

Accessible hiring and admissions checklist

For HR, talent acquisition and admissions teams. Most candidates with disabilities are lost before anyone meets them, at the advert, the portal or the test. Go through this before your next hiring round or admissions cycle.

For colleges and universities: read "hiring" as admissions, "job" as course, and "day one" as the first day of term. Also tell applicants upfront about seats, fee concessions and scholarships for students with disabilities.

1 Before you advertise

- ☐ The job description lists only what the role truly needs
- ☐ Every advert says persons with disabilities are welcome to apply
- ☐ Every advert has an adjustments line with a named contact
- ☐ Your equal opportunity policy is published and easy to find

2 Applying

- ☐ The application portal works with a screen reader and a keyboard alone
- ☐ No image-only CAPTCHA or tight time limit without another way in
- ☐ People can apply by email or phone if the portal doesn't work for them
- ☐ Sharing a disability is optional and kept away from shortlisting

3 Tests and interviews

- ☐ Every candidate is asked what they need, before the test or interview
- ☐ Extra time, a scribe or reader, and screen reader friendly papers are available
- ☐ The venue has step-free access and an accessible toilet, or there's a video option
- ☐ A sign language interpreter can be arranged on request

4 The panel

- ☐ Everyone on the panel has been briefed on assessing candidates with disabilities fairly
- ☐ Candidates are scored on the same essential criteria as everyone else
- ☐ No questions about the diagnosis, how it happened, or how much leave they'll need

5 Offer and day one

- ☐ The offer letter asks again what support they'll need at work or on campus
- ☐ Laptop, software, desk, parking, transport or hostel room is ready before they arrive
- ☐ Induction is accessible, and a buddy is named

6 Track and improve

- ☐ You count applications, shortlists and offers from candidates who chose to share
- ☐ You ask candidates with disabilities how the process felt
- ☐ Once a year, you find the biggest drop-off and fix it

Don't ask

"What's your disability?" · "How did it happen?" · "Will you need a lot of leave?" · "How will you manage the commute?"

Ask instead

"This role involves X. Talk me through how you'd approach it." · "Is there anything we can set up so you can do your best today?"

The 15-minute test

Turn on your phone's screen reader (TalkBack on Android, VoiceOver on iPhone) and try to apply for one of your own jobs or courses. If you get stuck, so do your candidates.

Where does your organisation stand on disability inclusion?

Take the free BELONG self-assessment, or book a free call to review your hiring or admissions process with us.

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