



LEVEL 3



Hiring **good people**
is good business

Be Disability Confident



Disability Confident – LEADER

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This guidance explains how to become a **Disability Confident leader** at level 3 of the Disability Confident scheme.

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Ministerial foreword

Congratulations and thank you for taking this step on your Disability Confident journey. I know that your business can be more productive, more prosperous and more competitive for the commitment that you are making.

The economic power of disabled people and their families is immense. Not only do they have a combined spending power of over £200 billion, but they have skills and talents that are underutilised and remain out of reach for many businesses.

The cost of this to your business, to government and to potential employees is huge. Growth is stifled and the potential for innovation and invention is lost.

But this can be avoided. The Disability Confident scheme will help you on your journey to employing, supporting and promoting disabled people in your workplace. You will gain insight into an often overlooked customer base and you will learn to think differently about what disability means – both for you and for your business.

There is no greater catalyst for change than business. In terms of your reach and your interconnectedness you are unrivalled. But the Disability Confident movement, that I am delighted you are now a part of, is absolutely in your interest too.



Penny Mordaunt MP

Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work

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Introduction

What's in it for my business?

Your business has already undertaken the self-assessment and is recognised as a **Disability Confident employer**. You are already benefiting from being able to draw from the widest possible pool of talent, and are securing, retaining and developing disabled staff who are skilled, loyal and hard-working.

By stepping up to being a **Disability Confident leader** your business can gain recognition from:

- disabled staff in your business
- disabled people outside your business
- other businesses
- your customers
- the wider community

They will all know that you have done an assessment of how Disability Confident your business is and put that assessment up for external challenge.

You will also be acting as a champion for Disability Confident within your local and business communities and encouraging and supporting other businesses in your supply chain(s) and your networks to become Disability Confident. In doing so, you will be showing disabled people that you are leading the way in getting every business to become Disability Confident.

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Stepping up to become a Disability Confident leader

You have already completed the Disability Confident self-assessment and are a Disability Confident employer.

There are now two additional steps that you need to take in order to become a Disability Confident leader:

1. Challenge
2. Leadership

When you have successfully completed the actions and activities to be a Disability Confident leader, you will need to follow the link in the [What happens next?](#) section to confirm:

Challenge

- that you have had your self-assessment validated, and by whom
- your validator(s) agree with your evidence and assessment, and that you are delivering against all of the core actions as a Disability Confident employer

Leadership

- the activities you have or are taking in support of being a Disability Confident leader

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1. Challenge

Your business will have already successfully completed the Disability Confident employer self-assessment. The next step to become a Disability Confident leader is to subject your self-assessment to an independent validation. The size and complexity of your business will usually dictate how you go about this.

The process for validation involves the validators looking at each of the criteria in your Disability Confident employer self-assessment and being assured that you:

- are delivering against all of the core actions
- can provide evidence for each of the activities that you are offering to get the right people for your business and to keep and develop your people

The template in **Annex A** (at the end of this document) will help you and your validators with the process.

Many large businesses already have, or are working towards, a recognised external accreditation that covers all the components of the Disability Confident self-assessment – this type of accreditation would validate the self-assessment for Disability Confident leader.

Smaller businesses may want to choose from other options that are available to them, reflecting the size of the business. These can include asking an existing Disability Confident leader business to undertake the validation, involving an external disabled person's organisation with the necessary expertise, or involving disabled people inside and outside the business. You may decide to use a mixture of these approaches. The key here is having the self-assessment validated by people or organisation that can provide an appropriate level of challenge based on their own knowledge, skills and expertise.

The level of challenge should be proportionate to the size of the business. Suggestions of people, groups or organisations that can help to validate your application to become a Disability Confident leader are given below.

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Micro employers (1 to 9 employees) and small employers (10 to 49 employees)

Possible validating groups/organisations for micro and small employers are:

- [existing Disability Confident leaders](#)
- disabled employees, customers or people in the local community
- local diversity and inclusion groups
- local disability organisations or network groups
- [disabled people's user led organisations \(DPULOs\)](#)
- recognised accreditation organisations whose accreditation covers the components of the Disability Confident employer self-assessment

Validation advice for micro employers

To validate your self-assessment, you may decide to enlist the help and support of disabled people that work for you, local disability organisations or DPULOs that you may have worked with in the past or in your community. For small businesses, or those in remote areas, you might involve local disabled people that you come into contact with as customers in your community – the key is involving people who will challenge your self-assessment.

Validation advice for small employers

As a small employer, your business may be more complex than a micro employer and this will be reflected in the level of validation. The validator will require documentary evidence, examples of recruitment and retention policies and practices, best practice initiatives and evidence that demonstrates how any issues/concerns have been managed effectively. To validate the self-assessment, you may decide to enlist the help and support of a group of disabled customers or disabled people that work for you, disability organisations and/or DPULOs that you may have worked with in the past, or disabled people based in the local community. A list of organisations that can offer support can be found through the [Disability Confident campaign page](#).

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Medium-sized employers (50 to 250 employees)

Possible validating groups/organisations for medium-sized employers are:

- [existing Disability Confident leaders](#)
- disabled employees
- disabled stakeholder groups or forums
- national disability network groups
- local disability organisations, Work Choice providers, network groups
- [disabled people's user led organisations \(DPULOs\)](#)
- recognised accreditation organisations whose accreditation covers the components of the Disability Confident employer self-assessment
- national disability organisations

Validation advice for medium-sized employers

As a medium-sized employer you are likely to have a more complex business than a micro/small employer, and this will be reflected by you providing more detailed evidence to the validators. The validation will require, for example, documentary evidence, examples of recruitment and retention policies and practices, best practice initiatives and evidence of issues/concerns that have been managed effectively.

To validate the self-assessment, you may decide to enlist the help and support of disabled people who work for you, disability network groups, disability specific organisations and/or DPULOs that you may have worked with in the past. You may also be working with an external accreditation organisation – providing the accreditation covers the components of the Disability Confident employer self-assessment, this would satisfy the validation. A list of organisations that can offer support can be found through the [Disability Confident campaign page](#).

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Large employers (over 250 employees)

Possible validating groups/organisations for large employers are:

- recognised accreditation organisations whose accreditation covers the components of the **Disability Confident employer** self-assessment
- [existing Disability Confident leaders](#)
- disabled employees or customers/clients
- internal diversity and inclusions groups/forums
- disabled stakeholder groups or forums
- national disability network groups
- local disability organisations, Work Choice providers, network groups
- [disabled people's user led organisations \(DPULOs\)](#)
- national disability organisations

Validation advice for large employers

As a large employer, employing over 250, you will collect the various information and data that clearly demonstrates that you are a Disability Confident employer. The validator will require documentary evidence such as inclusive policies and procedures and may refer to the groups/organisations that you involved in the self-assessment process.

To validate the self-assessment, you may decide to enlist the help and support of disabled people that work for you, disability network groups, disability specific organisations and/or DPULOs that you may have worked with in the past. A list of organisations that can offer support can be found through the [Disability Confident campaign page](#).

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2. Leadership

As a Disability Confident leader you will be encouraging other employers to make the journey to become Disability Confident.

How you do this, and at what level, will vary depending on the size and nature of your business.

For **all employers**, leadership may include:

- encouraging other employers in your supply chain
- using social media to promote and share good practice on Disability Confident, such as LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, blogs and business newsletters
- networking with other employers in your industry, through business clubs, local networks, business events and so on
- being a mentor, coach, buddy or providing peer support to others
- engaging with other local employers to share good practice
- celebrating success, for example being nominated for or the winner of a recognised award
- being nominated for and/or winning local, regional and national awards for the employment of disabled people
- sponsoring or hosting Disability Confident inspired events.

For **medium-sized employers** (50 to 250 employees) and **large employers** (over 250 employees), leadership may also include:

- providing validation of self-assessment(s) to other employers
- using contracting to drive positive change, with supply chain providers encouraged to become Disability Confident

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What happens next?

When you have successfully completed the actions and activities to be a **Disability Confident leader**, you will need to [complete this form on GOV.UK](#) to confirm your status.

Challenge

Through the form, you'll confirm:

- that you have had your self-assessment validated, and by whom
- your validator(s) agree with your evidence and assessment, and that you are delivering against all of the core actions as a Disability Confident employer

Leadership

You'll also record the activities you have or are taking in support of being a Disability Confident leader.

Once you have submitted the form

In return, we will confirm your status and send you a Disability Confident leader **badge** that you can use in your own business stationary and communications for 3 years.

We'll also send you a Disability Confident leader **certificate** in recognition of your achievement and further information on how you can share your experience and provide case studies to help other on their Disability Confident journey.

As part of awarding you your Disability Confident leader badge we will include your business name and expiry date for the badge on [GOV.UK](#).

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Disabled people's user led organisations

Disabled people's user led organisations (DPULOs) are run by and for disabled people.

DPULOs have an important role in:

- providing peer support in areas such as social care, financial services, employment and volunteering
- changing perceptions
- enabling disabled people to have a stronger voice in the local community

They provide advice on a wide range of topics to all disabled people, whatever their impairment.

The government recognises the importance of DPULOs and encourages disabled people to use their local organisations. A [list of DPULOs](#) that can offer support can be found on GOV.UK.

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Annex A – Validation template

The following template can be used by your independent validators to challenge your self-assessment and confirm you meet the assessment criteria for becoming a Disability Confident leader.

The amount of evidence required will vary depending on the size and nature of the business. The guidance for each criterion is included in the [Disability Confident employer \(level 2\) self-assessment pack](#), which you can download from GOV.UK.

Validator's name (organisation, group, forum or Disability Confident leader)		
Date of validation		
Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business		
The employer must have agreed to all of the following actions.		
Criteria As a Disability Confident employer, my business is:	Evidence	Validator comments or further action required
1. Actively looking to attract and recruit disabled people.		
2. Providing a fully inclusive and accessible recruitment process.		

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3. Offering an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job.		
4. Flexible when assessing people so disabled job applicants have the best opportunity to demonstrate that they can do the job.		
5. Proactively offering and making reasonable adjustments as required.		
6. Encouraging our suppliers and partner firms to be Disability Confident.		
7. Ensuring employees have sufficient disability equality awareness training.		

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Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business

The employer must have agreed to at least one of the following activities.

Activity	Evidence (consider only the activities included in the employer self-assessment)	Validator comments
1. Providing work experience.		
2. Providing work trials.		
3. Providing paid employment (permanent or fixed term).		
4. Providing apprenticeships.		
5. Providing a traineeship.		
6. Providing paid internships or support internships (or both).		
7. Advertising vacancies and other opportunities through organisations and media aimed particularly at disabled people.		

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8. Engaging with Jobcentre Plus, Work Choice providers and local disabled people's user led organisations (DPULO's) to access support when required.		
9. Providing an environment that is inclusive and accessible for staff, clients and customer.		
10. Offering other innovative and effective approaches to encourage disabled people to apply for opportunities and supporting them when they do.		

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Theme 2 – Keeping and developing your people The employer must have agreed to all of the following actions.		
Criteria As a Disability Confident employer, my business is:	Evidence	Validator comments or further action required
1. Promoting a culture of being Disability Confident.		
2. Supporting employees to manage their disabilities or health conditions.		
3. Ensuring there are no barriers to the development and progression of disabled staff.		
4. Ensuring managers are aware of how they can support staff who are sick or absent from work.		
5. Valuing and listening to feedback from disabled staff.		
6. Reviewing this Disability Confident employer self-assessment regularly.		

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Theme 2 – Keeping and developing your people.

The employer must have agreed to take at least one of the following activities.

Activity	Evidence (consider only the activities included in the employer self-assessment)	Validator comments
1. Providing mentoring, coaching, buddying and or other support networks for staff.		
2. Including disability awareness equality training in our induction process.		
3. Guiding staff to information and advice on mental health conditions.		
4. Providing occupational health services if required.		
5. Identifying and sharing good practice.		
6. Providing human resource managers with specific Disability Confident training		