

Students with Disabilities Including Dyslexia

The Careers Group, University of London, is committed to providing an excellent service to all its clients, regardless of background or disability, and is actively seeking to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act [DDA] 2005. If you require help accessing any of our services please ask a member of staff who will be happy to help. Any information disclosed to us is treated in strict confidence.

This leaflet is intended to provide information and useful referral points for students with disabilities when career-planning or job-seeking. The information is not comprehensive but aims to provide a useful starting point.

THE LAW

The DDA 2005 defines a 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'. This covers any physical, mental or learning disability, including Dyslexia. It also includes long term progressive illnesses such as HIV and cancer and covers those who are in remission from cancer.

The act means that:

- It is unlawful for any employer to discriminate against any disabled person who is applying for a job or is in employment
- Once an applicant has disclosed a disability, employers must make reasonable allowances in selection procedures
- Employers must make reasonable adjustments to the working environment to accommodate disabled employees
- Service providers (eg businesses and organisations) must make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of their premises to remove any physical barriers to access
- Whilst certain disabilities may preclude individuals from some areas of employment, all reasonable alternatives should be explored before that decision is made.

HOW CAN I IDENTIFY POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS?

The Disability Equality Duty, effective from December 2006, requires employers to show that they are being pro-active in assisting disabled applicants and employees to progress and succeed within their organisation.

Many employers recognise the advantages of recruiting a diverse workforce and promote their commitment by becoming members of the Employers' Forum on Disability (EFD) and by using the 'Two Ticks' symbol when advertising job vacancies.

The Two Ticks accreditation can be recognised by the following symbol 

The EFD's purpose is to improve the job prospects of people with disabilities by making it easier for employers to recruit, retain and develop disabled staff. An up-to-date list of member organisations can be found at: www.efd.org.uk/about-us/members.

If your preferred employer does not appear to be a member or use the Two Ticks logo, then access their Equal Opportunities policy statement to find out what their position is.

If you feel you have been discriminated against, seek advice from the Disability Law Service (www.dls.org.uk) or contact Skill, The National Bureau for Students with Disabilities. For further advice see references below.

ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING SPECIALISED ADVICE FOR STUDENTS AND GRADUATES WITH DISABILITIES

Experience has shown that the core requirements of all students seeking employment or wishing to undertake postgraduate study are similar, but there are some organisations that provide specialist help for students with disability-related requirements. Dyslexia organisations are listed separately at the end.

Directgov

www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/index.htm

Offering practical information on rights for disabled individuals, this site covers a range of issues including employment, education and training. They can put you in touch with disability employment advisers (DEAs) at your local Jobcentre who can provide support, advice and information including:

- An employment assessment to identify what type of work or training suits you best
- Referral, where appropriate, to a Work Preparation programme, a Pathways to Work adviser or a work programme like the Job Introduction Scheme, WORKSTEP or Access to Work
- A job-matching and referral service. The DEA can tell you about jobs that match your experience and skills
- Information on 'two ticks' employers in your area

Disability Alliance

www.disabilityalliance.org, tel: 0207 247 9342, email: office@disabilityalliance.org

Disability Alliance is a charity which works to relieve the poverty and improve the living standards of disabled people. They produce publications and help sheets, provide advice and are involved in policy and campaign work. Help sheets cover topics such as Access to Work, employment and support allowance, education maintenance allowance and much more.

Disability Toolkits

www.disabilitytoolkits.ac.uk, tel: 0161 275 2828

Disability Toolkits aims to help disabled students gain and make the most of work experience opportunities which could prove invaluable for their future careers. Their website provides information, advice and resources for students, academics involved in the provision of placements, and for prospective employers offering work experience and internships.

EmployAbility

www.employ-ability.org.uk, tel: 07852 764684, email: info@employ-ability.org.uk

EmployAbility is a not-for-profit organisation assisting disabled university graduates and undergraduates into employment. Their purpose is to ease the transition from education to employment and provide support throughout the recruitment process. They offer advice on all aspects of the recruitment process and other key disability issues. They will also make recommendations regarding disability-inclusive employers, offer internship and placement scheme opportunities and run specialist recruitment events providing insights into specific industries and the opportunity to meet key recruiters.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

www.equalityhumanrights.com, tel: 0845 604 6610, email: info@equalityhumanrights.com

An organisation providing comprehensive information and advice on disability law and legislation.

eQuality Recruitment

www.equalityrecruitment.co.uk, tel: 020 8983 9716

eQuality Recruitment are the UK's leading equality job site for candidates from across the diversity

spectrum of Britain's population. Their website includes a job search section and equality information for both job seekers and employers.

Scope

www.scope.org.uk, tel: 0808 800 3333, email: response@scope.org.uk

Scope's aim is that disabled people achieve equality. You can get involved in a number of opportunities at Scope and they welcome applications from disabled people and guarantee interviews to suitably qualified disabled applicants. Your personal direct experience and/or knowledge of disability will be seen as an advantage. They also offer employment help and advice as part of their service.

The Papworth Trust

www.papworth.org.uk, tel: 0800 952 5000, email: info@papworth.org.uk

This organisation supports disabled people with services including employment, housing, care and advice. The common factor is giving disabled people the skills, opportunities and confidence to make choices about how they live their lives. Papworth Trust's Employment programmes provide support to graduates with a physical disability who want to get into work.

Reach

<http://reach.thecareersgroup.co.uk>, tel: 02082404055

Reach is an online community designed for University of London students who feel they face barriers to reaching their potential. These may include social background, disability, age, gender and sexual orientation – it all depends on the individual and the career they are aiming for. The site includes comprehensive information resources, blogs, an events calendar and a discussion forum.

Remploy

www.remploy.co.uk, tel: 0845 155 2700, email: info@remploy.co.uk

Remploy creates independence for disabled people through work and is a leading provider of jobs for disabled people. Increasingly, the company is focusing on finding disabled people jobs in mainstream employment through its specialist recruitment service. They offer a range of services to develop disabled jobseekers' skills, including pre-employment training and recruitment programmes.

Shaw Trust

www.shaw-trust.org.uk, tel: 01225 716300

Shaw Trust is a charity providing routes into work for people who are disadvantaged in the workplace due to disability, ill-health or other social circumstances. They are one of the largest UK providers of employment services for disabled people. They run pre-employment activities in a supportive environment and work-related, accredited training.

Skill

www.skill.org.uk, tel: 0800 328 5050, email: info@skill.org.uk

This is a charity promoting opportunities for young people and adults with any kind of disability and helping them to realise their potential in further and higher education, training, and employment throughout the UK. They provide an information and advice service for disabled people and the professionals who work with them, via a freephone helpline, email and website. They also inform policy makers; promote best practice; run conferences and seminars; produce publications; offer consultancy and training for organisations; and conduct research and develop projects.

ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING SPECIALISED ADVICE FOR STUDENTS AND GRADUATES WITH DYSLEXIA

The British Dyslexia Association

www.bdadyslexia.org.uk, tel: 0845 251 9002, email: helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk

This national organisation offers information, support and advice to people with dyslexia and their families.

The Dyslexia Forum

www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=DYSLEXIA

A popular forum you can discuss issues with other people who have dyslexia and benefit from their ideas and experience.

Dyslexic.com

www.dyslexic.com, tel: 01223 420209, email: advice@dyslexic.com

This is a site where you can purchase assistive technologies and find out more about what technologies are available and suitable for you.

POSTGRADUATE STUDY

Are you wondering whether or not to take a postgraduate course? Do the benefits outweigh the cost? These issues are the same for all students. See the Postgraduate Study leaflet in this series.

If you need special help to undertake a course, contact the organisation and discuss your requirements with the admissions department or, in larger organisations, the Disability Officer. Certain charitable organisations and funding councils may provide financial help for students with disabilities. Contact Skill for further details.

DISCLOSING DISABILITY

When, what and how to disclose is often an issue for individuals with disabilities seeking either employment or a place on a postgraduate course, particularly when the disability is not overtly visible.

It may be useful to think about how your disability may affect you in the workplace and what adjustments might help overcome any difficulties. Any employer will be interested in how you have overcome difficulties in the past and the strategies you have adopted to do so.

If you choose to disclose but an employer does not ask how your disability affects you, offer a brief explanation to prevent any false assumptions or generalisations being made. Provide solutions rather than problems. A Careers Adviser will be happy to help you with this.

SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT

Specialist equipment may help you to manage your disability and perform to the best of your ability in employment or postgraduate study. Even if you are using such equipment at present, changes in technology or differing requirements in your new role may lead to different equipment or adjustment needs. It is worth finding out what is currently available and if it has been improved recently. A number of specialist organisations exist to help match your specific needs with what is available including those listed above.

It is the aim of the careers service to help you identify and highlight your skills so you can obtain employment at the appropriate level, or attain a place on a suitable postgraduate study course. If you have any problems or are worried about specific issues, please contact them. Students of colleges that are members of The Careers Group, University of London can locate their college service on www.careers.lon.ac.uk.

The Careers Group is committed to providing information in accessible formats. An electronic version of this document is available at www.careers.lon.ac.uk/cep. For further formats, please contact your college careers service or email cs@careers.lon.ac.uk.

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