



Indications of an Inclusive Employer

Researched by students, for students

Trinity College Dublin

Compiled by **Trinity Careers Service** Interns, in cooperation with **Trinity Disability Service**

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Introduction

This document gives advice to students on how to identify inclusive employers. It is targeted at disabled Trinity students who are seeking graduate employment, and are looking for an employer that;

- **Recognizes the benefits of a diverse workforce**
- **Goes above and beyond to promote inclusion**
- **Provides the support required to disabled employees to reach their full potential.**

Many employers will have Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) policies in place, but it can be difficult for a prospective employee to gauge whether these policies are actively carried out. This can be done by examining their recruitment programs, their diversity reports or familiarising yourself with their culture.

This report gives some general indicators that an employer engages with DEI. The report provides basic guidelines for students and is best used in collaboration with other resources. (at end of doc.)

Employers are examined for their inclusivity of disabled people only. As DEI is all-encompassing of gender pay-gaps, racial and ethnic minorities and the LGBTQ+ community some of these groups may be mentioned.

While it can be difficult to determine what work-life is like at a company, there are steps you can take to research an employer before accepting a job offer.

If you are an employer, please check here.

What if a recruiter doesn't have all the indicators discussed in this document?

This document covered many indicators of an inclusive employer, but for a company to cover all of this criterion would be rare.

- Smaller companies, non-profits or start-ups may not necessarily have the resources to include all the information discussed above. However, this does not mean that they are not an inclusive company. In these cases, it is best to use personal judgement
- Alternatively, the information may not be publicly available but still exist. The company may keep this information on an internal website for staff only, or may provide this information to job applicants once they have progressed to an interview

Additional Resources

- [Trinity Careers Service](#)
- [Trinity Disability Service](#)
- [AHEAD website.](#)
- [Guide to Disclosure in the Workplace](#), written by AHEAD.
- [Guide to finding suitable Assistive Technology](#), written by AHEAD

Recruitment & Hiring

A company that has inclusive recruitment practices will actively hire people from underrepresented groups. They will ensure everyone is given the same chance at being successful with their application. A company with inclusive recruitment practices will provide an universally inclusive and accessible experience for all candidates.

Accommodations

Applying to a job with a disability means you may require adjustments for your interview. An inclusive employer will offer interview accommodation. Examples of accommodations can include;

- **Different format of interview questions (e.g. written instead of verbal)**
- **Extra answering time.**
- **A sign language interpreter**

A company will usually mention if they provide interview accommodation on their website, usually on their careers page. However, if accommodation information is absent from their website it does not necessarily mean the company does not offer them. Accommodations may be communicated to you directly via a recruiter, or after you have applied for a role.

One of the best ways a company can demonstrate they are committed to hiring a diverse workforce is through targeted recruitment.

While you may apply to a role outside of a specific hiring program it is always interesting to note whether a company does provide alternative access routes to underrepresented groups... e.g. Microsoft's Autism@Work scheme.

Did you Know? Generally all employers will claim to be inclusive. However a survey by Aslam found that amongst large employers, only 37% of them had targeted disability recruitment

Job Descriptions

As one of the first things you see from a company - the language used in the job description is important to consider. The job description should specify the main responsibilities of the job. However it should encourage diverse applicants to apply. The language used should be well thought-out and deliberate in its approach.

If you feel the job description is welcoming and inclusive to you, it is likely the company culture will be the same.

Does the job description use gender neutral language?

Would it attract not just male or female applicants but non-binary or gender-fluid applicants?

Can you spot an Equal Opportunities Statement?

While an equal opportunity statement doesn't tell you much about a company's practices, it is still expected that all employers display such a statement on their job listings, careers page or website.

| |
|---|
| <p>Equal Opportunities Statement: This is a statement which communicates an employer's commitment to proving fair and inclusive recruitment processes.</p> |
|---|

Company Culture

Company culture can be hard to quantify but is essential as it will affect your everyday work life. Culture includes the everyday attitudes, personalities and values that make up an organisation.

Reputation

While reputation isn't everything, it can be useful to ask around and consider what people say about an employer. Consult your careers consultants, peers and college alumni working for that employer. You can visit employer rating websites such as Glassdoor.ie to see what past employees are saying.

Employee Resource Groups

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs): Employee Resource Groups are voluntary groups of like-minded employees.

It is common for employees to join ERGs to meet other staff with shared experiences or interests and to offer support to each other. ERGs often exist for minority groups e.g., Trinity College LGBT Staff Network group.

Smaller companies won't necessarily have the resources to offer ERGs, but they are commonplace amongst larger companies.

The ERGs present at a company is a good indication of what the people at the company are interested in and the kinds of events that will be run throughout the year.

Partnerships & Awards

Awards and charity work relating to diversity and inclusion are positive but not essential indicators of an inclusive company. The initiatives a company takes outside of its typical industry are indications of their DEI focus areas.

Staff Testimonials

Many employees are active on professional sites such as LinkedIn. Often employees will describe their experiences at work. It can be useful to see whether such employees exist, particularly employees in prominent roles or ones with similar backgrounds to you.

It is useful to find out what they say about their experience and whether any of these employees are openly disabled. It is important to note that disclosing or speaking publicly about disability is a personal choice for disabled employees. Not coming across openly disabled staff is in no way indicative of a bad employer. However, if there are many openly disabled staff it indicates a culture in which it feels they feel safe and comfortable in being public about their disability.

Many employers highlight employee '**stories**' or **testimonials** on their website. These give great insights into the people and culture at a company.

Website

The accessibility of an employer's website is important, even if it does not affect your specific disability. An employer who makes their website accessible is more likely to be committed to the physical accessibility of their workplace. It demonstrates the employer places great importance on inclusivity.

Ease of Information

Can you easily find the disability-related information you are looking for as a job applicant? This could include their accommodations procedures, their disability policies etc.

- By making disability information easy to find - the employer is actively encouraging and welcoming disabled applicants
- By not providing disability information, or making it hard to find, it can (sometimes, not always!) suggest the relevant information does not exist, or is rarely used.

In general, you should look for **simplicity** and **ease of use** on an employer's website. Especially for large companies, webpages on diversity should be prominent on the site. If this information is displayed prominently, it indicates the employers places a great importance on DEI.

Accessibility Statement

Employers should include on their website an accessibility statement. A quick google search of "(company name) accessibility statement" should reveal it!

Employers should also display information on their compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). These are international technical and design specifications that ensure websites are usable by all individuals, with and without disabilities.

A statement of compliance with WCAG) may be included within or separate to the accessibility statement. Compliance with another set of standards may be mentioned, but WCAG is the most common set.

Accessibility Statement: This is a declaration that defines the level of web accessibility the employer provides. Information is provided on whether accessibility is compromised in any areas of the website.



Open & Transparent

Employers who display a lot of DEI related information, (such as the % of their employees who have disclosed a disability) are show themselves to be open to change and hold themselves accountable to improving.

- Whatever an employer's commitments are surrounding DEI, do they back them up with actions?
- Are they open and transparent about their diversity levels, accommodations procedures & other disability
- supports? Are they clear about what they need to

While it is great for employers to claim they are improving diversity, look for actions that signify they are *actually* determined to achieve their goals. Even better, check if they have decided on a measurement to determine if they have reached that goal.

| | Makes a Disability Claim | Action to back up claim | Action is Measurable |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| "We aim to improve diversity." | ✓ | | |
| "We aim to improve diversity by introducing a disability recruitment scheme." | ✓ | ✓ | |
| "We aim to improve diversity by introducing a disability recruitment scheme and setting a goal of reaching 5% employee disability representation by 2030." | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

Bear in mind that smaller companies won't necessarily have the resources to do this!

Glossary of Terms

- **Equity** is the process of providing fair and impartial opportunities, with equally possible outcomes for each individual.
- **Disability** refers to physical, mental and intellectual disabilities, as well as chronic pain or fatigue.
- **Disclosure** means to make information known (in this case to the employer) about your disability.
- **Diversity** refers to the inclusion in the workforce of people from a range of different backgrounds which includes but is not limited to;
 - *people of different social and ethnic backgrounds, different genders, religions and sexual orientations, as well as minority groups.*
- **Inclusion** means providing a workplace where all individuals feel welcomed and valued. Everyone should feel a sense of belonging.
- **Neurodivergent** describes someone whose brain works differently to what is considered the 'norm'. Every neurodivergent person will have different strengths and challenges. Some types of neurodivergence include Autism, dyslexia, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), cerebral palsy or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). (Asasumasu, 2011).
- The word **neurodivergent** was influenced by the term **neurodiversity** (Singer, 1999) the idea that everyone's brain develops differently and is unique, therefore everyone will process the world in different ways. It was originally used as "an umbrella term for an emerging social/political movement based on the pioneering work of the Autistic Self Advocacy Movement" (Singer, 2021).

This document uses identity first language. However this may not represent the preferences of all Trinity students, staff and other members of the Trinity Community.

References

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