Disability Confident Employers

Finding more inclusive workplaces

A practical guide to understanding the scheme, exploring an employer’s approach and preparing questions about recruitment and workplace support.

What is Disability Confident?

Disability Confident is a voluntary UK government scheme intended to help employers recruit, retain and develop disabled people. It has three levels. Employers move through them in order, with commitments and evidence expected at each stage.

LEVEL	WHAT IT GENERALLY MEANS
1 · Committed	The employer agrees to the scheme commitments and identifies at least one action to improve opportunities for disabled people. This includes inclusive recruitment, accessible vacancy communication, interview commitments, reasonable adjustments and support for existing employees.
2 · Employer	The employer completes a self-assessment and demonstrates action across the scheme themes.
3 · Leader	The employer completes validation and demonstrates leadership and sharing of disability inclusion practice.

Keep the badge in perspective. Scheme status can be a helpful starting point, but it cannot tell you whether a particular role, manager or team will meet your needs. The employer’s status may also change, so check the current listing and date.

The scheme is a continuing learning journey. Accreditation lasts up to three years at each level; employers should check current GOV.UK guidance for renewal and progression details.

What Level 1 commitments can look like

The Level 1 commitments give employers a practical starting point. Look for clear information about inclusive recruitment, accessible vacancy communication, the interview offer, reasonable adjustments and support for existing employees.

- Recruit inclusively: make the essential requirements clear and remove unnecessary barriers.
- Communicate vacancies accessibly and explain how applicants can request adjustments.
- Explain the interview commitment and how the minimum criteria will be assessed.
- Consider adjustments at recruitment and during day-to-day work.
- Support existing staff to remain, develop and contribute at work.

A logo tells you an employer has joined the scheme; asking how these commitments work in the specific role can give you more useful detail.

Using the symbol while job searching

GOV.UK advises disabled jobseekers to look for the Disability Confident symbol on vacancies and application forms. At Level 1, the scheme includes a commitment to offer an interview to disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria. Check how the employer explains this for the specific vacancy and follow its application instructions.

A useful step-by-step check

- Read the advert and identify its stated essential or minimum criteria.
- Check the employer’s current scheme level and whether the vacancy explains an interview offer.
- If you want to use the offer, make it clear in your application how you meet the stated minimum criteria.
- Ask early about adjustments to an application, assessment or interview if you need them.
- Keep a copy of the advert and the employer’s response so you can refer back to the wording.

Questions worth exploring

- Are essential requirements clear and proportionate?
- Does the advert say how to request adjustments, and who to contact?
- Are work pattern, location, travel, sensory demands and communication expectations described?
- Does the employer explain what happens after you request an adjustment?

Remember: The symbol indicates participation in the scheme. It does not guarantee that every process will be accessible or that every adjustment will be suitable. You can ask questions and consider how the employer responds.

Possible questions for a recruiter

- “Could you explain the essential criteria and how they will be assessed?”
- “What adjustments can you offer for the interview or any work task?”
- “How can I share access needs, and who will see that information?”
- “What does a typical week look like, including meetings, deadlines and changes?”
- “How are new starters supported during induction and the first few months?”

Map your evidence to the advert

If you are using the interview offer, make it easy for the employer to see how your experience meets the stated minimum criteria.

ESSENTIAL CRITERION	MY EXAMPLE OR EVIDENCE
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____

Adjustments and supportive conversations

Reasonable adjustments can reduce or remove a work-related barrier. They may be considered during recruitment, induction and employment. The right option depends on the person, role and situation. Adjustments are not limited to physical changes and do not always require significant cost.

Examples to explore

- Communication: agendas in advance, written follow-up, clear instructions or a named contact.
- Time and organisation: predictable scheduling, adjusted start times, task prioritisation or planned check-ins.
- Environment: a quieter space, lighting changes, equipment or flexibility over location.
- Recruitment process: accessible application formats, alternative interview formats or extra time where appropriate.
- Support: job coaching, assistive technology or a gradual induction where suitable.

A conversation structure

Describe the barrier: “I find rapid verbal instructions difficult to retain.”
Explain the work impact: “I may miss steps when tasks change quickly.”
Suggest a possible support: “Could key instructions also be provided in writing, with a brief check-in when priorities change?”
Agree a review: “Could we try this for four weeks and then see what is working?”

What to notice in an employer’s response

- Do they listen and ask what would help, instead of making assumptions?
- Are options explained clearly, including who will follow up and by when?
- Is there a way to review the arrangement if it is not working?
- Do written and verbal commitments match the experience you observe?

You do not have to disclose a diagnosis to ask about a recruitment process or describe a practical access need. Share only what is relevant and what you feel comfortable sharing. For advice about rights or a specific situation, use a suitable advice service.

Turning a request into a workable plan

A helpful adjustment conversation can include the change, who will arrange it, when it will start and how you will review it. If the first suggestion is not workable, ask what other option could reduce the same barrier.

Barrier and possible support examples

BARRIER	POSSIBLE SUPPORT TO DISCUSS
Instructions are easy to miss	Written priorities, an agreed task list or a short follow-up note.
Frequent unexpected changes	Advance notice where possible, a named contact or a clear way to confirm priorities.
Busy or distracting setting	Quieter workspace, equipment, planned breaks or flexibility over location.

My inclusive-workplace plan

Use these prompts to organise what matters to you. You can complete this page privately, take it to a conversation or use it to compare opportunities.

Employer or role I am exploring:

_____

My most important work priorities:

_____

_____

Details I want to check

- Current scheme status and level.
- Essential criteria and any interview commitment for this vacancy.
- How to request recruitment adjustments.
- Role demands, work pattern, location and support arrangements.
- Who to contact, what I want to ask and when I will follow up.

What helps me do my best work?

_____

_____

_____

One small next step:

_____

_____

Official sources and further reading

GOV.UK · Looking for work if you're disabled: https://www.gov.uk/looking-for-work-if-disabled

GOV.UK · Disability Confident guidance for levels 1, 2 and 3: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-confident-guidance-for-levels-1-2-and-3

GOV.UK · Employers that have signed up to the scheme: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-confident-employers-that-have-signed-up

Educational information, not legal advice. Check current GOV.UK guidance for the latest scheme details.

My questions for the employer

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What would a helpful response include?

_____

_____

Follow-up record

Date contacted: _____ Person or team: _____

Next step and date: _____