

Job hunting guide for disabled students

Our [Quick Guide to Finding a Graduate Job](#) covers types of roles available, finding vacancies, when & how to apply and what to do if you have little experience.

This leaflet provides additional information and advice for disabled jobseekers including organisations who support disabled graduates to find work, finding vacancies, disclosing a disability to employers and reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

1. Searching for vacancies

- By law every employer is required to support disabled employees by means of reasonable adjustments, but some employers are more disability-friendly than others.
- The **Disability Confident Scheme** is awarded by the Jobcentre Plus to help job applicants identify organisations committed to helping disabled workers. This includes supporting you during recruitment into employment and throughout employment.
<https://disabilityconfident.campaign.gov.uk/>
- The Disability Confident logo will usually be displayed on the employer's website and in recruitment materials. You can search for Disability Confident employers at:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-confident-employers-that-have-signed-up
- Many employers are inclusive and would treat you well but aren't part of the scheme so don't discount them.
- Disability specific recruitment schemes (e.g. guaranteed interview schemes and internships for disabled students) can be useful but there are limited places.

2. Organisations supporting graduates with disabilities to find work

- **Access to Work** this government programme offers grants to pay for practical support if you have a disability, health, or mental health condition, to help you start work or stay in work. It can help with funding for special equipment, fares to work if you can't use public transport or a support worker or job coach, amongst other things.
www.gov.uk/access-to-work and www.braininhand.co.uk/partners/workplace/ultimate-guide-to-access-to-work/ and www.scope.org.uk/advice-and-support/access-to-work-grant-scheme
- **Autism West Midlands** offer 1-1 advice, guidance and support in Worcestershire that can be tailored to employment advice. www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk/
- **Blind in Business** provide specialist support and annual training events for undergraduates and graduates. www.blindinbusiness.org.uk/students/graduates-and-undergraduates

- **Dial South Worcestershire** is an independent, free, impartial, and confidential information, advice and welfare benefit service for disabled people and carers. They offer information, welfare benefit entitlement checks, liaise with agencies on your behalf and refer/signpost to support groups and organisations. www.dialsworcs.org.uk/
- **Disability Rights UK** advises on work support issues, welfare benefits and access to higher education. www.disabilityrightsuk.org
- **Disabled Workers Co-operative** is a **registered charity** that helps disabled people to help themselves. Services include an online job vacancy board and a database of the skills, services and products disabled people have to offer www.disabledworkers.org.uk/
- **EmployAbility** support, advise and advocate on behalf of talented neurodivergent and disabled university students and graduates to remove barriers in employment. List internships, graduate roles and scholarships for neurodivergent and disabled students and graduates www.employ-ability.org.uk/students-and-universities/
- **Evenbreak's Career Hive** provide accessible careers support for disabled candidates looking for new or better work, delivered by careers professionals with lived experience of disability <https://hive.evenbreak.co.uk/>
- **Helplines Partnership** lists helplines providing support for disability and mental health www.helplines.org/helplines/
- **Hft** offer a structured pathway into employment for people with learning disabilities (including individuals with autism) across England and Wales. It offers supported internship and supported employment programmes to help learning disabled and autistic people gain work experience and find a paid job www.hft.org.uk
- **Job Centre Plus** have Work Coaches at local Jobcentres to help you find a job or gain new skills and tell you about disability-friendly employers in your area. They can also refer you to a specialist work psychologist if appropriate, or carry out an 'employment assessment' www.gov.uk/looking-for-work-if-disabled/looking-for-a-job
- **Leonard Cheshire Disability** provides an internship and professional development programme and entrepreneur awards for talented students and recent graduates with disabilities, www.leonardcheshire.org/what-we-can-do-you/working/employment-support-and-internships
- **Mind** provides information on how to be mentally healthy at work www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/
- **National Autistic Society** provides advice and help for autistic people on seeking work www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/employment

- **Rethink Mental Illness** outlines what support is available to help you find work, advice re benefits and local support groups www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/living-with-mental-illness/
- **Waythrough** is a specialist mental health services provider offering individual placement and support programmes in selected areas of the UK www.waythrough.org.uk/
- **Royal National Institute for Blind People** provide specialist support and advice to help find employment, start a business and stay in work www.rnib.org.uk/living-with-sight-loss/equality-and-employment/
- **Shaw Trust** is a national charity that supports people with a disability or health condition into work, gain skills and take control of their futures. Referrals through the Job Centre Plus for Work Choice or Work Programme. Also offer Talent Match for those unemployed for a year – professionals can refer directly to Shaw Trust in Worcester <https://shawtrust.org.uk/what-we-do/we-support-people-to-get-good-work/>
- **The Inclusionists** is a new charity supporting autistic and neurodivergent individuals. It offers tailored employment support, work placements with inclusive employers, skills workshops and mentoring <https://theinclusionists.org.uk/>

3. Get experience to improve your chances of being hired

- Volunteering/work experience can help you decide if you enjoy various aspects of work and confirm if a job or career interest you.
- Experience will provide you with the opportunity to examine what impact (if any) your disability may have on you in the workplace and to develop strategies to overcome any barriers.
- Experience will show commitment, develop skills, build your network, and provide evidence to employers that you can do the job.
- Go to www.worcsu.com/volunteer/ or www.doit.life for volunteering opportunities.
- Most employability skills are transferable. Part time work may show a potential employer that you have the skills they are looking for.
- Part time jobs are advertised on myCareer, just filter on 'part time' in the left-hand column.

4. Disclosing/sharing a disability to employers

- There are no rules, and you aren't legally required to disclose a disability to an employer. You may, however, choose to share your disability as you will then be protected by the Equality Act and can also discuss any reasonable adjustments or support you may need from the moment you disclose.
- If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability, they may ask you about it to make '**reasonable adjustments**' (see section 5 below) for the interview process e.g. if there is a work-related activity they may ask if you need any particular equipment or support to undertake the activity.

- If you do decide to talk about your disability you should explain how it affects you in relation to the job. Make sure you're positive and talk about how you've overcome any hurdles. Then explain any adjustments you would need the company to make and end by saying you're available to discuss if they have any questions. Once you have disclosed you will be protected by the Equality Act and the employer will be under obligation to make any reasonable adjustments.
- Bear in mind that if you choose not to tell your employer and later underperform, you won't be covered by the Equality Act. An employer who was unaware of your condition can't be judged to have discriminated against you.

5. Reasonable adjustments

- The Equality Act 2010 requires employers to make reasonable adjustments if their employment practice, premises, or lack of auxiliary aid/service places a disabled job applicant/employee at a substantial disadvantage compared to people who are not disabled. www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance
- Before you request any adjustments make sure you think about where you will be working, what you will be doing, what you will need & what an employer could reasonably alter.
- If you want to request reasonable adjustments, email the recruitment team, and briefly explain the effects of your condition relevant to the interview or assessment and what adjustments you need. Try to do this with as much notice as possible so that any adjustments can be put in place, e.g.:
 - If you are invited to complete online assessments as part of the recruitment process and your disability might affect your performance, then it is often advisable to let the recruiter know before you start them. You may be entitled to adjustments such as extra time or using different formats.
 - Before your interview you can let someone in recruitment know that you would like to declare a special requirement for the interview such as having a later interview, having the interview questions written down or expressed in a less complicated way and making the room and equipment accessible for your disability.

6. Once you have been offered the job

- Discuss your needs with your employer – try to meet face to face to talk about your situation. Have an open mind to solutions – what you can do rather than what you can't.
- Make sure they are fully aware of what you need so that you can do the work to the best of your ability.
- It is an employer's responsibility to pay for any reasonable adjustments up front during the application and then claim these back.
- Your employer should help you fill out any forms.
- If the help you need at work isn't covered by your employer making reasonable adjustments, you may be able to get help from **Access to Work**. This is a government scheme run by **Jobcentre Plus** offering a grant to cover all or part of the costs of workplace adjustments assessed as necessary to support you as a disabled employee if you are eligible. To find out more go to www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview

7. Further information & support

- **Target Jobs** gives information about finding a graduate job when you have a disability, disclosing a disability to employers & how to find neurodiversity-friendly employers
<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/finding-a-job#inclusive-job-hunting>
- **Disability Rights UK** is an organisation led by, run by and working for disabled people
www.disabilityrightsuk.org/
- Follow the '**Applying to roles with a disability**' Pathway on [myCareer](#) designed by [myPlus](#). Develop the skills you need to succeed in your career through guided workflows, feedback and support on areas including communicating your strengths and helping you with openness statements.
- You may benefit from discussing disclosure and reasonable adjustments with the Disability & Dyslexia Service and the Careers & Employability Service. Contact the Disability & Dyslexia Service on disability@worc.ac.uk and the Careers & Employability Service on careers@worc.ac.uk

If you would like to book a careers appointment, please visit:

<https://worcester.targetconnect.net>

myCareer