

HM Revenue and Customs

Promoting positive attitudes
towards disabled people

and

encouraging the participation
of disabled people in public life

June 2007

This document is available in alternative formats, including large print, Braille, audio CD and electronic word version on request from HMRC, Visually Impaired Media Unit, 2nd Floor, Victoria Street, Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD98 8AA. 01274 539646

1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), HM Revenue and Customs is required when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people: and
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the disability duties')

Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, HM Revenue and Customs is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a disability action plan showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions.

1.2. As Chairman and Diversity Champion of HM Revenue and Customs, we are committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and this disability action plan. We will allocate, as far as possible, all necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to implement effectively this plan and where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into corporate and annual operating plans.

We will also put appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and this disability action plan effectively implemented. We will ensure the effective communication of the plan to staff and to providing all necessary training and guidance to staff on disability duties and the implementation of the plan.

HMRC's approach on all aspects of customer service is to consult and involve customer groups as much as possible. In relation to disability, we involved our customers and staff in the development of the HMRC Disability Equality Scheme (DES). Views and information obtained during this process of involvement provided the basis for the HMRC DES action plan. We have identified actions from that Scheme relating to the two Duties, carried them forward and developed them more specifically as measures to enable us to comply with the NI Duty. This will supplement the process which exists at national level for working with representatives from internal Trade Union Side on taking forward diversity and equality issues. Involvement is a continuing process both externally and internally and we will further develop the measures in the plan below based on feedback received.

Responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this disability action plan and the point of contact within HM Revenue and Customs will be:-

HR Centre of Expertise
(Diversity & Equality)
PO Box 55

Mowbray House
Castle Meadow Road
Nottingham
NG2 1BE

Tel: 0115 974 0615

Email: lyn.bowskill@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

Commitment

1.3 We confirm our commitment to submitting an annual progress report on the implementation of this plan to the Equality Commission and carry out a five year review of the plan, or plans submitted to the Equality Commission over a five year review period.

A copy of this plan, our annual progress to the Equality Commission and our five year review of this plan will be made available on the HM Revenue and Customs website.

1.4 Functions

Outlined below are the range of functions of HM Revenue and Customs showing the four Business Groups and their respective Business Units.

Product and Process Group (P&PG)

Benefits and Credits

Charity, Assets and Residence

Corporation Tax and VAT

Excise and Stamp Taxes

Customs and International

PAYE, SA & NICs

Customer units

Individuals customer unit

Business customer unit

Corporate functions

Anti-Avoidance Group

Central Compliance

Central Policy

Commercial Directorate

Communications and Marketing

Estates and Support Services

Finance

Internal Audit

HR and Learning

Knowledge Analysis and Intelligence

Information Management Solutions

Legal and Governance

Operations

Criminal Investigations

Customer Contact

Debt Management & Banking

Detection

Large Business Service

Local Compliance

National Processing

National Teams and Special Civil Investigations

PAYE & SA Processing

Risk & Intelligence

Valuation Office Agency

1.5 **Public Life Positions**

The public life positions over which HMRC has responsibility are:

Non-executive Board members. (The two current appointees are both people with disabilities.)

HM Revenue and Customs Adjudicator

2. **Previous Measures**

Outlined below are the key measures which HMRC has already taken to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.

Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people

Disability Champion at Board level appointed

Disability Steering Group set up with two disabled Board members

Disability Staff Network established

Training and awareness for staff and managers

Visual impairment media unit - in house team produce HMRC material in alternative format

Disabled staff to provide inspirational talks for colleagues and externally if requested

Encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

Disability Steering Group set up with two disabled Executive Committee members

Disability Staff Network established – involved in departmental policy making and the operation of business delivery

Special leave is available for people to participate in Public Life appointments.

3. Measures to **promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life:**

	Measures	Performance	Timescale Indicators/Targets
1.	High level steering group has been established, including 2 disabled Board members, the Disability Champion, disabled staff, and external organisations to oversee the implementation of the Disability Duty.	<p>Hold at least 3 meetings a year to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review progress and initiate further activity if required - provide strategic/operational steer/direction - use their authority to address issues/hurdles to implementation if necessary. 	In place: meetings held 15 January and 11 June; next meeting September
2.	Continue to establish and advertise the role of the Disability Champion and Disability Network to all staff and managers to seek involvement, feedback and good practice ideas for implementing the 2 Duties.	<p>Produce regular articles in our monthly magazine to update staff on progress on disability, work of Champion and the Network</p> <p>Staff feed back on disability issues: policy/process revised if necessary; operational problems resolved quickly</p> <p>Commitment from Network members and more open communications create more positive attitudes to disability;</p> <p>Evidence of greater involvement by disabled staff and customers</p>	OneHMRC article - September 07
3.	Look into the use of role models, such as the 2 non-executive disabled board members and disabled members of staff	<p>Visible commitment at most senior level eg personal statement showing how they have overcome barriers and what they have achieved</p> <p>Inspirational talks delivered promoting positive attitudes delivered by disabled member of staff</p>	<p>Statement published in OneHMRC/ intranet Sept/October</p> <p>Talk given at JAWS conference and in local offices – ongoing programme</p>
4.	Ensure that our contract procurement procedure is diversity-proofed	Provisions are in our Terms and Conditions that contractors (and subcontractors) comply with equality legislation and HMRC policies. The contract managers identify any risks and issues as well as performance indicators and take action if issues are identified.	Ongoing
5.	Develop and deliver programme of disability awareness raising sessions, including specific sections on the 2 duties for all	<p>Monitor take up of awareness raising package</p> <p>Evaluation sheets reviewed to</p>	Awareness package being developed and available July 07

	Measures	Performance	Timescale Indicators/Targets
	<p>staff</p> <p>The package will include sessions on the law and give practical advice and guidance.</p>	<p>ensure the objectives of the course have been met (reviewed and revised as necessary)</p> <p>Specific performance development indicator to be included in appraisal form to assess whether improved disability awareness demonstrated</p>	
6.	<p>Deliver awareness raising session for the Executive Committee and other senior managers, including inspirational talks promoting positive attitudes delivered by disabled member of staff</p>	<p>Evidence of commitment through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - intervention to resolve problems eg, in personal cases where necessary - staff feedback, eg through surveys, confirms senior managers seen to be more aware of and acting more positively to promote disability. 	<p>Awareness session for the Executive Committee March 07</p> <p>Further event planned e.g. 46 meeting of senior business heads</p>
7.	<p>Working with HMRC trade union side (TUS), develop a Charter on Disability aimed at promoting positive attitudes and encouraging participation of disabled people in public life</p>	<p>More opportunity for new suggestions for activity to promote positive attitudes as a result of TUS joint working</p> <p>TUS highlight any barriers to participation by disabled people</p>	<p>Charter developed by 30/9/07</p> <p>Publicity for Charter October 07</p>
8.	<p>Advertise the scope for undertaking volunteering as a developmental opportunity and encourage disabled staff to participate in public life by raising awareness of special leave arrangements</p>	<p>Guidance issued</p> <p>Monitor take up of special leave for public life activities by disabled staff</p>	<p>August 07</p> <p>08/08</p>
9	<p>Carry out centrally-led exercise to increase staff disability declaration rates</p>	<p>Improved disability declaration rates (aim for 90%)</p>	<p>First stage (all staff requested to check or enter disability status) - 07/08</p>
10	<p>Identifying disability issues/barriers for disabled people by monitoring staff survey, exit questionnaires and internal and external recruitment statistics.</p>	<p>Evidence of outcomes to be fed through the Disability Steering Group and action taken to rectify issues raised.</p> <p>Identification of potential barriers leads to improved systems for disabled staff</p> <p>Maintain good levels of recruitment</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

	Measures	Performance	Timescale Indicators/Targets
		of people with disabilities	
11	Develop disability communications plan	Plan produced and implemented	12/07
12	Disability guidance, including reasonable adjustments and etiquette/language information for staff and managers published on the intranet – accessible to all staff and managers.	<p>Review and revise guidance as necessary to make clear how managers must act to deliver HMRC's commitment to the two Duties</p> <p>Monitor the number of queries on particular disability areas such as language and etiquette to identify trends/issues</p> <p>Carry out audit the number and type of queries/complaints referred to HR service Centre</p>	<p>Act immediately on issues referred from HR Service Centre</p> <p>Monthly</p> <p>12/07</p>
13	Actively promote external recruitment opportunities for disabled people by advertising on a specialist website - Disabledgo as well as using regular advertising media.	Monitor take-up and ask for feedback form candidates to check whether this is a good forum for advertising.	Ongoing
14	Ensure our instructions on advertising internal jobs and promotion opportunities are clear in that job adverts do not contain any eligibility criteria that prevent a particular group of people from applying and that we operate the Guaranteed Interview scheme.	<p>Review adverts to ensure consistency.</p> <p>Monitor take up of guaranteed interview scheme</p>	Ongoing

Signed by:

PAUL GRAY
HMRC Chairman

CHRIS HOPSON
HMRC Diversity Champion