

# **LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE & TROPICAL MEDICINE**

## **PERSONNEL OFFICE**

### **DISABILITY STATEMENT**

This document sets out the School's policy in respect of disability in employment at the School.

### **POLICY**

1. It is recognized that disabled people have often faced barriers resulting in limited access to jobs, training, development and promotion. This is not acceptable to the School. Disability should not be confused with an inability to function. The School recognizes that attitudinal and environmental factors can sometimes have a disabling impact on individuals.
2. The School also recognizes the need to create an inclusive and supportive environment, which meets the needs of disabled staff:
  - most disabled people bring a wealth of skills and abilities and are as effective as other staff members, without the need for specific help.
  - disabled people offer as much as other people, given the use of appropriate help which is readily available, where necessary.
  - overlooking the abilities of disabled employees risks missing out on the contribution of potentially valuable employees.
  - the School has an obligation to ensure that disabled people are treated fairly and in line with its Equality and Diversity Strategy.
3. As well as requirements under the School's Equality and Diversity Strategy, there are also legal requirements placed on employers relating to employment of disabled people. These are mainly covered by the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 (collectively referred to as the DDA), as follows:
4. The DDA defines a disabled person as anyone with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. "Long-term" is defined as an effect of an impairment lasting for at least 12 months.
5. The DDA therefore widens the definition of disability beyond an obvious physical impairment such as blindness or partial paralysis. For example, a disabled person under the DDA can include someone with dyslexia, a hearing impairment, learning difficulties or a severe disfigurement.

6. The DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person in the course of employment on two grounds:
  - if, for a reason which relates to a person's disability, an employer treats the disabled person less favourably than other people, and
  - if the employer cannot show that this treatment is justified.
7. Under the amended DDA, the School as a public body has a positive duty to eliminate discrimination promote good relations between disabled and other people and to eliminate harassment. The School must also take steps to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.

## **PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTING POLICY**

### **General**

8. Every effort should be made to accommodate the needs of a disabled person working at the School by making reasonable adjustments to the workplace and to working arrangements. This applies to all aspects of employment, including recruitment and selection, probation, appraisal, staff development, promotion, redundancy, disciplinary or grievance procedures etc. This will apply to job applicants or to current members of staff.
9. Reasonable adjustments might include the following:
  - making adjustments to the workplace (including, where necessary, the provision of special equipment);
  - assigning a disabled person to a different location of work;
  - allocating minor duties of the person with disabilities to another member of staff;
  - redeployment to a suitable alternative post if no reasonable adjustment to current working arrangements is possible. This may involve retraining the staff member;
  - altering the individual's working hours (e.g. allowing them to travel flexible hours to accommodate transport arrangements, or changing their hours to fit with the availability of a carer);
  - allowing the person a reasonable amount of time off for remedial therapy and assessment etc. in connection with their disability;
  - training the individual to use special equipment;
  - modifying selection tests (e.g. providing an oral rather than a written test to a person with restricted manual dexterity).

## Disability Symbol – Two Ticks



10. The School is a certified user of the Two Ticks Disability Symbol Scheme. This means it is committed to employing disabled people and will:
- interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities
  - ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss, at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what can be done to make sure they develop and use their abilities
  - make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment
  - take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make these commitments work
  - each year, review the five commitments and what has been achieved, plan ways to improve on them and let employees and Jobcentre Plus know about progress and future plans

## Recruitment and Selection

11. Shortlisting decisions should be made on the basis of who is the best person for the job and also take account of our interview commitments under the Disability Symbol agreement. If a candidate is disabled, reasonable alterations to working arrangements can often accommodate the candidate who should be considered on the same basis as other candidates.
12. It is unlawful to include requirements which are not essential, or are marginal to a particular post, for example:
- insisting on a particular level of educational qualification, even though it is not necessary or significant for the job;
  - inserting into job descriptions physical requirements (e.g. mobility) from candidates when it is not necessary or significant for the job.

## **Interview arrangements**

13. All disabled candidates who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy will be shortlisted and considered on their abilities. Shortlisted candidates are asked whether any particular arrangements are necessary in order for them to attend the interview, or to do the job for which they have applied. The School will make every reasonable effort to accommodate a candidate's requirements, including meeting the cost of reasonable travel expenses.

## **Selection**

14. It is not discriminatory to ask relevant questions at interview about the person's disability e.g. reasonable questions about any changes that may need to be made to the workplace.
15. The criteria used in interviews and selection tests should only relate to what will be required of the future postholder. Thus, for example, it would be inappropriate to require someone with learning difficulties to complete a numeracy test where the job entails very little numerical work and is not part of the person specification for the post.

## **GENERAL**

### **Responsibility**

16. All staff, irrespective of seniority, have responsibility for the fair and equal treatment of disabled people at work.
17. Senior staff have a special responsibility to ensure that they are aware of the requirements of this Disability Statement, and to ensure that these are carried out. This is to ensure that all staff reporting to them are made aware of the Disability Statement and to ensure that they themselves do not discriminate against disabled people.

### **Disclosure**

18. Periodically, staff will be invited to complete a confidential disability status survey so the School can be sure it is achieving its disability equality responsibilities and positively meeting the needs of the workforce.
19. The School encourages disabled staff to disclose their disability at any time, in order to gain appropriate support. Employees can speak with their manager or contact the Equality & Diversity Manager in this matter.