

Get the job done

Why and how to employ people with learning disabilities in Islington



Foreword



Islington council is committed to helping create a diverse and representative workforce. We want to work with local businesses to promote equality and achieve our vision of 'One Islington'.

We believe that diversity brings many benefits including creativity, vitality and greater innovation. There are benefits for employers, and also for those who have learning disabilities.

Throughout Islington, people with learning disabilities are already making positive contributions to the teams they work in. We would like to see these experiences spread more widely across the borough.

We hope that this guide will enable employers to work towards the creation of a diverse and effective workforce in Islington.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Hitchins". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Councillor Steve Hitchins
Leader, Islington Council



ISLINGTON

www.islington.gov.uk/getthejobdone

The purpose of this guide is to give general information about employing people with learning disabilities in Islington. The contents of this guide should not be regarded as constituting legal advice. You are advised to seek specific advice about particular issues and situations.

Get the job done



Good reasons to employ people with learning disabilities in Islington

- People with learning disabilities are an untapped workforce in Islington
- Encouraging diversity promotes a positive image and is good for business
- The law says that employers must not discriminate against disabled customers, employees, agency workers and job candidates
- It's easier for the employer than you might think
- Employers can get special grants, advice and support
- It's good for Islington to have more people in the jobs market
- It's good for people with learning disabilities to have jobs
- People with learning disabilities do as good a job as anyone else

Keith Shortman, Event Organiser

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Welcome to Islington



Introduction



- This guide explains why and how employers in Islington can hire people with learning disabilities
- People with learning disabilities can and do work
- There are many kinds of learning disabilities
- People with learning disabilities may find it harder to learn, though they will be able to do so with time and help from other people
- This guide provides the information you need to take on new employees with learning disabilities and includes a directory of resources

Introduction

What is this guide for?

“Just because people look different or they have a disability, it doesn’t mean they can’t work. They’re just normal people. Just like you”

*Emma, Cashier,
Sainsburys*

This guide explains why and how employers in Islington can employ people with learning disabilities.

The guide will answer some of the questions you have about employing people with learning disabilities, and should help you to make the first moves in recruiting new staff. It also tells you where you can get more information and advice.

The guide contains employment stories about people in work and their employers that will help give a clearer idea of how it might work in practice.

You don’t need to read the whole guide to get something out of it – you can read the summaries at the front of each section and pick the ones that are most relevant to you.

What does learning disabilities mean?

If you’re not sure what the term learning disabilities means, you’re not alone.

Learning disabilities is an umbrella term and doesn’t refer to a single condition. It’s hard to give a definition because, as with everyone else, abilities and skills vary enormously from person to person.

Some learning disabilities are mild and hardly noticeable: others are more severe. Some people with learning disabilities also have a physical disability: others don’t.

In general though, someone with learning disabilities might

- Find it harder to learn, though they will be able to do so with help and support
- Communicate differently. For example it is particularly important to use clear, plain language
- Have difficulty with reading, writing or numbers. For example, some people prefer to use pictures and signs instead of written words





Some people with learning disabilities have particular medical conditions, such as Down's Syndrome. Some people with autism or cerebral palsy also have learning disabilities. But these names don't tell you very much, as two people with the same condition can have very different abilities. The best way to find out about someone's abilities is to ask them.

Some people prefer to use the term learning difficulties rather than learning disabilities. Again, be guided by the people you meet and what they say. We have used the term learning disabilities rather than learning difficulties in this guide to avoid confusion – some people use the term learning difficulties to mean conditions such as dyslexia, which are not included in this guide.

Can people with learning disabilities work?

People with learning disabilities can and do work in all kinds of jobs. In Islington, they work for all sorts of employers ranging from big companies like Marks & Spencer and Arsenal Football Club to smaller local employers like the wholesale butchers T.S.J. Woodhouse (see the employment story in Section 6) and Frederick's Restaurant in Camden Passage.

If you need to make adjustments to employ someone with learning disabilities, most of them can be done or paid for by other agencies (see Section 7 for more details).

“Every person, whether they have learning disabilities or not, brings different skills to the job. Don't judge a book by its cover”

*Debbie Smith,
Campaign
Manager, Help
the Aged*



Employment story: Sainsburys

Emma's story

"Before I came to Sainsburys I went to school, then college in Holloway. After college I learnt about interviews and CVs and did work experience. I worked as a receptionist. It's hard getting work if you don't have experience.

I started at Sainsburys when I was 19, packing bags at first. After a couple of years I asked a manager if I could be a cashier. She said OK, so I got training on the till.

It's better than when I was packing, I do different things – interact with customers, handle the change. Being a cashier is a lot of responsibility. You have to look after change and receipts and not make any mistakes. You get good customers and you get awkward customers, but most of them are friendly, and you get to talk to people.

I go out once a month with the girls. We try to meet up and go to different places in Islington and Archway.

Just because people look different or they have a disability, it doesn't mean they can't work. They're just normal people. Just like you."

Carl's story

"Sainsburys recently started a trial of 'Reality Recruitment'. This was designed for mass recruitment, but we did a trial with people with learning disabilities. Now we use it for all recruitment. It's less daunting than a one to one interview. There's lots of interaction – candidates work to

scenarios and we observe them. For example, we tell them about different cheeses, then see how they would deal with a customer asking about cheese. We don't expect 100% recall – we look at their manner and interaction.

Educational experience becomes irrelevant. What we look for is people's ability to deal with customers.

When you employ someone with learning disabilities you're employing people who really want to be there. You don't find people job-hopping like you sometimes get with other employees. One of our employees has been with us for 25 years. Also, for staff, it brings daily interaction with a wide variety of people.

You have to be patient and break tasks down into manageable chunks. It takes more time, but it makes you focus on how and why you do things. If you have to find new ways of explaining how to do something, you often find yourself challenging why you do it in the first place. That's a positive thing.

Over the last five years I've worked with 25 or 30 people with learning disabilities, and it's been a good experience. Out of those, I can only think of two where we couldn't continue with their employment – and that wasn't because they didn't fit in.

Ellingham's [a specialist recruitment agency] provide support. They come on daily visits in the first few weeks, then less frequently. The level of support we get depends on the individual."

Employee facts

Name: Emma

Job Title: Cashier

First joined Sainsburys: 1998

Hours: Monday to Friday full-time

Employer facts

Company: Sainsburys

Location: Liverpool Road, Islington

Key personnel: Carl Ashby, Personnel Manager





Leon Caddle, a student at the Bridge School, on work experience at Frederick's Restaurant, Islington

Why employ people with learning disabilities?



- **People with learning disabilities are an untapped and skilled workforce in Islington**
- **Employing people with learning disabilities has commercial benefits: a quarter of your customers have a disability or know someone who has**
- **Wider participation in the jobs market is good for people with learning disabilities and for the community in general**
- **Employers have to comply with the disability laws**
- **From October 2004, the law applies to all employers, including those with fewer than 15 employees**

Why employ people with learning disabilities?

“Educational experience becomes irrelevant. What we look for is people’s ability to deal with customers”

*Carl Ashby,
Personnel
Manager,
Sainsburys*



It’s a new workforce

Finding good employees can be difficult, particularly with employment levels so high. Many employers find it hard to fill vacancies and hold onto good staff.

People with learning disabilities represent an untapped workforce and it makes good business sense to include them in your recruitment process. There are many people of working age with learning disabilities in Islington, and some are in work. Many more would like to work, but haven’t been given the opportunity yet. Islington employers can change that.

Promoting diversity has business benefits

Everyone knows that an organisation’s success depends on keeping customers and business partners happy. We try to earn their respect and loyalty, for example by giving good customer service, keeping prices low, or staying open for longer.

Promoting workforce diversity is another way of keeping customers and partners happy.

“It’s good to have all types of people from different backgrounds working together – it means we have a varied team”

Lorraine Greer, Food Section Manager, Marks & Spencer

People with learning disabilities, their families and carers make up a large section of the population. Probably around 10% of the population have learning disabilities or are close to someone who has. That goes for your customers too. As for disabilities in general, around a quarter of your customers have a disability, or know someone who does. So it makes commercial sense to have them represented in your workforce.



It's easier than you might think

Maybe you've never employed someone with learning disabilities before. You might be worried about how you would find the time to train and supervise someone, or pay for any adjustments to the workplace or working arrangements.

In reality, it's unlikely that you'll end up out of pocket, and there is plenty of free help with training and supervision.

Section 7 of this guide tells you about all the different kinds of support you can get when taking on staff with learning disabilities, including things like

- Money for adjustments, e.g. adapting premises
- Job coaches who help the new employee learn their job
- Training in disability awareness

Employers have to comply with the disability laws

It's important for employers to know how to comply with the disability laws. The Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 outlaws unfair discrimination against disabled people. Until recently, it only applied to organisations with 15 or more employees, but from October 2004 it applies to all employers.

The Act says that employers must not discriminate against disabled employees, agency staff or job applicants because of their disability. Also, employers must make 'reasonable adjustments' to their workplace and working arrangements so that disabled people are not substantially disadvantaged in getting or keeping a job.

The law against discrimination applies not only to disabled people who are already in jobs, but also to the process of recruitment and training.

Employers that recruit staff with learning disabilities get grants and lots of help and support - most of it free. There is help with training, supervision and making adjustments



Adapted keyboard

Why employ people with learning disabilities?

Employers must comply with the disability laws right from the beginning of the recruitment process

So even if your organisation doesn't employ people with disabilities at the moment, you will have to comply with the law whenever you take on new staff.

You'll need to make sure that you are not discriminating against a candidate just because of their disability, and you may also need to make reasonable adjustments.

What's a reasonable adjustment? Some examples:

- Supplying additional training and support during induction
- Modifying instructions or reference manuals
- Modifying procedures for testing or assessment
- Providing additional supervision
- Reallocating part of a job to another employee
- Changing working hours
- Providing adapted equipment

For example, someone with a learning disability applies for a job which sometimes involves reading written instructions. The candidate has difficulty reading, but can read documents that are adapted using large type, simple language and illustrations. Providing adapted documents would be a reasonable adjustment, particularly as the employer could get advice on what to do and help with extra costs. So discrimination on the grounds that the applicant can't read written instructions would be unlawful. The adjustment enables the disabled employee to achieve the same results as any other employee.

"It doesn't matter if someone has learning disabilities, they should be able to go out to work if they want to – full or part time"

Alice Etherington, First Choice Trainers

Alice Etherington works with First Choice Trainers at the Elfrida Society in Islington (see Directory for contact details). The group provides training in learning disabilities awareness. She also works at Swiss Cottage Library.



Alice Etherington



Making adjustments often has benefits for all staff, not just the person with the disability.

Advice, support and financial grants are available to help with any adjustments you make, so it shouldn't be a burden. See Section 7 for more details.

There are benefits for your whole business

The benefits of employing people with learning disabilities can extend to the whole of your workforce: People with learning disabilities are all different, of course, but many employers say that people with learning disabilities also have above average attendance rates.

Reduced staff turnover	People with learning disabilities are more likely to stay with an employer for a long time, reducing advertising and recruitment costs and overall staff turnover rates
Improved communication	Any efforts you make to simplify written and verbal communications for staff with learning disabilities will be beneficial for your workforce overall, e.g. clearer job instructions, less confusing health and safety procedures
Employee satisfaction	As with customers and business partners, employees and unions will respect you for making a positive contribution to workforce diversity

“I did some instructions for the new photocopier with pictures to show how to use it. Now everyone else likes to use these instructions too because they're clearer”

*Bridget Rice,
Admin
Assistant,
Greenwich
Citizens
Advocacy
Project*

Why employ people with learning disabilities?

“I’d rather work than stay indoors all the time. I’m not a lazy person. I’ve always worked – since I was 15 or 16. You’ve got to work, especially if you have a family”

*Michael Gable,
Customer Service
Assistant,
Sainsburys*



There are benefits for managers, supervisors and colleagues of people with learning disabilities too. Many employers say that it’s a positive experience, and that it contributes to managers’ personal and professional development. Explaining in detail why you do things a certain way often makes you question why you did it that way in the first place – and probably find a better way of doing it in future.

“When you employ someone with learning disabilities you’re employing people who really want to be there. They really want the job. You don’t find people job-hopping like you sometimes get with other employees.”

Carl Ashby, Personnel Manager, Sainsburys

Benefits for people with learning disabilities and for the community

Like everyone else, people with learning disabilities can benefit hugely from having a job, gaining greater independence and earning power, and higher status. They also get more opportunities for personal development and participation in the wider community.

And the community as a whole benefits when you employ people with learning disabilities, as it brings closer integration of different sections of the community.

Everybody’s doing it

Efforts are being made to help more people with learning disabilities get access to job opportunities not just in Islington, but all around the country, in the public sector as well as private businesses. Islington Council is making positive efforts, as are many private employers in Islington.



National government supports this too. In 2001 it published a document all about its policies for people with learning disabilities called *Valuing People. A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century*. It calls for more people with learning disabilities to be employed nationally and locally.

Experiences of people at Islington council supervising people with learning disabilities

"I had to take it slowly at the beginning, to build up my confidence and break down my prejudice"

"Sometimes it takes longer to explain the task. But once understood there is no problem"

"It made me question whether these tasks needed to be done. I had never thought of it before until I was asked why"

"The Government's overall aim is to increase the number of people with learning disabilities in employment"

Valuing People
Government
White Paper

Employment story: Help the Aged

With support from Mencap Pathway, a specialist recruitment agency, Robert started work as a volunteer with Help the Aged in 2000. A year later, he had successfully moved to a paid, full-time position.

Robert's job includes:

- Doing large mailings
- Collecting and delivering newspapers, mail and faxes
- Photocopying
- Helping at events and conferences

Robert takes an active role in all of Help the Aged's activities. He attends and contributes to regular team meetings. He's captain of the pub quiz team and was named Man of the Match at a recent five-a-side football competition. He also helped out at the Help the Aged garden at the Chelsea Flower Show last year.

Robert's story

"I'm happy in this job – happy with these people. I listen to what they say, they listen to me. I need to have someone to talk to. Someone who can listen to you. Someone to help out.

On the dole you have to fill lots of forms in, wait a long time to see someone – that's what happens. It's better to work.

Before, I worked at Sainsburys. But I wanted to try a different job, so I went to Pathway [Mencap Pathway, a specialist recruitment agency].

At college I do reading and writing and computer skills. I can read slowly. My writing is getting better."

Debbie's story

"Robert is very hard working and efficient. He gets a job done as soon as you've asked him to do it. He throws himself into anything you ask him to do – and you can ask him to do anything. He's very adaptable.

The skills Robert brings and the job he does are invaluable. We have lots of mailings to do. Robert does them very efficiently – and that's important to us.

Some things are the same when you're working with people with learning disabilities. It's the same management processes, reviews, yearly objectives etc. But we have a friendship as well. Robert might need more support than other staff members, so we get to know each other better.

Robert has three mentors who are available to discuss things with him.

Mencap Pathway and other organisations in Islington provide support. We also received some extra funding from Remploy.

Every person, whether they have learning disabilities or not, brings different skills to the job. People with learning disabilities have equally valid skills and experience. Some people might need a bit of extra support. But don't judge a book by its cover."

Employee facts

Name: Robert Monk

Job Title: Clerical Assistant

First joined Help the Aged: August 2000

Hours: 9.30-3.30 daily, day release on Wednesdays to attend college

Employer facts

Company: Help the Aged

Activities: Charity working with and for older people

Location: Pentonville Road, Islington

Key personnel: Robert's managers: Debbie Smith, Campaigns Manager, Andrea Lane, Senior Press Officer





Singh Brah, Trainee Carpenter, Mill Lane Carpentry Project

Getting started



- **If you think employing someone with learning disabilities is a good idea, act now!**
- **Don't let good intentions get forgotten**
- **There are some easy things you can do today to get the ball rolling**
- **Talk to a specialist recruitment agency, or think about offering work experience**

Getting started



Ready for action?

Here are some things you can do straight away to get started.

- Show this guide to colleagues – discuss whether there are job vacancies coming up that could be filled by people with learning disabilities
- Write down all the tasks that never seem to get done in your business, or that stop people from doing their main job. Could someone new do these tasks, perhaps for a few hours a week? Could this be a job for someone with learning disabilities?
- Phone one of the specialist recruitment agencies listed in the Directory to talk informally about the work you do and where someone with learning disabilities could contribute
- At your next staff meeting or HR meeting, discuss how to make sure your organisation complies with the Disability Discrimination Act
- Talk to colleagues about how to encourage diversity and equality in your organisation
- If you're still not sure whether you're ready to employ someone with learning disabilities, consider employing someone on a temporary work placement

"Offer work experience! It's a good way of challenging your prejudices. And it can result in permanent employment"

*Kevin Glover,
Human Resources Officer,
Islington Council*



Leon Caddle and Roy Prince on work experience at Frederick's Restaurant, Islington



Mark Wood, Recycling and removals worker

Frequently asked questions



This section answers the kinds of questions and concerns that employers might have, or feel too embarrassed to ask about, for example:

- Some people with learning disabilities also have a physical disability, but many don't
- Some people with learning disabilities have epilepsy, but this is generally controlled through medicines
- Employing someone with learning disabilities is unlikely to raise extra health and safety issues
- You can adjust the recruitment process while still complying with equal opportunities

Frequently asked questions

“A member of staff comes with me (to work). Or sometimes I get a taxi”

Cicilene, Admin Support Worker, Greenwich Citizens Advocacy Project



What are the different kinds of learning disabilities?

Learning disabilities come in all shapes and sizes and not all of them have names. It's difficult to generalise, but the kinds of learning disabilities you might come across include difficulty with reading, writing or numbers, or verbal communication.

Section 1 tells you more about learning disabilities, and the Directory lists organisations that can provide more detailed information.

But whatever's someone's abilities, the best way to find out is to ask them.

Do people with learning disabilities also have physical disabilities?

Some people with learning disabilities also have a physical disability, but many don't. Some people with learning disabilities use a wheelchair – but many don't. Some people with learning disabilities also have sensory impairments, for example a visual or hearing impairment.

How do people with learning disabilities travel to work?

Some people are happy using public transport, others will be keen to work somewhere within walking distance of their home – which is one of the reasons local employment opportunities are so important.

Someone with learning disabilities may need help in getting to work. This can be paid for by grants. See Section 7 for more details.

If someone has learning disabilities, how can they learn a new job?

People with learning disabilities may find it harder to learn a new job in the first instance and may need extra time and training to get familiar with tasks and duties. However, with the right support, they can learn to do a job very well.



Do people with learning disabilities need more management time than others?

This will vary a lot from person to person. They might need a different kind of supervision. Managers or colleagues may need to spend some extra time checking that the employee has understood the information they have been given. This is often a positive experience for managers and supervisors, contributing to personal and professional development.

If your organisation doesn't have time to provide the extra training or supervision needed, you can get other agencies to pay for it or do it for you. See Section 7 for more information.

Do people with learning disabilities behave differently from others?

In every work place there are some people who come across as real individuals, or seem eccentric, and others who appear more 'normal' – at least on the surface! The behaviour of people with learning disabilities is just as varied and, as with any other employee, it's just a case of getting to know someone.

Everyone behaves more unpredictably when they are under stress. Over time, we learn how colleagues react to different kinds of stress and try to minimise these situations. If your employee comes to you from a specialist recruitment agency, they will be able to help you work out which situations could be problematic.

As with any employee, if you are concerned, think someone is behaving out of character, or think there might be an underlying problem, contact someone who knows them well (see next question).

Who can we call on for help and support?

During the training and settling in period, specialist agencies can provide support for employers and

“I can read slowly. My writing is getting better”

*Robert Monk,
Clerical Assistant, Help the Aged*



Frequently asked questions

“I’m very happy to be working. I’m always early for work. I like meeting customers. I never had a job before this”

*Paul Lamdin,
Table Clearer,
Letheby &
Christopher at
Arsenal Football
Club*



employees (see Section 7). You can get on-going support too, e.g. someone who visits regularly to make sure everything is going OK, help someone to learn new things, or go over tasks. These services are free.

Even if you don’t have support services in place, there will always be someone you can contact in case of a problem – for example a support worker, a family member or someone else where the employee lives. It’s a good idea to make sure you keep and update this kind of contact information for all employees.

Are people with learning disabilities more likely to have epilepsy?

Epilepsy is more common than you might think across the whole population. Nearly 10% of people will have a seizure, or fit, at least once in their lifetime.

Epilepsy is more common amongst people with learning disabilities than in the population as a whole. But it’s very likely that someone with learning disabilities who has epilepsy will be controlling it with medicines, so they’re much less likely to have a seizure.

Because epilepsy is quite common it’s a good idea to make sure that all employees know what to do if someone has a seizure. You can do this as part of your first aid training.

Will employing someone with learning disabilities raise extra health and safety issues?

It’s very unlikely that employing someone with learning disabilities will raise new health and safety issues. There shouldn’t be a problem if you already have good practice in place for the rest of your employees, and take the time to explain your health and safety processes clearly.



If we adapt the recruitment process for candidates with learning disabilities (e.g. by adapting the way we ask a question), does that go against equal opportunities?

No, it's fine to make adjustments to ensure that people with learning disabilities can compete on an equal footing. In fact, you need to do this by law – the Disability Discrimination Act says that employers should make 'reasonable adjustments' to employment arrangements and premises to make sure that disabled people are not placed at a disadvantage. Remember that making adjustments is all about overcoming barriers, not positive discrimination. You can get advice about this from the ACAS Equality Direct Service (see Directory).

What if we want to make someone redundant?

You can make someone with learning disabilities redundant if you need to, although of course you will need to make sure that you are not discriminating against that person – whether deliberately or not. For example, you will need to make sure that any selection criteria you use for choosing who gets made redundant are not discriminatory, and that all employees are consulted and understand the process. You may have a duty to transfer a disabled employee who would otherwise be redundant to fill an existing vacancy.

The ACAS Equality Direct Service can advise on this. Also, if your organisation has fewer than 250 employees, you can get free general advice on redundancy and other personnel issues from the Disability Rights Commission (but you would need to talk to a lawyer for advice on an individual case).

What about bullying?

Make it absolutely clear to everyone that bullying of any employee is unacceptable and let people know what disciplinary action will be taken against bullies. It is unlawful to harass disabled people or to allow disabled people to be harassed.

Making adjustments is not about positive discrimination in favour of people with disabilities. It's about overcoming the barriers they face



Koilore Rahman, housekeeping assistant, Lancaster Hall Hotel

What kind of work is suitable?



- People with learning disabilities work in all kinds of environments, from shops to offices, restaurants to art galleries
- You must pay an employee with learning disabilities the same rate as someone else doing the same job
- You must pay at least the national minimum wage
- Some people work full time, others will prefer part time work
- You may be able to create a new part time job by re-allocating tasks that don't get done or distract people from their main job, with efficiency benefits for everyone

What kind of work is suitable?

Where do people with learning disabilities work?

Some of the places in Islington where people with learning disabilities work:

Arsenal Football Club

Frederick's Restaurant

Goldrange (stewarding agency)

Help the Aged

Islington Council

London Metropolitan University

Marks & Spencer

Mencap

Sainsburys

T.S.J. Woodhouse (wholesale butchers)

Tesco

Waitrose

People with learning disabilities work in all kinds of organisations, and in many different kinds of jobs.

You may have seen people with learning disabilities working in shops, in big supermarkets or smaller local firms. Others work in offices or public spaces like theatres, art galleries, swimming pools, schools and universities. Or they might work in restaurants and cafes, or in factories.

"Robert throws himself into anything you ask him to do – and you can ask him to do anything. He's very adaptable."

Debbie Smith, Help the Aged

What kinds of jobs are suitable?

People with learning disabilities work as office administrators, bartenders and customer service advisors, as receptionists and supervisors. They work as decorators, gardeners, chefs, library assistants, waiters and theatre ushers.

Of course it would be impossible to list all of the jobs that someone with learning disabilities could do. Like everyone else, it depends on their individual talents and interests.

"As with any other employee judge people with learning disabilities on what they can do. Take the time to assess their qualities."

Kevin Glover, Human Resources Officer, Islington Council

New jobs from old: job splitting

You may still be thinking that you don't have any jobs suitable for people with learning disabilities. Or simply that you don't have any job vacancies at all at the moment. Think again.



In most organisations staff are overworked and there are tasks that never seem to get done. You may be able to put these tasks together to create a new job, perhaps for just a few hours a week. Some people call this 'job splitting'.

Splitting jobs makes sense because existing employees can concentrate on their main tasks, and so are more productive. Not everyone with learning disabilities needs a job like this – some will just apply to ads for standard jobs as and when they are advertised. But for some people, a job with a few hours a week is an attractive option. And the cost for the employer is low.

The employment story at the end of this Section gives an example of a job that has been developed in this way.

What hours and pay are suitable?

Hours

Some jobseekers with learning disabilities will be looking for full-time work. Others will be more interested in part-time jobs (less than 16 hours a week), as they can still get their benefits*.

Pay

Employers must pay all staff at least the national minimum wage. When you're taking on someone new to do the same job as other employees, the law says you must pay them at the same rate.

"We all have to earn money at some stage! I like to keep myself going, like anyone else who works for this company. I'm helping myself and helping others."

Copeland Ingram, Marks & Spencer

"The hours suit me. I can juggle meetings and plan other stuff"

*Tony Rose,
Goods-in person/Porter,
T.S.J. Woodhouse*



Employment story: Greenwich Citizens Advocacy Project

Cicilene is a good example of someone working for a very short time each week, but doing a valuable job. Work such as photocopying and mail-out jobs are saved up for Cicilene over the week. Some people call this job splitting. Cicilene got support to find the job from a specialist agency, Access to Employment Greenwich.

Cicilene's job includes:

- Photocopying and collating documents
- Photocopying and folding publicity leaflets
- Sending out newsletters
- Sorting out cupboards, checking when paper is running out

Cicilene's story

"I like working. I enjoy photocopying and collating the papers. Bridget shows me what needs to be done.

I get to work by bus. A member of staff comes with me. Or sometimes I get a taxi. It's about a 10-minute drive, but it depends because sometimes the traffic is very bad.

I used to work at CJ's café, but I didn't like it. It was a bit messy and I didn't like cleaning up, cleaning the floors."

Bridget's story

"There are lots of things that Cicilene can do. I point her in the right direction and she gets on with it. It's a help to have those jobs done for me.

I always type her instructions in big typeface and make sure they're clear. I did some instructions for the new photocopier with pictures to show how to use it. Now everyone else likes to use these instructions too because they're clearer.

What it's like working with someone with learning disabilities depends on the person. You can't set your expectations before you meet them and find out what they can do. Like with any recruitment, you have to meet the person."

Employee facts

Name: Cicilene

Job title: Admin support worker

First joined Greenwich Citizens Advocacy Project: 1999

Hours: 11am to 12 noon, Thursdays

Employer facts

Company: Greenwich Citizens Advocacy Project

Activities: Advocacy for adults with learning disabilities and young people with disabilities

Location: The Forum @ Greenwich, Trafalgar Road, Greenwich

Key Personnel: Bridget Rice, Admin Assistant





Parween Buglow, turnstile operative, Charlton Football Club

The recruitment process



- Candidates with learning disabilities may respond to job ads you put in the papers or in the Jobcentre
- You can also actively encourage people with learning disabilities to apply
- You can use specialist recruitment agencies and the Disability Employment Advisor at Jobcentre Plus to find candidates, or put job ads in papers aimed at people with disabilities
- You may need to make some simple adaptations to the recruitment process
- Employers can get free help and advice with recruiting people with learning disabilities

The recruitment process

How to reach candidates with disabilities

Candidates with learning disabilities may respond to standard job ads you put in the paper or in the Jobcentre. You can also actively look for and encourage candidates with learning disabilities. You have three main options for doing this. You can:

1. Use a recruitment agency that specialises in working with people with disabilities
2. Go through the Disability Employment Advisor (DEA) at Jobcentre Plus
3. Put an ad in the papers that people with disabilities read

If you have temporary work placements or work experience opportunities, you could also contact schools and colleges that have students with learning disabilities. They are listed in the Directory.

Agencies and the DEA

There are several recruitment agencies offering services in and around Islington that specialise in finding candidates with disabilities. They include Scope, Status Employment, Prospects, Mencap Pathway, and the Camden Society. Their recruitment services are free. (There is more information on these agencies in Section 7 on sources of support. Their contact details are in the Directory.)

The Disability Employment Advisor (DEA) at the Barnsbury Jobcentre Plus can also help with finding candidates. Again, this is free.

Putting an ad in the paper

If you are putting your job vacancy in the papers, you can reach more disabled candidates by using publications and web sites aimed at people with disabilities. You can do this as well as, or instead of, advertising through your usual channels.

There is a list of papers and web sites aimed at disabled jobseekers in the Recruitment section of the Directory. Some allow employers to advertise free of charge.

This section tells you about

● How to reach candidates with disabilities

● Adapting the recruitment process



Wherever you put your ad, make sure that it is clear and uses plain language (see Section 8 for more information about writing clearly). You can make your ad more welcoming to people by:

1. Including a disability statement in the ad, e.g. “We welcome applications from people with disabilities”
2. Using the ‘Two-Tick’ symbol to show that you are positive about disabled people (provided you are authorised)

Adapting the recruitment process

Whether disabled candidates come to you of their own accord, or you actively try to find them, you’ll need to think about adapting parts of your recruitment process. The three main differences will probably be:

1. Adapting the job ad, person specification, job description and any other documents you send to candidates to make them more easily understood
2. Adapting the interview and selection process to make sure that candidates with disabilities get a fair chance
3. Talking to an agency earlier on in the process than usual – maybe even before you’ve made a decision about the exact job vacancy

Interview and tests

Adjustments during the interview process could include:

- Allowing someone to bring a support worker
- Asking questions in a different way to make sure they can be easily understood
- Setting practical rather than written tests
- Giving more time for answering questions and tests

Remember that people with learning disabilities may have been disadvantaged in the education system – they may not have formal qualifications but still be able to do the job perfectly well.

The Two Ticks symbol is awarded by the Government’s Employment Service to employers who take positive steps to employ people with disabilities. Get in touch with the Disability Employment Advisor (DEA) at Jobcentre Plus for more information and to apply



The recruitment process

Having an equal opportunities policy doesn't stop you from making adjustments. On the contrary, equal opportunities policies should include the duty to make reasonable adjustments to prevent people from being placed at a substantial disadvantage

Here are some of the adjustments you could make before the interview

What might need adapting	Examples of what to do
Job advert	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Write the ad in clear, plain language● Welcome applicants with disabilities● Offer to provide documents in alternative formats, e.g. large print, email, tape, braille or computer disk● Use the two-tick symbol
Job description and person specification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Use clear, plain language● Think about the qualifications and skills you ask for, and make sure that they really are essential for the job● Provide an easy-read version of the job description using pictures or symbols. Specialist recruitment agencies can help with this (see Directory)
Application form	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Allow someone else to help the candidate make an application● Allow candidates to submit applications in other formats, e.g. type-written, by telephone or on tape

Some interview techniques are unsuitable for people with learning disabilities. If you routinely use telephone interviews, or aptitude and psychometric tests, think about what alternatives you could offer for disabled candidates.



Do

- Do use practical tests wherever possible, e.g. instead of asking a candidate for a cleaning job how they would clean a floor, show them how you would like it done and ask them to try it
- Do ask people directly about their abilities and work experience, e.g.

What work did you do at the café?

Can you read numbers?

Don't

- Don't ask for qualifications or skills that aren't directly related to the job. For example, lots of people work in environments where money is handled (shops, cafes, playgroups, swimming pools, etc.) but not everyone who works in these places needs to be able to handle money themselves.
- Don't ask personal questions or questions that aren't relevant to the job
- Don't ask someone with learning disabilities to have a medical exam if this isn't routine for all candidates

Adapting jobs and roles

Once you've actually met the candidate, you may need to adapt the job to suit their abilities and talents.

Individuals are naturally better at some things than others. You may find that a candidate is brilliant at one part of a job you are offering, but isn't able to do another part.

Try to be flexible. Are there ways of dividing up tasks in a different way? If someone can only do part of the job, maybe it would work as a job share, or a part-time job with only a few hours a week.

“What it’s like working with someone with learning disabilities depends on the person. You can’t set your expectations before you meet them and find out what they can do. Like with any recruitment, you have to meet the person”

*Bridget Rice,
Admin Assistant,
Greenwich
Citizens
Advocacy Project*

Employment story: T.S.J. Woodhouse

T.S.J. Woodhouse is a wholesale butchers serving top class hotels and restaurants with different cuts of meat to specification. Tony is the only person working in 'goods-in' (dealing with deliveries when they arrive), so he has sole responsibility for a lot of his work.

He wakes up at about 2.30 or 2.45am so that he can get in to work for 4.30am. On the other hand, he finishes work early so has time for other interests. For Tony, like many people, his job is just one part of a busy life.

Tony's duties include

- Making up orders to customers' specifications
- Unloading lorries and checking the meat that has arrived
- Taking the temperature of meat when it comes in and putting batch codes and traceability numbers on it
- Putting goods away in fridges and tidying up fridges

Tony's story

"I found out about the job because one of my brothers worked there – it was through word of mouth. I went to meet the factory supervisor, and he asked me when I could start, so I started on the next Monday.

I had worked for another butcher before that so I already had an idea of what the duties were. When I first started, someone showed me how he did the job.

I'm the only one doing goods in and I don't like to disturb the butchers. The factory supervisor can help, but mainly I manage on my own.

The hours suit me. I can juggle meetings and plan other stuff. I like cooking, playing football, reading, and creative writing.

It's pretty well paid. You know what you earn is what you get. On benefits you have to wait, there's filling in forms, processing ... I know what I've got each week and I can budget and sort things out.

The most difficult thing about the job is stocktaking on Fridays – taking everything out of the fridges and weighing it. I get help but I still find it difficult. The factory supervisor helps with that. I try to watch and learn and do things myself."



Tony Rose relaxing after work

Employee facts

Name: Tony Rose

Job title: Goods-in person/Porter

First joined T.S.J. Woodhouse: 2002

Hours: 4.30am to 1pm Monday to Friday,
some Saturdays 5am to 10am

Employer facts

Company T.S.J. Woodhouse Ltd

Activities: Wholesale Butchers

Location: Blundell Street, Islington





Robert Wise, office assistant and telephone researcher, Camden Society

Support, grants and advice for employers



- Employers who hire people with learning disabilities get plenty of support, including government grants
- There are specialist organisations in and around Islington that provide free recruitment services
- You can get job coaches who work alongside employees with learning disabilities and help them learn the job
- The Disability Employment Advisor at Jobcentre Plus can help you apply for grants and schemes, and so can many of the specialist recruitment agencies

Support, grants and advice for employers

When you employ someone with learning disabilities, there are four main areas of support you can get:

Money

Support for the employee

Free recruitment services

Advice and training

What kind of help is available?

Type of support	What it includes	Who to contact
Money	Grants to pay for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Costs of making adjustments to your workplace ● Someone in your organisation who provides extra support to a disabled employee ● A disabled person's wages during a trial period ● Extra costs in getting to work for the employee, e.g. taxi fares ● Special equipment 	Disability Employment Advisor at Jobcentre Plus
Support for the employee	A 'job coach' who can support the new employee. This could include learning about the job alongside the employee, helping with settling in and training, working alongside them, or visiting regularly to make sure everything is OK	Specialist recruitment agencies
Free recruitment services	Specialist organisations that can help you with everything from identifying suitable jobs to finding candidates and applying for grants	Specialist recruitment agencies
Advice and training	Free and low-cost help on things like making adjustments, disability awareness training and communicating effectively	Specialist recruitment agencies, or advice, training and consultancy companies



Where to go for support

These are the main organisations where you can get support. Contact details for all of them are in the Directory.

The **Disability Employment Advisor at Jobcentre Plus.**

They are based in Barnsbury (see Directory) and provide you with

- Information about government schemes and grants (e.g. Access to Work, Workstep, Job Introduction Scheme) and help with applying for them
- Free brochures on employing people with disabilities
- Candidates with disabilities who are looking for jobs
- Information about other organisations in the area that offer advice and training

Specialist recruitment agencies. There are several with services in and around Islington, including Prospects, Mencap Pathway, Camden Society, Scope and Status Employment (see Directory). They can help with:

- Identifying suitable vacancies and finding the right person for the job
- Adapting job descriptions, application forms, etc.
- Working out what adjustments are needed and applying for grants and schemes
- Doing a risk assessment, if necessary
- Providing a job coach or support worker

"I speak regularly to Paul's supervisor and they phone me if they need anything. I visit him about once every two months at work just to check how he's doing"

Judith Kerem, Employment Consultant, Prospects

The main places to go for support are the Disability Employment Advisor at Jobcentre Plus and specialist recruitment agencies

Support, grants and advice for employers

The two main schemes relating to employing people with disabilities are Access to Work and Workstep. Ask Workstep. Ask about these as soon as you start the recruitment process

Schemes and grants

There are so many different schemes and grants that it's easy to get confused. The two main things to remember are:

1. You don't need to know all the details of the different schemes. The Disability Employment Advisor at Jobcentre Plus and/or specialist recruitment agencies can advise you, and can often do most of the organisation and applications for you
2. Ask for advice on support and grants as early as possible in the recruitment process. You may get more help if you ask before you've actually employed someone rather than after

The main schemes you're likely to come across are:

Scheme and who to contact*	What it provides
Access to Work Contact Access to Work Business Centre or Jobcentre Plus	Money to pay for support and adaptations
Workstep Contact Jobcentre Plus	Tailored support packages, that could include money, job coaches and on-going support for employer/employee
Job Introduction Scheme Contact Jobcentre Plus	Money towards paying someone's wages during a trial period
Modern Apprenticeship Contact Local Learning and Skills Council	Payment for a young employee while they learn on the job, plus money to help overcome barriers related to a disability

*Contact details for all organisations in the table are listed in the Directory



Employment story: Bond Holders' Restaurant at Arsenal Football Club

Paul was supported in getting his job by Prospects, a specialist employment agency run by the National Autistic Society. Paul applied for a grant under the government scheme Access to Work. This pays for regular in-work support from his employment consultant.

Paul's story

"I support Arsenal and I wanted to work here so I wrote in and applied for the job. This is my second season working here.

I clear up tables, cutlery and glasses and empty ashtrays. I work with two other people. At half time we clear the tables and wash them down. In the second half we take out the rubbish.

I work 11am to 5pm on Saturdays when there's a home game and I work during the week when there's a home game. The busy times are before the game starts and during half time.

I come and watch matches like testimonials and the Carling Cup when I'm not working. The football season is coming to an end now and I want to go and work at the Oval for the summer because I like cricket as well.

I'm very happy to be working. I'm always early for work. I like meeting customers. I never had a job before this – I was bored.

Prospects are a big help. On the first day I didn't know what to do. They showed me the ropes. Any problems my support worker will sort it out for me. I have someone to talk to."

Margaret's story

"I have been Paul's supervisor since he started work here. I feel that it's been very worthwhile for the company and for Paul as well. We've learnt how to support him – it took time and patience for him to settle in. And it's worthwhile for him because we all get self-worth and a sense of achievement from our jobs.

He's very good with the customers and they miss him when he's not there."

Judith's story

Judith is Paul's employment consultant and work coach under the Access to Work scheme.

"Prospects supported Paul to get the job and did quite intensive job coaching at the beginning. That meant going with him for the first four or five matches to observe the work, support him and make any necessary reasonable adjustments. Then that began to be faded out as he became familiar with his job and his supervisors got more confident about his support needs. Prospects also gave disability awareness talks to Paul's line managers.

Employee facts

Name: Paul Lamdin

Job title: Table Clearer

First joined: 2002

Hours: Variable – up to 15 hours a week

Employer facts

Company: Letheby & Christopher – catering company running the Bond Holders' Restaurant at Arsenal Football Club

Location: Arsenal Football Stadium

Key personnel: Margaret Noone, Restaurant Manager

Employment support

Organisation: Prospects

Employment consultant: Judith Kerem

Now I speak regularly to his supervisor and they phone me if they need anything. I visit him about once every two months at work just to check how he's doing and talk about anything else that he might want to do like working at the Oval for the summer. I also talk to his supervisors when I visit, talk about how he's doing. If any problems have arisen we discuss how to work them out."

Arsenal's Head of Community, Alan Sefton says:

"We're delighted to be participating in the Access to Work Scheme and it's extremely pleasing to hear that Paul is doing so well in his role at Highbury on match days. This scheme is one of the many initiatives which Arsenal is involved in, aiming to encourage people from all backgrounds and abilities to be integrated into the community."





Tom Wickes, plantsman

Communicating with people with learning disabilities



- **Treat people with learning disabilities with the same respect and courtesy as you would anyone else**
- **Speak and write clearly, using plain language**
- **Break complicated information down into smaller chunks**
- **Use pictures or symbols to illustrate documents**

Communicating with people with learning disabilities

“It’s been very worthwhile for the company and for Paul. We’ve learnt how to support him. And it’s worthwhile for him because we all get self-worth and a sense of achievement from our jobs. He’s very good with the customers and they miss him when he’s not there”

*Margaret Noone,
Restaurant
Manager, Bond
Holder’s
Restaurant at
Arsenal Football
Club*

Basic principles of communication

Some basic principles apply to all forms of communication, regardless of the individual’s specific disability:

- Show the same respect and courtesy as you would for any other employee or colleague
- Do not patronise people or treat them as children
- Talk directly to the person with learning disabilities, not through another person
- Break complicated information down into smaller chunks and explain tasks step by step
- Don’t make assumptions about people’s disabilities – ask them
- When you offer help, ask what is the best way to help. Make sure that the offer of help has been accepted before you actually start helping

Allow plenty of time for your conversations. People with learning disabilities may need more time than others to talk things through and understand the information you are giving them.

Verbal communication

When you’re talking to someone with learning disabilities

- Speak clearly and slowly
- Use lots of eye contact when speaking and listening to someone. It helps you to communicate more effectively and shows you are giving your full attention
- If you don’t understand what someone says, ask them to say it again or to say it again in a different way
- Likewise, if someone doesn’t understand what you say, try saying it again in a different way
- Give people time to answer a question

Be direct and use plain language

- Don’t say: “We have a clear desk policy here and I’d be grateful if you could respect it on a daily basis”
- Do say: “It’s important to keep the office tidy. Please tidy your desk every day before you go home”



Avoid jargon and phrases that could be confusing

- Don't say: "Can you run over to the kitchen and see if Helen is still taking time out"
- Do say: "Please go to the kitchen and ask Helen if she is still on her break. Please go quickly"

Break instructions down into smaller bits

- Don't say: "Please do 20 copies, staple them, put them in envelopes with address labels and frank them"
- Do say: "Please photocopy this 20 times. Come and tell me when you've finished"

Communicating on paper

Some people with learning disabilities have difficulty with reading and writing. Using simple pictures and symbols instead of words, or alongside words, can be useful when explaining something. Use large type and plain language. You can get help with adapting documents from specialist recruitment agencies (see Directory).

Personnel issues

Once you've employed someone with learning disabilities, you can handle most personnel issues as you normally would. You may need to make 'reasonable adjustments', as with any other aspect of their job.

If other staff have performance reviews and targets, employees with learning disabilities should have them too. Performance targets may need to be adjusted, or support given to reach them. Make sure that disabled employees get enough time and support to understand and participate in what's going on, whether it's an appraisal or a disciplinary meeting. The same principles of clear communication apply to all these processes.

Good communication is all about saying things clearly. That's good for all employees, not just people with learning disabilities

Employment story: Marks & Spencer Holloway Road

When food deliveries come into Marks & Spencer in Holloway road, it's Copeland's job to take the stock from their trays and fill the shelves with the right products in the right place. His job includes putting products in date order, so that those with a longer sell-by date are at the back.

Copeland got support from Mencap Pathways (a specialist recruitment agency) to find the job. He started as a trolley porter. Later, he felt it was time for a change and, thanks to the commitment and high quality of work he had shown, was successful in getting a job as a sales advisor.

Copeland's story

"It's nice to have a job – keeping myself occupied and helping customers in the shop, and helping other staff. We all have to chip in. We all have to earn money at some stage! I like to keep myself going, like anyone else who works for this company. I'm helping myself and helping others.

I feel that I have gained valuable experience in Marks & Spencer. What I display in the dairy and juice section is extremely popular. I enjoy presenting food and drinks to catch the customer's eyes, especially when they launch new brand lines or promotions.

It can be hard work – lots of stock has to be taken off trays, sometimes it's piled high. When it comes off the lorry

it has to be sorted out and I have to do it before the store opens at 9am. It can be a hurry. If the customers don't see anything on the shelves they will ask why.

It wasn't difficult to learn the job. The more I did it the more I got to know it."

Lorraine's story

Lorraine has been working as a Section Manager in the food section of Marks & Spencer for around a year. Until she met Copeland, Lorraine had never worked with people with learning disabilities before.

"Copeland is one of our hardest workers. It's no effort whatsoever to supervise him – in fact, he's easier to supervise than average. He motivates himself and is very focused. He just comes in and gets on with what he needs to do.

Copeland's disability is just not an issue – we don't even think about it. He is extremely dedicated. The standard of his work is excellent.

It's good for equal opportunities and for Copeland. It's also good to have all types of people from different backgrounds working together – it means we have a varied team."

Employee facts

Name: Copeland Ingram

Job title: Sales advisor, foods

First joined Marks & Spencer: 1993

Hours: 7.30am to 12.15pm five days a week

Employer facts

Company: Marks & Spencer

Location: Holloway Road, Islington

Key Personnel: Lorraine Greer, Food Section Manager

Adjustments and extra support

Marks & Spencer has had to make very few adjustments to the way they work to accommodate people with learning disabilities. Some people with learning disabilities do need extra training, but in Copeland's case he hasn't needed any. Nor has Marks & Spencer spent any extra money on employing him. But they have made room for the following adaptations and support:

- Unlike many other sales advisors, Copeland does not work on the till. This isn't considered a problem, because there always needs to be someone on the shop floor to help customers, and Copeland fulfils that role
- When there is a lot of information, or complex information, the HR manager spends extra time with Copeland to make sure he understands it
- Occasionally Copeland's support worker comes in to talk to him and other staff to make sure that everything is going well





Directory



This directory contains contact information for all of the organisations mentioned in this guide. The directory is organised in sections:

- a) Recruitment services**
- b) Information, advice and consultancy for employers**
- c) Complying with the disability laws**
- d) Disability awareness training**
- e) Grants and schemes**
- f) More information about learning disabilities**
- g) Further reading**

a) Recruitment services

If you're ready to discuss recruiting someone with learning disabilities, you can contact the Disability Employment Advisor at the Barnsbury Jobcentre Plus, or one of the recruitment agencies in Islington that specialise in working with people with disabilities. You can also advertise in papers that reach people with disabilities. Contact schools and colleges if you have opportunities for work experience for young people.

● Jobcentre Plus

1, Barnsbury Road N1 0EX
Switchboard: 020 7301 3870
Contact: Disability Employment Advisor
Direct line: 020 7301 3866

Specialist recruitment agencies

● The Camden Society: Access Employment

The Camden Society is a charity specialising in services for people with learning disabilities. Its Access Employment service provides a recruitment service, including sourcing candidates, assessment and support for employers and employees.

The Camden Society, Access
Employment Service
173 Kentish Town Road,
London NW1 8PD
Tel: 020 7267 5529
Fax: 020 7485 9394
Email: admin173camden
@thecamdensociety.org.uk

● Ellingham Employment Services

Provides a comprehensive vocational preparation and placing service for people with learning disabilities and those who are socially disadvantaged. Offers a recruitment service which covers the Islington area.

Ellingham Employment Services –
Employment Agency
Suite 5, Alpha Business Centre
South Grove,
Walthamstow
London E17 7NX
Tel: 020 8509 9821
Fax: 020 8925 8449
Email: ellalpha@globalnet.co.uk

● Mencap Pathway Employment Services

Mencap Pathway is part of Mencap, the national charity specialising in learning disabilities (see under Information, advice and consultancy for employers). It offers access to candidates and can also provide advice on government schemes and staff to support new employees. It has various offices in London.

Mencap Pathway Employment
Services, Islington
404 Camden Road, London N7 0SJ
Tel: 020 7700 4690

Mencap Pathway Employment
Services, Haringey
The Selby Centre, Selby Road
Tottenham, London N17 8JN
Tel: 020 8808 7454



● **Prospects**

Prospects is an employment agency run by the National Autistic Society. Prospects can assess and recruit candidates, help with adaptations to the recruitment process, and provide on-going support once the employee is in post.

Prospects
Studio 8, The Ivories
6-8 Northampton Street,
London N1 2HY
Tel 020 7704 7450
Fax 020 7359 9440
Email: Prospects-London@nas.org.uk
Web: www.nas.org.uk

● **Remploy Interwork**

Remploy Interwork is a large national recruitment service that aims to expand employment opportunities for people with all kinds of disabilities. It also offers advice, workplace assessments, and training. Services cover Islington, but contact the Coventry head office in the first instance.

Remploy Interwork
Stonecourt, Siskin Drive
Coventry CV3 4FJ
Tel: 0800 138 7656
Fax: 0800 138 7657
Web: interwork@remploy.co.uk

● **Scope**

Scope is a national disability charity working particularly with people with cerebral palsy. It also offers recruitment and employment support services and has offices in Islington.

Scope

6 Market Road
London N7 9PW
Tel: 020 7619 7100
Fax: 020 7619 7399
Contact: Employment officer
Direct tel: 020 7619 7335
Web: www.scope.org.uk

● **Status Employment**

Employment agency working to help people disabilities to get open, paid employment. Status has candidates and a team of employment consultants covering Islington and Camden.

Status Employment (Head Office)
6 West Way Gardens
Shirley, Croydon CRO 8RA
Tel: 020 8655 3344
Mobile for Employment Consultant
covering Islington: 07966 402174
Fax: 020 8656 6600

Newspapers and web sites for job ads

● **Disability Now**

A monthly publication and web site published by Scope. It covers a wide range of disability issues and aimed at people with disabilities. Employers can advertise in the monthly paper and in a mid-month supplement.

Disability Now
6 Market Road, London N7 9PW
Tel: 020 7619 7323
Fax: 020 7619 7331
Minicom: 020 7619 7332
Email: editor@disabilitynow.org.uk
Web: www.disabilitynow.org.uk

● **Jobability**

A jobs web site helping employers reach candidates with disabilities, operated by the Potential Job Board Company, a partnership Total Jobs, Leonard Cheshire and Microsoft. Employers can place all job ads free.

The Potential Job Board Co Ltd
Holden House
57 Rathbone Place,
London W1T 1JU
Tel: 020 7769 9014 to place a free ad
Tel: 020 7769 9200 for general queries
Email: jobability@totaljobs.com
Web: www.jobability.com

● **RWA Recruitment Bulletin (Readywillingable)**

Web site aimed at getting employers and jobseekers with disabilities together. Employers can advertise vacancies on the site.

RWA
PO Box 295, Witney OX29 4XZ
Tel: 01865 880858
E-mail: editor@readywillingable.net
Website: www.readywillingable.net

Schools and colleges with students with learning disabilities

● **City and Islington College**

Students with learning disabilities available for work experience from age 16 up. Skills learnt at City and Islington College include retail, computing, catering and horticulture.

City and Islington College
Spring House
6-38 Holloway Road
London
N7 8JL
Tel 020 7676 3439
Contact: Head of Inclusive Learning
www.candi.ac.uk

● **The Bridge School**

A school for children with complex disabilities. They have students aged 16+ looking for work experience and provide staff support for all placements.

The Bridge School
15 Woodbridge Street
London
EC1R 0LL
Tel: 020 7253 6893
Fax: 020 7336 6046

● **Samuel Rhodes School**

A school for children with mild or moderate learning difficulties and complex needs. They have students looking for work experience and training placements, mainly aged 15 to 16.

Samuel Rhodes School
Dowrey Street
Richmond Avenue
London
N1 0LS
Tel: 020 7837 9075
Fax: 020 7837 4030
Email: sblount@samuelrhodes.islington.sch.uk



b) Information, advice and consultancy for employers

These organisations can provide information and advice about many aspects of employing people with learning disabilities, including introductory brochures. Services range from general information about what it's like employing people with disabilities to making adjustments and tailored assessments of your workplace. Most of the general information and advice services are free, but you may need to pay for consultancy and advice that is specific to your organisation. Many of the organisations listed under Recruitment can also provide information and advice.

● ACAS/Equality Direct

Equality Direct is a helpline service run by Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS). ACAS specialises in improving employment relations. The Equality Direct helpline is designed to give business managers easy access to advice on a wide range of equality issues, including employing people with disabilities.

Equality Direct (information and advice line) Tel/textphone: 0845 600 3444
www.equalitydirect.org.uk

● Disability Rights Commission (DRC)

The Disability Rights Commission has free guides on employing people with disabilities. It also runs a helpline giving free advice to employers with fewer than 250 employees.

Disability Rights Commission
Helpline
Freepost MID 02164
Stratford Upon Avon CV37 9BR
Tel: 08457 622 633
Fax: 08457 778 878
Text phone: 08457 622 644
www.drc-gb.org

● Employers' Forum on Disability

An organisation funded and managed by employers. It offers free information and advice about a wide range of disability employment issues on its web site and also offers low-cost print publications.

Employers' Forum on Disability
Nutmeg House, 60 Gainsford Street
London SE1 2NY
Tel: 020 7403 3020
Fax: 020 7403 0404
Minicom: 020 7403 0040
Web: www.employers-forum.co.uk

● Employment Opportunities

A national charity helping people with all kinds of disabilities find and retain work. It also provides support and advice to employers on employing and retaining people with disabilities, including best practice.

Employment Opportunities
53 New Broad Street
London EC3N 1NT
Tel: 020 7481 2727
Fax: 020 7481 9797
Email:
info@employmentopportunities.org.uk
Web: www.opportunities.org.uk

● **Islington Learning Disabilities Partnership (ILDP)**

ILDP is a joint service between Islington Council, Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care NHS Trust and Islington Primary Care NHS Trust. The service works with adults with learning disabilities, carers and staff groups. It also offers training to people supporting people with learning disabilities in Islington. Contact ILDP for more copies of this guide, and for general information about services for people with learning disabilities in Islington.

Islington Learning Disabilities Partnership (ILDP)
1 Lowther Road
London
N7 8US
Tel: 020 7527 6600
Fax: 020 7527 6607
Minicom: 020 7527 6619
Email:
learning.disabilities@islington.gov.uk

● **Jobcentre Plus/Disability Employment Advisor**

Jobcentre Plus provides advice and free publications on employing people with disabilities. They also advise on grants and schemes (including Access to Work, Workstep, and Job Introduction Scheme) and can help you recruit candidates. Contact the Disability Employment Advisor (DEA), who is based at Barnsbury Road.

Jobcentre Plus Islington
1, Barnsbury Road
London
N1 0EX
Switchboard: 020 7301 3870
Contact: Disability Employment Advisor (DEA)
DEA direct line: 020 7301 3866
Web: www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

● **Mencap**

A national charity specialising in learning disabilities. It has a national advice line and free brochures about employing people with learning disabilities. It also has local employment projects in some areas called Mencap Pathway, which can help to find candidates, provide job coaches and other support (see under Recruitment services).

Mencap Learning Disability Helpline
123 Golden Lane.
London
EC1Y 0RT
Helpline: 0808 808 1111
Fax: 020 7608 3254
Minicom: 0808 808 8181
help@mencap.org.uk
www.mencap.org.uk

● **Remploy Interwork**

Remploy Interwork is a large national recruitment service that aims to expand employment opportunities for people with all kinds of disabilities. It also offers advice for employers, workplace assessments, and training.



Remploy Interwork
 Stonecourt, Siskin Drive
 Coventry CV3 4FJ
 Tel: 0800 138 7656
 Fax: 0800 138 7657
 Web: interwork@remploy.co.uk

● **Shaw Trust**

A national, non-profit making organisation specialising in employment, training and increased independence for people with learning disabilities and others. They offer a range of advice and consultancy services for example to help you to audit your employment policies, advice on reasonable adjustments, disability equality training, etc. Some services are free, some are paid for.

Shaw Trust Information Resource
 (general information and enquiries)
 Shaw House, Epsom Square
 White Horse Business Park
 Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 0XJ
 Tel: 01225 716350
 Fax: 01225 716334
 Minicom: 08457 697288
 Email: stir@shaw-trust.org.uk
 Web: www.shaw-trust.org.uk

c) Complying with the disability laws

● **ACAS/Equality Direct**

This is a helpline service run by Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS), specialising in improving employment relations. The helpline gives advice on employing people with disabilities.

Equality Direct (information and advice line)

Tel/textphone: 0845 600 3444
www.equalitydirect.org.uk

● **Disability Rights Commission (DRC)**

The Disability Rights Commission runs a helpline giving information and advice on complying with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). It also has free guides with practical examples of how the law applies to employing people with disabilities.

Disability Rights Commission Helpline
 Freepost MID 02164
 Stratford Upon Avon CV37 9BR
 Tel: 08457 622 633
 Fax: 08457 778 878
 Text phone: 08457 622 644
www.drc-gb.org

d) Training

● **Bright Enterprises**

Offers awareness training for employers, focused exclusively on learning disabilities.

Bright Enterprises
 11 Thackeray Court, Springvale Estate,
 Blythe Road, London W14 0PW
 Tel: 07703 820 024
 Email: jane.bright1@btinternet.com

● **Disability Action In Islington (DAI)**

A user led organisation run and controlled by disabled people. It offers disability awareness training as well as general information on disabilities.

Disability Action in Islington (DAI)
90-92 Upper Street, London N1 0NP
Tel: 020 7226 0137
Minicom: 020 7359 1891
Fax: 020 7359 1855
Email: daii@compuserve.com

● Islington Learning Disabilities Partnership (ILDP)

A joint service between Islington council, Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust and Islington Primary Care Trust. It provides learning disabilities awareness training.

Islington Learning Disabilities Partnership (ILDP)
1 Lowther Road, London N7 8US
Tel: 020 7527 6600
Fax: 020 7527 6607
Minicom: 020 7527 6619
Email: learning.disabilities@islington.gov.uk

● First Choice Trainers

Provides training by people with learning disabilities for a wide range of professionals in learning disabilities awareness. It is part of the Elfrida Society, an organisation working with people with learning disabilities.

First Choice Trainers
The Elfrida Society, The Tom Blyth Centre
34 Islington Park Street, London N1 1PX
Tel: 020 7359 7443
Fax: 020 7704 1358
Email: elfrida@elfrida.com
Contact: Patrick Cording,
commdev@elfrida.com

e) Grants and schemes

The best starting point to find out about the main government schemes and grants (Access to Work, Workstep and Job Introduction Scheme) is the Disability Employment Advisor at Jobcentre Plus. You can also find out about Access to Work at the London Region Business Centre. If you use a specialist recruitment agency they will also be able to give you advice about how these schemes work and how to apply (see under Recruitment services). For Modern Apprenticeships, contact the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The London Central LSC covers the Islington area.

● Jobcentre Plus

1, Barnsbury Road, London N1 0EX
Switchboard: 020 7301 3870
Contact: Disability Employment Advisor
Direct line: 020 7301 3866

● Access to Work Business Centre - London Region Jobcentre Plus

Disability Service Team
Windsor House, 185 Ealing Road
Alperton, Middlesex HA0 4LW
Tel: 020 8218 2710
Textphone: 020 8218 2716

● Learning and Skills Council London Central (Modern Apprenticeships)

Centrepoint Tower
103 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DR
Tel: 0845 019 4144
Minicom: 020 7904 3704
Email: LondonCentralInfo@lsc.gov.uk



f) More information about learning disabilities

● Down's Syndrome Association

Information about Down's Syndrome

Down's Syndrome Association
Langdon Down Centre, 2a Langdon
Park, Teddington TW11 9PS
Tel: 0845 230 0372 Fax: 0845 230 0373
Email: info@downs-syndrome.org.uk
Web: www.dsa-uk.com

● Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities

A UK charity researching issues relating to learning disabilities. It offers free background information about learning disabilities on its web site and publications for sale.

The Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities, 83 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0HW
Tel. 020 7802 0300 Fax 020 7802 0301
Email. fpld@fpld.org.uk
Web: www.learningdisabilities.org.uk

● Mencap

A large national charity providing information about all kinds of learning disabilities.

Mencap Learning Disability Helpline
123 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT
Free helpline: 0808 808 1111 (open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)
Fax: 020 7608 3254
Email: help@mencap.org.uk
Web: www.mencap.org.uk

● National Autistic Society

Information about autism and Asperger syndrome.

The National Autistic Society
393 City Road,
London EC1V 1NG
Tel: 0845 070 4004 (help/info line)
Fax: 020 7833 9666
Email: info@nas.org.uk
Web: www.nas.org.uk

● Scope

Information about cerebral palsy.

Scope
PO Box 833, Milton
Keynes MK12 5NY
Tel: 0808 800 3333 (helpline)
Email: cphelpline@scope.org.uk
Web: www.scope.org.uk

● Epilepsy Action

A large, member-led organisation specialising in epilepsy. Provides information about what to do if someone has a fit.

Epilepsy Action,
New Anstey House,
Gate Way Drive,
LEEDS LS19 7XY
Tel: 0113 210 8800
Helpline: 0808 800 5050
Fax: 0113 391 0300
Email: epilepsy@epilepsy.org.uk
Web: www.epilepsy.org.uk

Further reading

Booklets, leaflets and reports

● *The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, What Employers Need to Know.*

Department for Education and Employment, available from the Disability Rights Commission

● *Employing disabled people – a good practice guide for managers and employers.*

Published by the Department for Education and Employment, available from the Disability Rights Commission

● *Making it work, a guide to employing people with a learning disability.*

Mencap booklet. Contact the Mencap helpline for copies

● *Sources of Information and Advice. Employing disabled people.*

Jobcentre Plus. Available from the Islington Jobcentre Plus listed in this directory

● *Valuing People. A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century.*

Government white paper, available at <http://www.valuingpeople.gov.uk/papers.htm>, or call the Department of Health Customer Service Centre on 020 7210 4850

● *Working with people with learning disabilities.*

Mencap careers leaflet. Contact the Mencap helpline for copies.

● *Code of practice for the elimination of discrimination in the field of employment against disabled persons or persons who have had a disability*

Department for Education and Employment, 1996. Available from the Disability Rights Commission

● *Guidance on matters to be taken into account in determining questions relating to the definition of disability*

Department for Education and Employment, 1996. Available from the Disability Rights Commission



This guide has been produced by the Camden Society and published by the Islington Learning Disabilities Partnership in September 2004. See section a) and b) of the Directory for these organisations' contact details. For an electronic version of the guide, plus any updated information, please check the web site at www.islington.gov.uk/getthejobdone.

We are grateful to the following organisations for their time and help with producing this guide:

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Get the job done

**Why and how to employ people with
learning disabilities in Islington**

www.islington.gov.uk/getthejobdone