



## **Disability Confident Scheme**

### **Guaranteed Interview - Recruiters Guidance**

As a conscious employer we are committed to hiring and providing opportunities to more people who are disabled, to help us transform our culture, inclusivity and performance. Disability Confident employers are recognised as going the extra mile to make sure disabled people get a fair chance. The aim of this commitment is to encourage positive action, by encouraging disabled people to apply for jobs and provide an opportunity to demonstrate their skills, talent and abilities at the interview stage.

#### **Why we use the disability symbol**

The symbol helps to make it clear that we welcome applications from disabled people and are positive about their abilities. It also shows existing employees that we value their contribution and we will treat them fairly should they be, or become disabled.

#### **University responsibilities**

All candidates should be assessed on their abilities, experience and suitability for the post. The candidate should be assessed on aspects relating their knowledge, skills and behaviour to the qualities, as outlined in the Job Description and Person Specification.

In cases where advice is needed on a medical condition or on the safety implications of recruiting a disabled employee, Personnel will liaise with Occupational Health or other specialist agencies for guidance.

#### **As a disability employer we will:**

- provide placements and work experience to individuals with a disability or a long-term condition
- use Occupational Health in order to support employees' individual needs
- monitor diversity data internally so we can measure how representative we are of disabled people (unemployment rates are much higher for disabled people)
- have Well Being Champions, and active Disability and Neurodiversity Networks

#### **Positive discrimination**

Implementation of the Disability Confident Employer scheme doesn't breach employment legislation. The Disability Discrimination Act permits this kind of positive action. Remember, although disabled candidates who meet the essential criteria on the person specification are guaranteed an interview, they aren't guaranteed a job offer. The disabled candidate must be considered on their merits in the same way as the other candidates.

Applicants will not be asked details about the nature of their disability or long-term condition, or to provide any evidence regarding disability in order to apply through the Disability Confident Interview Scheme.

### **If a disabled candidate meets the essential criteria measurable from the application form**

Candidates who are disabled, and evidence that they meet the **essential** criteria stated on the person specification, they must be invited for interview. This is a guarantee of an interview, but **not** necessarily of a job offer. For roles where we know we receive an extremely high number of applications the following statement can be used:

*It is important to note that there may be occasions where it is not practicable, or appropriate, to interview all disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job. In certain recruitment situations such as high-volume, seasonal and high-peak times, we may limit the overall numbers of interviews offered to both disabled people and non-disabled people.*

*In these circumstances we will select a minimum of two disabled candidates who best meet the minimum criteria for the job, rather than all of those that meet the minimum criteria, as we would do for non-disabled applicants.*

The above statement will not be used where there is no justification, or no evidence, that the role recruits exceptional well, or attracts a high number of applicants.

### **If a disabled candidate doesn't meet the essential criteria measurable from the application form**

If any candidate doesn't meet the essential criteria, measurable from the application form / CV, then they shouldn't be shortlisted. However, if you don't shortlist a candidate who has disclosed a disability the reason should be accurately recorded. If asked we have a duty to feedback to the candidates and to provide a suitable reason.

## **Interviews**

### **Inviting to interview**

When making the interview arrangements, remember to ensure that any adjustments or special arrangements that need to be made are put in place. The Personnel team will advise on this.

Consideration will be given to interview arrangements, to ensure that a person with a disability isn't at a substantial disadvantage compared to other applicants. Examples of adjustments that we could include are:

- Making sure the room is accessible
- Allowing an interpreter into the room
- Building in rest or toilet breaks
- Booking the interview at the most accessible time
- Allowing a support worker to attend an interview
- Communication support
- Adapting tests or selection exercises, for example, by giving additional time for completion, or whether answers need to be written
- Sharing interview questions ahead of the interview
- If online, having the camera off during the interview
- Allowing candidate requests to apply for a role via paper application or via telephone

## **Interviewing**

During the interview process you should assess how closely applicants can meet the requirements of the post, and you should act positively and flexibly to a need for reasonable adjustments. You should **not** ask or probe on any aspect of their disability.

Only ask questions you need to make an employment decision, these should be based on suitability and experience for the job, and should not refer to any personal or disability related information.

### **If you're unsure if someone has a disability or not**

Candidates are given the legal definition of what a disability is in the application form and asked to indicate whether they comply with the definition. The legal definition also covers mental ill health and certain degenerative diseases that may not have obvious symptoms, so care must be taken not to assume / judge. We also make sure that all candidates who are invited to interview are given access to reasonable adjustments should they need it.

We make it clear that any false declaration may result in the withdrawal of an offer of employment. If you're in doubt, talk to your Personnel team.

### **If the disabled candidate isn't the best person at interview**

If they aren't the best candidate for the job, they shouldn't be offered the job. However, ensure that you're making the decision on the basis of the individuals performance at interview and not on the implications of employing them.

They should be advised that they're the unsuccessful candidate and be provided with constructive feedback for future applications.

### **If the disabled candidate is the best person at interview**

If they are the best candidate for the job, they should be offered the job. As part of the recruitment process and starter forms candidates will be asked about any reasonable adjustment they may require. It is also standard procedure for all staff to have a Pre-Placement Health Assessment, run by our occupational health provider, "HealthWork".

### **Withdrawing an offer at employment stage**

It should be recognised that there may be occasions where the reasonable adjustment cannot be made. Should this be the case, there is a possibility that offer may need to be withdrawn, this is extremely rare and Personnel will advise in such cases. As a University committed to positive change, we would make every effort to ensure reasonable adjustments can be accommodated.

## **Reasonable adjustments**

The University is required to make reasonable adjustments, at times there are costs associated with this.

Funding may be available via Access to Work (AtW), the government scheme that provides funding to employers employing a disabled person. If we're applying for

funding from Access to Work, applications must be made within six weeks of the commencement of employment. Personnel will provide guidance and advice on this.

[Further information about Access to Work.](#)

If you have any question about the information contained in this document, please contact the Personnel Team on [jobs@hope.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@hope.ac.uk) or speak to your HR Manager.