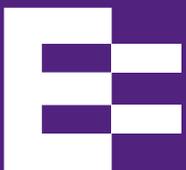


# Supporting disabled students' transitions from higher education into employment: what works?



# Acknowledgments

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The advisory group of disabled students and graduates, disability organisations, higher education practitioners and other organisations with expertise in careers support, included:

## Individuals

- = Fadeia Hossian
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- = Josh Hepple
- = Kathryn Gunstone
- = Laura Hornby
- = Natasha Wilson
- = Richard Amos
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## Organisations

- = Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) Disability Task Group
- = Action for ME
- = Action on Disability and Work
- = Afasic
- = Department of Education and Learning Northern Ireland
- = Disability Rights UK
- = Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)
- = Inclusion Scotland
- = Lead Scotland
- = National Autistic Society
- = National Union of Students
- = Restore
- = TechDis
- = Trailblazers
- = University Mental Health Advisers Network (UMHAN)

## Further information

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# Supporting disabled students' transitions from higher education into employment: what works?

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# Introduction

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Latest figures from Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) highlight an employment gap between disabled and non-disabled graduates.

The employment gap varies between different higher education institutions (HEIs), and for disabled people with different impairments. For example, 14% of graduates with a physical impairment or mobility issues are unemployed approximately six months after graduation, compared with 6% of non-disabled graduates (see table 1).

There are also differences in the mode of employment that graduates enter. For example, 58% of non-disabled graduates are in full-time employment approximately six months after graduation, with 12% in part-time work, 13% in full or part-time study, and 7% in work and further study. For graduates with a social communication/autistic spectrum disorder the figures are 30% in full-time employment, 18% in part-time work, 22% in full or part-time study, and 4% in work and further study. Graduates with a social communication/autistic spectrum disorder are more likely to be in part-time work or full-time study than non-disabled graduates.

Improving employment outcomes for disabled graduates requires reflection across organisations as to how current practices potentially disadvantage disabled people, and how these practices can be changed. As providers of education, services and employment, HEIs can play a significant role in bringing about this change. University careers services, in particular, can play a key role in supporting disabled students and graduates into employment.

ECU conducted research into what support practices exist across HEIs to help students find employment, with a particular focus on the provision of support for disabled students.

**Table 1: DLHE leavers by leaving destination and impairment (2012/13)**

The Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey conducted by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects information on what leavers from higher education programmes are doing six months after qualifying from their higher education course.

		Full-time work	Part-time work	Work and further study	Full-time study	Part-time study	Un-employed	Other	Total
Non-disabled	<b>No.</b>	222,307	46,844	26,175	44,065	4574	23,536	15,817	<b>383,318</b>
	<b>%</b>	58	12	7	12	1	6	4	<b>100</b>
Declared disabled	<b>No.</b>	22,467	6421	2970	5450	848	3932	2463	<b>44,551</b>
	<b>%</b>	50	14	7	12	2	9	6	<b>100</b>
Blind or a serious visual impairment	<b>No.</b>	258	105	36	107	24	83	51	<b>664</b>
	<b>%</b>	39	16	5	16	4	13	8	<b>100</b>
Deaf or a serious hearing impairment	<b>No.</b>	595	173	85	133	26	92	74	<b>1178</b>
	<b>%</b>	51	15	7	11	2	8	6	<b>100</b>
A physical impairment or mobility issues	<b>No.</b>	568	221	100	194	46	196	132	<b>1457</b>
	<b>%</b>	39	15	7	13	3	14	9	<b>100</b>
Mental health condition	<b>No.</b>	1643	607	286	548	107	444	266	<b>3901</b>
	<b>%</b>	42	16	7	14	3	11	7	<b>100</b>
A long-standing illness or health condition	<b>No.</b>	2432	668	339	569	66	386	252	<b>4712</b>
	<b>%</b>	52	14	7	12	1	8	5	<b>100</b>
Two or more conditions	<b>No.</b>	880	373	254	371	164	291	357	<b>2690</b>
	<b>%</b>	33	14	9	14	6	11	13	<b>100</b>
Social communication/autistic spectrum disorder	<b>No.</b>	266	157	38	176	21	195	32	<b>885</b>
	<b>%</b>	30	18	4	20	2	22	4	<b>100</b>
Specific learning difficulty	<b>No.</b>	13,838	3483	1441	2876	296	1863	1022	<b>24,819</b>
	<b>%</b>	56	14	6	12	1	8	4	<b>100</b>
Another disability, impairment or medical condition	<b>No.</b>	1987	634	391	476	98	381	277	<b>4244</b>
	<b>%</b>	47	15	9	11	2	9	7	<b>100</b>

## Key findings

The survey element of the research found the following key findings:

- = 56% of disabled students who expressed a view felt that careers services met the requirements of disabled people.
- = 52% of disabled students had received information about accessing their careers service.
- = 46% of disabled students and 42% of disabled graduates had used the university careers service.
- = 15% of disabled students who had disclosed to the careers service had discussed their individual requirements in accessing their careers service.
- = Disabled students and graduates access a range of information, advice and guidance from careers services. This includes information, advice and guidance around career planning, job vacancies, applying for jobs and assessments, and disability schemes and rights.
- = High numbers of disabled students had received information, advice and guidance on employment/career choice, writing a CV and volunteering opportunities. Few had received information, advice and guidance on reasonable adjustments in the workplace, Access to Work, disclosing as disabled or the Two Ticks scheme.
- = 17% of disabled students rated the information, advice and guidance they received as very good. 34% rated the information, advice and guidance as good.
- = 12% of disabled students who had accessed information, advice and guidance responded that it contained information specific to students who shared their impairment.
- = Few respondents knew whether their university had done anything to support disabled people into employment that was targeted at people sharing a particular impairment. Of those who did know, 20% of disabled students and 20% of disabled graduates responded that their current or previous university had done something to support disabled people into employment that was targeted at people sharing a particular impairment.

- = A number of HEIs were highlighted through the research as doing proactive work to support disabled students to find employment. These include Brunel University, University of Bradford, University of Kent, London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE), Loughborough University, Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Oxford, the Open University, University of Sheffield, Staffordshire University and Queen's University Belfast.
- = Highlighted initiatives include effective work placements, staff training on disability issues for those supervising students in the workplace, specific work experience and internships for disabled students, tailored materials, events and communications methods for disabled students on careers services and peer mentoring schemes.

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## Key recommendations

In response to the research, ECU makes the following recommendations to HEIs.

- = Improve outreach and communications to ensure disabled students are aware of their university career service, for example through disability-specific mailing lists and partnership working with disability services.
- = Adopt outreach and communication mechanisms that cover the entire student cycle, for example during admissions, induction and final year.
- = Ensure information, advice and guidance that is provided meets the access requirements of disabled students by using alternative formats, one-to-one sessions or similar.
- = Involve disabled students and disability services in accessibility audits of careers services to ensure they meet the requirements of disabled students.
- = Adopt ongoing evaluation mechanisms to ensure services and information, advice and guidance remain relevant.
- = Collect and analyse destination of leavers information by impairment type to inform evaluations.
- = Provide information, advice and guidance on disclosing a disability, reasonable adjustments in the workplace, Access to Work and national disability support schemes.

- = Develop joined-up information between careers services, disability services and national and local disability organisations to ensure careers service staff have access to relevant and up-to-date knowledge around disability.
- = Include information specific to particular impairments within information, advice and guidance, for example within information on job applications and interviews. This should be managed so that individual abilities are the primary consideration, with informed impairment-specific information highlighted positively so as to remove barriers and improve confidence.
- = Use disabled role models and disabled mentors as a mechanism for conveying information about the workplace. Careers services can contact alumni to conduct this role.
- = Use contact and leverage with employers to educate on reasonable adjustments, Access to Work and improve attitudes around disability.

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## Overview

This guidance provides information on the many ways that university careers services can support disabled students and graduates into employment. The following sections provide information on:

- = the social model of disability, reasonable adjustments, and their application to employment
- = the range of information, advice and guidance that disabled students recommend to support them into employment
- = different ways of providing information, advice and guidance so that it is accessible to disabled students and graduates
- = tools to improve outreach and promotion of services so that disabled students are aware of the support offered by careers services
- = recommendations on how careers services staff can develop their understanding of disability issues so that the information, advice and guidance they provide is accurate and relevant
- = the wider role that universities and careers services can play in providing and facilitating work opportunities to disabled students and graduates

The guidance responds to recommendations from disabled students and graduates, disability organisations and other sector agencies. Disabled students and graduates identified careers services that met the requirements of disabled students and examples of their practices have been provided throughout.

Evidence for this guidance was gathered through:

- = a quantitative survey open to students and graduates from all UK HEIs
- = interviews with HEI careers staff, disability services, members of the advisory group and students
- = an open call for examples to institutions

Further details of the methodology and an overview of the results of the survey can be found in **Appendices 1–6**.

## The social model of disability

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An understanding of the social model of disability, reasonable adjustments, and their application to employment, will support staff in careers services in their work with disabled students.

The social model of disability distinguishes between impairment and disability. Whether a person with an impairment is disabled depends on the physical, procedural and social barriers that they encounter.

'[I]n the broadest sense, [disability] is about nothing more complicated than a clear focus on the economic, environmental and cultural barriers encountered by people who are viewed by others as having some form of impairment – whether physical, mental or intellectual.'

Mike Oliver (2004) 'The social model in action: If I had a hammer.'  
*Implementing the social model of disability: Theory and research*  
edited by C Barnes and G Mercer, The Disability Press.

For example, in terms of employment opportunities, a graduate with an impairment may be unable to access an employment opportunity because the employer has a negative attitude about the abilities of people with a particular impairment, and so does not employ them. The attitude of the employer presents a barrier to the student in accessing the employment opportunity. In this context, this student is disabled.

Careers services can play a role in removing barriers to employment in a number of ways, including:

- = educating employers they come into contact with about disability equality and the abilities of people with impairments
- = providing information, advice and guidance which does not make negative assumptions about the abilities of people with impairments
- = ensuring the information, advice and guidance that is provided is accessible

These issues will be explored further within this guidance.

## Reasonable adjustments in employment

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People who meet the legal definition of disability may be entitled to reasonable adjustments.

The Equality Act 2010 gives the definition of disability as follows:

'A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

Equality Act 2010, Section 6

Further clarity of this definition is provided at [www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance)

Reasonable adjustments are required when disabled people experience substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled people.

The duty for employers to make reasonable adjustments applies for potential and current employees in relation to:

- = a provision, criteria or practice, for example work patterns
- = physical features, for example the built environment or furniture
- = auxiliary aids, for example the provision of specialist equipment

The duty applies in recruitment and during all stages of employment.

An employer only has a duty to make reasonable adjustments if they know, or could reasonably be expected to know, that a person is disabled.

### **Determining what is reasonable**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) outlines that when considering what is reasonable, an employer should consider:

- = how effective the change will be in avoiding the disadvantage the disabled worker would otherwise experience
- = its practicality
- = the cost
- = the organisation's resources and size
- = the availability of financial support

**Examples of reasonable adjustments**

Examples of reasonable adjustments in employment can include:

- = providing recruitment materials in alternative formats and accepting applications in alternative formats
- = allowing a disabled applicant extra time to complete a test
- = allocating work duties to another worker
- = altering working hours
- = allowing a disabled worker to take a period of disability leave
- = providing adapted keyboards, large screens and adapted telephones

**Relevance to careers services**

Staff working in careers services should have a working knowledge of how reasonable adjustments apply in employment so that they can:

- = advise disabled students that employers have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments
- = advise employers they interact with of their legal duty to make reasonable adjustments
- = reflect on their own employment practices

These issues will be explored further within this guidance.

#### **Further resources**

- = The Disability Confident campaign is working with employers to remove barriers, increase understanding and ensure that disabled people have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations:  
[www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign)
- = The EHRC *Employment: statutory code of practice* includes legal information on reasonable adjustments in the workplace:  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/employment-statutory-code-practice](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/employment-statutory-code-practice)
- = Examples of reasonable adjustments in the workplace can be found in the EHRC document *Working better: the perfect partnership – workplace solutions for disabled people and business*:  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/working-better-perfect-partnership-workplace-solutions-disabled-people-and-business](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/working-better-perfect-partnership-workplace-solutions-disabled-people-and-business)

## Careers information, advice and guidance for disabled students

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**Disabled students and graduates benefit from a range of information, advice and guidance provided by careers services to support them into employment.**

'A real effort is made to identify, recognise and support the individual needs of each disabled student. The careers service really is insightful and gave me various ideas as to my personal options.'

Disabled student

'I'd most like to see careers adviser's having the attitude I saw at [X] where the person and their skills and aims in life is most important and exploring supporting the disability is a secondary issue instead of the disability coming first and artificially restricting student's options.'

Disabled student

Students and graduates receive a range of information, advice and guidance from their university careers services. This includes information, advice and guidance on:

- = career planning, for example, on employment and career choices, getting work experience and finding placements, undertaking further study and networking
- = available job vacancies, work placements and work experience, and details of how to search for opportunities
- = applying for jobs and assessments, including writing CVs, searching for jobs, interview skills, application forms, how employers select or shortlist, preparing for an assessment centre and practising psychometric tests

To ensure that the range of information, advice and guidance is relevant to their requirements, disabled students recommended that it includes details relating to disability and their specific impairment. Currently, few students receive information, advice and guidance with elements specifically related to their impairment.

## The workplace

'...it would be good if the careers service can try to get in touch with former disabled students and see if they can provide a case study of where they are now a few years after their degree/masters/PhD. There are so many statistics banded about concerning the low employment rate of autistic people for example, it would be good to see some success stories for once! And I know they must exist as I am one of them and I can't be the only one.'

Disabled student

Equipping students with realistic information about the work environment can counter uninformed messages that disabled students may have received about the range of employment opportunities available to disabled graduates. This should include information about the availability of reasonable adjustments. Careers advisers can refer to the Equality Act 2010 *Employment: statutory code of practice* which contains case studies of reasonable adjustments employers have provided for a wide variety of impairments, for example alterations in work patterns and the provision of specialist equipment.

Testimonials from disabled people in employment could be used to provide details of the practicalities of the workplace, and their positive and negative experiences in particular occupations. Careers services could look to their own alumni and develop a list of disabled graduates who would be willing to be contacted, or who could act as mentors for current students.

Disabled students should also be made aware of the availability of funding for workplace support. Currently, the main external source of funding for individual adjustments for disabled employees in England, Scotland and Wales is Access to Work. It can fund assistive aids and equipment, adaptations to premises and support worker assistance: [www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview](http://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview).

A good understanding of their individual requirements and how they relate to Access to Work can help students communicate with prospective employers. It allows them to showcase their talent in the knowledge that some of the barriers to their employment can be easily overcome.

### **Further resources**

- = The EHRC *Employment: statutory code of practice* includes legal information on reasonable adjustments in the workplace:  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/employment-statutory-code-practice](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/employment-statutory-code-practice)
- = Examples of reasonable adjustments in the workplace can be found in the EHRC document *Working better: the perfect partnership – workplace solutions for disabled people and business*:  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/working-better-perfect-partnership-workplace-solutions-disabled-people-and-business](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/working-better-perfect-partnership-workplace-solutions-disabled-people-and-business)

## Job vacancies, work placements and work experience

'Actively highlight the employers who are diversity- and disability-positive, and build up case studies of those supported and encouraged by their employers...'

Disabled student

It is recommended that careers services develop contacts with disability-friendly employers, and promote their vacancies to students. However, vacancies from disability-friendly employers should be advertised alongside vacancies from other employers. It should be made clear to disabled students that vacancies from all employers may be relevant.

A number of employers have attained accreditation from various disability standards, for example Two Ticks, Business Disability Forum and Clear Assured. These organisations could also be highlighted, alongside vacancies from all employers.

### Further resources

- = The Two Ticks symbol is used on advertisements where employers have made five commitments to encourage applications from disabled people:  
[www.gov.uk/recruitment-disabled-people/encouraging-applications](http://www.gov.uk/recruitment-disabled-people/encouraging-applications)
- = The Business Disability Forum run the Disability Standard, 'an online management tool to help business to measure and improve on performance for disabled customers, clients or service users, employees and stakeholders.' A list of Disability Standard award winners since 2007 can be found on their website:  
[www.disabilitystandard.com/awards/award-winners](http://www.disabilitystandard.com/awards/award-winners)
- = Clear Assured is accredited to organisations that state their commitment to identifying and removing barriers from recruitment policy, process and practice which have the potential to exclude disabled people:  
[www.clarkit.co.uk](http://www.clarkit.co.uk)

## Applying for jobs and assessments

'Offer role play practice specifically addressing dealing with disability issues/questions in assessment/interview.'

Disabled student

'...I run an At uni with ME support group and we teach the members to "spin" their ME positively...eg highly motivated clearly, good at prioritising, for medics [this] can [mean] understand patient perspective etc etc....this would be good!'

Disabled student

Information, advice and guidance on applying for jobs and assessments should support disabled students to reflect positively on their experiences and achievements. It should also empower them to demonstrate to potential employers qualities that would be regarded as desirable and distinctive.

Practical experience of the recruitment process will develop students' confidence, for example mock and virtual interviews. This may include information, advice and guidance on how to respond positively to questions they may get relating to disability.

Providing information, advice and guidance on the duty employers have to make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process can also support disabled students in their application. For example, sharing knowledge that employers can provide recruitment materials in alternative formats and can allow disabled applicants extra time to complete tests will support them if this is an appropriate reasonable adjustment for them. Students should be advised that the extent of what is a reasonable adjustment depends on the nature of the disabled person's impairment, how closely the test is related to the job in question and what adjustments the employer would be reasonably required to make if the applicant were given the job (see section 16.55 of the EHRC *Employment: statutory code of practice*).

Careers advisers are also in a good position to provide information, advice and guidance which enables students to make an informed decision around disclosing a disability to an employer. This information, advice and guidance should consider the various stages of the recruitment process, and the availability of reasonable adjustments.

### Further resources

- = *Get That Job* is a new video programme aimed at supporting the transition of disabled students and graduates into employment:  
[www.agcas.org.uk/agcas\\_resources/671-Get-that-Job-streaming-licence-p](http://www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/671-Get-that-Job-streaming-licence-p)  
Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) worked with higher education students and graduates, employers and disability services to produce the programme, which was sponsored by Shell, Bank of America, Meryll Lynch and Microlink.
- = *Disability and mental health: diversity matters* which is aimed at supporting students and graduates with issues such as finding disability-positive employers, disclosing a disability and rights around disability and mental health:  
[www.targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/equality-and-diversity/320153-disability-and-mental-health-diversity-matters](http://www.targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/equality-and-diversity/320153-disability-and-mental-health-diversity-matters)
- = The EHRC *Employment: statutory code of practice* includes legal information on reasonable adjustments in the workplace:  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/employment-statutory-code-practice](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/employment-statutory-code-practice)

## Providing accessible information, advice and guidance to disabled students and graduates

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Providing information, advice and guidance in a range of ways can lead to improvements in accessibility for disabled students and graduates.

'Individualisation – different disabilities, different needs. One size does not fit all.'

Disabled student

'I think that such advice should be offered in a way that the student is able to understand and access to the fullest extent according to the disability they have. If that needs to be a personal programme rather than a generic one, then I think that should be offered.'

Disabled student

Careers services have a legal responsibility to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to the services they provide to current and potential disabled students.

As their services relate to the provision of information, careers services should take reasonable steps to ensure that their information, advice and guidance are provided in an accessible format. If information, advice and guidance are only provided in a specific format, or through a specific mechanism, some students may not be able to access it.

To ensure all students can access their support, careers services should therefore consider providing information, advice and guidance:

- = in a range of formats, for example podcasts, videos or audio guides
- = through a number of mechanisms, for example face-to-face meetings, careers events, workshops or online resources

Established mechanisms may also need to be adjusted to ensure that they meet the requirements of disabled students. This may include, extending the time for one-to-one appointments, or providing appointments in different ways such as face to face, over the phone or online. The content can also be adapted to include information relevant to disabled students, for example workshops on employment to contain information on Access to Work and reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

Each mechanism for delivering information, advice and guidance should be assessed to ensure that they can be accessed by disabled students. Involving disabled people and disability organisations which have expertise in the barriers that disabled people may face can ensure effective delivery.

Involving disabled people and disability organisations can be done through a number of ways, such as:

- = focus groups
- = one-to-one student discussions
- = university surveys
- = feedback forms
- = online forums

Collecting and analysing destination data for disabled students can also highlight where the work of the careers services is effectively supporting disabled students, and where further initiatives may be required.

### **Targeted events**

**Loughborough University provides targeted events for disabled students and graduates.**

The disability office and careers and employability centre at **Loughborough University** organised an event for disabled students registered with the disability office, including students supported by the mental health team. It aimed to provide advice and information and raise awareness about employment issues for disabled students going on to placement, or leaving university and entering a career.

Forty students attended the half-day event which consisted of talks and workshops on issues such as disclosure of a disability in the recruitment process and preparing for careers fairs, along with optional workshops from various employment sectors, including finance (HSBC, KPMG), management consultancy (Accenture), the public sector (Leicestershire County Council), the Teaching Agency and Employability. The day was well received by both students and employers.

As a result of the event an information booklet was produced: *A guide to employment for disabled students and graduates:*  
[www.lboro.ac.uk/services/cds/disability/opendoorsguidetoemployment/](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/cds/disability/opendoorsguidetoemployment/)

### **Removing barriers to events for people with specific impairments**

Staff in **Loughborough University's** mental health team were concerned that their students and disabled students were not always accessing careers fairs organised by the careers and employability centre. The fairs (more than 150 employers and thousands of students attend the autumn fair) were considered to be off-putting to students who lack confidence and may have to wade through the crowd of students to speak directly to employers.

As a result an access hour was organised. Employers agreed to extend their time by one hour at the end of the careers fair specifically to allow these students the opportunity to meet with them in a quieter environment.

A workshop was held a week before the careers fair so that students could feel better prepared and more confident to network with employers. On the day, students were offered the opportunity to ask the mental health team questions before embarking on their conversations with potential employers.

### **Providing a range of information**

**LSE provides a range of information in a variety of ways to ensure that disabled students can access and benefit from them.**

LSE considers that adopting a one size fits all approach will not meet the needs of their disabled students. They therefore offer a range of services accessible only to disabled students.

#### **= Individualised appointments**

The university employs a dedicated careers consultant with expertise in issues relating to disability and employment. Appointments with the consultant differ from regular one-to-ones in that they are 45 minutes (as opposed to the usual 15-minute allocation), can be arranged at a time to suit the needs of the student, and may be extended beyond the usual four-per-term limit. This is because the university considers that many of their disabled students need a greater level of support within a set period of time. Advice and support is also delivered via email or Skype when the student is unable to attend in person.

#### **= Events**

The university's careers services deliver a number of sessions and events for disabled students ranging from tailored careers seminars on disability or employment-related issues, networking and employer engagement events. The annual access to employment event, hosted each year at a city firm, brings together 30 students and up to 15 inclusive graduate employers. Students from Imperial College London are also invited to join.

#### **= Online information**

A section on the LSE careers website has comprehensive information for disabled students. This includes *Dispelling the myth*, a short film highlighting the support available at LSE careers services for disabled students, alongside a look at the availability of accessible recruiters and the case for diversity in the workplace.

### **Guidance and advice for work placements and wider employment**

At **Brunel University** any student can book an appointment with a disability and dyslexia service (DDS) adviser, or a placement and careers centre (PCC) officer to discuss issues around disability and work placements, seeking work (voluntary or paid) during their studies, or seeking employment upon graduation. The PCC at the university will continue to give advice and support to graduates for up to two years after they have graduated.

A range of leaflets and documents addressing various relevant issues are provided. These include:

- = *Disclosure: a guide for students on the pros and cons of disclosing as disabled*
- = *Good practice guide to providing work placements to disabled and dyslexic students: a guide for employers*

The DDS has also worked with the PCC to facilitate an annual workshop for disabled students entitled *Disclosing your disability (or not) to an employer*. The workshop explores:

- = what the job market is like for disabled graduates
- = taking control: marketing yourself
- = the pros and cons of disclosing a disability to an employer:
  - on completion of their degree
  - for part-time jobs while still at university
  - when going on placements

### **Auditing services**

**The University of Sheffield conducts an audit of their services to ensure they are accessible to disabled students and graduates.**

The careers services at the **University of Sheffield** conduct an annual audit of the support available for disabled students and graduates, in conjunction with the university's disability services. This covers the information and one-to-one support that students and graduates receive, physical access to the service and employer-facing events. This audit is considered a relatively inexpensive, simple and time-efficient way to keep disability on the agenda.

### **Gathering feedback**

**The University of Kent encourages student feedback and opinion to improve their services.**

At the **University of Kent** all students engaging with the careers and employability service are regularly asked for their opinion on the services they use, such as job vacancies, online services, drop-in sessions, careers guidance and group interactions. Students receive a personalised message inviting feedback and providing additional resources relevant to the service they have used.

More general feedback from all students is sought twice a year via an online survey. Students are asked about what support they would like, which methods of communication they prefer and how the service could improve. Focus groups with small numbers of students are also used and a suggestion box facility is provided.

Online methods for students to submit unsolicited feedback are available and social media provides a further avenue for this. Students, including disabled students, have told the university that they like to make comments in a variety of ways and at a variety of times.

### **Peer mentoring**

**Manchester Metropolitan University developed a peer mentoring scheme. This provides opportunities for disabled students to develop skills valued by employers, and provides a mechanism for the careers service to deliver information, advice and guidance and promote their services.**

Peer mentoring for disabled students was initially introduced as a pilot scheme by the disability service. New students from targeted disability groups were offered a peer mentor prior to starting university and the opportunity to email their mentor via Bright-links e-mentoring.

One of the key aims when introducing the scheme was to assist disabled students making the transition to higher education and reducing the number of students leaving their course during the first year. Once enrolled, mentees had the option of continuing with e-mentoring support and also attending monthly meetings arranged by the disability service. Evaluation highlighted that all the mentees who signed up remained on their course at the end of the academic year.

All mentors are disabled students themselves and the training they receive gave them greater knowledge of the university support services and the diverse range of students accessing support through the university's disability service. It has also provided mentors with employment skills to add to their CV and thereby enhanced employability. Evidence illustrates that as a direct result of becoming mentors, some of these students have been offered other employment opportunities.

There is also evidence of mentors increasingly taking lead roles within group meetings and assisting in the training of new mentors. Through regular monthly group meetings, mentors and mentees have been able to discuss issues that are important to them, raise concerns, access information via guest speakers, develop confidence and friendships, and build skills in public speaking. An adviser from the careers and employability service is invited as a guest speaker, which both the mentees and mentors have found beneficial.

### **Accessible information**

**The Open University has developed an accessible careers website. Some content has been developed directly in response to suggestions made by disabled students.**

The **Open University** careers website contains a variety of information and resources, including information on vacancies, graduate positions, CVs, help on applications and how to access other services.

The website is fully accessible and AAA rated (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0). It allows users to change page displays to enlarge text and has a flexible layout which allows users to resize the browser window without horizontal scrolling. Any embedded graphics are provided with appropriate alternative text that describes their purpose and meaning.

The university careers service has held an online forum specifically for disabled students. As the forum was online it was able to reach people who may have concerns around confidentiality. Given the wider reach it was also considered a cost-effective solution as one adviser was able to reach many students.

One of the issues raised in the forums was about home working, and how information, advice and guidance on this topic would be welcomed. As a result a new section on home working was added to the careers services webpages.

### **Mainstreamed and disability-specific information, advice and guidance**

#### **The University of Oxford provides mainstreamed and disability-specific information, advice and guidance.**

The University of Oxford tries to mainstream many of its activities and resources. For example, within the skills sessions for all students, information on disability is included. In a session on job-hunting and interview techniques an example is given of how describing the impact of a health condition or disability can be used in answering a question to do with time management or dealing with a challenging situation.

Surveys of students at the university show that there is also a need for stand-alone activities and resources for disabled students. They have set up a programme titled (Dis)AbilityWorks, which is referenced in any activity that is targeted at disabled students. The programme covers:

- = knowing yourself
- = legislation
- = to disclose or not to disclose
- = how to make effective applications
- = mock interviews
- = organisations
- = employment schemes

The programme is delivered in several ways, from one hour sessions, to half-day boot camps.

### **Developing information, advice and guidance through involvement**

**Staffordshire University provides talks developed with the insights of their disabled students.**

Staffordshire University runs a series of careers talks developed specifically for disabled students on topics such as disclosure and CV construction. The project is called Employability Confident, inspired by the recent government publicity campaign around disability and employment, Disability Confident.

The careers centre consulted with the university's student enabling centre and disabled students' forum in establishing a need for talks such as these, with the forum deciding which topics would be of most use. Two talks have been delivered to the forum members, and have received very positive feedback.

Further consultation is taking place on whether the forum wishes to receive further talks, or would be happy, as suggested by some of the members, for this relevant information to be included in all appropriate careers centre talks. This would have the potential to reach disabled students who may not be forum members, or who may not consider themselves as disabled, but for whom disclosure might still be an issue.

As a result of this work, the careers centre has changed the format of all of its talks to make them more accessible, and has inserted a slide to all talks informing students that the material is available in different formats upon request. The careers centre is also looking at how information on disclosure and other disability and health-related issues can be incorporated into all talks and online careers guides.

The university is also running a student academic partnership project, which aims to understand disabled students' experiences of employment and applying for employment within the university, for example, with the students' union and through Unitemps, the in-house recruitment service. It aims to capture good and promising practice, and recommend actions that will help students to overcome barriers and gain valuable work experience. The project will use a variety of data-collection mechanisms including online surveys and face-to-face interviewing. This will be planned and carried out by two students, supported by careers centre staff. The project has recruited its student researchers and is now in the early stages of planning.

**Further resources:**

- = The EHRC *Services, public functions and associations: statutory code of practice* includes legal information on reasonable adjustments in the provision of services:  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/services-public-functions-and-associations-statutory-code-practice](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/services-public-functions-and-associations-statutory-code-practice)
- = The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) has information on producing accessible documents:  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-communication](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-communication)

## Promoting services to disabled students

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Improving promotion of careers services and outreach to disabled students can increase the accessibility of services provided.

'Make a specific effort to contact disabled students, we are not always able to do so ourselves, the service making the first contact etc I feel would give me much more confidence in them, their advice and make me more confident to contact them myself in the future.'

Disabled student

Disabled students highlighted that careers services would benefit from promoting their services so that all students are aware of what they provide.

Improving promotion of services may require:

- = reviewing current ways that services are advertised, identifying any associated barriers for people with impairments, and working to remove them
- = developing specific strategies which target disabled students

For example, some careers services have developed disability-specific mailing lists which they use to promote their services and disseminate information, advice and guidance. Advertisements in disability services or within specific sections of careers services webpages could also be considered.

Many disabled students receive information, advice and guidance from other sources, like academics and disability services. Some careers services have therefore developed contacts throughout the institution who can inform disabled students about the work of the careers service.

### **Improving outreach**

**The University of Oxford conducts a range of outreach activities to ensure disabled students are aware of their services.**

A key aim at the **University of Oxford** careers service is ensuring that all students are aware of the careers service and what they provide, so that students can make an informed choice as to whether they use the service. Referrals and recommendations are encouraged across the university.

The university does this in several ways:

- = information and networking sessions with disability contacts (named academic or administrative staff in colleges and departments who provide a link with disabled students)
- = information and networking sessions for student contacts, aimed at designated student positions in the colleges
- = a disability e-newsletter each term highlighting key events and how to access one-to-one appointments
- = social media platforms such as Twitter, and website pages and blogs

## Developing understanding of disability issues

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**An understanding of disability issues will enable staff working in careers services to support all students.**

'My experience has been patchy at best. The careers adviser at [X] I saw was excellent but also very experienced in her role. Others at [Y] I saw were clearly not experienced in advising disabled students at all. I think each careers service should have at least one person designated to be an adviser to disabled students but also a pot of money put aside so that individual can go on training courses and attend conferences to keep current.'

Disabled student

'I feel they genuinely care and my disability adviser is disabled so they know how you feel and what your barriers to learning are.'

Disabled student

**Having access to information on disability and disabling barriers can improve the information, advice and guidance that careers staff can provide. For example, it will support careers staff in:**

- = not making negative assumptions about the abilities of people with impairments, and thus not setting up artificial barriers to employment opportunities**
- = sharing knowledge with students of how potential barriers in the workplace can be removed through support and adjustments, therefore allowing students to make informed decisions about employment**
- = advising disabled students on aspects of equality legislation which protects disabled people in employment, education and the delivery of services**
- = delivering a service that is inclusive of the whole student body**

Careers advisers can develop their knowledge, and counter any lack of confidence and expertise in supporting disabled students they may have by:

- = undertaking staff training on disability awareness**
- = working with university disability services**
- = experience of working with disabled students**

Careers services could also consider employing a dedicated disability careers adviser.

### **Understanding specific issues affecting disabled people**

**Loughborough University has set up a cross-institutional group to tackle issues affecting disabled students.**

**Loughborough University** has set up a new group with representatives from the counselling and disability service and careers and employability centre. It is hoped this group will identify and tackle employability and careers-related issues affecting disabled students, share and attend events and training courses, share knowledge, best practice and resources and organise new events. This will provide a more formalised mechanism for collaborative work between services and build on current work around this topic.

### **Further resources**

- = **AGCAS** run regional training events specifically for members interested in enhancing their work with disabled students and graduates: [www.agcas.org.uk/events/967-Enhancing-your-work-with-disabled-students-and-graduates-Milton-Keynes](http://www.agcas.org.uk/events/967-Enhancing-your-work-with-disabled-students-and-graduates-Milton-Keynes)
- = *Working with disabled students and graduates – case studies* highlights good practice: [www.agcas.org.uk/agcas\\_resources/637-Working-with-disabled-students-and-graduates-case-studies](http://www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/637-Working-with-disabled-students-and-graduates-case-studies)
- = *Working with disabled students and graduates – some frequently asked questions*, based around some of the key issues that careers advisers may have questions on or concerns about when working with disabled students and graduates: [www.agcas.org.uk/agcas\\_resources/80-Working-with-disabled-students-and-graduates-some-frequently-asked-questions](http://www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/80-Working-with-disabled-students-and-graduates-some-frequently-asked-questions)
- = *AGCAS disability task group blog*, aimed at fellow practitioners who have an interest in working with disabled students and graduates. The blog is used as a portal where members of the task group share their experiences of working with disabled students and graduates in order to share good practice: [agcasdtg.wordpress.com](http://agcasdtg.wordpress.com)

## Providing and facilitating work and skills opportunities

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Careers services can work to provide and facilitate work and skills opportunities including work experience and work placements.

'Interact with employers in the community to encourage them to hire disabled students, inform them of the... legislation and help they can get.'

Disabled student

'If they could be advocates for disabled students, by supporting them through the interview and job application process and ensuring that the students are not being discriminated against because of their impairments, that would make a huge difference.'

Disabled student

Careers services work with employers through a range of their activities, including the provision of work-placement opportunities. Careers services can use these engagement opportunities to promote disability equality, dispel some of the myths that exist in employment about what disabled people can and can't do, and advocate for disabled students.

Careers services can also ensure their own employment practices promote disability equality. This will allow them to:

- = recruit and promote from the widest talent pool
- = develop knowledge around disabling barriers
- = improve awareness of disability equality within the HEI

Careers services could make steps towards this through:

- = developing, promoting and adopting clear policies around recruitment informed by disability legislation
- = training for staff involved in recruitment to understand ability rather than disability

In addition to increasing the number of disabled staff within their permanent workforce, universities and careers services could provide work-experience opportunities for disabled students. This would benefit students who will gain understanding and skills relating to employment.

### **Supporting work placements**

#### **University of Bradford provide work-experience opportunities for disabled students.**

Summer Experience@Bradford is a programme dedicated to helping current first and second-year students at the **University of Bradford** find work-experience opportunities during their summer vacation. Students meet with an employability and placement adviser for help with applications and feedback. Once a student has secured a placement there is a pre-placement meeting to talk through how they can prepare. Students are given a self-reflective workbook to complete while on placement.

Once on placement, students can contact advisers at any time via phone or email. Advisers visit the host organisation at least once during the six weeks students are with them. After the placement, there is a round-up meeting to look through the student's self-reflective workbook and discuss next steps. This may involve a referral for a full careers guidance appointment.

The scheme is promoted to disabled students via the disability service, and through a statement on the university webpages:

'Are you concerned that as a disabled graduate you might find it harder to get work once you qualify? Because disabled people continue to be underrepresented in the job market, this year we are also targeting our summer internship scheme for disabled students/students with dyslexia.'

### **Providing internships**

#### **The University of Bradford provides internship opportunities for disabled students.**

The Bradford graduate internship scheme provides approximately 35 graduate internship opportunities both within the university and with external employers. All internships last ten weeks.

Applicants can be supported during the recruitment and selection process by employability and placement advisers. Advisers can answer questions students have about the application process, advise on how to share information about disability and reasonable adjustments, and support the applicant if successful after interview.

All graduate interns are met by an adviser for an induction meeting beforehand and they have at least one on-site visit during their internship. Finally there is a round-up guidance meeting with one of the careers advisers when the internship is over.

### **Facilitating work placements**

**Brunel University develops a support profile for disabled students for discussion with careers placement officers organising work placements.**

Every student registered with the disability and dyslexia service (DDS) at **Brunel University** is invited to meet a disability adviser to discuss their support requirements. If their course includes a work placement, their requirements in relation to this will be discussed.

A support profile is created summarising students' requirements and recommending reasonable adjustments that can be made in all relevant areas of study. The form is also used to indicate whether there are any specific needs to be addressed before the student goes on a work placement. If the support requirements are likely to be complex a meeting with the disability adviser and a careers placement officer is recommended. At this meeting, issues such as the following are discussed:

- = pros and cons of disclosing as disabled to a workplace supervisor
- = how a student's impairment may impact on their ability to effectively carry out all their duties in the workplace
- = support and adjustments available to address any barriers
- = how and when to communicate information on reasonable adjustments to the supervisor and who should do this
- = what to do if things appear to be going wrong on the placement or if a student feels the support they require is not being implemented

During work placements students can contact their adviser in the DDS, their allocated placement officer, their personal tutor or the academic placement coordinator to discuss any concerns they have. A lot of placements also incorporate study leave during the placement and so students sometimes use these times to attend support sessions at Brunel University.

### **Training work placement providers**

**Brunel University provides training to all staff involved in supervising students in the workplace.**

**Brunel University** has a rolling programme of training sessions aimed at placement providers. These are run throughout the year for the following professional courses:

- = physiotherapy
- = occupational therapy
- = social work
- = teaching

Staff working in these professions are required to attend a training course before they can take and supervise Brunel University students in their workplace. Disability and dyslexia service advisers facilitate a disability awareness session at these training courses. This session includes information on employers' legal duties in providing reasonable adjustments to disabled students.

### **Work-study schemes**

**The University of Kent provides a work-study scheme for students, and an associated bursary.**

The **University of Kent** work-study scheme seeks to enhance the employability skills, awareness and acumen of disabled students by providing an employability programme alongside privileged Access to Work study placements.

Bursaries are also provided for students to undertake work experience that they might otherwise be unable to access. The funding can pay for out-of-pocket travel expenses, childcare or uniform costs or similar.

### **Providing work opportunities**

#### **Queen's University Belfast provides employment opportunities and placements for disabled students.**

**Queen's University Belfast** has employed a number of disabled students across various schools and departments through its student job shop. They are also about to launch a programme, in partnership with the Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland, to provide 12 one-year placements for disabled people in a variety of positions across several schools and departments. The aim of the programme is to offer disabled students the opportunity to gain valuable experience of working within a large organisation and develop skills which will help them secure sustainable employment in the future.

## Appendix 1: Methodology

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To ensure this guidance was effective, evidence was gathered from various institutions in different ways and an advisory group was set up to offer advice and expertise.

The advisory group of disabled students and graduates, disability organisations, higher education practitioners and other organisations with expertise in careers support provided advice and expertise throughout the project, including:

- = initial scoping of the research
- = design of the research instruments
- = review of initial analysis
- = review of the guidance document

Evidence for this guidance was gathered through a number of mechanisms.

- = A quantitative survey of students and graduates from different HEIs. This provided a broad understanding of what employment support practices students are currently accessing, what issues are associated with these practices and what recommendations students and graduates had for improvement.
- = Interviews with HEI careers staff, disability services, members of the advisory group and students, in order to explore further issues around disabled graduate employability and the work of university careers services.
- = A call for examples to institutions whose practice was identified through the survey as effectively meeting the requirements of disabled students.

Respondents to the survey can be broken down as follows:

- = disabled students (1231)
- = non-disabled students (78)
- = disabled graduates (343)
- = non-disabled graduates (22)

Please note that some respondents may be both a current student and a graduate, for example students who are on postgraduate courses or studying a second degree.

The respondents to the survey had a range of impairments and experiences.

## Appendix 2: Survey results: career information and guidance

*Please note that in order to protect privacy and confidentiality counts under five have been suppressed in some questions and are expressed as ‘‘*

### Career planning

Have you received any information or guidance on the following aspects of **career planning** from a university careers service? Please select all that apply.

	Disabled student		Disabled graduate	
	No.	%	No.	%
Employment/career choice	474	68	118	68
Getting work experience/finding a placement	326	47	51	29
Undertaking further study	311	45	82	47
Networking	172	25	39	23
Contacting professional bodies, employment agencies and employers	132	19	29	17
Contacting other employment support organisations	66	10	14	8
Pursuing self-employment	57	8	9	5
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>694</b>		<b>173</b>	

Have you received any information or guidance on **career planning** from any other sources? Please select all that apply.

	Disabled student		Disabled graduate	
	No.	%	No.	%
Academic staff	403	48	109	48
Careers fair	351	42	79	35
Parents/grandparents/guardian	288	34	64	28
Friends/siblings	283	33	68	30
University careers website	197	23	43	19
Employer website	165	20	47	21
Academic resources, eg academic journals, newsletters and websites	160	19	36	16
Student on course	134	16	37	16
University website	134	16	34	15
Disability services at your university	131	16	23	10
Social network site/new media network	116	14	29	13
Teacher at school	98	12	15	7
Professional bodies	91	11	31	14
Job centre	90	11	31	14
Employment support website	69	8	25	11
Students' union	65	8	16	7
Specialist health professional	42	5	18	8
National disability organisation	28	3	10	4
Trade union	11	1	..	1
Local disability organisation	10	1	6	3
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>845</b>		<b>225</b>	

## Job vacancies

Have you received any information or guidance on the following **job vacancies** from a university careers service? Please select all that apply.

	Disabled student		Disabled graduate	
	No.	%	No.	%
Volunteering opportunities	369	63	69	54
Work experience (during course) – unpaid	295	51	46	36
Work experience (during course) – paid	245	42	42	33
Graduate job vacancies	220	38	70	55
Work experience (after graduation) – paid	122	21	26	20
Work experience (after graduation) – unpaid	87	15	22	17
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>583</b>		<b>128</b>	

Have you received any information or guidance on **job vacancies** from any other sources? Please select all that apply.

	Disabled student		Disabled graduate	
	No.	%	No.	%
Careers fair	192	30	42	23
Academic staff	182	28	56	30
Employer website	178	28	57	31
Friends/siblings	160	25	44	24
University careers website	141	22	33	18
Parents/grandparents/guardian	130	20	32	17
University website	104	16	31	17
Academic resources, eg academic journals, newsletters and websites	96	15	31	17
Job centre	96	15	35	19
Social network site/new media network	92	14	30	16
Professional bodies	69	11	34	18
Employment support website	61	9	17	9
Student on course	56	9	11	6
Students' union	39	6	8	4
Disability services at your university	35	5	8	4
Teacher at school	19	3	..	2
Specialist health professional	16	2	6	3
National disability organisation	15	2	8	4
Local disability organisation	11	2	6	3
Trade union	6	1	..	2
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>645</b>		<b>184</b>	

## Applying for jobs and assessments

Have you received any information or guidance on the following aspects of **applying for jobs and assessments** from a university careers service? Please select all that apply.

	Disabled student		Disabled graduate	
	No.	%	No.	%
Writing a CV	468	81	108	78
Searching for jobs	253	44	52	38
Interview skills	236	41	50	36
Completing application forms	194	34	39	28
How employers select or shortlist	144	25	20	14
Preparing for an assessment centre	108	19	16	12
Disclosing as disabled to an employer	76	13	27	20
Practising psychometric tests	65	11	17	12
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>577</b>		<b>138</b>	

Have you received any information or guidance on **applying for job and assessments** from any other sources? Please select all that apply.

	Disabled student		Disabled graduate	
	No.	%	No.	%
Academic staff	215	39	60	38
Friends/siblings	182	33	58	37
Parents/grandparents/guardian	181	33	50	32
Careers fair	130	24	24	15
University careers website	103	19	25	16
Employer website	74	13	21	13
University website	69	13	15	9
Academic resources, eg academic journals, newsletters and websites	66	12	19	12
Job centre	66	12	25	16
Student on course	51	9	14	9
Employment support website	50	9	14	9
Disability services at your university	45	8	10	6
Social network site/new media network	45	8	22	14
Teacher at school	44	8	7	4
Professional bodies	35	6	16	10
Specialist health professional	23	4	11	7
National disability organisation	15	3	6	4
Students' union	15	3	6	4
Local disability organisation	8	1	7	4
Trade union	5	1	..	1
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>552</b>		<b>158</b>	

## Disability schemes and rights

Have you received any information or guidance on the following **disability schemes and rights** from a university careers service? Please select all that apply.

	Disabled student		Disabled graduate	
	No.	%	No.	%
Reasonable adjustments in the workplace	87	40	18	35
Access to Work	86	39	24	46
Two Ticks scheme	24	11	11	21
Other (please specify)	71	32	18	35
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>219</b>		<b>52</b>	

Have you received any information or guidance on **disability schemes and rights** mentioned above from any other sources? Please select all that apply.

	Disabled student		Disabled graduate	
	No.	%	No.	%
Disability services at your university	64	29	17	22
Academic staff	42	19	13	17
Friends/siblings	37	17	16	21
Parents/grandparents/guardian	34	15	10	13
Job centre	27	12	16	21
National disability organisation	25	11	16	21
University careers website	22	10	9	12
University website	21	10	7	9
Employment support website	19	9	..	5
Employer website	17	8	..	5
Careers fair	16	7	..	4
Academic resources, eg academic journals, newsletters and websites	14	6	5	6
Professional bodies	13	6	4	5
Specialist health professional	12	5	8	10
Local disability organisation	9	4	7	9
Student on course	9	4	4	5
Students' union	8	4	..	3
Teacher at school	7	3	0	0
Social network site/new media network	6	3	4	5
Trade union	5	2	..	4
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>221</b>		<b>78</b>	

## Appendix 3: Survey results: information and guidance from your university careers service

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Have you used a university careers service?

*% does not include those who answered 'don't know' or 'prefer not to say'.*

		Yes	No	Don't know	Prefer not to say	Total
<b>Disabled student</b>	<b>No.</b>	501	585	93	10	<b>1189</b>
	<b>%</b>	46	54			
<b>Disabled graduate</b>	<b>No.</b>	130	182	13	3	<b>328</b>
	<b>%</b>	42	58			

## Impairment-specific information, advice and guidance

Has any of the information and guidance provided by the university careers service contained information specific to students who share your impairment?

Only respondents who indicated that they used a university careers service answered this question.

		No – information and guidance has been general	Yes – information and guidance has included additional elements	Total
<b>Disabled student</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>453</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>12%</b>	
<b>Respondent has disclosed as disabled to a university careers service</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>325</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>15%</b>	
A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D	<b>No.</b>	203	31	<b>234</b>
	<b>%</b>	87%	13%	
A social/communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or Asperger’s syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder	<b>No.</b>	42	5	<b>47</b>
	<b>%</b>	89%	11%	
A long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy	<b>No.</b>	63	6	<b>69</b>
	<b>%</b>	91%	9%	
A mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	<b>No.</b>	133	13	<b>146</b>
	<b>%</b>	91%	9%	
A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using arms or using a wheelchair or crutches	<b>No.</b>	62	5	<b>67</b>
	<b>%</b>	93%	7%	
Deaf or a serious hearing impairment	<b>No.</b>	11	7	<b>18</b>
	<b>%</b>	61%	39%	
Blind or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	<b>No.</b>	9	..	<b>11</b>
	<b>%</b>	82%	18%	

## Relevance

Do you think the information and guidance provided by your university careers service was relevant to you and any issues you may experience?

Only respondents who indicated that they used a university careers service answered this question.

*% does not include those who answered 'not sure'*

		Yes – completely relevant	Yes – partly relevant	No	Not sure	Total
Disabled student	<b>No.</b>	77	212	91	71	<b>453</b>
	<b>%</b>	20%	56%	24%		
Disabled graduate	<b>No.</b>	17	59	25	23	<b>125</b>
	<b>%</b>	17%	58%	25%		
Respondent has disclosed as disabled to a university careers service	<b>No.</b>	61	156	60	45	<b>324</b>
	<b>%</b>	22%	56%	22%		
A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D	<b>No.</b>	46	108	43	37	<b>235</b>
	<b>%</b>	23%	55%	22%		
A social/communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or Asperger's syndrome/ other autistic spectrum disorder	<b>No.</b>	6	22	8	9	<b>46</b>
	<b>%</b>	17%	61%	22%		
A long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy	<b>No.</b>	9	29	17	13	<b>69</b>
	<b>%</b>	16%	53%	31%		
A mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	<b>No.</b>	15	77	31	22	<b>146</b>
	<b>%</b>	12%	63%	25%		
A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using arms or using a wheelchair or crutches	<b>No.</b>	6	36	17	8	<b>67</b>
	<b>%</b>	10%	61%	29%		
Deaf or a serious hearing impairment	<b>No.</b>	..	9	..	..	<b>17</b>
	<b>%</b>	23%	69%	8%		
Blind or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	<b>No.</b>	..	5	..	..	<b>11</b>
	<b>%</b>	30%	50%	20%		

## Rating

How would you rate the information and guidance you have received from your careers service?

Only respondents who indicated that they used a university careers service answered this question.

		Very good	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	Total
<b>Disabled student</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>453</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>4%</b>	
<b>Disabled graduate</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>125</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>2%</b>	
<b>Respondent has disclosed as disabled to a university careers service</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>325</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>3%</b>	
A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D	<b>No.</b>	45	84	80	20	5	<b>234</b>
	<b>%</b>	19%	36%	34%	9%	2%	
A social/communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder	<b>No.</b>	7	14	19	3	..	<b>47</b>
	<b>%</b>	15%	30%	40%	6%	9%	
A long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy	<b>No.</b>	8	21	30	9	2	<b>70</b>
	<b>%</b>	11%	30%	43%	13%	3%	
A mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	<b>No.</b>	19	49	57	14	6	<b>145</b>
	<b>%</b>	13%	34%	39%	10%	4%	
A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using arms or using a wheelchair or crutches	<b>No.</b>	6	20	26	8	7	<b>67</b>
	<b>%</b>	9%	30%	39%	12%	10%	
Deaf or a serious hearing impairment	<b>No.</b>	4	4	9	..		<b>18</b>
	<b>%</b>	22%	22%	50%	6%		
Blind or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	<b>No.</b>	..	..	..	..	..	<b>11</b>
	<b>%</b>	27%	27%	27%	9%	9%	

**Please provide a reason for your answer**

The positive and negative points tend to mirror each other in content and order and size of ranking.

<b>Positive reason</b>	<b>No.</b>
Needs or specific queries were addressed	51
Help with writing or preparing a CV	17
Staff were supportive and helpful	17
Good range of information	12
Regular or frequent contact	10
Lectures and seminars	9
Disability-specific information	8
Departmental careers advice or adviser	7
Help preparing an application for work or study	7
Referred to a useful resource	6
<b>Negative reason</b>	<b>No.</b>
Information was too generalised and not specific enough	46
No information specific to disability	25
Needed more help/guidance, or more detail	19
Received no relevant information	16
Staff unsupportive	4

## Recommendations

How do you think careers services can improve the information and guidance they provide to disabled students?

Recommendation	No.
Promotion and outreach to disabled students	137
Disability-specific support and information	104
Personalised or impairment-specific information or support	93
Events for disabled students or graduates	44
Support for applying to jobs (help with CVs, interviews, etc)	41
Information and support identifying appropriate jobs or placements for the student/graduate and their disability	41
Educate students/graduates about employment rights	31
Create a disability-specific mailing list or send emails specific to disabled students	26
Provide information in accessible formats	26
Educate students/graduates about reasonable adjustments	25
Provide one-to-one meetings or support	23
Provide advice on disclosure	23
Provide support via phone or online	21
Give staff training on and improve awareness about disability employment issues	19
Link with the student and disability support services	17
Make sure the careers office and events are accessible	16
Provide disabled mentors or role models, employ careers adviser staff with disabilities who can share their experiences	13
Have a dedicated disability careers adviser	10
Have more flexibility in opening times, and across campuses	10
Careers service should link up with employers	10

(There are a further 28 codes with fewer than ten mentions which give further recommendations.)

**Is there anything else you think your careers service should provide to meet the requirements of disabled students and graduates?**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>No.</b>
Promotion and outreach to disabled students	48
Disability-specific support and information	41
Personalised or impairment-specific information or support	37
Support for applying to jobs (help with CVs, interviews, etc)	25
Events for disabled students or graduates	19
Give staff training on and improve awareness about disability employment issues	18
Provide support via phone or online	16
Provide one-to-one meetings or support	13
Information and support identifying appropriate jobs or placements for the student/graduate and their impairment	11
Provide information in accessible formats	10
Link with the student and disability support services	10
Provide disabled mentors or role models, employ careers adviser staff with disabilities who can share their experiences	10
Make sure the careers office and events are accessible	9
Build confidence and encourage disabled students and graduates	9
Educate students/graduates about employment rights	8
Provide advice on disclosure	8
Provide opportunities for peer support networks and groups	8
Have more flexibility in opening times, and across campuses	7
Careers service should link up with employers	7
Have a wider range of information more generally	7

(There are a further seven codes with fewer than ten mentions which give further recommendations.)

## Appendix 4: Survey results: accessible university careers services

### Receiving information on access

Have you received any information about accessing the services offered by your university careers service?

*% does not include those who answered 'prefer not to say'.*

	Disabled student	
	No.	%
No	490	48
Yes	529	52
Prefer not to say	21	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1040</b>	

### Individual requirements

Have any of your individual requirements in accessing the services been discussed?

*% does not include those who answered 'prefer not to say'.*

	Disabled student		Disabled student who has disclosed to university careers service	
	No.	%	No.	%
No	860	88	557	85
Yes	115	12	101	15
Prefer not to say	52		26	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1027</b>		<b>684</b>	

## Accessible formats

Do you know if the information or guidance provided by the careers service is available in a format accessible to you?

*% does not include 'not sure' or 'prefer not to say'.*

	Disabled student	
	No.	%
No it isn't	36	8
Yes it is	441	92
Not sure	525	
Prefer not to say	17	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>100</b>

## Discussing accessibility

Have you been involved in any discussions with your university about ensuring the careers service is accessible?

*% does not include those who answered 'prefer not to say'.*

	Disabled student	
	No.	%
No	951	95
Yes	49	5
Prefer not to say	36	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1036</b>	

## Meeting requirements

Overall, do you feel your university careers service meets the requirements of disabled people?

*% does not include 'prefer not to say'.*

		No	Yes	Prefer not to say	Total
<b>Disabled student</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>965</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>56%</b>		
A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D	<b>No.</b>	166	204	98	<b>468</b>
	<b>%</b>	45%	55%		
A social/communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder	<b>No.</b>	42	26	21	<b>89</b>
	<b>%</b>	62%	38%		
A long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy	<b>No.</b>	74	65	44	<b>183</b>
	<b>%</b>	53%	47%		
A mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	<b>No.</b>	118	110	85	<b>313</b>
	<b>%</b>	52%	48%		
A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using arms or using a wheelchair or crutches	<b>No.</b>	75	47	42	<b>164</b>
	<b>%</b>	61%	39%		
Deaf or a serious hearing impairment	<b>No.</b>	6	16	17	<b>39</b>
	<b>%</b>	27%	73%		
Blind or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	<b>No.</b>	7	8	..	<b>19</b>
	<b>%</b>	47%	53%		

Please give a reason for your answer:

If yes, because...

Reason	No.
Disability-specific information/support	56
Staff were supportive or helpful	26
Service was accessible	17
Spoke to a disability adviser	6
Regular or frequent contact	5
Disability-specific mailing list	5
Information was relevant and useful	4
One-to-one session	4
Linked to disability services	4

If no, because...

Reason	No.
Disability provision not publicised/not aware of any	43
No information or support specific to disability	41
Did not support my specific disability	27
Information or support was limited or inadequate	21
Service was difficult to contact or access	19
Was not generally aware of the careers service	14
No relevant information	11
Information was too generalised and unspecific	8
No or minimal link between disability services and careers service	7
Staff were unsupportive or rude	6
Variable quality	6
Not well publicised	5
No information provided on reasonable adjustments	5
Resources were not accessible	5
Staff were unknowledgable	4
No information on disability employment schemes	4

## Recommendations

What do you think universities should do to ensure their career services are accessible to disabled students?

Recommendation	No.
Promotion/outreach to disabled students	183
Disability-specific support	51
Consult with disabled students	38
Personalised/impairment-specific	38
Information in accessible formats	33
Online/phone support	29
One-to-one meetings/support	28
Staff training/awareness	27
Link with student/disability support	25
Accessible space	16
More events	14
More frequent/regular contact	14
Monitoring	13
Employment rights learning	10

(There are a further 35 codes with fewer than ten mentions which give further recommendations.)

## Appendix 5: Survey results: university support

Has your current or previous university done anything to support disabled people into employment that was targeted at people sharing a particular impairment?

*% does not include those who answered 'don't know'.*

		No	Yes	Don't know	Total
<b>Disabled student</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>999</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>20%</b>		
<b>Disabled graduate</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>294</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>20%</b>		
A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D	<b>No.</b>	174	46	257	<b>477</b>
	<b>%</b>	79%	21%		
A social/communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder	<b>No.</b>	36	9	49	<b>94</b>
	<b>%</b>	80%	20%		
A long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy	<b>No.</b>	58	16	116	<b>190</b>
	<b>%</b>	78%	22%		
A mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	<b>No.</b>	112	20	203	<b>335</b>
	<b>%</b>	85%	15%		
A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using arms or using a wheelchair or crutches	<b>No.</b>	64	15	104	<b>183</b>
	<b>%</b>	81%	19%		
Deaf or a serious hearing impairment	<b>No.</b>	14	..	28	<b>44</b>
	<b>%</b>	88%	12%		
Blind or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	<b>No.</b>	8	..	13	<b>25</b>
	<b>%</b>	67%	33%		

**What do you think universities could do to better support disabled students into employment?**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>No.</b>
Promotion/outreach to disabled students	49
Disability-specific support	36
Wider range of information/support more generally	29
Increased support for employment	27
Personalised/impairment-specific	22
Information about appropriate jobs/placements	19
Link with employers	19
Offer placements	16
More events	15
One-to-one meetings/support	15
Provide advice on disclosure	15
Employment rights learning	14
Influence employers	14
Staff training/awareness	10

(There are a further 31 codes with fewer than ten mentions which give further recommendations.)

## Appendix 6: Survey results: disability disclosure

Have you disclosed as disabled to your university?

*% does not include those who answered 'prefer not to say'.*

	Disabled student		Disabled graduate	
	No.	%	No.	%
No	47	5	15	5
Yes	918	95	280	95
Prefer not to say	35		3	
	<b>1000</b>		<b>298</b>	

Would you/have you disclosed as disabled to an employer?

*% does not include those who answered 'not sure' or 'prefer not to say'.*

	Disabled student		Disabled graduate	
	No.	%	No.	%
Yes – to all employers	273	33	104	40
Yes – to some but not all employers	305	37	110	43
No	248	30	44	17
Not sure	159		37	
Prefer not to say	15		2	
	<b>1000</b>		<b>297</b>	

## Equality Challenge Unit

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ECU works to further and support equality and diversity for staff and students in higher education across all four nations of the UK, and in colleges in Scotland.

ECU works closely with colleges and universities to seek to ensure that staff and students are not unfairly excluded, marginalised or disadvantaged because of age, disability, gender identity, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or through any combination of these characteristics or other unfair treatment.

Providing a central source of expertise, research, advice and leadership, we support institutions in building a culture that provides equality of both opportunity and outcome, promotes good relations, values the benefits of diversity and provides a model of equality for the wider UK society.

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