

Advice and support for employers

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Promoting Inclusion

How can employers be more proactive?

In addition to good practice, processes and activities, there are further ways in which employers can help disabled people to prepare for, or enter, employment. Even if an employer does not have an actual job vacancy, there are areas that employers, by using creative thinking, can assist disabled people to become more competitive and increase their job prospects in the labour market. This part of the Guide describes some initiatives that employers may consider worthy of consideration.

Employers' Disability Charter

The Charter enables employers to provide tangible evidence that they are working towards taking positive action and developing initiatives that will assist more disabled people to access employment opportunities in Guernsey. By signing up to the commitments of the Charter employers are demonstrating their commitment to being positive and pro-active towards recruiting and retaining disabled people and people with health conditions. The development of a Charter is also intended to help disabled job applicants identify employers that have made positive commitments regarding the treatment of disabled people within recruitment, training and retention processes, and have sought to raise disability awareness within their organisations.

The Charter is not a statutory obligation nor is it a legal requirement; signing up to the commitments of the Charter is voluntary. However, if we are to change attitudes in Guernsey and create a more inclusive society so that disabled people can be active and engaged socially and economically, then positive action is required.

Signing up to the Charter will not cost employers money. In fact there is a sound business case to do so. Adhering to the Charter will help employers save time and money on the costs of recruitment and training by reducing staff turnover and enable them to attract untapped labour resources. Moreover it may improve staff morale and commitment by demonstrating that the employer treats all employees fairly.

By building a reputation as a disability friendly employer that actively seeks out and recruits skilled disabled people, employers will be helping positively to change attitudes, behaviours and cultures, not just in their immediate business but in their networks, supply chains, and the communities throughout Guernsey. The Charter is organised and supported by Guernsey Employment Trust.

The commitments within the Charter include: guaranteeing a job interview for disabled job applicants who meet the minimum criteria; encouraging job applications from disabled people and providing short-term work experience placements where practicable.

Job creation - Working with Supported Employment agencies

Job Creation is where an agency such as Guernsey Employment Trust works with an employer to identify parts of a job or duties that the employer needs completing and can be completed by a disabled job seeker. It can take imagination and creativity on the behalf of both the employer and the employment agency, but in many cases it can lead to a win-win situation for both the employer as well as for the prospective employee. For more information and examples of job creation see Recruitment and Selection - Job Creation / Job Flexibility page 21.

Work experience placements

Many managers are apprehensive about employing a disabled person. The vast majority of these concerns are ill-founded and can stem from a lack of knowledge and awareness about the capabilities of disabled people and the types of support available.

One of the most effective methods to improve awareness of employment and disability issues and to demonstrate commitment to a proactive approach in supporting disabled people is to offer work experience placements within the organisation. This is often for people who have not worked before or who have developed a disability and need to change careers. The placements should be strictly time limited to between 2-8 weeks, usually on a part-time basis,



involve clear goals and activities and be facilitated through a local supported employment organisation, such as the Guernsey Employment Trust.

The benefits of a work experience placement to a disabled person may include:

- Increasing or updating existing skills
- Determining strengths and weaknesses
- Identifying work preferences
- Obtaining an up-to-date reference
- Gaining relevant work experience

GOOD PRACTICE IDEA

One of the most effective methods to improve awareness of employment and disability issues and to demonstrate commitment to a proactive approach in supporting disabled people is to offer work experience placements within the organisation.

In providing a work experience placement it is important to draw up an agreement between the organisation, individual and any support organisation. This should include the terms of the placement (lengths, hours, supervision), and include the provision of insurance cover. Individuals would not normally receive payment whilst on placement but should be provided with any uniform or safety equipment appropriate to the job. The Guernsey Employment Trust would be able to support the manager to complete these arrangements as well as finding a suitable individual to undertake the placement.

Job tasters

A job taster should be organised in much of the same manner as that of a work experience placement (see above). The main difference is that the duration of a job taster would not be expected to last for more than two weeks and may indeed be only for a day or two. Job tasters are a simple yet effective way to enable a person with a disability to get a flavour of a specific industry and to sample different types of work for a short period of time. This can be of benefit with regards to identifying future employment goals and also assists a person to gain an insight into particular work environments.

Work-site visits

Labour market statistics tell us that disabled people are more likely to have been out of work for considerably longer periods compared to non-disabled people. Moreover, significant numbers of disabled people may have never been in work and are quite unaware of particular industries, work-place environments and job activities.

By facilitating an organised work-site visit, an employer can provide a disabled person with a brief insight into the realities of work and the roles and tasks performed in their workplace. This may well influence their career choices as well as helping prepare for the world of work.

Work-site visits should ideally be organised and co-ordinated through an employment support organisation and would not be expected to last more than a few hours.



Mock interviews

A useful and beneficial activity that an employer can participate in is that of a mock interview – a practice interview for a job. There does not have to be an existing vacancy or a future vacancy for an employer to dedicate some time to giving a disabled person a mock interview.

For any job applicant, employment interviews are a nerve-wracking prospect at the best of times. For disabled people who may not have much or any experience, the prospects of a formal job interview can be intimidating and daunting. A mock interview undertaken by an employer/HR/personnel manager can provide a disabled person with much needed experience and useful feedback. Additionally, through providing mock interviews, employers can also gain confidence and experience of interviewing a disabled person.

It is important for the mock interview to be as realistic as possible and the employer may interview a person for an actual post with the job seeker completing an application form or submitting a CV. As the mock interview is in essence a rehearsal, then it would be appropriate for the interviewee to dress accordingly and present themselves as formally as possible.

For the mock interview to be of benefit to the job seeker, then feedback from the employer must be honest, constructive, diplomatic and helpful. It may be useful for an Employment Support Worker to be present at the mock interview but they should not participate in answering or asking any questions.

Encourage job applications from disabled people

Employers could target disabled people and disability organisations by sending them future job vacancies. A welcoming and encouraging statement in job advertisements conveys a positive message that as an employer you take your responsibilities under equal opportunities seriously.

Employers could continue to use their usual recruitment channels and they could also add some disability organisations/services to their job advertising

list. By doing so, employers are showing a willingness to engage with disabled people and are displaying evidence of positive and pro-active action to give disabled people the opportunity to consider and apply for vacancies.

Organisations that would welcome notification of vacancies would include: Guernsey Mind, Autism Guernsey, Guernsey Employment Trust and the Work Rehabilitation Team within the Committee for Employment and Social Security.

Sources of Support

There is a range of support available in Guernsey to assist employers to introduce and develop good practice in employing and retaining disabled employees. Being aware of what potential help is available in Guernsey should provide employers and managers with the support needed to enable them to be confident about addressing many issues relating to employment and disability.

Support organisations

The following are the key organisations that can provide assistance to employers:

States of Guernsey, Committee for Employment & Social Security

The Committee for Employment & Social Security assists job seekers to identify any development needs they may have and provide information on appropriate training and possible work opportunities.

The Committee for Employment & Social Security can also advertise job vacancies and help identify suitable candidates for vacancies. Additionally, Employment and Social Security provide a range of initiatives designed to support employers to recruit and retain disabled people and people with health issues.

Work Rehabilitation

The Work Rehabilitation Team provides one-to-one assistance for people who have significant barriers to employment, including disabilities. They provide help, support and guidance to those who have been out of employment for some time, whether through illness,

redundancy or personal circumstances. Some people with multiple barriers to employment are referred to occupational psychologists for additional support.

FitTogether

FitTogether is an initiative to raise awareness of the very important relationship between work and health. FitTogether is about doctors, employers and employees all working together to make sure that people who have an illness, injury or disability are supported as early as possible to help them stay at work or get back to work as quickly as possible.

FitTogether is aimed at providing much more information about how employers, employees and health professionals should work together to make sure that someone who has been off of work due to illness, injury or disability gets the advice and support that will help them return to work more quickly.

FitTogether is part of the SOHWELL project (Supporting Occupational Health and Wellbeing) which was created by Social Security. So far, the project has transformed the way sickness benefit claims are managed, improved the information that is provided on the medical certificate and introduced a new independent assessment of a person's ability to work which is called the Work Capability Assessment. The assessment identifies what a person can do and the type of support they might need to be back in work.

Recruitment Grant

The Recruitment Grant is a series of payments designed to support employers in recruiting staff who have been out of work for extended periods. To claim the grant an employer must recruit an employee who has been claiming incapacity or unemployment benefit for at least 6 months up to the date of recruitment. The Recruitment Grant can also be applied for in respect of claimants who are receiving supplementary benefit.

Back to Work Benefits

Back to Work Benefits are provided on a discretionary basis for the purpose of supporting an individual back into employment. These include job start expenses such as funding for tools and equipment, back to work bonuses, recruitment grants and funding for training.

Back to Work Bonus

A Back to Work Bonus is a cash lump sum paid to a person when their unemployment, incapacity or supplementary benefit claim ends because they have started a new job which is still ongoing after four weeks. The Bonus may be paid if the person has returned to a new job after being sick or unemployed for six months or longer. They must be in paid work for at least 15 hours per week to qualify and can only receive one bonus payment in any period of 12 months.

Employment Relations Service

The Employment Relations Service provides impartial and practical advice on a wide range of employment related issues to help promote a clear and practical understanding of best practice in the workplace and current (and any impending) employment legislation.

The Service encourages a non-adversarial approach to avoiding or resolving difficulties and disputes that arise in employment relationships. Conciliation is offered in respect of complaints to the Employment Tribunal. All services are free and may be accessed by telephone, email or via the website:

www.gov.gg/employmentrelations.

Guernsey Employment Trust

The Guernsey Employment Trust (GET) was established as a charitable organisation in 2015 and is working actively with disabled job seekers and potential employers to secure and maintain jobs in the local labour market. The services of GET are designed to address the employment needs of not only disabled people but also the needs of employers. GET can provide a professional recruitment service as well as provide advice, training and long-term support. Services provided by GET are free and easily accessible.

Services include:

- Supporting disabled islanders into employment
- Organising work experience placements for disabled people
- Providing support to employers and disabled employees
- Delivering training for employers on good practice regarding disability
- Working with employers to sign up to the Employers' Disability Charter

Guernsey Mind

Guernsey Mind's Employee Wellbeing Service offers businesses support, advice and training to manage the mental health of employees at work focusing on simple, strategic and practical tools to manage mental health at work.

This service enables employers to adopt a mentally supportive workplace culture.

Services include:

- Delivering mental health and wellbeing training to managers and staff
- Providing support to businesses to develop tailored mental health and wellbeing policies and strategies for business wellbeing
- Undertaking wellbeing audits - understanding workplace wellbeing issues will make it easier to put an action plan in place
- Providing advice and support to businesses to enable them to manage employee mental health conditions in a positive way

Disability Awareness Training

The States of Guernsey, in partnership with DisabledGo, have set up an online Disability Training course.

The training was developed by a number of local charities and disabled islanders and therefore is bespoke to Guernsey.

The training is free and made up of six short modules which take about 10 minutes to complete. They can be completed individually or all at once.

The training provides useful hints and tips which are practical and informative and will assist in ensuring your organisation is more disability aware and more inclusive.

Further information regarding the training is available from Guernsey Disability Alliance, States of Guernsey Disability Officer or Guernsey Employment Trust.

To register for this training go to: <http://training.disabledgo.com/auth/register/states-of-guernsey>



Useful Contacts

Adult Disability Service

Professor Shaw Community Centre
St Martin's
GY4 6LL

01481 230000

hsc.adsesadminteam@gov.gg

www.gov.gg

FitTogether

Edward T Wheadon House
Le Truchot
St Peter Port
GY1 3WH

01481 732500

socialsecurity@gov.gg

www.gov.gg

Autism Guernsey

Suite 1, Cranwell House
La Route du Picquerel
St Sampson's
GY2 4SD

01481 245272

office@autismguernsey.org.gg

www.autismguernsey.org.gg

Guernsey Blind Association

Four Cabot
Rue de la Bouillerie
St Andrew's
GY6 8XE

01481 236933

Fax: 01481 236932

gba@guernsey.net

www.gba.org.gg

Citizens Advice Bureau

Bridge Avenue, The Bridge
St Sampson's
GY2 4QS

01481 242266

Fax: 01481 200444

www.cabguernsey.org

Guernsey Employment Trust

Fort Complex
Les Tracheries
St Sampson's
GY2 4SN

01481 247999

www.get.org.gg

Headway (Guernsey)

Brain Injury Association

Western Community Centre
Rue du Longfrie
St Saviour's
GY7 9RZ

01481 265623

servicemanager@headwayguernsey.org.gg

www.headwayguernsey.com

Guernsey Mencap

07781 403684

guernseymencap@gmail.com

Guernsey Hard of Hearing Association

01481 238704

ghha@suremail.gg

www.guernseyhardofhearing.org.gg

Guernsey Disability Alliance

07781 467316

info@disabilityalliance.org.gg

www.disabilityalliance.org.gg

www.matter.gg

Employment Relations Service

Raymond Falla House
Longue Rue
St Martin
GY4 6HG

01481 234567

employmentrelations@gov.gg

www.gov.gg

Guernsey Cancer Support
07839 206857
info@guernseycancersupport.org.gg
www.guernseycancersupport.org.gg

Guernsey Mind
The Lions Mind Centre
The Arsenal
St Peter Port
GY1 1UW
01481 722959
emily.litten@guernseymind.org.gg
www.guernseymind.org.gg

Dyslexia Support Group
01481 252655
dyslexiadaycentre@cwgsy.net

Work Rehabilitation
Edward T Wheadon House
Le Truchot
St Peter Port
GY1 3WH
01481 732484
workrehab@gov.gg
www.gov.gg

**Queens Road Medical Practice -
Occupational Health Advisors**
St Peter Port
GY1 1RH
01481 724184
LisaOgier@eqrmp.com
www.eqrmp.com

**Primary Care Mental Health
and Wellbeing Service**
La Rue de la Corbinnerie
St Martin's
GY4 6SP
01481 707744

**L'Aumone Surgery -
Occupational Health Advisors**
L'Aumone
Castel
GY5 7RU
01481 256517

**Cobo Health Care -
Occupational Health Advisors**
Route de Carteret
Castel
GY5 7HA
01481 256404

**Health & Social Care -
Occupational Health**
01481 725241
occupationalhealth@gov.gg
www.gov.gg