

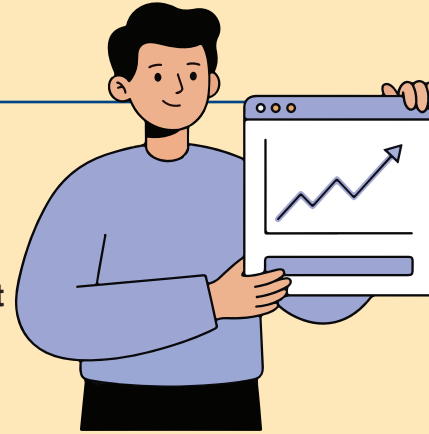


Recruiting disabled people and people with health conditions

Lessons from the evidence

This information sheet is for employers and hiring managers who want to make recruitment more inclusive and accessible for disabled people and people with health conditions. It sets out practical actions that can be built into recruitment systems, hiring practice and organisational leadership.

The recommendations are informed by a rapid evidence assessment (REA) of high and moderate quality evidence, conducted in 2026.



What the evidence shows

The evidence highlights that employers can benefit from practical support to recruit disabled people and people with health conditions, including guidance on inclusive recruitment, workplace adjustments and available support schemes. Delivery staff from employment support programmes such as Connect to Work or WorkWell can help support or provide guidance to implement these recommendations.

Recommended actions for employers

Use structured recruitment processes:

Set out clear job-relevant criteria and score candidates objectively against these. Use consistent interview questions or tasks for each candidate to score against the criteria. Where possible, job-relevant criteria should be related to behaviours and skills rather than experience, as disabled people and people with health conditions may have less linear career paths.**



Train hiring managers on disability inclusion and reasonable adjustments:

Embed targeted disability-specific training for hiring managers and others involved in recruitment. Training should focus on practical recruitment decisions, reasonable adjustments and challenge negative assumptions about capability. Where possible, complete training before recruitment begins.***

Training – example from the evidence: In a 2026 trial, participants who completed interactive video training on blindness and low vision showed greater knowledge, more positive attitudes, and a higher likelihood of hiring qualified candidates with vision loss than participants who received standard training.



Use Artificial Intelligence (AI) responsibly and retain human oversight:

AI tools can be used to support fair, transparent and accountable decision-making. If using AI for recruitment, ensure that

prompts focus on job-relevant criteria and support inclusive, auditable assessment. AI should not be used as a substitute for human judgement and recruiting managers should retain decision-making responsibility.***

AI – example from the evidence:

In a 2026 study using OpenAI's GPT-4, structured, fairness-oriented prompts helped recruiters to focus on candidates' skills and qualifications throughout a hiring task. The prompts emphasised that hiring decisions should be based on merit and relevant qualifications, free from bias, and inclusive of all candidates. Recruiters who used these prompts were more likely to select a disabled applicant.

Review recruitment materials to signal inclusion:

Make sure job adverts, job descriptions and recruitment materials use inclusive and accessible language, in plain English. State clearly what flexible working arrangements are in place, and that accommodations are available throughout the recruitment process and beyond. An example may be suggesting that alternative interview settings (e.g. online) will be considered instead of requiring all interviews to be office-based.*



Demonstrate leadership commitment through measurable goals:

Engage senior leaders and HR decision-makers in discussions about disability inclusion, equality, diversity. Highlight the organisational value of widening recruitment and ensure disability inclusion is part of the organisational workforce planning and diversity strategy. Set measurable goals to monitor progress on recruiting disabled people and people with health conditions. Examples of goals include percentage of shortlisted job applicants identifying as disabled and percentage of vacancies using structured interviews.**

These recommendations are based on evaluation evidence identified through a rapid evidence assessment (REA) on how to support employers to recruit disabled people and people with health conditions. To indicate the strength of the evidence, each recommendation has been given one of the following confidence ratings:

- * *Indicative* – moderate. The evidence these recommendations are based on is suggestive and cannot be directly linked to outcomes. It is of moderate quality.
- ** *Influence* – high. The evidence these recommendations are based on suggests the activity influences the outcome, but cannot be said to directly cause the outcome. It is of high quality.
- *** *Causal* – moderate or high. The evidence these recommendations are based on suggest a causal link to outcomes such as mitigating negative disability bias. It is of moderate or high quality.