

Disability Confident- Implementation by Recruitment / HR



The Department for Work and Pensions has contacted all employers who are currently registered to display the 'Positive about Disabled People' (Two Ticks) symbol regarding a new scheme named 'Disability Confident', which will be phased in to replace 'Two Ticks'. The aim of the new Disability Confident scheme is to be simple and accessible, offering advice and guidance that will take organisations through a three level Disability Confident journey, promoting the ability to: attract, recruit and retain disabled people, whilst demonstrating commitment, action and progression to people who have a disability.

The three levels are as follows:

Level 1: Disability Confident Committed: To be Disability Confident Committed, the employer must deliver the following commitments: 'Ensure our Recruitment process is inclusive and accessible', 'Communicate and Promote Vacancies', 'Offer an Interview to Disabled People', 'Anticipate and provide reasonable adjustments as required' and 'Support any existing employee who acquires a disability or long term health condition, enabling them to stay in work'. Once the employer meets the criteria for this stage they will be awarded a badge for a 12 month period.

Level 2: Disability Confident Employer: This level requires the employer to demonstrate progression on Level 1 by undertaking a self-assessment process against a set of statements to help employers to attract, recruit and retain disabled people. The employer will also need to demonstrate that they are taking positive action in the following areas: 'Getting the Right People for your business'- which contains 7 core actions and 'Keeping and Developing your people' which contains 6 core actions. Once the employer meets the criteria for this stage they will be awarded a badge for 2 years.

Level 3: Disability Confident Leader: This level requires the employer to be Disability Confident as recognized by their peers, local community and disabled people. Disability Confident Leaders will be open to external challenges and will support other employers to become Disability Confident. The criteria for Level 3: Disability Confident Leader consists of two additional elements to the assessment process. The first is an 'Outside Challenge'- where employers are validated or subject to challenge by one of 4 external groups; such as a Disabled People's Organisation, for instance. The second is 'Leadership', where an employer who is Disability Confident will follow one or more of 6 recommended routes to encourage other employers to become disability confident. Once the employer meets the criteria for this stage they will be awarded a badge for 3 years.

As an employer who is already accredited with the 'Two Ticks' Positive about Disabled People symbol, we have completed the migration form, (sent to us by the Department of Work and Pensions) which places us at Level 1.

We are progressing our self-assessment for a Level 2 award and will update the Equalities Panel. Following the award at Level 2, this accreditation will be valid for a period of 24 months, at which point another self-assessment would be required.

By migrating to Disability Confident, we are demonstrating a commitment for the fair treatment of disabled people through the entire employee process, from application through to exit. We will be able to display the badge on promotional documents as a symbol of a commitment that (in the vast majority of areas) we already meet or exceed. By progressing to Level 2 Disability Confident Employer, we will also have the opportunity to further demonstrate our commitment, with the potential of moving to Level 3 in the future as we undertake further action to achieve this level of accreditation.

The communication plan for the migration to Disability Confident will be presented at the Equalities Panel for comment and feedback.

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Andrew Rowland

COMMUNICATION PLAN

In ensuring equal opportunity within recruitment and employment it is essential that the migration to Disability Confident is handled in a respectful manner. However, it is important to promote the commitment that we will be undertaking in migrating to Disability Confident. Below is an outline of the key communication methods which could/should be utilised to notify staff and the public of our renewed commitment.

Communication Method	Considerations
Update Recruitment Documentation	Our Recruitment Documentation (specifically the Application Pack which is loaded with all vacancies) discusses our commitment to the recruitment and retention of staff who have a disability. It is important (from an applicant and organisational perspective) that the information within this document is up to date and correct and reflects the Disability Confident Scheme.
Communicate with Disability Staff Group	The aim of the group is to create a sensitive and supportive working environment for disabled staff. It supports staff who may have a physical impairment, sensory impairment, learning disability, mental health issue or other condition which has an impact on their daily life. With this in mind, it is essential that the changes are communicated to the group early into the migration process.
Article in Insight (Internal Staff Newsletter)	83% of people acquire their disability whilst they are in work, therefore, by promoting the change in Insight, we will be able to communicate our commitment to supporting and retaining staff members. Other key areas of being a Disability Confident Employer focus around equal opportunity to promotions and learning and development opportunities, which could be reiterated using this method of communication to existing staff members.
Citynet (News + Recruitment Pages) (Intranet Site)	Many developments within our organisation are communicated using Citynet. For the reasons explored above, it is important to ensure the changes are communicated here also.
Corporate Twitter / LinkedIn	Upon researching a number of other companies who are now signed up to the Disability Confident scheme, one of the key methods that have been utilised to communicate the change to customers (externally) is the use of social media. LinkedIn, specifically, will be an important tool to communicate the change.
Website	With the above reference to social media, it will be important to direct people to further information about the scheme and our website would be ideal to host such information whilst also acting as another method to communicate our commitment.
External Groups/Organisations	In addition to communicating the changes internally and to potential applicants through our Recruitment documentation, it is important that discussions take place with external organisations and groups such as Job Centre Plus, Papworth Trust etc. This is an area we hope to expand upon through Disability Confident.