



LEVEL 2



Hiring **good people**
is good business

Be Disability Confident



Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Contents

Introduction	1
Getting started	2
Level 2 explained	3
Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business	4
Theme 2 - Keeping and developing your people	16
Activities that will make a difference for disabled people	20
What happens next?	23
Case studies and resources	24

This guidance explains how to become a Disability Confident employer at level 2 of the Disability Confident scheme.

Introduction

The Disability Confident scheme aims to help you successfully employ and retain disabled people and those with health conditions. Being Disability Confident is a unique opportunity to lead the way in your community, and you might just discover someone your business can't do without.

It was developed by employers and disabled people's representatives to make it rigorous but easily accessible - particularly for smaller businesses.

The scheme is voluntary and access to the guidance, self-assessments and resources is completely free.

The 3 levels are designed to support you on your Disability Confident journey. You must complete each level before moving on to the next.

Your journey starts with:

- Reading the guidance
- providing your contact details
- signing up to the Disability Confident statements
- identifying at least one activity that you can offer to do.



[See how your business can be Disability Confident](#)

Once you have read this guidance you will need to confirm you have completed your self-assessment and inform us of the activities you are undertaking. Further details on this are in the '**What next**' section on page 23.

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Getting started

As you progress on your Disability Confident journey you may well have questions. To help you we have introduced a range of icons you can click on, which will take you to further information, advice and guidance. We have also added case studies and videos to bring the Disability Confident journey to life. The icons are as show below.



Information



Case study



Guidance



Video

We will continually add to and update the resources behind them. We are always interested in material employers have found helpful in their own Disability Confident journey. If you have any useful links please email them to the [Disability Confident team](#).

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Level 2 explained

To take the second step, from being Disability Confident committed to being a Disability Confident employer, you will need to self-assess your business against a set of statements, grouped into 2 themes:

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business

- Core actions
- Activity

Theme 2 - Keeping and developing your people

- Core actions
- Activity

For each of the two themes you'll need to agree to take all of the actions set out in the core actions list and at least one from the activity list.

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – core actions

As a Disability Confident employer my business is:

1. Actively looking to attract and recruit disabled people:

- make a commitment to employ and retain disabled people and ensure this is reflected in job adverts, at all levels
- connect with local (and if appropriate) national [disability organisations](#) to access networks of disabled people who want to work. For example, see the [Leonard Cheshire Disability - Change100 for businesses case study](#)
- run, support or participate in local disability jobs fairs or targeted recruitment campaigns. Contact your local Jobcentre Plus to see if there are any being organised near you
- develop links with Jobcentre Plus and access government resources (For example [Work Choice providers](#)) to advertise your jobs and attract disabled people to apply for opportunities
- placing job adverts in the disability press or on disability websites or both. For example:
 - Diversity Jobs
 - Evenbreak
 - Disability Now
 - provider websites

More information:



[Recruitment and disabled people](#)



[Leonard Cheshire - Change100 for businesses case study](#)



[Work Choice providers](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – core actions

2. Providing a fully inclusive and accessible recruitment process:

- identify and address any barriers that may prevent or deter disabled people from applying for jobs, including where you advertise, the words you use and how people can apply
- make sure online or offline processes are fully accessible. For example provide a named contact, telephone number and email for applicants to request support or ask questions
- get your recruitment process tested by disabled people and if there is a barrier either remove it or provide an alternative way to apply
- provide a short but accurate job description that clearly sets out what the jobholder will be required to achieve, accepting there are different ways to achieve the same objective
- make sure you make all documentation available in different formats if required (written and on line)
- accept job applications in a variety of formats
- make sure people involved in the recruitment process are Disability Confident and know how to support disabled applicants

More information:



[Recruitment and disabled people](#)



[Business Disability Forum](#)



[Finding-inclusive-employers](#)



[Accessible communication formats](#)



[Recruiting disabled talent](#)



[Guidance finding talent - top tips](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – core actions

3. Offering an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job

Some employers will be able to offer a guaranteed interview. If employers do not advertise a formal guaranteed interview they should make it clear in their recruitment material that **if a disabled applicant meets the minimum criteria for the job** (this is the description of the job as set by the employer) they will be given the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities at an interview.

To make interviews work well for disabled applicants you will have:

- made sure your recruiters (internal or external) know how to support disabled applicants
- identified the core elements of the job and made these known in your advert, job specification and on line
- provided an opportunity for disabled people to indicate that they are disabled or have a long-term health condition and are requesting an interview
- made sure you invite disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job when sifting job applicants

More information:



[Guaranteed Interview scheme](#)



[Evenbreak](#)



[Disability Rights UK](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – core actions

4. Flexible when assessing people so disabled job applicants have the best opportunity to demonstrate that they can do the job.

This may include:

- planning for, and making reasonable adjustments to the assessment and interview process. For example, small things such as allowing candidates to complete a written test using a computer can make a big difference
- offering extended or working interviews to enable disabled people to demonstrate their potential
- making sure people involved in the interviewing process understand the Disability Confident commitment and know how to offer and make reasonable adjustments. (for example a later interview time that takes account of the longer journey time a disabled person may need).

More information:



[Considering other selection methods](#)



[Individuals with hidden impairments,](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – core actions

5. Making reasonable adjustments as required

- make reasonable adjustments e.g. (such as changes to working patterns, adaptations to premises or equipment and provision of support packages) will ensure disabled workers are not disadvantaged when applying for and doing their jobs. This includes contract workers, trainees, apprentices and business partners
- often these adjustments will cost nothing or very little. The Access to Work scheme may be able to provide advice and assistance if there are extra costs involved
- it's important that your employees at all levels and any agencies you use know what to do and know where to turn to for advice

More information:



[Reasonable adjustments for disabled workers](#)



[Reasonable adjustments are often straightforward \(ACAS guide\)](#)



[Access to Work guide for employers](#)



[Access to Work guide for employers](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – core actions

6. Encouraging our suppliers and partner firms to be Disability Confident

- as a Disability Confident employer you can encourage your partners, suppliers and providers to demonstrate their commitment to being Disability Confident. You may wish to consider setting clear performance indicators for your supply chain and partners

More information:



[The Clear Company](#)



[Business Disability Forum](#)

7. Ensuring employees have sufficient disability equality awareness.

- a Disability Confident employer will ensure all employees have sufficient disability equality awareness, taking into account their role. For example, staff carrying out recruitment will need to be fully aware of the steps to make a recruitment process fully accessible. Managers and supervisors will need to understand how to support their disabled staff. Other employees will need a general understanding of how attitudes, behaviours and environment can affect disabled people

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – activity

You must also commit to at least one action from the list below to be a **Disability Confident employer**.

As a Disability Confident employer my business is:

1. Providing work experience

- work experience is usually for a fixed period of time that a person spends with the business, when they can learn about working life and the working environment
- some work experience positions offer people the chance to try particular tasks. Others can provide an opportunity to watch and learn
- work experience also provides an opportunity for disabled people to demonstrate their abilities and helps build the resilience and behaviours they will need to succeed. Watch the Mencap and Inclusive Employer's video to see the experience of young people during Learning Disabilities Work Experience Week

More information:



[Not just making tea a guide to work experience](#)



[Mencap Work experience](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – activity

2. Providing work trials

- this is a way of trying out a potential employee before offering them a job. It can be informal or by agreement with Jobcentre Plus
- if this is agreed with Jobcentre Plus, an employer can offer a work trial if the potential job is for 16 hours or more a week and lasts for at least 13 weeks. The work trial can last for up to 30 days

More information:



[Work-trials](#)

3. Providing paid employment (permanent or fixed term)

As well as providing employment opportunities, a Disability Confident employer will encourage disabled people to apply for their vacancies and support them when they do. Jobcentre Plus has a range of recruitment services that can help an employer seeking to recruit staff. An employer can get:

- [recruitment advice](#), including specialist support for businesses
- help setting up [work trials](#) to give an opportunity to see potential recruits in action in the work environment
- help through the [Work Choice or other](#) programmes towards employing a disabled person who needs specialist support from [other employment schemes](#), including Work Clubs and help with work experience

More information:



[Work trials](#)



[Recruitment and disabled people](#)



[Sector based work-academies employer guide](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – activity

4. Providing apprenticeships

These are for new or current employees. They combine working with studying for a work-based qualification. As well as providing apprenticeship opportunities, a Disability Confident employer will encourage disabled people to apply for their vacancies and support them when they do. Employers based in England may be able to get a grant or funding to employ an apprentice. Apprentices must be paid at least the minimum apprenticeship wage.

The apprentice must:

- work with experienced staff
- learn job-specific skills
- study for a work-based qualification during their working week, such as at a college or training organisation

More information:



[Take on an apprentice](#)

5. Providing a Traineeship

Traineeships are designed to help young people who want to get an apprenticeship or job but don't yet have appropriate skills or experience.

More information:



[Traineeships fact sheet for employers](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – activity

6. Providing paid internships or supported internships (or both)

A paid internship is a period of paid work experience between 1 and 4 months, aimed at college or university students and usually taking place during the summer. Typically the intern will work full time for a certain employer, where they will gain experience and basic knowledge about a particular business discipline. This valuable experience can be built upon during a placement year as well as in graduate employment. A supported internship is aimed at disabled people still in education who are seeking work experience and knowledge about a business discipline but whose disability is such that they need special support, often including a support worker or work coach to help them in the workplace. Supported internships do require time and commitment to set up, so might be most appropriate for a larger employer who could offer several of them at once or in succession, sharing support costs and setting up time.

More information:



[Advertise internship](#)



[Leonard Cheshire what we do Change100](#)



[Supported internship guidance](#)

7. Advertising vacancies and other opportunities through organisations and media aimed particularly at disabled people

This can help ensure the opportunities are seen by disabled people. Appropriate organisations include:

- [Diversity Jobs](#)
- [Evenbreak](#)
- [Disability Now](#)
- RNIB
- Provider websites
- Your local Council for Voluntary Service
- Your local disability rights organisation

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – activity

8. Engaging with Jobcentre Plus, Work Choice providers or local disabled people's user led organisation to access support when required (or both)

This may include:

- identifying and connecting with national local disabled people's networks and organisations (or both)
- identifying and connecting with Work Choice providers
- identifying and connecting with Job Clubs
- building links to specialist schools, colleges etc
- working with advocates

More information:



[What is a DPULO](#)



[Disabled peoples user led organisations list and contacts](#)



[Help for recruiters/work-choice](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 1 - Getting the right people for your business – activity

9. Providing an environment that is inclusive and accessible for staff, clients and customers

- access is not only about meeting the needs of people with physical impairments. It is also about meeting the access needs of people with, for example, sensory impairments or learning disabilities. An inclusive environment works better for everybody
- accommodating the needs of those customers, clients and service users who might be disabled can help you make sure that your business is accessible to everyone. It will also send a message to the world that disabled people are welcome in your business. In turn, this helps to attract applications from disabled people for vacancies or other opportunities you are offering
- find out more about inclusive environments
- see info graphic: Are your premises accessible?

More information:



[infographic is your premises accessible](#)



[Inclusive-environments](#)

10. Offering other innovative and effective approaches to encourage disabled people to apply for opportunities and supporting them when they do

Your business may have developed other innovative and effective approaches beyond what we have set out here. If so we would like to hear what you are doing. If appropriate, we could include details and case studies in future versions of this scheme, to help other employers.

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 2 - Keeping and developing your people – core actions

As a Disability Confident employer, my business is:

1. Promoting a culture of being Disability Confident

This is about building a culture in your business where your employees feel safe to disclose any disability or long-term health condition, feeling confident they will be supported as necessary. It's about creating positive messages in company literature, statements and plans, and challenging any negative images or prejudicial statements.

A Disability Confident employer will regularly consult with staff about their perceptions of issues, barriers or concerns and will report back on action taken to address these.

More information:



[The Clear Company](#)



[Business Disability Forum](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 2 - Keeping and developing your people – core actions

2. Supporting employees to manage their disabilities or health conditions

This could include:

- encouraging employees to be open and to discuss access and support needs
- making sure that employees know that should they acquire a disability or should an existing disability or health condition worsen, every effort will be made to enable them to continue in their current job or an alternative one
- providing support for existing employees who become disabled or experience health problems for example via occupational health sessions, offering flexible working patterns, offering home-working
- providing reasonable adjustments as necessary to support staff. This includes supporting applications to Access to Work for advice and financial support

More information:



[Recruiting disabled talent](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 2 - Keeping and developing your people – core actions

3. Ensuring there are no barriers to the development and progression of disabled staff

This could include:

- encouraging disabled staff to be ambitious and seek progression in the workplace, including increasing hours, taking on additional responsibilities and seeking promotion
- ensuring disabled staff are fully included in team meetings and informal communications
- monitoring, whether formally or informally, progression rates for disabled staff and ensuring they are in line with general progression rates
- regularly discussing training and development needs with all staff, including disabled staff and offering appropriate training support as necessary such as courses in alternative formats, special coaching if necessary, accessible training venues
- ensuring there are no unforeseen barriers to progression, such as changes to location or travel arrangements that a disabled member of staff could not do

The linked guide explores three areas of equality good practice to help with this action:

- equality policies
- equality training
- monitoring

More information:



[BBC disability talent](#)



[Case study an inclusive approach to developing disabled talent](#)



[Equality policies](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 2 - Keeping and developing your people – core actions

4. Ensuring managers are aware of how they can support staff who are sick or absent from work

This could include:

- having a clear process for managing absence and making sure all staff know about this process
- where appropriate, making a referral to the Fit for Work service
- ensuring that absent staff receive regular contact from their line manager to keep them in touch with work developments and so they know they are still valued
- when a staff member has recovered enough to return to work, making sure a support plan is in place. This might include temporary reductions in hours or changes to work patterns and any necessary reasonable adjustments. Where the employee is unable to continue in their current role, despite reasonable adjustments, you should explore suitable alternatives

5. Valuing and listening to feedback from disabled staff

This could include:

- ensuring there are opportunities for staff feedback, whether through formal staff surveys and forums or informally, and encouraging staff to participate in them
- encouraging the creation of disabled staff networks where appropriate and creating mechanisms for receiving feedback from them
- regularly reporting on issues raised and what action has been taken about them
- ensuring that line managers encourage staff to speak openly about their views, needs and ambitions in staff reviews, and act appropriately on the points raised

6. Reviewing this Disability Confident employer self-assessment

A Disability Confident employer will be looking to continually improve and to take account of changing advice and guidance. Regularly running through the self-assessment pack can help with this process.

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 2 - Keeping and developing your people – activity

At least one of the activities below need to have been taken to become a Disability Confident employer

1. Providing mentoring, coaching, buddying and other support networks for staff

- providing access to support networks can be a good way of helping disabled staff or those with health conditions to develop their skills and build their confidence
- mentoring is a partnership between mentor and mentee, with both working together as equals, in a relationship based upon mutual respect. A mentor is an experienced individual who is willing to share their knowledge with someone less experienced. They involve themselves in helping to guide the career of the mentee through a process of regular meetings and discussions
- coaching is more focused on a specific area of work and is sometimes used as a short term approach. The coach seeks to use their own everyday experience to improve the performance of others by giving tuition or instruction
- a buddy is generally a nominated colleague who can provide support, guidance and training and promote confidence when a member of staff moves to a new working environment
- some companies also encourage staff to set up their own informal support networks, including virtual networks using email and messaging services

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 2 - Keeping and developing your people – activity

2. Including disability awareness equality training in our induction process

ensuring that new staff and people moving posts receive the appropriate level of disability equality training, ensuring that they can identify and support colleagues and team members with disabilities and support needs. This will be particularly important for staff taking on line management responsibilities

3. Guiding staff to information and advice on mental health conditions

guiding staff to information on mental health and well-being in the work place can help them identify the symptoms and know how to support their team members and colleagues. [National and local helplines and support groups](#) access to Work provides a specific mental health support service

More information:



[Employing disabled people and people with health conditions](#)

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 2 - Keeping and developing your people – activity

4. Providing occupational health services if required

An occupational health service can provide support for existing employees who develop an impairment/condition or experience health problems. This can be done internally, for example through occupational health sessions, or might be done through an external provider. Access to Work may be able to offer advice and contribute to the costs of this.

See guidance for employers on using Fit for Work to help their employees stay in or return to work.

More information:



[Access to work](#)



[Fit for work guidance for employers](#)

5. Identifying and sharing good practices

- it shows leadership to share your best practice with your wider business community, and helps support others on their Disability Confident journey
- being a known exemplar of good practice can help attract disabled talent that you might otherwise have missed
- providing specific role models and case studies can help encourage other disabled staff in the organisation or amongst suppliers, networks or the wider community to be more confident and ambitious

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Theme 2 - Keeping and developing your people – activity

Providing human resource managers with specific Disability Confident training

Give managers and people involved in human resources (this can include any recruitment agencies acting on behalf of the organisation) specific and continuing training to make sure the organisation is following current best practice in supporting disabled people.

What happens next?

When you have completed level 2, you will need to [follow this link](#) to confirm that you:

- have undertaken and successfully completed the Disability Confident self-assessment
- are taking all of the core actions to be a Disability Confident employer
- are offering at least one activity to get the right people for your business and at least one activity to keep and develop your people.

In return we will send you a Disability Confident **employer badge** that you can use in your own business stationary and communications for 2 years. We'll also send you a certificate in recognition of your achievement and information about becoming a Disability Confident leader.

As part of awarding you your Disability Confident committed badge we will include your business name and expiry date for the badge on GOV.UK.

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Case studies and resources

Developed by employers and disabled people's representatives, this scheme is designed to help employers make the most of the opportunities provided by employing disabled people. See what others say about the benefits of being Disability Confident.

Click on the icons below to watch employers' testimonials on how disabled staff have made a positive difference to their businesses.



IMG Productions (IMG) is one of the world's leading television production companies. Their journey to becoming Disability Confident began when producer Simon Birri acquired a disability following a brain aneurysm.



Chartwells Independent have recruited, trained and supported Steven, who has autism. He has become a highly regarded member of the catering team at Old Swinford Hospital School in Stourbridge.



EY talk about their approach to recruiting talented disabled people and how they support staff who acquired a disability during their career.



The Recruitment Industry (**RIDI**) awards celebrate progress and recognise the success of organisations that are making headway in increasing the inclusion of disabled professionals.

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Definition of disability

Someone is disabled under the [Equality Act 2010](#) if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

This means that, in general, the:

- person must have an impairment that is either physical or mental
- impairment must have adverse effects that are substantial
- substantial adverse effects must be long-term for example it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed
- [long-term](#) substantial adverse effects must be effects on normal day-to-day activities such as a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection

[Guidance for employers about their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010](#)

Long term health conditions

Examples of long term conditions include:

- high blood pressure
- depression
- dementia
- arthritis

Long term conditions can affect many parts of a person's life, from their ability to work and have relationships, to their housing needs and educational attainment.

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Mental health conditions

A mental health condition is considered a disability if it has a long-term effect on your normal day-to-day activity. This is defined under the Equality Act 2010.

A condition is 'long term' if it lasts, or is likely to last, 12 months.

'Normal day-to-day activity' is defined as something you do regularly in a normal day. For example - using a computer, working set times or interacting with people.

If a mental health condition means they are disabled they can get [support at work](#) from their employer.

There are many different types of mental health condition, including:

- depression
- anxiety
- bipolar disorder
- obsessive compulsive disorder
- schizophrenia
- self-harm

What isn't counted as a disability?

See [guidance on conditions that aren't covered by the disability definition](#), for example addiction to non-prescribed drugs or alcohol.

Disability Confident – EMPLOYER

Disability employment facts

Disability Confident employers recruit and retain disabled people and recognise how their skills can benefit their business.

