**Disability Rights UK**

[**https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/careers-and-work-disabled-people#five**](https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/careers-and-work-disabled-people#five)

**Applications and Interviews**

**Applications**

When requesting further information about a job, it’s worth noting that you can ask for this in an alternative format, such as large print, Braille or electronically. You can also ask to submit your application in an alternative format. Under the Equality Act 2010, providing application materials in an alternative format is likely to be considered a reasonable adjustment that an employer should make. Some organisations can provide advice and assistance with writing CVs and filling in application forms.

**Interviews**

Under the Equality Act 2010 the employer has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to the arrangements for interview. If you need any adjustments, it’s best to tell the employer in advance. If you’re unable to attend an interview at a specific time for disability-related reasons, it’s likely under the Act that the employer would have to rearrange.

**Access to Work**

It's important to remember that all employers have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments. However, you can help persuade them that costs won't be a problem by telling them about the Access to Work scheme.

Access to Work is a government programme aimed at supporting disabled people to take up or remain in work.  It can help in a number of ways, for example by paying towards:

* Communicator, advocate or BSL interpreter for a job interview, if you’re deaf or have communication difficulties
* Special aids and equipment
* a support worker, such as a reader for somebody with a visual impairment; communicator for a deaf person; or a helper for personal care needs at work
* Travel to work, which can include taxi fares

The scheme pays 100% of the approved costs (subject to the cap):

* for travel to work, for a support worker or a communicator for support at job interviews
* if you have been working for an employer and have been in the job for less than six weeks or
* if you are self-employed or setting up your own business through the New Enterprise Allowance

If you have been in your job for six weeks or more when you first apply for help, Access to Work will pay a proportion of the costs of support. How much your employer will pay depends on the cost of the adaptations and the size of the employer.

The scheme has been extended to cover support that you may need to work from home during the Covid-19 pandemic. This can be for special equipment such as a screen reader or video remote interpreting or support worker services. If you cannot travel to work safely due to your health condition you can also apply for financial support with things like taxi fares. A tailored package of mental health support is also available for up to nine months if you are anxious about returning to work.

For more information on Access to Work see the Disability Rights UK *Factsheet F27 – Access to work*.

**Telling people about your impairment**

You don't have to tell an employer about your disability unless you’re asked direct questions about your health on a medical questionnaire. Under the Equality Act 2010, employers cannot ask candidates questions about their health that are unrelated to the job role.

Being open about your impairment is a personal decision and people often worry about discrimination, prejudice or lack of confidentiality. The main benefit of telling an employer is that it gives you more protection under the Equality Act if you have a dispute at work. If an employer can show they didn't know you were disabled, you might have less of a case for discrimination. Other advantages could include:

* Some employers are keen to employ disabled people
* It could provide an opportunity to talk about yourself positively
* Adjustments can be put in place earlier
* You might build a better working relationship
* You can explain aspects of your CV that might otherwise count against you, such as gaps in your education or work history

Information about your impairment is protected by the Equality Act and the General Data Protection Regulations. It is sensitive personal information and cannot be passed on to other people without your permission.

For more information on telling people about your impairment see the Disability Rights UK *Factsheet F54 – Telling people you’re disabled*.

**Recruitment agencies**

Recruitment agencies can be a good way to get a job. They are paid by employers to find suitable people for vacancies, so they have an interest in getting you into appropriate work. They also have access to some vacancies that are not advertised and are free for jobseekers.

For temp positions, the agency is usually the official employer. They make an agreement to supply you as a worker to somebody else but are directly responsible for paying you. The host company, where you actually do your work, is called a ‘principal’. Under the Equality Act, both the agency and the principal have duties not to discriminate against you and they have to make reasonable adjustments to overcome any employment arrangements or physical features of the workplace that put you at a substantial disadvantage.

When deciding whether an adjustment is reasonable, employment agencies and principals will take into account how long you will be working.

Permanent agencies usually work by receiving a fee from an employer for introducing you to them or for recruiting you. Your employer is covered by the Equality Act in the usual way.

**6. Employment Programmes**

The Government funds welfare to work programmes to support people back into work.

**Intensive Personalised Employment Support**

Intensive Personalised Employment Support is a voluntary scheme which provides a personalised package of employment support for people with disabilities or health condition who are unlikely to move into work within the next year and need additional support. A dedicated support worker will work with you to overcome barriers that may be stopping you from entering work. You can receive support for up to 21 months, including 6 months of in-work support if you get a job.

The support includes:

* Identifying skills, abilities and the work you’re able to do
* Jobs searching, interview and CVs
* Access to volunteering, job taster sessions, work trials, local services and employers
* Help to find training that will help you find work

For more information on the support available visit [www.gov.uk/intensive-personalised-employment-support](http://www.gov.uk/intensive-personalised-employment-support).

The Work Coach at your local Jobcentre Plus can tell you more on the scheme.

**The Work and Health Programme**

The Work and Health Programme is intended to help disabled people, as well as the long term unemployed to enter and stay in work.  It is available on a voluntary basis to those with health conditions and disabilities, and to various groups of vulnerable people. The Programme is also compulsory for those who have been out of work and claiming unemployment benefits for 24 months. For more information on the support available on the Programme visit: [www.gov.uk/work-health-programme](http://www.gov.uk/work-health-programme).

The Work Coach at your local Jobcentre Plus can tell you if you’re eligible.

**7. Apprenticeships**

An apprenticeship is an opportunity to learn on the job while studying for a qualification. Apprentices do real jobs in a real workplace and gain a nationally recognised qualification. Apprentices who are under the age of 19 or are in their first year of an apprenticeship are entitled to a minimum wage of £4.15 per hour. After the first year those aged 18 to 20 earn £6.45 per hour and those aged 21 to 24 earn £8.20. These are the minimum wages and most apprentices earn more. The average pay rate at Level 2 and Level 3 is £6.70 and the average for Level 4 and 5 higher apprentices is £9.83. These rates are from April 2020 to March 2021.

Whether you want to work on a farm, as a travel agent, a painter and decorator or as a trainee accountant there are opportunities out there. Whatever you decide to do, your college or employer should give you the help and support you need. There are lots of different apprenticeships in:

* Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care
* Arts, Media and Publishing
* Business, Administration and Law
* Construction, Planning and the Built Environment
* Education and Training
* Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies
* Health, Public Services and Care
* Information and Communication Technology
* Leisure, Travel and Tourism
* Retail and Commercial Enterprise
* Science and Mathematics

There are various levels of apprenticeships. You can either start from the beginning and work your way up or start on the level that best suits the qualifications you already have.

The Apprenticeships website has lots of examples of different types of apprenticeships and videos of different apprentice experiences. Visit [www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/)/

For more information on apprenticeships see the Disability Rights UK *Into Apprenticeships* guide. It deals with common questions such as how to find an apprenticeship, whether the training will be accessible and what support is available in the workplace.

**8. Alternative ways of working**

These days many people choose to do work which does not follow the traditional 9am to 5pm pattern. Some people need to work flexibly because of caring responsibilities or other personal commitments. People with certain kinds of impairments can also benefit from more flexible work patterns. It’s possible to find work on a part-time or job share basis, and a number of organisations now offer a flexi-time system, giving you more control over your working hours. The Disability Rights UK publication *Doing Careers Differently* has more detail on alternative ways of working.