

Disabled People in the Workplace: Creating inclusive learning environments

Disability Wales is the national association of disabled people's organisations in Wales championing the rights, equality and independence of all disabled people.

Our core role is to reflect the views and priorities of our members to government with the aim of informing and influencing policy

Our Reach

DW is an umbrella body with:

- 100 national and local member organisations
- a core group of 23 local Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) across Wales

DW's reach is further extended by:

- Over 300 individual members
- 3754 on Facebook
- 12,400 twitter followers

Our Work Programme

- Inform and influence policy through representation on stakeholder and advisory groups, co-ordination of engagement events to gather the views of disabled people and submission of consultation responses
- Develop and support the work of organisations managed and controlled by disabled people through providing information, advice and support
- Design and deliver campaigns on priority issues identified by members

What is 'disability'?

What does it mean to be disabled?

Our Core Values

Social Model of Disability

“Disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

(UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People)

Where Does the Social Model of Disability Come From and Why is it Important?

Language & Terminology



We often hear people say:

People with disabilities

The disabled

Suffers from...

Special needs

Vulnerable

Able-bodied

Wheelchair bound

We want to hear people say:

Disabled people

Access requirements

Non-disabled

Impairments

Wheelchair user

Avoid passive, victim words. Use language that respects disabled people as active individuals with control over their own lives

Words are important!

The words we use tell us how disabled people are viewed by the people and organisations that use them

Examples:

“Many people suffer from mental health issues but do not feel able to talk about them openly, or seek help.”

“Vulnerable adults may need help to access services, and engage in work, training, education or volunteering.”

“Ease of accessibility of facilities and vehicles for disabled people, together with the ease of access between transport modes are fundamentally important to anyone with disabilities.”

“the ‘community’ is defined by a shared interest, experience or demographic characteristic – for example young people, people with disabilities or the business community.”

Reasonable Adjustments

Employers must make reasonable adjustments to make sure disabled workers aren't substantially disadvantaged when doing their jobs.

Reasonable adjustments include:

- A ramp for wheelchair users
- Specialist equipment; keyboards, desks.....
- Changing work hours or patterns of work
- Phased return after sick leave
- Modifying performance targets
- Modifying internal policies

Questions

1. What reasonable adjustments does your organisation currently make for disabled learners or employees?
2. What are some of the ways that your organisations could introduce more inclusive policies and practices to increase accessibility for disabled people?

Case Study

Reasonable Adjustments in the Legal Sector

A DRILL research project, Legally Disabled, found that the Legal profession has;

- A lack of part-time training contracts
- Discrimination associated with their impairment
- A poor understanding of reasonable adjustments
- Poor understanding of and how impairments and health conditions can vary
- A reluctance from disabled people to disclose an impairment or health condition

Question

How can your organisation create a supportive culture which enables apprentices to have honest and open discussions about the adjustments they require?

Supporting Careers Advice and Progression

‘It [development of aspirations] should be encouraged in special schools. When young people go to college it seems that there are few opportunities...we never really hear young people talk about them, or talk about the future. That is a real shame, because if we gave young people opportunities, they would flourish.’

Youth club leader

‘It is an issue as we don’t really hear people talking about hopes and aspirations and for a number of our group, they have passed through school and college, so they are out there in the world. ’

College day provision leader

‘There are limited options [to support aspirations] unfortunately, [some] are going into another service, or others may be ‘signed off’ by Social Services, if no other service is available.’

College lecturer of 21 year olds

The DRILL funded project, Legally Disabled, emphasise that important factors for enabling career progression for disabled lawyers include:

- Strong disabled role models
- supportive senior colleagues
- the presence of mentors and networks

Question

How can colleges and workplaces ensure that disabled people receive the support, careers guidance and mentoring they need to progress in their careers?

**What positive action will
you take away with you
today?**

Thank you for participating

Wales's Disability Expert

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