



Department
for Work &
Pensions

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Rt Hon Frank Field MP
Work and Pensions Committee

04 July 2018

Dear Frank,

Response to Work and Pensions Committee re Disability Confident scheme

Thank you for your letter of 15 May.

As you know, the Government is committed to seeing at least 1 million more disabled people in work over the next 10 years as part of our desire to close the disability employment gap.

As you say, our primary mechanism for promoting the benefits of employing disabled people is Disability Confident. The scheme was designed to be easy to access, particularly for smaller employers, while also providing a rigorous and structured approach that will reassure disabled people and groups that represent disabled people that it will make a real difference.

I have provided an overview of the Disability Confident (DC) scheme at **Annex A**, including details of the commitments that an employer must make with each stage of their DC journey.

Evaluation Plans

DWP agreed to your predecessor Committee's recommendation, that the Department will commission an evaluation of the Disability Scheme by 2020. We are keen to ensure that the scheme continues to meet the needs of employers and the evolving labour market. The Business Leaders Group of Board-level representatives of major companies and a Professional Advisors Group drawn from training and recruitment focused organisations advises us on how best to promote and develop the scheme.

A recent innovation has been the establishment of a series of Specialist Themed events, in which Disability Confident Leaders share their knowledge

and experience on specific topics with other Disability Confident organisations. Themes so far have been mental health, workplace adjustments and recruitment, with others to follow.

We are currently developing a project that will involve interviewing Disability Confident employers in order to assess the effect that signing up to the Scheme has on how an employer recruits, retains and supports disabled people, and that will guide the future development of the scheme to improve its impact. We hope to have results from this project towards the end of 2018.

Management Information

You asked for a breakdown of employer sign-ups for every year since 2013, by level, company size, industrial sector and geographical location. The current Disability Confident employer scheme was formally launched in November 2016. Before that date Disability Confident was a DWP Communications campaign and as such did not have sign-ups. The figures in the tables in **Annex B** therefore represent the number of employers signed-up at each level as at the end of 2016, 2017 and as at 22/06/2018, with a breakdown by employer size.

You also requested information on DC employers by employer size, geographical locations and sector. This information is provided in tables 2, 3 & 4.

We know that there are approximately 7,200 large employers (who have 250 employees or more) and of those 1,990 have signed up to Disability Confident, which account for 27.5% of those employers. However as the overall number of micro, small and medium sized employers' (SMEs) changes on such a regular basis, it is not possible to obtain robust information on the percentage of SME's signed up to Disability Confident.

I am pleased to say that we have delivered on our commitment to lead the way as a DC employer. All of the main Government departments are now signed up as Disability Confident Leaders.

At the formal launch of the scheme, we had completed an exercise to engage with previous *Positive about Disability Two Ticks* employers to offer them the opportunity to migrate into the new scheme.

Disability Confident – Impact

Pending a formal evaluation, we are using other methods to assess the impact of Disability Confident. For example

- Since the launch of the scheme in November 2016, **807 employers** have completed their self-assessment and progressed from **Disability**

Confident Committed Level 1 to become Disability Confident Employers (Level 2)

- A further **2671 employers** migrated from *Two Ticks* have completed their self-assessment and become full **Disability Confident Employers (Level 2)**
- 133 employers have progressed from Disability Confident Employer to become **Disability Confident Leaders (Level 3)**.

Those employers have made significant commitments to provide opportunities for disabled people and these are shown at **Annex C**, and cover the period to the end of March 2018 which is the latest set of figures currently available.

We also know that many of those employers are employing and supporting more disabled people since signing up. Although we cannot give overall numbers at this stage, we have some case studies and employer statements. These can be seen at **Annex D**.

A Disability Confident Employer (Level 2) moving to become a Disability Confident Leader (Level 3) will not change the commitments to core actions they had made. To become a DC Leader the organisation will however need to put their self-assessment – including those core actions – up for external challenge. They will also have to provide a narrative of the activities they will be undertaking to lead other employers on a Disability Confident journey.

I hope that you find this information helpful. I will ensure that the Work and Pensions Committee are kept informed of further developments in assessing the impact of the scheme.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Newton MP
Minister for Disabled People, Health & Work

Annex A: Disability Confident Scheme Overview

The Disability Confident scheme has been live since November 2016 and supports the Government's commitment to see one million more disabled people into work within the next ten years. The scheme is supported across Government and has over 6500 employers signed up, at different levels. Disability Confident replaced the Disability Symbol 'Two Ticks' scheme and its core purpose is to support and encourage employers to attract, recruit, retain and promote disabled people. Retention is particularly important with 83% of people acquiring a disability or health condition whilst of working age. Disability Confident has been developed with support from: disabled people, disability organisations and employers and is designed as a journey, providing employers with free advice, guidance and information. All employers start at Level 1 and progress through the scheme at their own pace. The journey is as follows:

Level 1: Disability Confident Committed	Level 2: Disability Confident Employer	Level 3: Disability Confident Leader
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers can apply for and achieve this level entirely on line via our pages on Gov.UK: https://disabilityconfident.campaign.gov.uk/ They must commit to set statements and commit to at least 1 action*. Employers don't have to do their actions straight away, but they will be encouraged to develop their commitments over the 12 months. Employers are awarded this badge for 12 months as a maximum and then during/after this time, they will need to progress to Level 2 or reapply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an online self-assessment process, where employers review their processes and procedures against set criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> getting the right people for your business; and keeping and developing your people Employers need to agree to meet all of the actions in the core actions list plus at least one action from the activities list This can be completed at the employers own pace. Once the self-assessment is completed the employer will submit the form on Gov.UK to confirm. DWP emails the employer their badge. Employers are awarded this level for 2 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This involves the employer having their self-assessment independently validated by someone outside of their organisation. (Information about this is contained within the scheme). Employers will need to be able to demonstrate Leadership in promoting Disability Confident with other employers. Note: Some organisations will validate free of charge or employers can pay a provider to do this (the pack provides examples of the type of organisations employers can go to, such as their disabled staff network or a Disabled People User-Led Organisation). Employers are awarded this level for 3 years.
<p>*Actions can include the offer of work experience, work trial, paid employment, apprenticeship, job shadow opportunity, traineeship, paid internship and supported internship, student placement, sector-based work academy placement</p>	<p>The self-assessment covers: Actively looking to attract and recruit disabled people Providing a fully inclusive and accessible recruitment process Offering an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job Flexible when assessing people so disabled job applicants have the best opportunity to demonstrate that they can do the job Making reasonable adjustments as required Encouraging suppliers and partne</p>	<p>They should put their self-assessment up for external challenge/validation: and Provide a narrative of activities and/or actions they have or are taking in support of being a Disability Confident Leader.</p>

	<p>firms to be Disability Confident Ensuring employees have sufficient disability equality awareness And Promoting a culture of being Disability Confident Supporting employees to manage their disabilities or health conditions Ensuring there are no barriers to the development and progression of disabled staff Ensuring managers are aware of how they can support staff who are sick or absent from work Valuing and listening to feedback from disabled staff Reviewing this Disability Confident employer self-assessment</p>	
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Annex B: Disability Confident Employer Sign-up information

Table 1: Breakdown of Employer sign ups, by Status (levels)

Totals at	End of 2016	End of 2017	22 June 2018
Disability Confident Committed (Level 1)	653	2,732	4,013
Disability Confident Employer (Level 2)	2,667	2,941	*2,671
Disability Confident Leader (Level 3)	20	98	133
	3,340	5,771	6,841

* Reduction in figure due to 24 employer being at a renewal stage: *Positive about Disability Two Ticks* employers who migrated to DC scheme in 2016.

Table 2: Breakdown of DC Employer sign ups by employer size, by year

Totals at	End of 2016	End of 2017	22 June 2018
Micro employers (1 to 9 employees)	453 (14%)	1,352 (23%)	1,857 (27%)
Small employers (10 to 49 employees)	741 (22%)	1,375 (24%)	1,677 (25%)
Medium employers (50 to 249 employees)	782 (23%)	1,182 (21%)	1,325 (19%)
Large employers (Over 250 employees)	1,364 (41%)	1,862 (32%)	1,980 (30%)

Table 3: Breakdown of DC Employer sign ups by Regions and Status (level), at 22 June 2018

Group	Committed	Employer	Leader	Total
Scotland	300	309	5	614
North West	420	214	8	642
North East	192	287	4	483
North Central	393	354	5	752
Wales	220	129	6	355
West Midlands	524	176	9	709
North & East Midlands	555	360	10	925
London & Essex	568	312	22	902
South East	320	226	7	553
South West	492	281	17	790
National	25	47	40	112
Northern Ireland	4	0	0	4

Table 4: Breakdown of DC Employer sign ups by Sector and employer size, at 22 June 2018

Sector	1-9 Employees	10-49 Employees	50-249 Employees	Over 250 Employees
Administration/Office including Public Sector	136	51	74	485
Agriculture	23	12	4	7
Armed Forces	0	0	0	0
Arts and Media	60	26	25	27
Beauty and Therapy	25	4	4	2
Care/Childcare/Social Care	75	141	169	97
Construction	38	31	38	37
Contact Centres	1	6	7	11
Customer service	13	9	5	5
Education / Teaching	183	200	158	318
Energy & Utilities	7	15	4	19
Facilities Management	19	26	7	22
Financial Services	16	14	10	55
Health	50	88	103	302
Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism	131	97	57	48
Information Technology and Telecoms	39	32	19	20
Manufacturing & Engineering	33	87	79	68
Recruitment Agencies	71	66	52	38
Retail/Sales	161	66	25	38
Security and Safety	17	21	8	13
Sports & Recreation	26	17	30	23
Transport and logistics	23	19	18	32
Voluntary, Charity & Social Enterprise	530	525	330	173
Other	180	124	99	140

Annex C: Employer commitments to provide opportunities for disabled people

As of the end of March 2018, the employer commitments comprised:

Level 1 DC Committed - Commitments

1.Work Experience	2,956	23%
2.Work Trials	1,284	10%
3.Paid Employment (permanent or fixed term)	2,545	20%
4.Apprenticeships	1,521	12%
5.Job Shadowing Opportunities	1,581	12%
6.Traineeships	725	6%
7. Paid Internship(s) and/or Supported Internships	528	4%
8.Student Placement	1,201	9%
9.Sector based work academy placements	525	4%
	12,866	100%

Level 2 DC Employer - Commitments

A. Getting the right people for their business

A1. Work Experience	1,666	13%
A2. Work Trials	707	6%
A3. Paid Employment (permanent or fixed term)	2,041	16%
A4. Apprenticeships	1,350	11%
A5. Traineeship	498	4%
A6. Paid Internship(s) and/or Supported Internships	621	5%
A7. Advertising - Vacancies	1,099	9%
A8. Engaging with JCP, Work Choice Providers and/or local DPULOs	1,698	13%
A9. An environment that is inclusive and accessible	2,185	17%
A10. Innovative and effective approaches	977	8%
	12,842	100%

Level 2 DC Employer - Commitments

B. Keeping and developing their people

B1. Mentoring, coaching, buddying and other support	1,852	17.49%
B2. Disability awareness equality training in our induction programme	1,885	17.80%
B3. Guiding staff to information and advice on mental health conditions	2,153	20.33%
B4. Providing Occupational health services	1,946	18.37%
B5. Identifying and sharing good practices	1,853	17.50%
B6. Providing human resource managers with specific DC training	902	8.52%
	10,591	100%

Annex D: Case Studies and Employer Statements

Fujitsu says:

Since becoming Disability Confident, Fujitsu has significantly increased the number of people with disabilities on its graduate recruitment programme. 20% of the cohort last September had disabilities. Fujitsu has also seen an increase in the number of employees declaring they have a disability, which allows the company to better provide adjustments or support.

Barclays says:

Barclays is proud to be a Disability Confident Leader. It means we are committed to sharing best practices, and to continuing to learn from others as part of our drive to improve access and inclusion for all customers, clients and colleagues. Hosting events such as our Becoming Disability Confident - Business Meets Parliament event in November 2017, and scaling up our “This is Me” campaign to challenge the stigma around mental health with other businesses, enables Barclays to share our direct experience with many more employers.

Barclays was an early participant in the Disability Confident scheme. It enabled us to openly discuss issues around disability and explore what true accessibility actually meant for us as a business.

Our commitment to an inclusive culture has been a driving force at Barclays, changing attitudes towards disability and mental health. We aim to give our colleagues the right tools so that they can excel and feel their talents are nurtured, empowering them to contribute fully to the business. We back this up by listening to and supporting our colleagues. The creation of ‘champions’ to support the disability and mental health agenda is a tangible example of how becoming disability confident can permeate the whole business.

At Barclays, we want to create an accessible and inclusive business where people of all abilities want to bank and work. By becoming more disability confident, we have been able to widen our talent pool and recognise the unique set of advantages that employing people with disabilities brings.

It has had a positive impact on employee turnover and the retention of valuable talent, and brought a different level of creativity and problem-solving. It has helped to inform the way we develop our products, services and processes, which improves profitability.

In 2017, as part of our commitment to making careers accessible to all, Barclays created a new scheme that aims to help people with disabilities and mental health conditions gain valuable experience in the workplace. Through Able to Enable, we have been able to offer internships and Higher Apprenticeships within the retail branch network. It is giving people with

disabilities the opportunity to immerse themselves in the world of personal banking.

This fully-supported programme is open to people of all ages, in particular those with a disability or mental health condition who can demonstrate the right life skills, setting them on the path to success in a career in banking that some thought was previously inaccessible to them.

Our advice to other businesses is to engage with the Disability Confident scheme and to openly discuss issues around disability. Asking colleagues who identify as disabled what one change you could make that would improve their lives is often an excellent starting point. We're often stopped by the fear of getting something wrong and offending a colleague or customer. But the only thing you can really get wrong is not starting in the first place. The tools and networks driven through the Disability Confident scheme should help most businesses, large or small, to take that first step.

KPMG says:

We are proud to be a Disability Confident Leader. We signed up to Disability Confident because we think it's really important. Firstly, many of our people have disabilities so enabling them to perform at their best is fundamental. Secondly, we're a customer facing organisation, and many of our customers also have a disability. They want to work with an organisation that takes this area really seriously and supports people with a disability.

The Disability Confident events and workshops we have jointly organised and delivered with the Civil Service have provided great opportunities for us to share and learn from best practice. Having the opportunity to network with another organisation in this area and talk about disability has been particularly well received by colleagues that have attended the events/workshops.

Since becoming Disability Confident we have been involved in initiatives to create more opportunities for disabled people. For example in our Leeds office, partnering with the Lighthouse futures trust, we are providing 5 young adults with autism a year's internship at KPMG. We also have a focus on social mobility and a successful apprenticeship program which has helped us widen participation into the professions.

Being a Disability Confident Leader has also led to us talking to and working with other Disability Confident Leaders, like Auticom with whom we are about to start a pilot programme taking two of their consultants into our Audit business. We are also working with Purple on a review into disability as a leadership agenda.