive disorder



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Definitions

2 Substantial

'Substantial' is more than minor or trivial. A condition with a substantial adverse effect doesn't have to stop a person from doing something completely, but it must make it more difficult to complete a daily task like getting dressed. It may also be that a person avoids doing certain things – because it causes them a lot of pain or makes them tired.

3 Long term

'Long-term' means a condition lasting 12 months or more, for example a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection.

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Definitions

4 Day-to-day activities

Normal day-to-day activities are those carried out by most people on a regular basis. For example:

- Walking or driving
- Washing or getting dressed
- Cooking or eating
- Using public transport
- Talking or hearing
- Writing, typing or reading
- Carrying or moving things
- Being able to concentrate or understand
- Being able to form social relationships.

Some conditions are specifically excluded from the Act as an impairment. For example, addiction to alcohol, nicotine and any other substance (unless the addiction is the result of medically-prescribed drugs or treatment).

A progressive condition is one that gets worse over time. People with progressive conditions can be classed as disabled. However, you automatically meet the disability definition under the Equality Act 2010 from the day you're diagnosed with HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis.



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Definitions

4 Hidden disabilities

Hidden disabilities refer to disabilities which may not be visible at a glance, but can have a major impact on people's lives and can include:

- **Chronic Pain:** A variety of conditions may cause back problems, musculoskeletal issues, physical injuries, neurological causes or headaches.
- **Chronic Fatigue:** This can be extremely debilitating and affect every aspect of a person's everyday life.
- **Mental Illness:** There are many mental illnesses that qualify for disability benefits. Some examples are depression, attention deficit disorder, schizophrenia, agoraphobia and many others. These diseases can make performing everyday tasks extremely difficult.
- **Chronic Dizziness:** Often associated with problems of the inner ear, chronic dizziness can lead to impairment when walking, driving, working, sleeping and other common tasks.

Some Common Hidden Disabilities include traumatic brain injury, epilepsy, diabetes, chronic fatigue syndrome, Cystic Fibrosis, Attention Deficit-Disorder or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder(ADD/ADHD)

A related condition is a condition which later develops into another condition related to the first. If taken together, the adverse effects of these two related conditions last for more than 12 months, a person will be considered as having a disability under the Equality Act.



Making
reasonable
adjustments

Making reasonable adjustments

A 'reasonable adjustment' is a change or adaptation to the working environment that has the effect of removing or minimising the impact of the individual's impairment in the workplace, so they are able to undertake their job duties, or apply for a job, without being at a disadvantage.

What the law says

Employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments in three scenarios:

- Where there is a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of the employer,
- Where there is a physical feature of premises occupied by an employer, or
- Where there is a lack of an auxiliary aid.

places a person at a substantial disadvantage compared with people who are not disabled. It is the employer's responsibility to consider if any adjustments are required as soon as they are aware that a person has a disability. It is not sufficient to wait for an individual to ask for what they need.

If you decide it's necessary to talk to somebody about their health or disability and if it's affecting their work, your overall aim is to figure out how they can perform to the best of their ability and what you can do to make this happen.

An employer should not try to get somebody to disclose a health condition or disability (they're not legally obliged to do so) or to invade their privacy by asking unnecessary questions about their health.

Making reasonable adjustments

Examples of reasonable adjustments in the workplace:

- Allocating some duties to another person
- Transferring the disabled person to an existing and more appropriate post
- Altering the disabled person's working hours
- Purchasing a special keyboard because of arthritis
- Enabling a gradual return after a long period of sickness
- Acquiring new, or modifying existing equipment
- Including a disabled parking space in the car park
- Providing additional supervisory guidance / support
- Providing literature in large print
- Allowing a guide or hearing dog into the workplace
- Discounting disability-related sickness leave for the purposes of absence management.

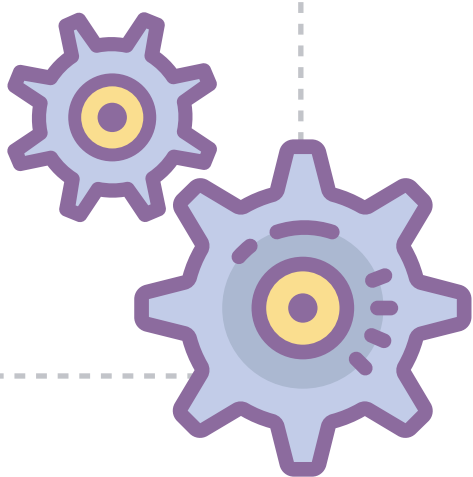


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Making reasonable adjustments

Examples of reasonable adjustments during an interview:

- Making changes to the location of the interview
- Adapting the environment, for example to enable wheelchair access or to dim down the lights for someone with epilepsy
- Providing an interpreter, for example for a candidate who communicates using sign language.
- Arranging the interview at a particular time. A candidate could have a condition that causes tiredness at certain times of the day, they need to take medication or eat at specific times, or they have difficulty using public transport during rush hour.



Making reasonable adjustments

What is considered 'reasonable'?

An employer is only expected to make an adjustment if it is considered to be 'reasonable'.

They are entitled to take into account all circumstances when deciding what steps it would be reasonable to take. This includes:

Effectiveness

Will the adjustment prevent the disadvantage? It is important not to make assumptions about what will be effective. Possible adjustments should be discussed with the individual and never imposed. In most cases, the person with a disability will have a better understanding of what measures will help and should be fully involved in the discussion.

Practicality

How practical is it to make an adjustment? Would it help other members of staff?

Cost

How much will the adjustment cost and will it disrupt any of the organisations activities? What resources are available and what other assistance/support is available? Many reasonable adjustments cost little or nothing to implement.

Making reasonable adjustments



Nature of employer's activity and size of undertaking

What may be reasonable in a very large company may not necessarily be so in a very small company.



The reasonable adjustment duty on an employer is not 'anticipatory'

This means that you are not expected to provide a range of adjustments to your premises in anticipation that one day you might employ a person with a specific disability. Also, you are not subject to the reasonable adjustment duty if you do not know, and could not reasonably be expected to know, that an individual has a disability.



Example

A disabled employee might request that you build a special ramp for wheelchair access to your offices. Having considered this you might decide it to be infeasible in cost and practical terms to make structural alterations to the building, but you might decide that you can have a temporary ramp available and someone ready to assist with entry and exit to the building. In doing so you would have complied with the law because you provided a workable solution that is reasonable in the circumstances.



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Making reasonable adjustments



Example

A new supervisor is recruited to manage a team. Shortly after their appointment, they become aware that the team receptionist has recently had many intermittent days off sick and is often late for work. During a catch-up, the supervisor discusses the sickness absence with the staff member and asks if everything is ok. The staff member explains they have rheumatoid arthritis. They experience worse symptoms in the morning and so need more time to get ready to leave the house. Their condition also leaves them feeling very fatigued, making the journey to work at rush hour exhausting. Moreover, as the condition fluctuates, they are often unable to predict when they will feel unwell.

The new manager asks the member of staff what they can do or change to help. The staff member suggests a later start and earlier finishing time will help them manage the early morning symptoms of their condition. The line manager agrees and arranges for another member of staff to cover the reception desk during these hours. The supervisor also ensures that any further absence related to the staff member's condition is registered as disability leave, so that their annual appraisal will not be affected by levels of sickness absence that are higher than average.

Further information and support

ACAS – Making and requesting reasonable adjustments in the workplace

 www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6074

Citizens Advice - The employer's duty to make reasonable adjustments

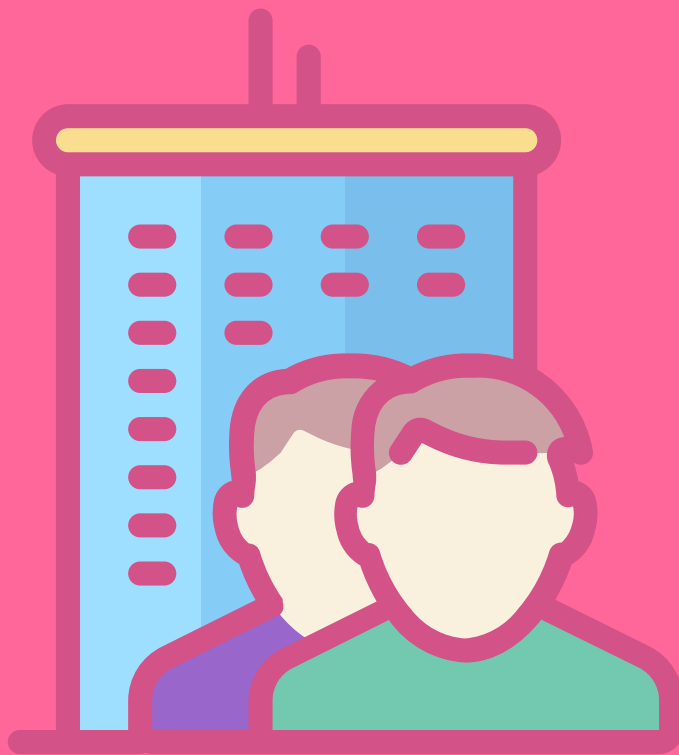
 www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/discrimination-at-work/what-are-the-different-types-of-discrimination/the-employer-s-duty-to-make-reasonable-adjustments/

Capability Scotland – Support and training for employers

 www.capability-scotland.org.uk/services/adult-and-children's-services/why-choose-us-quality-training/

Access to Work - Support to access funding for things that can help individuals in the workplace

 www.gov.uk/access-to-work



Disability and discrimination in the workplace

Disability and discrimination in the workplace

The Equality Act 2010 protects employees from disability-related discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

The Equality Act 2010 protects employees from disability-related discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The Equality Act also protects an employee from 'discrimination arising from disability' – this is where they are treated unfavourably, not because of the disability itself, but because of something linked with their disability.

How can disability discrimination happen?

There are four main types of discrimination within the protected characteristic of Disability under the Equality Act 2010:



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Disability and discrimination in the workplace

1 Direct Discrimination

Direct Discrimination is when someone is treated less favourably than others. It can be because of:

- their disability – this is **ordinary** direct discrimination
- the disability of someone they are associated with (friend, family, colleague). This is direct discrimination **by association**
- how they are perceived - that they are believed to have a disability. This is direct discrimination **by perception**, whether or not the perception is true.

✓ **In practice:** Decision not to employ someone, to dismiss them, withhold promotion or training, offer poorer terms and conditions or deny contractual benefits.

💬 **Example:** Julie has a tendency to make spelling mistakes arising from dyslexia. As a result, she is getting selected for redundancy instead of others in the admin team.

💬 **Example:** Pam has cerebral palsy which causes involuntary, jerky bodily movements. Senior managers think the movements would make it difficult for Pam to be taken seriously in a team leader role and decide to overlook her for promotion.

Disability and discrimination in the workplace

2 Indirect Discrimination

Indirect Discrimination occurs where an employer applies conditions or practice to all employees, but it puts people with a disability at a particular disadvantage compared to people who do not have a disability.

- ✓ **In practice:** Recruitment selection criteria, contractual benefits, a redundancy scoring matrix.
- 🗨️ **Example:** John has a condition which affects his concentration at work and he struggles to meet targets. Management only allows a 30 minutes lunch break, but John needs regular breaks to stay focused and rest. His disadvantage might be caused by a lack of frequent breaks rather than the targets which are imposed.

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Disability and discrimination in the workplace

3

Harassment

Harassment is an 'unwanted conduct'. It must have the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. It can be verbal, written or physical.

- ✔ **In practice:** Bullying, nicknames, threats, intrusive or inappropriate questions, excluding someone (ignoring, not inviting someone to meetings or events etc) or insults.
- 💬 **Example:** At a team meeting, a colleague of James says he does not understand why James needs a disabled parking space when spaces for staff are already so limited when he has a badge and can park anywhere.



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Disability and discrimination in the workplace

4 Victimisation

Victimisation is when an employee suffers a 'detriment' - something that causes damage, harm, or loss – because of:

Making an allegation of discrimination, supporting a complaint of discrimination, giving evidence relating to a complaint about discrimination, raising a grievance concerning equality or discrimination. An employee is protected under the Equality Act if they make, or support, an allegation of victimisation as long as it is in good faith – even if the information or evidence they give proves to be inaccurate.

✓ **In practice:** Being labelled a 'troublemaker', being left out and ignored, or being denied training.

🗨️ **Example:** Sarah has complained to her HR department that many staff members have been using the disabled toilet because it is the only one on the ground floor and it has restricted her access to it. HR has put up reminders on the door. Since then the three employees sharing her office have stopped including her in staff bulletin emails.

Good practice to avoid discrimination

Adjustments you can make to support a disabled person in the workplace

Contractual working conditions such as targets, working hours, leave

- Allocate some duties to another staff member, if the person is unable to meet the targets or cope with the workload because of their disability
- Transfer the person to another job, if they become unable to do their current job because of their disability
- Allow the person to take extra breaks during the day
- Allow the person to take time off work or disability leave if they need treatment or rehabilitation training.

Sick leave

Don't treat sick leave caused by a disability as routine sick leave:

- Allow the person to work flexibly - for example, work part time
- Allow the person to have a phased return to work
- Allow the person to return to an alternative job or adjust duties and responsibilities.

Good practice to avoid discrimination



Parking arrangements at work

- Reserve a parking space near the office.



Disciplinary or grievance

- Allow the person to bring a friend to a disciplinary meeting if they suffer from anxiety or have a learning disability.
- Hold the meeting in a neutral place if this reduces the person's anxiety.



Redundancy procedures

- Ignore periods of disability-related absences when applying redundancy selection criteria.



Recruitment and interview

- Allow extra time to complete an assessment.
- Ignore any absences in the person's last job which are disability-related.
- Ensure the recruitment processes are accessible for everyone – applications, tests, interviews etc.

Discrimination Exercise



Are these situations cases of discrimination? If so, what type?



Situation 1

A large hotel chain introduces a new telephone exchange and caller ID system. One of the receptionists, Julie, has a visual impairment and has previously used software to enlarge the text on the screen, but it is not compatible with the new exchange. The notification as for whether a call is external or internal is identified on screen as the call comes in, but this is too small for Julie to see. Extensive discussions take place to see if Julie could have a standard greeting, but this is declined by the head office. Julie's contract is terminated.

[Answer is on page 33.](#)

Discrimination Exercise



Situation 2

Barry has a severe visual impairment, which cannot be corrected by glasses. He is not selected for a job as a bus driver as he cannot carry out the essential requirements of the job.

[Answer is on page 33.](#)

Situation 3

James has an eating disorder. His manager knows he has an eating disorder and she makes offensive remarks in the open plan office about people with anorexia.

[Answer is on page 33.](#)

Discrimination Exercise



Situation 4

Gregor's arthritis has worsened. He has an adapted car he uses to get to work, but now finds it more and more difficult walking from the nearest car park to the office where he works. He asks the Human Resources department if he can park in one of the company car park places outside the office.

The HR manager turns down his request because the spaces are only for managers and the Board. The HR Manager suggests Gregor gets a wheelchair.

[Answer is on page 33.](#)

Discrimination Exercise

Answers



Situation 1

Answer: Direct discrimination, yes.

Situation 2

Answer: Indirect discrimination. No: This is likely to be justified as the reason he is not selected is a substantial one and is clearly linked to the safe performance of the role and where no reasonable adjustments could be made.

Situation 3

Answer: Yes. This is harassment.

Situation 4

Answer: Yes. Direct discrimination and refusal to make reasonable adjustments.



Induction and initial training

Induction and initial training

It is best practice to give an induction to everyone entering a new job. The induction is likely to be the new recruits first chance to meet colleagues, find his or her way around the premises and to learn about your organisation.

Everything will be new and unexpected issues may arise. The employer may have to make adjustments to ensure a person with disabilities is introduced into a new working environment in a clearly structured and supported way, with an individually tailored induction/training programme if necessary.

Some people with disabilities may take longer than other employees to settle into a job. It may be appropriate to allow a longer induction period than usual for some employees. This is particularly relevant when reasonable adjustments are being tested to find out if they are working as intended.



Induction and initial training



Workplace support

There are a number of ways in which an induction and initial training process can be made more accessible to a new employee with a disability. Employers should consult with the new employee and with their employment worker to agree any adjustments that may be necessary. Examples could include:

- It may be beneficial to assign another member of staff as a mentor to support the new employee for a specified period of time, to help them settle in and get to know their new work colleagues.
- External agencies can also help and if the person is employed through a supported employment scheme, they can benefit from support on the job as well as mentoring. Where an employment support service has been involved in the recruitment process, a support worker will often come into the workplace to find out what is involved in the job. They then work out the best way for the person with a disability to be inducted into their post
- Often, an induction period involves the new employee shadowing or being supported by a more experienced employee. This works particularly well for people with learning disabilities.



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Induction and initial training



Customs and practice - Beware of the unwritten rules

Most organisations have ‘unwritten rules’ about interaction between colleagues (such as who makes the coffee, where people sit at breaks, when it’s okay to interrupt someone in their work). Some people will come into a workplace and pick these rules up quickly and easily; others, such as someone with a learning disability or someone on the autistic spectrum may find it more difficult.

Be aware of the ‘unwritten rules’ of your workplace and be prepared to explain these to a new employee with a disability. Do not assume employees with certain disabilities will automatically pick up these ‘unwritten rules’.

Sometimes a taken-for-granted workplace practice can put a disabled person at a disadvantage. It will be important in these circumstances to recognise that an adjustment is required



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Induction and initial training

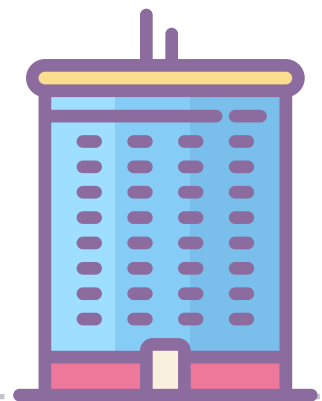


Health and safety

Managers should ensure that disabled staff are consulted about their individual needs for evacuating the building in a safe and dignified manner, in advance of any emergency. Company risk assessment should be updated to take account of the particular support needs of any new employee. This is a straightforward exercise for any experienced Health & Safety practitioner and should not present a barrier to a person with a disability taking up a role.



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Induction and initial training



Off-the-job training and assessment

When induction involves off-the-job training and assessment, there are various adjustments that can easily be made.

Examples include:

- Putting people in smaller groups than is usual
- Asking people questions rather than giving them a written test
- Giving people longer to go through a training manual
- Putting training material into accessible formats
- Allowing a support worker to attend the training
- Make adjustments to training methods to suit individual needs.

🗨️ **Example:** A small building firm usually hands out written copies of all its policies by way of induction to new employees and gives them half a day to read the documentation and to raise any questions with their line manager. A new employee has dyslexia and the employer arranges for her supervisor or a support worker, if appropriate, to spend a morning with her talking through the relevant policies.

🗨️ **Example:** When a person with autism starts a job or takes on new responsibilities, clear and structured training is invaluable. Rather than saying 'give everybody a copy of this', say 'make three photocopies of this, and give one each to Laura and Sean'. You may also choose to provide written instructions. It can be helpful to ask the employee to repeat back instructions, so you are sure they have understood.

Induction and initial training



Confidentiality

It is important to respect an employee's right to confidentiality about their disability or long term condition and any support needs relating to it.

Everyone is entitled to have their personal information kept private. People with learning disabilities, in particular, often have very bad experiences of personal information being shared about them and this has sometimes resulted in harassment and abuse.

Employers should think carefully about what information they need to know, how much needs to be shared with other employees and how to respect people's confidentiality. They should only share information that is necessary for other employees to know about an employee and agree with the employee what and how information will be shared.

- **Example:** An employee with learning disabilities needs to take medication at certain times of the day. His work colleagues are informed that he needs to take a five-minute break at these times. They are not told why, as this would have been a breach of his confidentiality.



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Induction and initial training



Support for people with learning disabilities

There are a number of techniques that may be useful when supporting a person who has learning disabilities to learn a job:

- Breaking the job down into separate tasks
- Providing instructions in a format accessible to the person with learning disabilities. Ask a support agency or an organisation specialising in accessible communication to help you with this
- Make sure you give instructions at a pace that is suitable for the employee. Check that the person has understood and, if necessary, repeat instructions or show them again how to do a task.

A number of SUSE members are expert and experienced in supporting people who have learning disabilities and their employers in the workplace. SUSE can link employers to appropriate providers in their local area.

Example: Daniel has a learning disability. He joins a cleaning company who are contracted to service rooms in a large hotel. When he starts, his team supervisor organises an informal meeting with Daniel and his support worker to discuss any reasonable adjustments Daniel might need to carry out his job.

Daniel and his support worker suggest that instead of completing the traditional two days of training undertaken by other new starts, Daniel is paired with an experienced team member who can help him learn 'on-the-job'. Daniel's supervisor agrees, and Daniel is successfully paired with a colleague who will help him learn the requirements of the role.



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Induction and initial training



Support for people with learning disabilities continued

After a few weeks Daniel's supervisor meets with him and his support worker again to discuss how he is doing. Daniel's supervisor is concerned because he does not always clean rooms to an acceptable standard. During the conversation, Daniel explains that he sometimes forgets certain aspects of his role because he finds the staff handbook (which details the processes and requirements for cleaning the hotel rooms) difficult to follow.

Daniel's supervisor arranges for an 'easy-read' version of the staff handbook to be produced, which Daniel finds easier to understand.





Communication

Communication

People generally want to use language that describes disability accurately and does not cause offence but are often quite unsure about this. As all people with disabilities are individuals, there are no hard and fast rules regarding etiquette and terminology, but there are a few things you could bear in mind.

Do not make assumptions about people or their disabilities

Do not assume you know what someone wants, how they feel, or what is best for them based on your own perceptions. Often the best way to make a person with a disability comfortable is to ask for their advice.

If you have a question about what to do, how to do it, what language or terminology to use, or what assistance to offer, do not be afraid to ask. That person should be your first and best resource.

Ask before you help

Before you help someone, ask if they require assistance. In some cases, a person with a disability might seem to be struggling, yet they are fine and would prefer to complete the task on their own. Follow the person's cues and ask if you are not sure what to do. Do not be offended if someone declines your offer of assistance.

Positive language

The words we use when talking to or describing others can be very powerful. Sometimes the negative words we use about disability causes us to see what the person cannot do before we see their abilities.

See the PERSON before the disability. Having a disability is not a "problem", it is a natural part of life - 20% of us have a disability or long term health condition. It does not make a person less valuable to society. When we interact with people with disabilities we should focus on their unique personal characteristics instead of defining who they are based on their disability. The words we use have the power to build positive images about disability.

See the person before the disability



Instructions: look at the sentences below. Why are they negative?
How could you turn them into positive statements?

Sentence 1

Sheila is handicapped.

[Answer is on page 47](#)

Sentence 2

Jane suffers from Cerebral Palsy.

[Answer is on page 47](#)

Sentence 3

Dave is physically challenged and confined to a wheelchair.

[Answer is on page 47](#)

See the person before the disability



Sentence 4

Katie is brain damaged.

[Answer is on page 48](#)

Sentence 5

Michael's walking is restricted
because he uses crutches.

[Answer is on page 48](#)

Sentence 6

Amy is a normal girl.

[Answer is on page 48](#)

Sentence 7

George is disabled and unable
to do things.

[Answer is on page 48](#)

See the person before the disability answers



Sentence 1 answer

Positive sentence: **Sheila has a disability.** Probably the best bit of advice is not to refer to someone's disability or health unless you strictly need to.

Sentence 2 answer

Positive sentence: **Jane has Cerebral Palsy.** Don't use words that suggest pity or could be patronising. Don't assume someone is a "victim" or "suffering" because they are disabled.

Sentence 3 answer

Positive sentence: **Dave uses a wheelchair.** Don't feel the need to use overly technical vocabulary, or euphemistic terms such as "intellectually challenged" or "physically challenged". In many ways, these are nonsensical – would it make sense to call somebody who uses a wheelchair "physically challenged" if they're also an elite Paralympic basketball player and fitter than I am?

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See the person before the disability answers



Sentence 4 answer

Positive sentence: **Katie has a brain injury.**

Sentence 5 answer

Positive sentence: **Michael uses crutches to assist his walking.**

Sentence 6 answer

Positive sentence: **Amy does not have a disability.** Avoid words like “normal” and “abnormal”. These imply there’s something “wrong” with the person.

Sentence 7 answer

Positive sentence: **George has a disability and is able to do many things.**

Efficient communication

1 Communication with people who are deaf or hard of hearing

The first language of people who are born deaf, or become deaf before spoken language is acquired, is normally British Sign Language, however, it should not be assumed that a deaf person can sign.

Good Practice

- Remember to speak to the person you are meeting, rather than their interpreter
- If you need to catch the person's attention, you should do so by lightly touching their shoulder or by waving your hand
- Interpreters should only work for half an hour before being given a break. Meetings of more than 2 hours should have 2 interpreters working
- At the start of any meeting you should check with the person that they have no objection to being provided with confidential information via an interpreter. If they object, an alternative should be arranged for this
- Where it is essential to communicate by telephone, ensure you speak clearly and any answer phone messages are kept brief.



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Efficient communication

1

Communication with people who are deaf or hard of hearing

Arranging a meeting

- Set up a meeting room free from background noise or with a minimum of noise
- Fit an induction loop, which amplifies sound where you know someone with a hearing aid will be present
- Make clear at the outset of a meeting that one person at a time should speak and that all comments or questions should be directed through the chair.

Lip-reading

Lip-reading is a specialist skill that some deaf people use. You can ask people if they lip-read when you meet them. If they do, it is best to:

- Look directly at them and speak slowly and clearly, making sure that your face can be seen
- Keep sentences reasonably short
- Use suitable facial expressions or other body language to emphasise what you are trying to convey
- Do not make assumptions that the person does/does not understand, clarify with the person, e.g. use written notes.



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Efficient communication

2 Communication with people who are visually impaired

Good Practice

- Identify yourself clearly, introduce anyone else who is present in the room and indicate where they are placed in relation to the person who is visually impaired
- Say the name of the person you are talking to when part of a group
- Make sure you let the person know when you have ended a conversation and want to move away
- Take care not to distract a person's guide dog.

Arranging a meeting

- Ensure that the room has good levels of light and a means of controlling glare.
- Ensure the room is clearly signposted or that a member of staff is on hand to offer assistance.



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Efficient communication

3 Communication with people with impaired speech

Good Practice

- Be attentive and patient, it can take longer for someone to make their point
- Avoid correcting or speaking for the person; wait quietly while the person speaks and resist the temptation to finish his or her sentences
- Tell the person if you do not understand, do not pretend you understand.

4 Communication with people with impaired mobility

Good Practice

Stand in front of the person and try and place yourself at their eye level

- Do not move about so that the person has to continually change position in order to speak directly to you
- Talk directly to a wheelchair user, not to their companion
- Do not lean on a wheelchair – you are invading the body space of the user.



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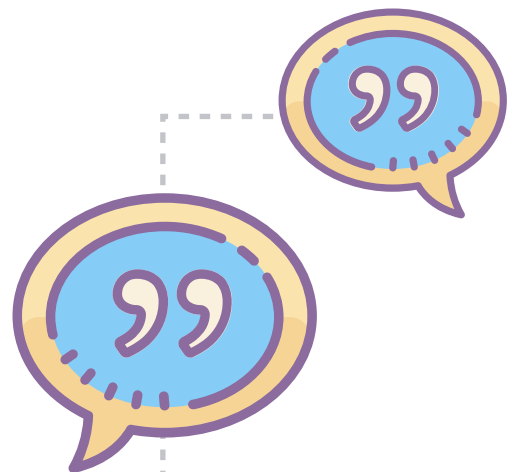
Efficient communication

4 Communication with people with impaired mobility

Arranging a meeting

- Check that there are suitable parking facilities close to your meeting place
- Make sure that the entrance is level, or has a ramp
- Ensure that the doors are easy to open or that a member of staff is available to offer assistance with heavy or revolving doors
- Check where the nearest accessible toilets are located
- Organise a meeting room that is easy to get to for someone using a wheelchair or walking aids
- Ensure that it has sufficient space to allow the person with a disability to remain fully mobile and unobstructed.

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Efficient communication

5 Communication with people with learning disabilities

Good Practice

- Be patient and encourage the individual
- Be prepared to explain more than once if necessary, and do not assume you will be understood
- Ask the person to stop you if they do not understand
- Do not ask multiple questions and keep the sentence structure concise and jargon-free
- Use clear and unambiguous language, whether in written or verbal communication
- Ask if the person has a job coach or support worker who provides employment assistance if required.

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Efficient communication

5 Communicating with people with an autistic spectrum condition (ASC)

People with Autism or Asperger syndrome thrive in a structured and well-organised environment and may have many strengths such as accuracy, good eye for detail, reliability and meticulous application of routine tasks. However, they may have (often mild) difficulties with the following:

- Clear understanding of verbal and non-verbal communication such as body language or facial expressions
- Building social relationships, starting and maintaining conversations on topics that may not be of particular interest to them
- Imaginative activity: they may have narrow interests and find it hard to think in abstract ways. They may be much more comfortable with facts rather than hypotheses.

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Communication methods

Information should be made available that is understandable and accessible by all. Some people with disabilities will need information to be provided in different formats.

Not all communication provided by the organisation needs to be provided in every format but it is important to have an awareness of what different methods are available and how to produce these quickly if they are required.

Local and national support organisations may be able to provide these services.

- **Royal Association for Deaf people (RAD)** www.royaldeaf.org.uk
- **The British Deaf Association** www.bda.org.uk
- **The Association of Lipspeakers (ALS)** www.lipspeaking.co.uk
- **The British Computer Association of the Blind** www.bcab.org.uk
- **Deafblind UK** www.deafblind.org.uk
- **Sense for Deafblind People** www.sense.org.uk

Efficient communication

1 Audio

This is of particular benefit to people with learning disabilities, visual impairments, low literacy levels, or those who may have problems with their hands. You will need to decide whether to record the tape yourself or to go through a transcription agency. Doing it yourself may be appropriate if responding to an individual request, whilst an agency can produce a tape with a more 'professional' feel, often including music and other effects.

2 Electronic

Making information available in electronic format can be a cheap and easy way to reach a growing number of blind and partially sighted people who have access to computers, smart phones and other information technology devices.

3 Braille

Braille is a system of raised dots which some blind people can read with their fingers. Some blind and partially sighted people prefer particular types of information in Braille, for example information to be used in meetings or to be read silently.



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Efficient communication

4 Large Print

For the majority of blind and partially sighted people, larger print is essential. No single size is suitable for everyone but most people prefer their large print in the range of 16 to 22 point in a clear font such as Arial.

5 British sign language (BSL) interpreters

BSL is a visual language, communicated in a variety of ways: using specific signs, using different hand shapes and movements, facial expressions, lip patterns and upper body movements.

6 Lip-speakers

Lip-speakers convey a speaker's message to lip-readers without using their voice. They produce clearly the shape of the words, the flow, rhythm and phrasing of natural speech and repeat the stress used by the speaker.



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Efficient communication

7 Deafblind interpreters

Communication methods used by deafblind people vary greatly depending on the amount of residual sight and hearing. Some will be able to hear speech, lip-read and use sign language; many of those who can't hear speech or see sufficiently to follow lip-reading or visual sign language will use some form of tactile communication.

8 Minicomms / textphones

Minicomms/textphones allow hearing impaired people to communicate over the telephone using a keyboard and visual display.





Policies and practices

Policies and practices

When an employer recruits a person with a disability, it is important that the right policies are in place and appropriate support is in place, with any adjustments reviewed regularly to ensure that the member of staff has every opportunity to be fully effective and develop in their role.

It is also important to note that many economically active people of working age will become disabled or develop a long term condition during their working life. It therefore makes sense for employers to have an appropriate suite of policies to support these workers and knowledge about how to make reasonable adjustments.

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Disability management approach to retention

Best practice in retention means holding on to valuable employees, whether they have a disability or health condition, when they are first employed or acquire a disability during the course of their employment.



A disability management approach to retention should:

- Increase the numbers of employees returning to work after a short or long-term absence
- Reduce the costs associated with absence in the workplace
- Improve productivity and employee morale
- Avoid inadvertent discrimination towards employees with a disability
- Avoid a negative approach, which focuses on irrelevant medical requirements or 'getting rid of' perceived problems

Benefits of retention and redeployment of staff

There are many benefits of retaining people who develop a disability or health condition during their working lives.



These benefits are:

- Many people with a disability have well-developed problem-solving skills that can be of benefit in the workplace. Living with a disability or a health condition often means dealing with difficulties as part of everyday life, using planning, negotiation and problem-solving skills. These types of flexible and transferable skills can be useful and can promote a problem-solving culture.
- The cost of keeping an employee, by implementing a reasonable adjustment, will almost always cost far less than having to recruit and train a new employee.
- Adjustments that are made for people with a disability or health condition often benefit others – both employees and customers. As an organisation becomes more disability aware, these changes become part of mainstream activities – just the way things are done. This approach can make a business more responsive to their customers' needs and creates a positive workplace culture that benefits everyone who works there.

Sickness absence

With significant numbers of people who acquire a disability whilst in work, it is important to consider disabilities when managing sickness absence. People can acquire a disability not only as the result of a single traumatic injury (e.g. a road traffic accident), but also due to the development or deterioration of a condition. It is good practice to be proactive in relation to an employee's absence and rehabilitation and to consider making reasonable adjustments before an employee's condition would necessarily be considered a disability. This may help employees return to work earlier and save the costs of sickness absence and replacement staff.

There is a difference between sickness and disability-related absences. People with disabilities generally take no more or less sick leave than other employees. However, a minority, owing to the nature of their condition may need to take additional disability-related absences.



Good Practice

Actions employers could consider:

- Where possible, maintain regular contact with the employee
- Refer the employee to occupational health providers if available
- Seek assistance from the DWP or a specialist agency
- Focus on bringing the employee back to work by discussing any adjustments that might be required
- Consider a phased return.



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Sickness absence



Example

An employer has a sick leave policy that limits absences to three days in any six-month period. If an employee acquires a disability or long-term health condition and needs regular treatment to stabilise their condition, the employer could be discriminating if he penalised the employee for taking sick leave relating to disability. It is best practice for employers to distinguish between sick leave and disability-related absences.



Steps to ease transition back to work

Managers need to bear in mind that an employee who has been absent from work for any length of time may feel very anxious about returning to work. This may be the case particularly if the absence has been the result of mental health issues. It is vital that the employer takes steps to ease the transition back into work. For example:

- Arrange a social visit prior to the official return date of the employee
- Keep in contact, discussing fully any adjustments or supports that have been put in place
- Agree to a phased return where the employee can gradually increase their hours and/or duties
- Make sure the employee is not overloaded initially, although it is important that they are given meaningful work to do soon after their return
- Discuss with the individual if they would like any support explaining their absence to colleagues and how they would like any changes in the workplace to be explained.



Retention and redeployment policy

There will be occasions when, after all reasonable adjustments have been made, an employee will be unable to carry out the duties in their post because of the effects of a disability or long term health condition. This situation may also occur where an individual has a disability that is stable, but the nature of their job changes significantly and they are not able to carry out the new duties even with reasonable adjustments.

Where there are no reasonable adjustments that would enable the person to stay in their original post, it is good practice to consider if there are any other posts that would be suitable. It would be a reasonable adjustment to transfer someone to a vacant post to allow them to be retained. However, the organisation does not have to 'create' a vacancy if there is not one available.

The following stages are suggested as a procedure to ensure that all options are considered. Ideally these should be written into a retention and redeployment policy to ensure that all supervisory staff are aware of their responsibilities. In any event, the stages are listed to present a potential outline of actions that may be considered by employers.

The most vital aspects of the retention and redeployment process are to ensure full consultation with the individual at all times throughout the process, and consideration of reasonable adjustments at all stages.



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Retention and redeployment policy

1 Stage one

Information collected to support the decision making process.

There is an option to refer the individual to a medical officer or occupational health provider to support the process. A specialist support employment agency and an advocacy service can also provide assistance.

2 Stage two

All information available brought together to form a redeployment action plan.

This should be discussed fully with the employee and include details of what adjustments could be considered.



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Retention and redeployment policy

3 Stage three

In light of additional information being gathered, the possibility of making reasonable adjustments to the individual's current post should be considered to ensure redeployment is the only remaining option.

This stage requires flexible and creative thinking. Consideration should then be given to any vacancies and any reasonable adjustments that could be made to make these a viable option. It would be good practice to consider Job Carving/Job Filling at this stage. Throughout this process the individual must be fully consulted, and their preferences taken into consideration.

4 Stage four

If there is any uncertainty whether a post will be suitable, a short work placement in the new post can be arranged.

This gives the opportunity to assess the person's capabilities in the new post, refine any reasonable adjustments and for the individual to consider if they wish to proceed with the transfer.



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Retention and redeployment policy

5 Stage five

The situation is regularly monitored to ensure that the employee is given the appropriate levels of support once re-settled into their existing job with adjustments or re-deployed into a new role.

Redundancy

In general, the same arrangements, duties and requirements for redundancy will apply for employees with a disability as for employees without disabilities. However, it is essential to recognise that it can sometimes be easy to unintentionally discriminate against a person with a disability in these situations.

It is normal practice for a consultation process with employees to be undertaken when redundancies are being considered. Employers need to ensure that any arrangements which are made for consultation do not discriminate against an employee with a disability. It is vital to make sure that they have received the information in an appropriate format, can fully understand the proposals and have the same chance as any other employee to contribute to the consultation process.



Good practice for consultation

- You should consider involving a representative for an employee who has a learning disability to help explain the process and to assist the individual to present feedback to management
- A person with a visual impairment should have any written information provided in large print or electronic format
- It is quite common practice to include number of days sickness absence as part of the selection criteria, for consideration for redundancy. However, if this includes absence caused by a person's disability, this could potentially be seen as disability-related discrimination
- It would be considered good practice to allow an employee with a disability to have independent representation throughout this process.

Disciplinary action

Employees with a disability are covered by the same disciplinary policies as all other employees. However, care must be taken throughout the disciplinary process to ensure that the employee is able to fully participate in the disciplinary process and that there are no factors relating to a person's disability that have led to the disciplinary action being taken, such as a person on the autistic spectrum misunderstanding of unwritten rules or codes of conduct.

Reasonable adjustments may need to be made when proceeding with disciplinary action or interviews in the same way as for other situation or procedures. It would be considered good practice to allow an employee with a disability to have independent representation throughout this process.



Example

An individual who is deaf and a BSL user (British Sign Language) usually lip reads in his day-to-day work, as it does not involve much communication and he does not feel a BSL interpreter is usually necessary. It would be a reasonable adjustment to offer to arrange an interpreter for a disciplinary meeting, as it is vital that everything that is being discussed is communicated in full and there are no risks of information being misunderstood.



Recruitment


Recruitment

By taking simple steps to prevent discrimination and removing unnecessary barriers in the recruitment process, employers can ensure that the best person for the job is always recruited and people with disabilities or long term conditions are able to compete for available jobs. Employers have told us that introducing fair recruitment practices doesn't just benefit people with a disability – the organisation becomes a better place to work for everyone

1 Job description

The job description should always reflect the requirements of the job accurately and should always be in clear language.

It is good practice to regularly review job descriptions and not only prior to recruitment. This can help to distinguish between the main activities of the job and marginal activities that may not be essential parts of the role. This will enable you to consider reasonable adjustments, as it will be easy to see if tasks could be transferred to another member of staff or if they are fundamental to the role.


 **Example:** If the role includes driving a delivery van once a month (a marginal activity), it is likely to be reasonable to allocate those duties to another member of staff if the best candidate in all other respects was unable to hold a driving licence due to their disability. In comparison, in a job that involves driving a delivery van for most of every shift (a main activity), it probably would not be a reasonable adjustment to reallocate these duties and it may be reasonable to require applicants to hold a valid driving licence.

Recruitment

2 Person specification

When outlining the essential skills, experience and other attributes necessary to carry out the job, it is important to scrutinise all criteria carefully. Care must be taken to avoid including any unnecessary requirements that may lead to discrimination.

It is important to ensure that any personal, medical or health-related criteria are absolutely necessary for the performance of the job. The essential characteristics/minimum criteria should not include qualifications and experiences that are not necessary to the job.

 **Example:** A managerial job includes essential travel to a rural location away from the office on a weekly basis and there is no public transport that can be used. Commonly, in a post like this, a driving licence would be included as an essential requirement; however, this could be indirect disability discrimination against people whose disability prevents them from holding a driving licence. Therefore, a more appropriate essential requirement would be the ability to drive, travel or for the employee to arrange a driver. There may be funding available to help the person with this part of their job.


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Recruitment

3 Advertising

Adverts must not make discriminatory statements in relation to people with disabilities and not use language that could imply that applicants with a disability are unwelcome. It is best to avoid unnecessary wording regarding mobility or character such as: strong, agile, prepared to work long hours.

Employers should consider advertising in publications and websites aimed at people with disabilities or notifying local disability organisations of vacancies. SUSE Members can assist with this. You also need to make sure adverts posted online are accessible.

 **Example:** It is good practice to include a welcoming and encouraging statement in adverts. This is a public statement of policy and intent and lets potential applicants know that you will be able to understand and meet the needs of people with disabilities. For example, you could write 'We welcome enquiries from people with a disability and value diversity in our workforce', or 'We are willing to consider flexible working arrangements'.



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Recruitment

4 Application forms

The application form should encourage applicants to declare a disability and explain the employer's commitment to a positive approach towards equality of opportunity in employment.

Application forms should:

- Ask whether the applicant believes that they will need the employer to make a reasonable adjustment in the selection process or in the job itself, and what this adjustment might be
- Ensure that the form is easy to follow and read, avoids very small print and has adequate space for replies – this will help all applicants, not just those with disabilities
- Ideally, and where practicable, the form should be available in different formats. This may include audio, Braille, large print and electronic, then allowing candidates to submit the form in format of their choosing.

If requesting applicants to fill in application forms online, make sure you consider digital barriers to recruitment. There is more information on this below.



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Recruitment

5 Short-listing

It is good practice to invite all disabled candidates who meet the essential criteria for the post to interview. Where it is not clear if a disability might have an effect on an individual's ability to complete the essential activities of the job, negative assumptions should not be made, and the applicant should be given the opportunity to evidence their skills and explore what reasonable adjustments might remove any barriers.

Employers should take into account gaps in education or employment history that relate to a disability when shortlisting and, if necessary, make a reasonable adjustment to any essential educational or experience criteria for the job so that a disabled person with lesser qualifications or experience is considered for interview.

6 References

Reference request letters for all candidates should only ask for information relevant to the job, based on the person specification (i.e. extent of skills, aptitudes and experience). No isolated reference to a disability should be made.



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Recruitment

7

Reasonable adjustments at the recruitment stage

An employer should ask whether a job applicant needs any 'reasonable adjustments' or 'access requirements', for any part of the recruitment process. But, employers cannot ask an applicant if they are disabled.

- If a candidate has indicated a disability in their application, or the employer becomes aware of it, or the candidate asks for 'reasonable adjustments', the employer must consider and make 'reasonable adjustments' to the recruitment process. For example, holding the interview in a location that is accessible.
- Before offering a job, an employer must only ask a disabled applicant what 'reasonable adjustments' are needed for the recruitment process and, once those are in place, whether they are suitable, and to determine whether the applicant could carry out a function essential to role with the 'reasonable adjustments' in place
- Otherwise, only after offering the job, should an employer ask the successful applicant what adjustments they will need to do the job and progress at work.

Job creation: the benefits working with a supported employment agency

Job creation is a method of job finding where a job is created by identifying parts of a job or tasks that an employer needs completing and can be completed by a job seeker with a disability.

It can take imagination and creativity on the part of both the employer and the Employment Support Worker, but it can lead to a win-win situation for both the employer and the prospective employee.

Strategies for successful job creation

- **Job carving** - the tasks of the employee are taken from the job descriptions of different existing jobs in the company. In that way, a new job is created that fits the abilities and strengths of the supported employee. The other employees in the company have more time to do the tasks which they are qualified for or better suited to do
- **Job stripping** - some tasks the employee would find too difficult are taken away from the regular job description, for example reading or carrying heavy objects. In exchange, the person might take over other tasks from his/her co-workers
- **Job enrichment** - new tasks are added to the job description according to the abilities of the employee or to foster inclusion in the company. For example, in a job with little contact with co-workers during the day, the task of collecting mail in the company is added to allow the person to have more contact with co-workers.

Good practice for digital recruitment: digital barriers

Recruitment today is often digital, with increasing numbers of employers posting vacancies on their websites and advertising through online job search websites. Many employers only accept applications which have been submitted online.

This has created a scenario where job seekers with disabilities face not just attitudinal barriers, but digital barriers as well. A significant portion of employer sites, recruitment boards and online tools are not fully accessible to people with disabilities. This raises serious questions about diverse recruitment practices and discrimination.

At SUSE we want to work with employers as partners – helping them to create workforces that reflect the communities they serve. We are therefore increasingly concerned about digital barriers to recruitment and are keen to educate employers on how they can have efficient and cost effective recruitment processes that do not deter applicants who have disabilities or long term conditions.

Web accessibility problems for disabled job seekers include:

- Navigation issues
- Timeouts
- Poor colour contrast
- Graphics without alternative text descriptions
- Job applications that could only be completed using a mouse.



Tips for reducing digital barriers

- **Make online applications accessible** - Employers tend to underestimate the need for accessible online job applications and may not have thought about the impact on people with disabilities. It is also necessary to offer alternatives, including traditional paper based applications.
- **Accessibility versus usability** - Many employers think that accessibility is about compliance, not usability. But just because a technology is compliant does not necessarily mean it is intuitive and user-friendly.
- **Consider costs** - Technical solutions for the most common accessibility issues already existed; however, many thought those solutions would be expensive and difficult to implement.
- **Look at the big picture** - Employers often fail to look at the big picture and consider accessibility challenges beyond the job application form itself, including processes related to job sourcing (how people find out about the vacancy), pre-employment testing and digital interviews.
- **Test before going online** - Employers rarely tested their online job application software with actual users prior to launch. It is good practice to carry out user testing on these applications and get constructive feedback.
- **Follow guidelines** - Knowing the technical requirements to make a website accessible can make online recruitment easier. There is a great deal of help and advice available from SUSE members.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

Many digital barriers could easily be re-mediated if website designers follow the universal standards for web accessibility (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), Instead, countless opportunities for richer talent are potentially lost when companies rely on inaccessible online recruitment tools.

WCAG is a step-by-step set of technical requirements explaining how you can make your website accessible to people with various kinds of disabilities. Following these guidelines will make content more accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, limited movement, speech disabilities, photo-sensitivity, and combinations of these, and some accommodation for learning disabilities and cognitive limitations.

More information here:

 www.essentialaccessibility.com/blog/web-content-accessibility-guidelines-wcag/

 www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/



**Be proactive
about inclusion**

Be proactive about inclusion

In addition to good practice measures, processes and activities, there are further ways in which employers can help people with disabilities to prepare for and enter employment.

Even if an employer does not have an actual job vacancy, there are ways to assist people with disabilities to become more competitive and increase their job prospects. We've described some pro-active approaches in the **Recruitment** section of this guide.

Job creation - Working with Supported Employment agencies

Job Creation is where a Supported Employment agency works in partnership with an employer to identify parts of a job or tasks that the employer needs completing and can be completed by the job seeker with a disability. It can take imagination and creativity on behalf of both the employer and the Supported Employment agency, but in many cases, it can lead to a win-win situation for the employer and the prospective employee.

For more information on job creation, see the Recruitment section.

Be proactive about inclusion

Work experience placements

Employers may also want to consider offering work experience placements or work tasters for people with disabilities or long term conditions. Some managers may be apprehensive about employing a person with a disability. The great majority of these concerns can stem from a lack of knowledge about the capabilities of people with disabilities and the types of support available.

One of the most effective methods to improve awareness of employment and disability issues and to demonstrate commitment to a proactive approach in supporting people with disabilities is to offer work experience placements within the organisation.

This is often for people who have not worked before or who have developed a disability and need to change careers. The placements should be strictly time limited to between 2-8 weeks, usually on a part-time basis, involve clear goals and activities and be facilitated through a local supported employment organisation.

This can also be a useful learning opportunity for the employer and their staff team who may not have considered what roles in their organisation could be carried out by people who have disabilities.



Be proactive about inclusion



Benefits of a work experience placement

- Increase or update existing skills
- Determine strengths and weaknesses
- Identify work preferences
- Obtain an up-to-date reference
- Gain relevant work experience.
- Contribute to a job search plan

When providing a work experience placement it is important to draw up an agreement between the organisation, individual and any support organisation. This should include the terms of the placement (lengths, hours, supervision), and the provision of insurance cover. Individuals would not normally receive payment whilst on placement but should be provided with any uniform or safety equipment appropriate to the job.

Be proactive about inclusion

Job tasters

A job taster should be organised in much of the same manner as that of a work experience placement. The main difference is that the duration of a job taster would not be expected to last for more than two weeks and may indeed be only for a day or two. Job tasters are a simple yet effective way to enable a person with a disability to get a flavour of a specific occupational sector and to sample different types of work for a short period of time. This can be of benefit with regards to identifying future employment goals and also assists a person to gain an insight into particular work environments.

Work-site visits

People with disabilities are more likely to have been out of work for considerably longer periods compared to non-disabled people. Moreover, significant numbers of people with disabilities may have never been in work and are quite unaware of particular industries, work-place environments and job activities.

By facilitating an organised work-site visit, an employer can provide a person with a disability (or a group) with a brief insight into the realities of work and the roles and tasks performed in their workplace. This may well influence their career choices as well as helping prepare for the world of work. Work-site visits should ideally be organised and co-ordinated through an employment support organisation and would not be expected to last more than a few hours.

Be proactive about inclusion

Encourage job applications from people with disabilities

Employers can target people with disabilities and disability organisations by sending them future job vacancies. A welcoming and encouraging statement in job advertisements conveys a positive message that as an employer you wish to create a diverse workforce. You can find out more information about this in the Advertising tab in the Recruitment section of this guide.

Include Disability Awareness Throughout Your Company

Inclusion happens when everyone in your company understands the value of hiring a diverse workforce. Include regular training focusing on disability awareness and inclusion. Many SUSE members can offer this training. SUSE also offers employers a quality training programme for the managers of organisations who undertake the Inclusive Workplace Award.

Be proactive about inclusion

Consider an Award scheme or a national initiative

SUSE has developed the Inclusive Workplace Award. Working towards the award allows you to review your practices and give managers training to increase their confidence in supporting people who have disabilities or long term health conditions. It also allows you to link up with a Supported Employment agency who can support you to recruit and retain employees with a disability. For more information, please visit our website:



www.suse.org.uk/inclusive-workplace-award

SUSE also runs DuoDay once a year. This a great way to promote your organisation as inclusive and committed to diversity. It also allow a young person with a disability to learn about your organisation.

For more information, please visit our website:



www.suse.org.uk/duo-day/how-to-guide





Selection and interviews

Selection and interviews

All interviews should be objective and non-biased, all applicants should be allowed an opportunity to provide evidence of their abilities and skills in relation to the job. When interviewing a person with a disability, do not let any misconceptions or assumptions about disabilities influence your view on whether a person can do the job.

Asking about a disability should only be done in a positive manner, in relation to the effect on someone's ability to do the job and focusing on what adjustments might remove any barriers.

Planning reasonable adjustments

If you know in advance that a candidate will need some reasonable adjustments to take part in a selection interview, you will need to arrange these. If you do not know in advance, you should try to accommodate any needs a person with a disability might have when they arrive.



Good Practice

Encouraging applicants to discuss any requirements early in the application process can help make the interview process easier for both candidate and interviewers. It may be useful to insert the following paragraph in your invitation for interview letters:

“If you require assistance to attend this interview, for example, use of a signer or interpreter, mini-loop induction facility or car parking within close proximity to the interview venue - or if disability affects your access to, or mobility within buildings, please contact [named individual] at the above address/number, who will be happy to provide you with assistance”.

Reasonable adjustments during an interview

These can include:

- Making changes to the location of the interview
- Adapting the environment, for example to enable wheelchair access or to dim down the lights for someone with epilepsy
- Providing an interpreter, for example for a candidate who communicates using sign language
- Changing the planned interview time. Some candidates may benefit from having the interview at a particular time, for example if they have a condition that causes tiredness at certain times of the day, they need to take medication or eat at specific times, or they have difficulty using public transport during rush hour.



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Case study



A company is recruiting a new software engineer. After reviewing applications, the shortlisting panel invites five candidates to an interview. Each candidate is asked if they need reasonable adjustments or additional assistance in order to attend.

The recruiting Manager receives an email from a candidate who discloses they have autism. The candidate feels they may struggle in a traditional interview which relies heavily on social and communication skills. Additionally, they are concerned they may struggle with any hypothetical or abstract questions asked. **They make the following requests:**

- To be accompanied at interview by a companion, who will rephrase or interpret any questions they struggle to understand
- To see the interview questions before the interview, if possible.

The recruiting manager is unsure; they feel that by honouring these requests they may put the other candidates at a disadvantage. After speaking with a member of the HR department, they are advised that the changes requested amount to 'reasonable adjustments'. The recruiting manager responds to the candidate agreeing that they may be accompanied by a support worker and shares with them the proposed interview questions.

They also:

- Give the candidate as much information about what to expect from the interview as possible, including who will be on the interview panel
- Adjust the interview questions so that they contain no hypothetical or abstract questions or language.

Selection tests

Care must be taken when selection tests are used ensuring that these do not discriminate unfairly against individuals with disabilities. Employers may need to make reasonable adjustments to enable candidates with disabilities to properly demonstrate their skills.

If a selection test is to be completed online, the employer must make sure the website and software used are accessible and that alternative options are available if required.

In some cases practical working interviews or tests can be more appropriate for some people with learning disabilities, especially when a person finds it difficult to articulate their skills in a job interview. Consider a Job Taster or Work Experience Placement or even a short practical test.



Good Practice

- **Provide more time to complete the test**
- **Do not make the test time limited**
- **Provide a personal reader/writer**
- **Provide a signer/communicator**
- **Provide support equipment, e.g. induction loops, adapted keyboards**
- **Allow a break in a long test**
- **Adjust how the test is scored.**

Medical examinations / health screening

Some employers require all successful candidates for employment to have a medical examination and it would be appropriate for an employer to include a person with a disability in this process.

However, it is not appropriate for an employer to insist on a medical check for a person with a disability and not for others, without justification. Having a disability needs not affect a person's general health.

Occasionally it may be appropriate on health and safety grounds to complete a medical check with a view to implementing reasonable adjustments. If after you have offered somebody a job, a health condition is brought to your attention, it must be treated as a disability. In asking medical questions, you should make it clear that individuals are welcome to discuss any health-related matters in person and in confidence with an appropriate member of your staff, either in addition to or as an alternative to filling in a questionnaire. Some people living with certain conditions prefer to be able to explain in more detail how they are successfully managing their condition and be on hand to answer any questions, rather than rely on a form.

It is not unlawful for you to offer an applicant a job that is conditional upon him or her passing an occupational health check. In this situation, if the results are that the successful candidate has a disability that affects his or her ability to do the job, the question will then be whether a reasonable adjustment can be made to deal with that. If a reasonable adjustment cannot be made, it would then be legitimate to withdraw the job offer on the grounds that the applicant has not met the required condition.



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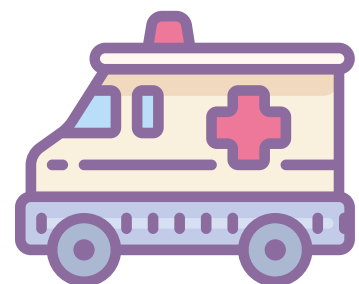
Medical examinations / health screening



Good Practice

Throughout the recruitment and selection process it is advisable, and general good practice, to retain all data used and notes made with regards to selection decisions and the reasoning for selecting one candidate over another. This would include original application forms, interview notes and selection test results, which should be kept after the interview for a period of 3-6 months.

This will be of great assistance if an applicant wishes feedback or to appeal against your decision.





Further
information
and guidance

Further information and guidance

Supported employment services

SUSE members provide specialised employment help for people with disabilities and employers. These services are free, confidential and tailored to the needs of each individual and business.

From September 2018 we will be adding a new feature to this website – a searchable database of supported employment services – the first of its kind in Scotland. Employers can use this to find SUSE members in their local area. We will update this page with the link when the new feature is ready.



www.suse.org.uk

Disability Information Scotland

Disability Information Scotland helps to guide people through the maze of disability information.



www.disabilityscot.org.uk/directory/

Scope

Guidance around different employment topics for employers.



www.scope.org.uk/support/disabled-people/work

Further information and guidance

Disability Rights UK

Policy and Campaign organisation led by disabled people working for change and equal participation for all.



www.disabilityrightsuk.org/

ACAS

Information, advice, training, conciliation and other services for employers and employees to help prevent or resolve workplace problems.



www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1461

Employability in Scotland

Information on Employability in Scotland and a section specific to people with disabilities.



www.employabilityinscotland.com/key-clients/disabled-people/

Further information and guidance

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

Advice and information to help employers meet their duties and promote equality in the workplace.



www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance

Employment Statutory Code of Practice

Detailed guidance for organisations about what the Equality Act means.



www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/EqualityAct/employercode.pdf

Citizens Advice Bureau

Information on general rights at work.



www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/rights-at-work/

Further information and guidance

BASE Knowledge Base

Free source of information both for supported employment and for disability / employment support.

 www.base-uk.org/knowledge-base

Jobcentre Plus

Advice on benefits and employment. Can provide employers with disabled candidates.

Disability employment advisers (DEAs) are dedicated to supporting disabled people who want to find work, and employers who wish to employ someone with a disability.

 <http://los.direct.gov.uk/>



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