

# **Employing disabled people**

## **A good practice guide for managers and employers**

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The accompanying set of Information Cards have easy reference material on key facts about employing disabled people.

## **Introduction**

For readers in Northern Ireland, please read the annex at the end of the booklet on page 32 for details of different nomenclature, organisations and procedures in Northern Ireland.

Equal opportunities is a natural and integral part of good management practice. This booklet has been designed as an easy to use aid for help with the employment of disabled people. It has been put together in consultation with organisations representing employers - both large and small - and with a wide variety of groups working with disabled people. It is intended to be a tool to help managers and employers to obtain and keep the very best employees, and so assist people with disabilities to meet their full potential.

A number of employers already carry out much of the good practice set out in this Guide and will be familiar with the material produced by the CBI and the Employers' Forum on Disability, amongst others. Many small or medium sized organisations may not be, and also may not have individuals with specific personnel responsibility. This booklet is intended to give information and examples on good practice in employing disabled people, and has information on where to go for assistance and help with funding support and equipment. There are also Information Cards in the pack which may be more convenient for smaller organisations.

The Government believes in a fair, decent and successful society promoting opportunity and equality for all. Economic success and social justice are not separate aims, but closely linked objectives. Everyone needs the chance to realise their full potential. This will help build an inclusive and fair society and it will lead to economic prosperity.

The Government is working in partnership to increase opportunities for all sections of society. For disabled people this means tackling the physical, attitudinal and communication barriers so that they can participate more fully in society.

And the Government wants all employers to understand how to employ disabled people and to benefit from their skills and experience. Best practice demonstrates that having a working environment which is free from discrimination and which promotes diversity, enhances profitability for the firm and for individuals.

## **DRC Helpline**

The DRC Helpline provides a one stop point for all your enquiries about the Disability Discrimination Act and employing disabled people. It can be contacted as follows

**Telephone** 08457 622 633.

**Textphone** 08457 622 644 for people with hearing impairments.

**Email** [ddaahelp@stra.sitel.co.uk](mailto:ddaahelp@stra.sitel.co.uk)

Trained operators can provide general advice and information (but not legal advice) and can direct you to a range of organisations to contact about your particular query if they cannot answer it.

## **++ Why you should read on**

### **Good Practice**

The Good Practice examples used throughout this Guide are real and have been taken from research involving over 200 employers who have been successful in employing disabled people. While following good practice is not a guarantee that you will be complying with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), employers who engage in the good practice principles in the booklet are more likely to find that they are complying. The Guide also gives some practical compliance advice.

### **Business case**

There are good business reasons for employing disabled people. Most disabled people can work alongside their non-disabled colleagues without any, or with very little, special assistance. Others may need some adjustment to the working environment or working practices. But these adjustments can be straightforward and often inexpensive to implement. Frequently there is financial and other assistance available.

What can be clearly demonstrated are the benefits to employers of employing disabled people. Research shows that

- having disabled people in the recruitment pool offers more choice, making it more likely to get the right person for the job

- employers have found disabled employees stay in the job for longer, and have a strong commitment to work as well as good punctuality records and low absentee records
- keeping an employee who becomes ill or disabled at work generally costs less than having to recruit and train someone new
- employing disabled people can help increase the number of disabled customers using the service, and improve staff morale, since they will view the organisation as more representative and diverse
- often the adjustments made to help in employing a disabled person can bring benefits for other employees and customers.

Disability Employment Advisers and Disability Service Teams are based in Jobcentres and can offer advice (but not legal advice) and practical assistance with employing disabled people. You will find the address and telephone number of your local Jobcentre in the telephone directory.

In addition, adopting good practice and complying with the duties and requirements of the DDA reduces the risk of costly litigation and bad publicity. These can be bottom line benefits, and throughout this booklet you will see real examples of the business case for employing disabled people.

## **++ Facts and figures**

- Disabled people have abilities, skills and experience to use at work.
- There are over 81/2 million disabled people in the UK, all of whom are potential customers.
- It is estimated that disabled people spend around £40 billion a year on goods and services.
- There are over 2 million disabled people in employment in the UK.
- And, there are well over a further 1 million disabled people who want jobs but are out of work - many of whom are skilled and with the same qualities as those who have jobs.
- Disability is too often associated with wheelchairs but only 5% of disabled people use wheelchairs.
- Disabled people have no more likelihood of being generally ill than their non-disabled colleagues.

## **++The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)**

Many employers already consider disabled people's individual employment needs. They do this in the same way as they would any employee who might

need assistance in training for example, or some extra help at times. However this is not always the case. In 1995, a new law was introduced which aims to end the discrimination which disabled people can face. The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) (DDA) covers

- employment
- access to goods, facilities and services
- the management, buying or renting of property.

Any firm with 15 or more employees is covered by the employment duties in the DDA (although businesses of all sizes are covered by the access duties).

A crucial part of the DDA is that it is unlawful for employers to discriminate against current or prospective employees with disabilities. Employers are required to act in a fair and common sense way. This could mean that employers have to make “reasonable adjustments” so that a disabled person is not put at a substantial disadvantage compared with a non-disabled person. It could also mean that employers have to be prepared to justify the way in which they treat a disabled person. See “Knowledge of the Law” on page 22 and DDA examples given throughout the booklet.

This booklet and the accompanying pack only deal with the issues relating to employment and there is an Information Card in the pack which gives further details on the access to goods and services duties.

The Information Cards in the accompanying pack can be used alone or in conjunction with this booklet. This booklet and the Cards do not attempt to describe the law in every detail, nor should they be taken as an authoritative statement of the law or a comprehensive guide to compliance with the DDA.

## **++ Employing Disabled People**

### Job Introduction Scheme (JIS)

The Job Introduction Scheme provides a weekly grant towards the cost of employing a disabled person for a trial period.

If you have interviewed a disabled applicant and would like to employ them, but you have doubts about their ability to cope with the proposed job or place of work, then you should contact the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) at your local Jobcentre to discuss whether the Job Introduction Scheme may be a possibility.

## **Example**

It may not be important that someone with a restricted reach can actually get files from a high shelf. What is important is that they can get the appropriate information somehow. There may be a number of ways of arranging this - e.g. help from someone else, putting files on a lower shelf, using a mechanical device, using records on a PC instead of paper.

## **++ Recruitment**

By far the most common business argument given by managers employing disabled people is that it enables them to secure the best person for the job. Making adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled employees, if necessary, is seen as common sense and sound business practice.

It is important to ensure that your recruitment and employment practices maximise the opportunity to attract and keep disabled people, as well as ensuring that you comply with the law.

Later in this booklet on page 23, you will find more detailed information on employers' duties to make reasonable adjustments for employees with disabilities - in recruitment, induction and ongoing employment. On page 14, you will see the help and support which is available through the Government's Access to Work Programme for new and existing employees.

## **++Job descriptions/Person specification**

A first step is to look at the job description/person specification for the vacant post. Check that it only includes requirements which are clearly related to the duties - otherwise a disabled applicant may be deterred from applying or be (inadvertently) discriminated against in the selection process.

A good discipline is to focus on what the job is to accomplish - the inclusion of unnecessary - or marginal - requirements in a job specification can lead to discrimination.

Employers recruit for vacant positions in a variety of ways. Whatever method you use, you will always need to be sure that you are not discriminating against people. There are some important good practice principles which encourage disabled people to apply, thus ensuring that you are attracting the widest range of applicants.

## **Example**

You will find more information on the Employment Service's Disability Symbol on page 21. Employers who have signed up and who show the Symbol on their job advertisements and company notepaper, have agreed - amongst other things - to interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities.

## **++ Advertising**

If you are using advertisements to recruit, you can use them to publicly welcome applications from people with disabilities.

Make it clear that you can provide the vacancy information in different formats such as large print, tape, disk or email, and that applications can be received in a similar fashion.

Consider placing your advertisement with the Disability Employment Adviser at the Jobcentre.

## **++ Application forms**

You will want to take special care to ensure that you are not discriminating against disabled people in the way in which you deal with applications. You may need to make adjustments such as allowing a candidate to submit an application in a different format from that specified for candidates in general e.g. typewritten, by telephone, on tape or by email. It would normally be a reasonable adjustment for an employer to allow this.

Good and successful practice is where an employer gives applicants - through standard questions in the job application - the opportunity to say whether any special provisions or facilities are required at interview.

Employers can ask applicants on the application form if they are disabled. It can be helpful to ask whether the applicant believes that they will need the employer to make a reasonable adjustment in the selection or interview process, or in the job if the applicant is selected. Sharing this information at an early stage should be to the advantage of both applicant and employer.

## **++ Selection**

You need to ensure that your selection procedures do not disadvantage disabled people at interview or when completing assessment and selection tests.

You should review the job requirements and person specifications to make sure that they can all be justified in relation to the tasks to be performed in the job. Even where a qualification is justified generally, you should consider waiving it if a person who could not achieve it because of a disability would nevertheless be capable of performing well in the job.

### **DDA Example**

An employer prefers all employees to have a certain level of educational qualification. A woman with a learning disability, which has prevented her from obtaining the preferred qualification, is turned down for a job because she does not have that qualification. If the qualification is not necessary in order to do the job and she is otherwise the best candidate, then the employer will have discriminated unlawfully against her.

Information Card 4a covers some common misconceptions about what disabled people can do.

### **DDA Example**

An employer sets candidates a short oral test. An applicant has a bad stammer, but only under stress. It may be a reasonable adjustment to allow them more time to complete the test, or to give the test in written form instead, though not if oral communication is relevant to the job and assessing this was the purpose of the test.

## **++ Interviewing**

If you know in advance that a candidate will need some adjustments to attend and/or to take part in a selection interview, you will need to arrange this, where reasonable. Even if you do not know in advance, you should try to accommodate any needs a disabled person might have when they arrive.

All selection interviews should be objective and non-biased. When interviewing people with disabilities, do not let any misconceptions about disability influence your view on whether a person can do the job.

Asking about a disability should only be done in relation to the effect on someone's ability to do the job. It can be very useful to allow the individual to guide you through their qualities and limitations as they know their needs better than anyone else. This will help you to find out whether the person needs an adjustment to the job and what that adjustment might be.

An important “rule” is not to make assumptions about an individual's ability to perform certain tasks. People with disabilities often develop innovative solutions to everyday tasks, with or without technical aids or personal support.

Interviewing job candidates requires skills and understanding, and staff training in disability awareness can be a good way to reduce the risk of discriminatory attitudes affecting decisions.

## **++ Assessment testing**

It may be normal practice in your recruitment and selection procedures to carry out aptitude or other tests. For example, where a job involves practical skills which can be tested fairly readily, then it makes sense to confirm or test these at the time of the interview. It is very important, however, to examine selection tests - particularly if you have devised these “in-house” - to ensure they are free from any unjustifiable bias.

You may need to revise the tests - or the way the results of such tests are assessed - to take account of specific disabled candidates, except where the nature and form of the test are necessary to assess a matter which is very relevant to the job. For example, you could substitute practical tests rather than written tests for people with learning disabilities who are not good at reading and writing, and do not need to be in order to do the job.

## **++ Psychometric testing**

Some employers carry out commercially produced psychometric tests which study aspects such as intelligence, aptitudes, personality, motivation and attitudes. Such tests should only be carried out by people who are fully trained in their use and interpretation.

Employers believe these tests can sometimes be useful in determining candidates' abilities, particularly where they have no formal qualification - for

example, if an applicant's educational experiences have been limited by disability.

But remember that when administering such tests there are various issues which can arise for people with disabilities. Most tests will not have been normed on disabled people, so bias could occur.

Some people with hearing impairment may have difficulty in following oral instructions or a person with dyslexia may take longer to read questions. Advice should be sought from a test consultant for each individual situation so that only appropriate changes are made and that the effects on the interpretation of the results are understood.

Appropriate disability organisations can be contacted for specialist advice and help. For example, people with cerebral palsy have very particular problems with these types of tests.

### **Good Practice Example**

Before inviting candidates to the test session, the occupational psychologists SHL Group plc recommend that employers:

- ask the candidate about the disability and how they cope with it and provide the candidate with a practice leaflet
- ask the candidate if they anticipate any problems in taking the tests and how these might be overcome
- consult the test issuer regarding best test procedures
- make arrangements for an appropriate venue
- make sure any additional equipment or facilities required are available
- ensure that the candidate can get to the venue.

Some people with disabilities such as dyslexia may have already undergone similar assessment tests as part of their diagnosis, and an individual could inform you of their own strengths and weaknesses as a result.

Check with DRC Helpline.

### **DDA Example**

An applicant for a job has a disabling heart condition. The employer routinely issues a health questionnaire to job applicants and requires all applicants who state that they have a disability to undergo a medical examination. This procedure is only likely to be justified where assessment of the disabling heart condition might have implications for the particular job, for example if the job required lifting and carrying.

## **DDA Example**

An employer, shortlisting candidates for a junior office position, is considering whether or not to include a blind applicant whom the employer believes might present a safety risk moving around a crowded office space.

A reasonable adjustment might be to provide mobility training to familiarise the new employee with the work area, so removing any risk there might otherwise be.

## **++ Health screening**

Some employers require all candidates for employment to have a medical examination, and it would be appropriate to include a disabled person in this process. But it is not appropriate for an employer to insist on a medical check for a disabled person and not for others without justification.

The crucial question is not simply whether this person is fit for the job but often whether he or she would be fit for the job if a reasonable adjustment was made.

In recent research, good practice was found where the selection process was separated from the health screening. Confidential health questionnaires or medical examinations would only be triggered after a preferred candidate had been identified, and these would be dealt with by an occupational health specialist.

## **++ Health and safety**

Some employers have concerns about the health and safety implications of employing a disabled person. The number of occasions where health and safety problems represent an insuperable obstacle to the employment of someone with a disability are very few and far between. Experience shows that there is not likely to be a conflict between the DDA and the Health and Safety at Work Act. Indeed it is often the case that where an employer makes a reasonable adjustment for the employment of a disabled employee, any health and safety risk can be significantly reduced.

## **++ Employment**

### Induction

Induction is an important stage for both employer and any new recruit. For some disabled people, this can be especially so.

Induction more often than not is going to be the first time that the new recruit will be using the buildings, getting to know other staff and learning about the organisation, its products or services and its procedures.

You will need to consider whether your standard induction procedures are accessible or whether you will need to make any adjustments.

Most importantly, you will need to ensure that managers, supervisors and working colleagues are suitably briefed. They need to understand the nature of the adjustments you have made but may not always need to know details of the disability. You might want to consider assigning another member of staff to support the new employee, especially in their early days.

## **++ Training**

Your training programmes may need to take account of any particular or additional needs of disabled people. For instance

- individual training for a disabled person to use any adaptations or special equipment provided
- training over a longer period, for example, for someone with a learning disability or where a condition, such as chronic back pain, means attendance can only be for shorter periods of time
- retraining to enable someone who becomes disabled to remain in their present job or take a redesigned job. (About 12% of people in employment can expect to become disabled at some point in their working lives.)

And you need to remember that you may have a responsibility to ensure that any training provider that you are using as an agent is adhering to the requirements of the DDA, and so it is advisable to ensure that they are aware of the provisions of the DDA.

## **DDA Example**

You might have to make adjustments during the induction such as having a hearing loop for the induction talks and alternative formats for manuals and presentation packs, including the use of Braille or subtitles or signing on videos; or even an alternative venue. Sometimes these might only be needed at the induction stage and not for the job itself.

## **Good Practice Example**

In one case study of a household textiles manufacturing company, Peter, who has a congenital learning disability and is employed as a warehouseman, was assigned another member of staff - from day one - to work alongside him to explain things to him, and to show him how to do each task, so that he didn't feel left out.

This means that Peter is able to carry out his duties and finds satisfaction in the job. This is seen by the company as a significant benefit.

## **DDA Example**

In its Best Practice Guide, the Employers' Forum on Disability, has set out a list of the kinds of adjustments which may be required to ensure your training programmes are accessible for disabled delegates.

## **Here are some to note**

- individualised training for specific tasks or methods, e.g. providing pictures of each stage of a task for someone with learning difficulties
- adjustments to physical access to training locations, such as improved lighting or better signage to help visually impaired people
- adjustments to residential accommodation, such as providing trainees who are deaf with vibrating pagers rather than radio-alarms in bedrooms, installing voice messages or raised buttons in lifts to help blind people and re-positioning food in self-service cafeterias to make it accessible to wheelchair users
- different timing for courses, for example, to allow a person with diabetes to eat at regular intervals
- providing facilities for a trainee to dictate rather than hand-write notes
- changes in style of presentation, such as routinely reading out the text of overheads for someone with a learning difficulty or impaired vision
- allowing a trainee to bring a personal care attendant on a residential course.

## **++Career development and promotion**

Enabling employees to benefit from training courses is one of the principal steps to good career development. It is therefore very important not to make assumptions about a person's ability to undertake or benefit from training. Always check and talk with the person and discuss if they will need adjustments to participate fully.

Other steps to facilitate development opportunities are also important. For example, adjustments to allow full participation in staff and team meetings.

Regular performance reviews provide a chance to discuss whether an individual is able to carry out new tasks associated with promotion or transfer.

One common mistake is to overlook a disabled person for promotion to management or supervisory positions because they cannot carry out some of the tasks due to their impairment. But very often the supervisor only needs to know how the task is done and not necessarily to be able to do it.

## **++ Retaining disabled employees**

### **Retention**

Much of the good practice described in this booklet applies to the successful retention of disabled employees. There are sound business reasons to retain employees who become disabled. They cost money to recruit and train, as well as having the skills for the job, and knowledge of the company's products and methods of working.

The DDA Code of Practice says that it would be reasonable for an employer to have to spend at least as much on an adjustment to a disabled person in work - including any retraining - as might be spent on recruiting and training a replacement.

Experience has shown that often the costs of adjustments in money and time can be far less than those of recruiting a new employee.

The majority of disabled people become disabled during their working life, and the incidence of disability increases steadily from age 45. Employers need to consider how best to make reasonable adjustments to retain an employee who has become disabled or whose condition changes or

deteriorates, so that the employee is not put at a substantial disadvantage in their job.

Some of the most effective adjustments include

- changes to duties and/or allocating to another employee minor tasks which can no longer be done by the disabled person
- transfer to another post
- providing practical aids and technical equipment.

A range of assistance packages is available for which disabled employees may qualify. They are described in the next section.

### **Good Practice Example**

James was originally placed as a YTS trainee requiring special training needs with a local council in 1988. He has dyslexia and at the time lacked confidence in his own abilities. He started as a junior clerk in the building and construction department.

He started to use a computer and, after his YTS term finished, he remained with the council on the Supported Employment Programme (see page 15 for more information).

He progressed so well that in 1991 he was assessed as being able to work in unsupported employment and became a full member of the council's staff. He started a college course in building and was promoted to junior technician. He is now a technician in the bridge design team and has achieved a Higher National Certificate in Building.

### **Good Practice Example**

Jim is in his late 40s and works as a team manager for a voluntary organisation which provides training and places volunteers into local posts in the community. He has severe back problems from an accident six years ago. He realised something was more seriously wrong when he was found asleep at his desk at his previous employment. The doctor advised three months leave for exhaustion, and subsequently myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME) was diagnosed.

His back problem causes progressive pain throughout the day, but as a team manager, Jim has been able to take the decision to purchase items to help - a lumbar support chair and flexible document holder. He has also been given a "free hand" to design the ergonomics and layout of his team space, which he believes has had a positive effect on his feeling of well-being. Colleagues too are much more aware of the constraints on Jim's ability to lift and move objects.

Although Jim's ME is less problematic now, there are days when he does not feel well, and the company have allowed him to adjust his hours so that he

can leave early and take work home if necessary. Even if he does not use this facility, Jim believes that it relieves him of psychological pressure, and so helps his condition.

### **Good Practice Example**

Jaru is 40 and a lecturer in the Care Department of a Community College. He has Tropical Spastic Paraplegia - a degenerative bone disease which is closely related to Multiple Sclerosis but only affects those born in the southern hemisphere. He has significant reduction in his mobility alongside chronic pain, which is controlled to a degree by pain killers.

In association with the local Disability Service Team, the College has moved his work area and provided a close-by staff room facility where he has his desk and computer, at minimal cost to the College. At the same time the Disability Service Team provided three special high backed chairs - one each in the lecture room, staff room and at home; and also provided two computers with compatible software for college and home, where he is able to do some of his work. The costs so far have been £3,000, the bulk of which has been provided under the Access to Work Programme.

### **++ Access to Work**

Access to Work provides practical support to disabled people entering paid employment to help overcome work-related obstacles caused by disability.

Access to Work is open to employed, unemployed and self-employed disabled people. It provides a grant towards the extra employment costs resulting from disability.

Access to Work can help in a number of ways, for example

- special aids and equipment
- communicator support at a job interview
- adaptation to premises or existing equipment;
- help with fares to work
- support worker: for example, personal reader, carer, driver, job coach, communicator.

Employers who want to know more about the help which Access to Work can provide should contact the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) in the Disability Service Team at their local Jobcentre. Once Access to Work is in

place, the DEA will keep in touch with you and the employee to make sure everything is going smoothly.

If you are going to interview or take on a disabled person, or if a member of your staff becomes disabled or you become aware of a disability, then the first point of contact to discuss what help might be available is the Jobcentre and the DEA.

## **++ Supported Employment Programme**

The Supported Employment Programme provides jobs for disabled people in factories or supports people in open employment. The value of the Programme lies in the ability to provide the disabled person with the opportunity to realise their potential, working in open employment.

The employer benefits from the enthusiasm, loyalty and commitment of the individual. The Supported Employment Programme provider will negotiate support to you as the employer, and to the employee. This may take the form of a contribution towards wage costs, practical advice, job coach support, or a combination of these.

Supported Employment can also help you to retain a person in work who develops a disability or who has a long established disability which deteriorates so that the individual needs support to continue working.

The Employment Service works with local authorities and non-profit-making voluntary bodies who act as providers for the employer, and to the Supported Employment Programme. Prior to interview with the provider or host employer, the DEA assesses the eligibility of the disabled jobseekers.

If you are interested in becoming a Supported Employment provider or host employer you can contact the Employment Service's SEPACS (Supported Employment Procurement and Consultancy Service) team whose details are available from the DEA at the Jobcentre.

### **Good Practice Example**

Graham is a general operative in the maintenance section of a sportsware manufacturer. He has a severe learning disability and a speech impairment. He is a Supported Employment Programme employee and his employers have a contract with a provider on the basis of an agreed output of Graham's work efficiency and receive a subsidy towards his wages.

The company acknowledge that Graham needs more coaching and supervisory time than other employees and are clear that they benefit. Graham has been most recently appraised as “willing, hardworking, never late (he starts at 07:30) and rarely absent”.

## **++ Termination of employment**

### **Redundancy**

In general the same arrangements, duties and requirements for redundancy will apply for disabled people as for non-disabled employees. However, it is essential to recognise that it can sometimes be easy to unintentionally discriminate against a disabled person 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 a disabled employee. For example, to make sure that they have received information and fully understood the proposals and have had the same chance as any other employee to contribute to the consultation process.

It is sometimes the case that employers use a method of 'selection criteria' when implementing redundancy procedures. This is an area where, without sufficient attention and care, the criteria which are set, or the assessment against the criteria, may inadvertently discriminate against a disabled employee.

### **++Disciplinary action**

It is similarly important when taking disciplinary action against a disabled employee that employers and their managers have fully considered and are aware of any reasons why a disabled employee might have behaved in the way which has led to the disciplinary action. This is to ensure that there is no discrimination which is just due to disability.

Justified disciplinary action is not likely to be discriminatory. One helpful practice which some employers operate is to deal with a potential disciplinary action straight away where it concerns a disabled employee. This is in order to establish why the employee has acted in such a way, and to be certain the behaviour is not as a result of the disability.

It is worth noting that “reasonable adjustments” may need to be made in relation to arrangements for disciplinary action or interviews in the same way as for other things.

## **++Dismissal**

Dismissal as a consequence of disciplinary action is dealt with above.

Dismissal on the grounds of capability should generally only be made after careful exploration of all the possibilities of whether reasonable adjustments could be made, and often it will be appropriate to seek expert advice before dismissing an employee.

Retention policies, including the use of adjustments to help adapt jobs to people, or help people move to a more suitable job, can prevent dismissals. Care should be taken to ensure that any dismissals that prove to be necessary can be justified and are non-discriminatory.

### **DDA Example**

In a case brought before an employment tribunal, K who is blind and worked as a shift chemist with a large food producer, claimed discrimination under the DDA and unfair dismissal when he was made redundant.

The company had a selection criteria scoring system for deciding redundancy. K claimed that he had been given low scores because of a wholly subjective view of him against the criteria, the origins of which lay in his disability.

Although never criticised for poor performance or lack of competence, he was given a score of 0/10; and on potential, he also scores 0/5 because management viewed his disability as a health and safety problem. Points were also deducted for absenteeism, although this was related to his disability.

The tribunal's view was that objective assessment would have produced an average score, and upheld his claim.

### **DDA Example**

In a recent case a disabled employee who had depression was dismissed for misconduct after being found under the influence of alcohol. He took a

complaint to the employment tribunal arguing that he drank because of his disability.

He lost his case as the tribunal decided that he was drinking as a coping strategy, not as a result of his disability.

## **++ HOW TO SUCCEED IN EMPLOYING DISABLED PEOPLE**

### **Example**

“The company wholeheartedly supports the principle of equal opportunities in employment and opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of disability, race, religion, nationality, ethnic or national origin, age, sex, marital status or sexual orientation.

We believe that it is in the company's best interests, and those of all who work in it, to ensure that the human resources, talents and skills available throughout the community are considered when employment opportunities arise. To this end, within the framework of the law, we are committed, wherever practicable, to achieving and maintaining a workforce which broadly reflects the local community in which we operate.

Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions on recruitment, selection, training, promotion and career management are based solely on objective and job related criteria.

When recruiting and retaining employees with disabilities we will make use of the good practice information available, and where necessary seek advice from disability agencies and the Employment Service”.

### **++Equal opportunities policy statement**

Experience and research evidence shows that the employers who are most successful in attracting disabled applicants to work for them - and thus getting the best person for the job - are

- those companies which start off by having a leadership commitment to equal opportunities
- those companies which have specified equal opportunities policies, and especially those which pay attention to the arrangements for disabled employees
- the employers who have trained their managers and workforce in disability awareness, and who have helped their employees to confront the misconceptions about what disabled people can do

- the employers who are familiar with their duties and responsibilities under the DDA, and have acted to comply.

Several recent studies show that a significant proportion of employers have a formal equal opportunities policy statement which includes disability issues. This is an important component in improving awareness and challenging attitudes and behaviour. Where written policies are effectively mainstreamed into the organisation and owned locally their impact is more positive.

Key components on disability which should be contained in a good equal opportunities policy are

- the organisation's commitment to achieving and maintaining, within the framework of the law, a workforce which represents, as far as practicable, the composition of the population and recruitment area, including people with disabilities
- clear objectives and priorities for recruiting, retaining and accommodating people with disabilities, which are explicit and measurable
- an effective programme to achieve these objectives
- a clear statement that conduct which breaches the policy will not be tolerated; and very importantly
- the visible support of top management.

An equal opportunities policy which is effectively implemented and communicated to all employees will help you to

- make the best possible use of all the potential workforce
- avoid unlawful discrimination
- improve employment recruitment and retention practices
- attract, develop and retain the good quality staff who are essential in today's competitive environment.

### **Good Practice Example**

Jane is profoundly deaf and joined a financial institution straight from secretarial college. She now works as a secretary to the Equal Opportunities Manager. She lip reads and uses British Sign Language. Since Jane joined the company, there are now several other hearing impaired employees.

The adjustments made by the company fall into four categories:

- purchase of capital equipment and provision of British Sign Language signers at staff meetings and training sessions
- training
- modifications to her duties
- sign-language and awareness training for other members of staff.

The equipment includes minicomms (devices which send and receive teletypewritten signals over telephone lines) for all hearing-impaired staff and minicom facilities at key 'phone lines e.g. security and meeting rooms, and type-talk facilities to enable Jane and others to make external 'phone calls to lines without minicom.

British Sign Language signers are used to interpret at training sessions and group meetings.

Jane has attended an NVQ L2 course to help with her English grammar and syntax as spoken and written English is different to that of British Sign Language.

There have been some slight adjustments to Jane's duties - she does not have to take audio typing, and her manager uses voice-mail to avoid her having to pick up telephone calls.

The sign-language and deaf-awareness training for other members of staff means that her manager and some staff can communicate with Jane in her language.

All of these things make a substantial difference to Jane's working day.

## **++Awareness of disability**

### **Raising awareness**

Raising awareness among managers and the workforce is a major step in successful implementation of an equal opportunities policy.

Recent research has shown that often the main success factors can be

- the personal commitment of the relevant manager and his/her perceived status within the organisation - certainly, where the Managing Director/Chief Executive is known to have a direct interest, impact is higher
- awareness raising sessions for non-disabled employees are particularly effective - in one example, non-disabled employees are encouraged to

think about how a disability affects an individual by undertaking various exercises

- annually defined targets for equal opportunities derived from the business plan and led by a senior manager.

Work experience provides links with disabled people, expert advisers and spokespeople, and is an excellent way of achieving better understanding.

### **++ Knowledge of disabilities**

People often think of disability as covering situations such as using a wheelchair, being blind or visually impaired, or deaf; and they will often know about other disabilities which can include epilepsy or diabetes.

But they are sometimes surprised to discover that disability can cover a much wider range of conditions, for example, facial disfigurement, dyslexia, learning difficulties, heart disease, depression and mental illness. And people who have had a disability, particularly those with a history of mental illness, often face discrimination.

Many people are not used to seeing disability as a discrimination issue, and there has been a historical tendency to focus on a person's impairment rather than their capability.

An informed employer can help a struggling employee more efficiently if they are armed with the appropriate information. This can lead to better communication and support for the employee and in return raise workplace loyalty.

### **++ Monitoring**

Some employers successfully use a system of monitoring progress in the employment of disabled people.

Systematic monitoring allows you to

- keep track of applications from disabled people and the results. This will allow you to measure whether your recruitment policies and practices are successful and if not, then to improve them

- ensure that your training programmes in disability awareness for managers and the workforce are kept up to date
- monitor the promotion of disabled staff
- evaluate the adjustments and investments you have made
- plan ahead - for example, in premises redesign or refurbishment, or new technology installation - with the needs of present or potential disabled employees (and customers) in mind
- publish results of how you have measured up to your action plan, in your annual report allowing employees, customers and the local community to see the organisation's commitment to the employment of disabled people.

### **Examples of monitoring progress**

- having an action plan on how you are going to measure the effectiveness of your policies on the employment of disabled people
- by raising awareness of help available, and encouraging staff to seek help if they become disabled, you are more likely to be able to monitor the number of disabled staff you retain in employment, remembering that most disabled people become so during their working life
- monitoring the effectiveness of the adjustments which have been made, as a person's impairment may not remain static.

### **++ Disability symbol**

The Employment Service's disability symbol is a very visible way for employers to show that they are taking positive steps to employ disabled people. Around 4,000 employers have signed up to the disability symbol, agreeing to take the following action

- to interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities
- to ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss at any time, but at least once a year, what can be done to make sure they can develop and use their abilities at work
- to make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure that they stay in employment
- to take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make the commitments work

- each year to review these commitments and what has been achieved, plan ways to improve on them and let employees and the Employment Service know about progress and future plans.

If you want to know more about becoming a symbol user, contact the DEA at your local Jobcentre.

## **Good Practice Examples**

### Agricultural products sales

This company uses the disability symbol on the company's application forms, and took the opportunity recently when redesigning the forms to make the symbol more prominent.

### Departmental store

This company uses the disability symbol in advertisements and the symbol features significantly in its headed notepaper. The company believes that this does encourage applications from disabled people and promotes a positive image with the local community.

### Hotel

This hotel has been a disability symbol user since 1995 and guarantees to interview disabled applicants who meet the minimum requirements for the job.

Trevor, a conference porter at the hotel, was recruited in this way. His left hand has been amputated and at his interview he was able to identify examples of how he carried out tasks in everyday life which illustrated how he could do the job.

Information Card 7 gives information on the people and organisations with obligations under the DDA.

Information Card 5 gives more information on this definition and what sort of effect on a person's ability there has to be.

## **DDA Example**

Examples of disabilities that the DDA can cover

- recurring or fluctuating conditions such as arthritis

- conditions which can progressively deteriorate such as multiple sclerosis, cancer or HIV infection
- severe disfigurement.

## **++ Knowledge of the law**

### **Disability and discrimination**

As well as good practice, it is important for employers and their managers to have a clear understanding of their duties and responsibilities under the law.

This section briefly covers those elements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) which relate to the employment of disabled people and gives some compliance guidance as well as good practice.

However, as many employers know, good employment practice in relation to people with disabilities can often lead to other benefits. For example, ensuring access to goods, facilities and services for disabled people will improve access for others like some elderly people and parents with prams or pushchairs. Staff awareness of disability equality issues can develop a better understanding of disabled customers' needs.

Any firm with 15 or more employees is now covered by the employment provisions of the DDA.

Although other discrimination legislation prevents positive discrimination, the DDA does not prevent employers from treating disabled people more favourably because of their disability than those without a disability.

The DDA defines disability as

“a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities”.

It is important to note that the DDA covers people with a wide range of impairments, a number of which are not always thought of as disabling by some people.

The Act protects both disabled people and people who have had a disability in the past.

The DDA makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate against current or prospective employees with disabilities.

Discrimination includes treating a disabled person less favourably than other people for reasons relating to their disability, without justification.

The DDA also says that discrimination occurs when an employer fails to comply with a duty of reasonable adjustment in relation to a disabled person, and the employer cannot show that this failure is justified.

## **++ Adjustments**

Throughout this booklet, you will find references to the DDA's duty on employers to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure their employment arrangements or premises do not put a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with a non-disabled person. The advice given and the case studies quoted all show examples of the range of adjustments which can be made. Adjustments may often not be needed or may well be made at nil or minimal cost. As can be seen, they generally are not major structural alterations to premises.

### **DDA Example**

A man who is disabled by dyslexia applies for a job which involves writing letters within fairly long deadlines. The employer gives all applicants a test of their letter-writing ability. The man can generally write letters very well but finds it difficult to do so in stressful situations. The employer's arrangements would mean he had to begin his test immediately on arrival and to do it in a short time. He would be substantially disadvantaged compared to non-disabled people who would not find such arrangements stressful or, if they did, would not be so affected by them. The employer therefore gives him a little more time to settle in and longer to write the letter. These new arrangements do not inconvenience the employer very much and only briefly delay the decision on an appointment. These are steps which it is likely to be reasonable for the employer to have to take in the circumstances to prevent the disadvantage - i.e. a reasonable adjustment.

This section of the booklet explains in more detail what is meant by reasonable adjustment and what would be expected of you as an employer, or potential employer of a person with disabilities.

### **Good Practice Example**

Christine is in her mid 20s and is employed as a support worker in an NHS Trust residential home for adults with learning difficulties. The duties in the

home require staff cover for 24 hours a day which includes one member of staff being awake throughout the night, with the other asleep but on call. Christine has diabetes and needs to be rigorous about her diet, blood sugar levels and medication. After her interview for the post, the occupational health unit gave advice and had just one reservation about her having to do the 'awake' night shift because of the disruption to Christine's regular food intake and sleep patterns which could have serious consequences to her blood sugar levels.

Her managers were concerned that if Christine did not do the 'awake' night shifts, then other members of the team would have to do more. This dilemma was discussed openly and managers and her colleagues agreed that Christine would be "excused" the "awake" night shifts but would take a higher proportion of the night (sleep in) and weekend day shifts.

Both Christine and her employers are happy with the arrangement which is working well. For Christine, the professionalism of the management has been a critical factor in her job satisfaction. The NHS Trust are satisfied that they secured the best person for the job, and the residents' awareness of Christine's condition and need for medication has created a feeling of shared experience.

What is the duty of reasonable adjustment?

This duty applies when any 'physical feature' of the workplace or any 'arrangements' made by or on behalf of the employer substantially disadvantage a disabled person compared to a non-disabled person. An employer has to take such steps as it is reasonable to take in all the circumstances to prevent that disadvantage.

What does "physical feature" mean?

"Physical feature" includes anything on the premises arising from the design of the building or its construction or from an approach to, or exit from or access to the building; fixtures, fittings, furnishings, equipment or materials; and any other physical element or quality of land in the premises - all whether temporary or permanent.

What does "arrangements" made by or on behalf of the employer mean?

This duty applies to "arrangements" for determining to whom employment should be offered and any term, condition or arrangement on which

employment, promotion, transfer, training or any other benefit is offered or afforded. The duty applies in recruitment and during employment; for example, selection and interview procedures and the arrangements for using premises for such procedures as well as job offers, contractual arrangements, and working conditions; and for termination of employment.

What sort of adjustments might an employer have to make?

Examples given in the DDA are

- making adjustments to premises
- reallocating part of a job to another employee
- transferring the disabled person to fill an existing vacancy
- altering the person's working hours
- assigning the person to a different place of work
- allowing absences during working hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment
- supplying additional training
- acquiring special equipment or modifying existing equipment
- modifying instructions or reference manuals
- modifying procedures for testing or assessment
- providing a reader or interpreter
- providing additional supervision.

When is it reasonable for an employer to make an adjustment?

The DDA lists a number of factors which may, in particular, have a bearing on whether it will be reasonable for the employer to have to make a particular adjustment - these are

- the effectiveness of the particular adjustment in preventing the disadvantage
- the practicality of the adjustment
- the financial and other costs of the adjustment and the extent to any disruption caused
- the extent of the employer's financial or other resources; and
- the availability to the employer of financial or other assistance to help make adjustment.

### **Good Practice Example**

Andrew is in his late 20s and was employed as a skilled toolmaker in a small parts manufacturer. He has a paralysed right arm and hand from a motor cycle accident five years ago. The company wanted to keep the skills and

experience which Andrew had gained in the tool room as well as providing him with practical support.

During a year off for rehabilitation, the company discussed the way forward with him as it was agreed that without the use of both hands, Andrew could not continue to work in the press shop.

The adjustment made was to re-locate Andrew in the engineering office where his job involves taking leads from the sales engineers and working up detailed quotes. This means working with a computer with a specially adapted key pad for his left hand. This equipment cost about £1,500 which was provided with financial assistance from the Employment Service through the Access to Work Programme.

The post Andrew took up was a new post and would have been advertised had circumstances not turned out as they did. Both his employer and Andrew feel that the adjustment has been successful since Andrew's experience has not been lost; indeed it has been exploited positively.

## **++ THE BENEFITS OF EMPLOYING DISABLED PEOPLE**

Quotations from case study research

A small lampshade manufacturer with six employees at the site in question has slightly changed the duties of one of its employees, Neil, when it was discovered that he has epilepsy. A colleague was financially compensated for having to take on some duties which the firm believed would have been dangerous for Neil to do.

Their reason for doing this was that 'they believe that jobs should be offered to the right person for the job regardless of any disability they may have. In this way the company maximises the labour pool from which it may draw.'

A purchasing and supply company serving educational establishments has a policy of recruiting staff on their ability to do the job. In situations where a disabled person is of equal suitability, the company will often prefer to take on the disabled individual.

"The company believe that this demonstrates a strong commitment as a caring employer and this does have a positive impact on staff morale".

A packaging production firm employed Mervyn after he was placed with them on a government assisted scheme to help him control his stress related depression. He is now employed as an assembly operator.

The firm reports that it “gets a buzz from helping out, particularly so when it sees the personal development and progress made”.

A high street bank with a range of disabled employees recognises the business case for attracting disabled customers. “In some cases the physical adaptations to buildings and the provision of specialist equipment has achieved the twin objectives of helping staff and customers”.

An air-conditioning manufacturer has retained Tony, an employee who became paralysed through a motor cycle accident. He was a skilled sheet metal worker and on his return after 16 months rehabilitation, the company developed a new role for him as a drawing design quality controller. His previous hands-on experience meant that he was well suited to this new post which the company wished to introduce as part of its plans for BS5750 accreditation. Adjustments were made to the office layout and computer equipment was bought with the help of the Employment Service's Access to Work Programme. Tony's work patterns are flexible to cope with the pain he experiences.

The company are adamant that in his new role, Tony has saved them many thousands of pounds by minimising the discrepancies between drawings and manufactured parts. His experience as a sheet metal worker and his knowledge of the company's manufacturing processes has greatly enhanced his value as a drawings checker. The General Manager says “his work is of considerable value to the company”.

Lucy is wholly blind and works as a solicitor for a District Council. As well as providing her with a secretary and the purchase of some Braille texts and a Braille keyboard, Lucy works from home when this is practicable.

The Council say that her working from home does not entail any measurable costs. The sort of equipment required is in standard use throughout the Council anyway.

A local and specialist newspaper producer in a small rural town employs Daniel, a wheelchair user, as a customer service assistant on one of the national specialist papers that it produces. This is essentially a desk job dealing with customer queries but requires some movement from office to office in a complex building. Adjustments have been made to glass panels in

the doors at wheelchair height, changes to the work surface area so that Daniel's wheelchair could fit in and a suitable car parking space.

The company employed Daniel because he was the best person on the day at interview. They recognise their obligations under the DDA but made the adjustments for what they describe as common sense reasons.

The Employment Appeal Tribunal upheld an appeal under the DDA from a chemist who is blind and who was unlawfully discriminated against when he was made redundant. His employers had to pay £103,000 compensation.

## **++The business case**

There are compelling arguments for employing disabled people. Principally it makes good business sense to recruit the best person for the job. This section of the booklet highlights the costs and benefits, drawing on quotations from employers interviewed in recent research.

The conclusion is clear - the benefits usually outweigh any costs incurred. Importantly, by following good practice, it is far more likely that you will be complying with the law, which otherwise could have costly results.

### **Employing the best person for the job**

This is by far the most frequent benefit quoted by employers who have recruited or retained an employee with disabilities.

There are over 1 million unemployed disabled people who want to work. This is a pool of talent and skills which cannot be ignored in today's competitive market.

Disabled employees are often more committed employees, more likely to stay in the job and with good punctuality records.

### **Contributions to the efficiency of the workplace**

By making adjustments for an employee who becomes disabled, you can maximise skills and knowledge that would otherwise not be available to you.

Also some employers have noted that, especially for certain individuals with particular types of learning disabilities, routine tasks can yield considerable job satisfaction. There are examples of individuals making a valued contribution to the efficiency of the workplace by being prepared to do essential but routine and repetitive tasks very well.

### **Positive practices in the field of disability provide a “feel good” factor**

Many employers see positive practices of the kind set out in this booklet as a significant component to a “feel good” factor about their organisation. This applies to all key stakeholders - whether disabled or non-disabled - staff, customers and the community at large.

Employers believe that these practices work to improve the image of the organisation, provide better public relations and higher staff morale.

### **Adjustments may benefit other employees and customers**

There are clear examples of the wider benefits of making adjustments for one disabled person. Some of the more obvious are physical adjustments where non-disabled employees and disabled customers can benefit - for example, improved access, provision of lifts.

But others may be less obvious. Providing oral instruction, as well as in writing, will help a dyslexic person, but other employees with literacy difficulties will also benefit.

### **Most adjustments cost very little**

Many of the employers interviewed in recent research saw the adjustments they had made to accommodate disabled people as 'no big deal'.

They emphasised that they were regularly making adjustments for individual members of staff who might not be disabled - to accommodate requests for training or special leave, for example.

The Employers' Forum on Disability quotes the average cost of adjustment for employers in the USA as no more than £200. More importantly they have found that two thirds of adjustments cost nothing.

### **Improvements in communications technology**

The enormous improvements in communications technology mean that many employers are now able to offer much more flexible working conditions to

their employees. With computers, email, fax and telephone, working from home is now a much more realistic proposition.

For some disabled employees it can be a life-line. There are those who cannot travel to work, or for whom the costs of providing suitable transportation far outweigh the costs of working from home. Others find the flexibility of being able to work from home for part of the working week a real benefit to help with, for example, the pain or tiredness associated with their disability.

Recent statistics show that of the 140,000 disabled people who work from home using a telephone and a computer, 100,000 are teleworkers, i.e. they could not work without these facilities.

Often there are savings for the employer. The costs of providing the equipment are usually less than the rent of office space on employer's premises; and can be considerably less than any specific physical adaptations which might have to be made for some disabled people.

### **Businesses only have to do what is reasonable**

Remember, effective and practicable adjustments for disabled people often involve little or no costs or disruption and are therefore likely to be reasonable for employers to have to make.

Page 25 of this booklet lists the factors which may have a bearing on whether it will be reasonable for the employer to have to make an adjustment. Factors such as practicability and effectiveness, costs and resources available to fund these costs will be considerations.

### **Failure to comply with the DDA can be costly**

Good practice means that employers and managers need to be familiar with the duties and requirements of the DDA, and comply with them.

### **Failure can be costly if a case goes to an employment tribunal**

As much as any costs and compensation to be paid, there is the loss of goodwill and the bad publicity which can have serious effects on customer business.

## WHERE TO GO FOR MORE HELP AND INFORMATION

The DRC Helpline provides a one stop point for all your enquiries about the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and employing disabled people. They can be contacted as follows:

**Telephone**            08457 622 633  
**Textphone**            08457 622 644  
**Email**                    enquiry@drc-gb.org

Trained operators can provide general advice and information (but not legal advice) and can direct you to a range of organisations, like those listed below, to contact about your particular query if they cannot answer it.

There are a number of voluntary organisations which can offer advice. Familiar names are

- Royal National Institute for the Blind
- Royal National Institute for Deaf People
- SCOPE (for people with cerebral palsy)
- RADAR (for disability generally)
- MENCAP (for people with learning disabilities)
- MIND (for people with mental illness)
- British Dyslexia Association, and
- Employers' Forum on Disability.

There are many more - just telephone the Helpline.

The Employment Service's Disability Employment Advisers and Disability Service Teams are based in Jobcentres and can offer advice (but not legal advice) and practical assistance with employing disabled people. You will find the address and telephone number of your local Jobcentre in the telephone directory.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) is another useful contact. Public Enquiry Points (PEPs) can provide free, independent and impartial advice on all employment related topics. Your local PEP is listed in the telephone directory under ACAS.

ACAS also run workshops and seminars for employers, and ACAS advisers can help organisations formulate good employment policies and procedures. ACAS also publish a series of handbooks to help employers, obtainable from ACAS Reader on 01455 852 225.

## **Publications**

The Department for Education and Employment has produced a number of publications on the DDA, most of which can be obtained from the DDA Helpline as above. Other useful publications can be obtained as follows:

- An employment Code of Practice under the DDA (ISBN 0-11-270954-0, cost £9.95) is available from the Stationery Office Publications Centre, PO Box 276, London SW8 5DT. (Telephone orders 0870 600 5522)
- Equal Opportunities - 10 Point Plan for Employers and Equality Pays (which is aimed at smaller employers) can be obtained from DfEE Publications, PROLOG, PO Box 5050, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6ZQ. (Telephone 0845 602 2260)

## **Website**

All of the Helpline's DDA publications, as well as Codes of Practice, are available at [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk)

## **ANNEX**

### **Facts and figures**

- There are 154,800 disabled people of working age in Northern Ireland.
- There are 43,900 disabled people in employment in Northern Ireland.
- And, in Northern Ireland there are a further 14,000 disabled people who want to work, many of whom have the same qualities and skills as those who have jobs.
- [1998 NI Labour Force Survey]

### **The Disability Discrimination Act in Northern Ireland**

This annex gives some specific information on the numbers of disabled people in Northern Ireland and the differences in the nomenclature of some of the key equivalent bodies and services in Northern Ireland.

The DDA applies in Northern Ireland in the same way as throughout the rest of the United Kingdom. There is a separate version of the Code of Practice for the elimination of discrimination in the field of employment against disabled persons or persons who have had a disability for Northern Ireland which is available from The Stationery Office.

In Northern Ireland, the Disablement Advisory Service provides equivalent services and programmes for disabled people as the Employment Service and Jobcentres in England, Scotland and Wales. In Northern Ireland Disability Employment Advisers are known as Disablement Employment

Advisers; however, the ES Disability Symbol does not apply in Northern Ireland.

On page 15 of this booklet there is a description of the Supported Employment Programme. The equivalent programme in Northern Ireland is known as Employment Support.

As well as the organisations listed on page 30 which can give help and information, Disability Action is an organisation in Northern Ireland which can give you more help on disability generally. The Labour Relations Agency which operates in a similar way to ACAS in Great Britain is another useful source of help.

The Disability Discrimination Act Helpline is available throughout the UK with the same telephone number.

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