

Inclusive Recruitment Practices

Inclusive Interviews for Candidates with a Physical Disability

The following is a brief guide for conducting inclusive interviews with candidates with a physical disability. Drawn from the research and evidenced based, it provides information and tips that may assist companies wanting to attract candidates with a physical disability.

Role clarity & accessibility in advance

- Provide a clear outline of the job role, interview stages and assessment criteria ahead of time – this supports candidates in deciding whether they may need adjustments.
- Make application and communication materials available in accessible formats (e.g. plain text, large print, audio, Easy Read).

Reasonable adjustments offered proactively

- Invite candidates to request adjustments at each stage: application, interview shortlisting, pre-interview and assessment.
- Adjustments may include: alternative interview formats (e.g. virtual, phone, assisted), accessible venues, extended time, supporting person or interpreter.
- When asking whether a candidate will need any reasonable adjustment:
 - If the answer is NO, this means no further questions can be asked
 - If the answer is YES, the employer may ask about the type of adjustment needed or how the task may be performed, but not about the disability or condition.

Interview panel preparation and bias awareness

- Panel members should receive disability awareness and unconscious bias training and include, where possible, people with lived experience of disability.
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) makes it illegal for employers to seek specific details about a candidate's disability. Questions must be for legitimate, non-discriminatory purposes, for example to:
 - determine whether a person can complete the inherent requirements of the job
 - identify reasonable adjustments required during the recruitment process and / or to perform the job. For example: Some duties require following emergency evacuation procedures. Would you need any support or adjustments to evacuate safely in an emergency?

Creating an inclusive interview environment

- Communicate venue accessibility (e.g. ramps, parking, restrooms) when scheduling the interview.
- During the interview greet the candidate and assist navigating the space if necessary.
- Confirm the comfort and accessibility of the interview space (lighting, noise, temperature, layout).
- Offer breaks, extra time for responses, or alternate formats during assessments.
- Use simple, clear language without jargon or ambiguous phrasing.
- Actively listen, remain patient, avoid assumptions—allow space for pauses or different communication styles.

Feedback and transparency

- Provide respectful, timely feedback to all interviewed candidates, including reasons for outcomes and opportunities for process improvement.
- Solicit candidate feedback on the accessibility and inclusivity of the process for continuous improvement.

It is unlawful for an employer to ask a candidate anything relating to personal attributes like sex, age or disability, if those questions are unrelated to the position they are applying for. The table below outlines key insights from the Australian Human Rights Commission (2020) regarding disability identification in the workplace.

Employers can	Employers cannot
Ask questions about how the candidate's disability relates to doing the job and working safely	Ask personal questions about the candidate's lifestyle or how they manage their disability
Ask how the workplace could be changed or improved to help the candidate do the job	Ask the candidate general questions about their health or disability
Ask about how work hours or rosters could be changed to help the candidate perform better in the role	Ask the candidate how many times per year they go to the doctor or what the doctor says to them in those appointments

Ask questions about keeping the workplace safe for the candidate and everyone else

Treat the candidate differently or less favourably because they have a disability

Ask the candidate whether they take any medications which might make it unsafe to perform any tasks involved in the role

Ask the candidate whether they take lots of medication for their disability or illness

Ask if there is any information or awareness training the candidate would like provided to their colleagues about their disability

Tell others about the candidate's disability without asking the candidate first

Interview people with disability (JobAccess, 2020)