

Positive about Disabled People

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Commitments



Commitment 1

Recruitment - To interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities.

The aim of this commitment is to encourage disabled people to apply for jobs by offering them the assurance that, should they meet the minimum criteria, they will be given the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities at interview stage.

The following are the essential actions that employers must agree to and desirable actions, which the employer could consider:

The employer must:

- apply the commitment to all vacancies, internal and external, without exception. Managers and people involved in sifting (including any recruitment agencies acting on behalf of the organisation) must be made aware of their role and of the requirements of the first commitment
- ensure minimum criteria are available to disabled applicants and, in the job advert/specification, make applicants aware of where they can access this information
- when sifting applications to reduce interview numbers, any disabled applicant meeting the minimum criteria must be set aside for interview and not subject to any subsequent change in the minimum criteria
- make sure they do not include non-essential requirements which could inadvertently exclude a disabled person
- make sure they consider whether the minimum criteria could be met with the facilities available through Access to Work
- make sure that the requirements under the commitments are known by internal and external vacancy fillers, eg employment and recruitment agencies
- ask applicants if they have a disability, and aim to include a short statement explaining why this question is asked, eg "this information is needed so that all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for this position are offered an interview". Employers who receive, and act on, a high number of CVs/speculative approaches could consider sending out a standard monitoring form on receipt of a CV.

The employer could:

- consider including a brief statement explaining what the symbol means in the job advert. For example, "all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the job will be invited to interview. Minimum criteria details are available on the person specification for the role
- consider including details of the minimum criteria in the job advert itself
- place job adverts in the disability press to attract more disabled applicants
- where minimum criteria cannot be fully evidenced on the application form because of an applicants disability invite the applicant to demonstrate their abilities at an interview
- monitor what happens to disabled applicants through the internal and external recruitment process.

Commitment 2

Consulting employees with a disability – to ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what can be done to make sure they can develop and use their abilities.

The aim of this commitment is to ensure that disabled employees are getting the same opportunities as others to develop and progress within their job.

The following are the essential actions that employers must agree to and desirable actions, which the employer could consider:

The employer must:

- be able to identify who their existing disabled employees are in order to fulfil this commitment
- bring this commitment, and the action it requires, to the attention of all employees who have responsibility for managing staff
- ensure that there is a mechanism in place to gain information on developments agreed between managers and their staff
- ensure that disabled employees are not inadvertently left out of communication and development exercises
- make adaptations to training materials/premises and telecommunications.

The employer could:

- encourage a working environment which encourages disabled employees to discuss their development at any time
- ensure there is a mechanism in place for disabled employees to speak to an alternative member of staff should there be a problem with their immediate supervisor
- monitor views and actions taken as a result of this commitment
- publicise this commitment widely, eg in internal guidance and newsletters
- have a system in place to identify and consider issues raised by individuals that are not within the individuals control to resolve, eg premises, training access and telecommunications
- use a staff attitude or similar survey to monitor the outcomes of this commitment for disabled people
- display Access to Work materials
- consider setting up an employee forum to discuss needs and issues and ensure that views are considered and, if appropriate, acted on.

Commitment 3

Retaining people who become disabled – to make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment.

The aim of this commitment is to make sure that employees know that, should they become disabled, they will have their employer's support to enable them to continue in their current job or an alternative one. Retaining an employee who has become disabled means keeping their valuable skills and experience and saving on the cost of recruiting a replacement.

The following are the essential actions that employers must agree to and desirable actions, which the employer could consider:

The employer must:

- ensure there is a mechanism in place for them to consider all the options should an employee become disabled, or if an employee's existing disability becomes worse
- ensure that this commitment is widely known amongst all employees and all managers
- make managers aware of the company retention policy and how to implement it should a member of their staff develop a disability
- ensure that guidance on dealing with inefficiency cases addresses the issue of people whose performance is affected as a result of developing a disability. The commitment does not ask employers to apply different standards to disabled employees, only to consider options should a person's disability be the reason for issues in performance..

The employer could:

- consider how flexible their procedures are to accommodate this commitment. For example, does the employer offer flexible working patterns, job sharing, home working
- consider developing procedures to monitor the progress of employees who have become disabled or whose disability has worsened
- make sure that managers know about support available from Jobcentre Plus should a member of staff develop a disability. For example, advice on job restructuring, adapting workstations, work preparation and financial help through Access to Work
- in cases where it proves impossible to retain the person, consider using their business network to assist the disabled person in their job search. An employer could consider giving a disabled employee time off to look for another job.

Commitment 4

Developing awareness – to take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make these commitments work.

The aim of this commitment is to provide awareness of disability issues to all staff in order to improve the working environment.

The following are the essential actions that employers must agree to and desirable actions, which the employer could consider:

The employer must:

- define what the appropriate levels of disability awareness are. An employer may choose to vary their awareness training mechanisms according to the particular role of their employee. For example, personnel specialists could have detailed disability equality training, whereas a trainer might need to examine how to accommodate people with different disabilities in a learning environment. Line managers and colleagues would probably benefit from a general understanding of how attitudes and environment can affect disabled people, with some guidance on disability etiquette when meeting a disabled person
- ensure that new staff and people moving posts receive the appropriate level of awareness training.

The employer could:

- consider taking people on a work preparation trial so that existing employees can gain experience of working with a disabled colleague
- set up mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of awareness raising activities and other actions taken as a result of disability symbol commitments.

Reviewing progress and keeping people informed – each year to review the five commitments and what has been achieved, to plan ways to improve on them and to let employees and Jobcentre Plus know about progress and future plans.

The aim of this commitment is for the employer to monitor their own practices and achievements in meeting their symbol commitments, and to identify areas for further progress or good practice to share with others. The commitment also helps employers to plan how to let people know initially that the company has become a symbol user, and to keep them up to date with developments. The employer and Jobcentre Plus should discuss progress at the annual review.

The following are the essential actions that employers must agree to and desirable actions, which the employer could consider:

The employer must:

- ensure that it is clear who is responsible for collecting information to make the review effective. Make it clear what information needs to be collected
- ensure there is a mechanism in place to share the results of the review with all employees.

The employer could:

- consider conducting a disability audit to get a benchmark from where to start
- consider recording recruitment and career progression information about disabled people to review the effectiveness of policies
- consider recording information about people who stay in a job as a result of the employer retention policy
- identify and decide what future action is needed to develop further as a symbol user.