Disability in the workplace: Employers’ and service providers’ responses to the Disability Discrimination Act in 2003 and preparation for 2004 changes

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# Contents

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... ix  
The Authors ................................................................................................................... xi  
Summary ............................................................................................................................... 1  

1 Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 9  
   1.1 Background ................................................................................................................. 10  
   1.2 Research design and methods .................................................................................... 13  
       1.2.1 Quantitative method ......................................................................................... 13  
       1.2.2 Qualitative method .......................................................................................... 17  
       1.2.3 The report ....................................................................................................... 19  

2 The employment of disabled people: Employers' responses to Part II of the DDA ............................................................................................................. 21  
   2.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 21  
   2.2 Awareness and knowledge of the DDA employment provisions ....... 22  
       2.2.1 Spontaneous awareness of legislation ............................................................. 22  
       2.2.2 Sources of information about the DDA ............................................................ 24  
       2.2.3 Factors impacting on awareness ....................................................................... 25  
       2.2.4 Awareness of the main provisions of legislation ............................................. 26  
       2.2.5 Reasonable adjustment ...................................................................................... 28  
       2.2.6 Changes to the legislation .................................................................................. 29  
       2.2.7 Awareness of what is meant by disability ....................................................... 30  
   2.3 Employment of disabled people ................................................................................. 34  
       2.3.1 History of disability in the workplace ................................................................. 34  
       2.3.2 Circumstances of disabled employees .............................................................. 36  
       2.3.3 Current disabled employees .............................................................................. 37  
       2.3.4 Disability monitoring ......................................................................................... 37
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Policies for disabled employees and applicants</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1</td>
<td>Local knowledge of policy content</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2</td>
<td>The impact of other legislation</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3</td>
<td>Business practices</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Recruitment and selection</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.1</td>
<td>Advertising of vacancies</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.2</td>
<td>Health information</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.3</td>
<td>The ease of making adjustments to the application process</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.4</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.5</td>
<td>Staff training</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.6</td>
<td>The ease of accommodating specific disabilities</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.7</td>
<td>Seeking advice</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Adjustments at the workplace</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.1</td>
<td>Changes at workplaces with disabled employees</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.2</td>
<td>Ease of making changes</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.3</td>
<td>The role of cost</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.4</td>
<td>Reasons for making changes</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.5</td>
<td>Ease of implementing different measures</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Attitudes towards employing disabled people</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 The provision of services to disabled people: Service providers' responses to Part III of the DDA | 75 |

3.1 | Introduction | 75 |
3.2 | Awareness of service provider provisions (Part III) of DDA | 76 |
| 3.2.1 | Sources of information and advice about the DDA | 79 |
| 3.2.2 | Factors impacting on awareness | 80 |
| 3.2.3 | Awareness of the main provisions | 81 |
| 3.2.4 | Awareness of ‘reasonable adjustment’ | 82 |
| 3.2.5 | Awareness of changes to legislation | 83 |
| 3.2.6 | Perceived impact of the new legislation | 84 |
| 3.3 | Policies for disabled customers | 88 |
| 3.3.1 | Local knowledge of policy content | 91 |
| 3.4 | Implementation of adjustments and practices for disabled customers | 91 |
| 3.4.1 | Adjustments in place or planned | 92 |
| 3.4.2 | Provision of training relating to disabled customers | 97 |
| 3.4.3 | Reasons for making changes | 100 |
| 3.4.4 | Experience of making changes | 104 |
3.4.5 Reason why no special arrangements were being made for customers ....................................................... 108

4 Overall response to the Act .......................................................................................................................... 111
  4.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 111
  4.2 Service providers’ awareness ................................................................................................................... 111
    4.2.1 Awareness of current DDA legislation ............................................................................................. 111
    4.2.2 Awareness of new requirements ....................................................................................................... 113
  4.3 Policies for disabled people ..................................................................................................................... 115
  4.4 Provisions for disabled employees and customers .................................................................................. 118
    4.4.1 Provisions and adjustments currently in place for employees and customers .................................... 118
    4.4.2 Reasons for making changes ............................................................................................................ 120
    4.4.3 The influence of cost ....................................................................................................................... 122
    4.4.4 Future priorities ............................................................................................................................... 124
  4.5 Impact of DDA ........................................................................................................................................ 125

5 Conclusions .................................................................................................................................................. 127
  5.1 Employers and service providers’ perceptions of disability ................................................................. 127
    5.1.1 Perceived ease of employing someone with a disability ................................................................. 127
    5.1.2 Sources of information .................................................................................................................. 128
  5.2 Employers’ and service providers’ responses to the requirements of the DDA ...................................... 128
    5.2.1 Knowledge and understanding of the Act ......................................................................................... 128
    5.2.2 Existing policies for employees and customers ............................................................................... 129
  5.3 Provisions for disabled employees and customers .................................................................................. 130
    5.3.1 Recruitment and selection of employees ......................................................................................... 130
  5.4 Making adjustments ............................................................................................................................... 130
    5.4.1 Adjustments in practice .................................................................................................................. 130
    5.4.2 Perceptions of adjustments ........................................................................................................... 131

Appendix A Case studies overview .................................................................................................................. 133
Appendix B Logistic regression ........................................................................................................................ 137
Appendix C Survey questionnaire and case study topic guide ........................................................................ 147
References ....................................................................................................................................................... 195
Other research reports available ................................................................................................................... 197
List of tables

Table 1.1 Sample profile ................................................................. 14
Table 1.2 Workplace SIC code .......................................................... 15
Table 1.3 Overall size of business .................................................... 16
Table 1.4 Employers’ job titles ....................................................... 16
Table 1.5 Number of employees at case study workplace/organisation structure ......................................................... 18
Table 1.6 Case study sector ............................................................. 18
Table 2.1 Spontaneous awareness of legislation .............................. 22
Table 2.2 Main provisions of legislation .......................................... 26
Table 2.3 Proportions considering condition to be a disability ........... 31
Table 2.4 Whether workplace ever employed disabled person by workplace size ......................................................... 35
Table 2.5 Whether business has policy covering rights of disabled employees and applicants by workplace size ............ 39
Table 2.6 Policies referenced in job adverts ....................................... 43
Table 2.7 Purpose of health information by workplace size ............... 45
Table 2.8 How easy it would be to employ someone with a disability .... 50
Table 2.9 Adjustments at the workplace .......................................... 57
Table 2.10 Ease of making changes to the workplace ....................... 62
Table 2.11 How much adjustments cost the workplace in the last 12 months ................................................................. 63
Table 2.12 Why changes were made at workplace ............................ 66
Table 3.1 Overall awareness of Part III of the DDA (spontaneous and prompted) by workplace size ............................ 77
Table 3.2 Knowledge of the Act ........................................................ 81
Table 3.3 Awareness of final part of Part III of the DDA coming into force by workplace size ..................................................... 84
Table 3.4 Perceived effect of new provision on business by workplace size ................................................................. 85
Table 3.5 Perceived effect of new provision on business (single site or multi-site workplace) .................................................. 86
Table 3.6 Reasons given for expected level of impact of the legislation ...... 87
Table 3.7 Reasons given for no expected impact from the legislation .... 88
Table 3.8 Whether business has a policy on the provision of goods and services to disabled people by workplace size ............ 90
Table 3.9 Adjustments/practices made or planned at workplace to help customers with disabilities ........................................... 92
Table 3.10 Awareness of having made changes to workplace or working practices to assist disabled customers by workplace size .......... 96
Table 3.11 Whether staff have undergone training in issues relating to disabled customers by workplace size ........................................ 97
Table 3.12 Whether staff have undergone training in issues relating to disabled customers and clients ................................... 98
Table 3.13 Type of training provided to staff relating to disabled customers and clients .................................................. 99
Table 3.14 Reasons for making changes for disabled customers ................. 102
Table 3.15 Whether changes would have been made without legislation ... 102
Table 3.16 Problems/difficulties encountered in making the changes ........ 105
Table 3.17 Whether changes had a direct financial cost ................................. 106
Table 3.18 How much adjustments cost ..................................................... 106
Table 3.19 Reasons for no changes being made for disabled customers .... 109
Table 4.1 Awareness of both parts of the Disability Discrimination Act ..... 112
Table 4.2 Awareness of new requirements from 2004.............................. 114
Table 4.3 Existence of policies for disabled people .................................. 116
Table 4.4 Provisions in place for disabled employees/customers ................ 119
Table 4.5 Whether changes were made because of legislation ................. 121
Table 4.6 Whether changes made incurred an additional cost .................. 123
Table A.1 Outline of the case studies ....................................................... 134
Table B.1 Whether ever had disabled employees at the workplace .......... 138
Table B.2 Awareness of DDA: Part II .................................................... 140
Table B.3 Awareness of DDA: Part III .................................................... 141
Table B.4 Adjustments in place and/or planned – Employers ................. 143
Table B.5 Adjustments in place and/or planned – Service providers ........ 144

List of figures

Figure 2.1 Agreement with business statements ........................................ 41
Figure 2.2 How easy it would be to help disabled job applicants ............... 47
Figure 2.3 How easy it would be for workplace to make physical adjustments ........................................ 69
Figure 2.4 How easily workplace could change working practices ............ 70
Figure 2.5 Agreement with statements – recruitment and retention of disabled employees ........................................ 71
Figure 2.6 Agreement with statements – recruitment and retention of disabled employees ........................................ 73
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Summary

This research explores how employers and service providers are responding to both previous and forthcoming provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995. This report presents findings based on around 2000 telephone interviews and case studies of 38 employers and service providers. Both the telephone survey and the case studies focused on the workplace rather than the overall organisation, although managers at Head Office were also interviewed for the case studies. By focusing on the local workplace rather than the overall organisation it was possible to talk to line managers rather than HR specialists at Head Office and get at actual practice rather than policy. The research was carried out by the Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP) at Loughborough University, with the British Market Research Bureau (BM RB).

Key findings

• Overall, three-fifths of employers (62 per cent) were aware of Part II of the Disability Discrimination Act either spontaneously or when prompted. Knowledge of the employment provisions of the DDA was higher among larger organisations, and in public and voluntary sector organisations, as well as among employers at workplaces where there had been disabled employees. Smaller employers in particular (those with fewer than 15 employees) were unsure of the implications of the Act for their organisation. Knowledge of the forthcoming changes concerning the provision of services was usually higher in organisations within the public and voluntary sector. Nearly one-third of organisations that provide services were unaware of both the employment and the customer provisions of the DDA. The case studies showed that the concept of ‘reasonable adjustment’ was poorly understood and there was concern that the concept was too vague and therefore unhelpful in making decisions about tackling discrimination.

• After being prompted with the range of conditions that are covered under the DDA, nearly two-fifths of employers (37 per cent) said that their workplace had employed disabled people. Nearly one-quarter of employers (24 per cent) said that their workplace currently had at least one disabled employee.
• Nearly all employers (94 per cent) stated that their workplace always sought to recruit the best person for the job, regardless of any disability, yet many felt that taking on a disabled person is a major risk for the employer (33 per cent), and that their workplace would find it difficult to retain an employee who became disabled (47 per cent).

• Generally, most organisations had given little consideration to the potential adjustments that could be made to assist disabled people through the application and interview process.

• Over four-fifths of employers that have had disabled employees (83 per cent) said that there were adjustments at the workplace or to working practices specifically to help disabled employees. Workplaces which had sought information about employing a disabled person were more likely to have adjustments in place or planned for disabled employees.

• Overall, nearly three-quarters of service providers said that they had adjustments in place, or planned, to assist disabled customers. Service providers who were aware of Parts II and III of the DDA and those with a policy for disabled customers were more likely to have made, or planned to make, changes to accommodate disabled customers than those who were unaware of the legislation.

• Changes and adjustments which have been made or planned by service providers for their customers tended to be for those with physical impairments. Changes or adjustments which would be required for less observable types of impairment were less frequently reported as being in place or planned for the future.

• Typically, the DDA was not a key motivating factor in making adjustments; although it was more influential in changes made for customers than employees. Just over one-third of employers who had made changes to their workplace for disabled employees (35 per cent) said they did so partly as a result of legislation. The most common reasons cited for making changes were that it was the right thing to do for the disabled employee (98 per cent) and that they anticipated that the benefits would outweigh the costs (78 per cent). Business incentives, an awareness of positive public relations and the need to be seen to be embracing the needs of disabled people were often viewed as key factors for changes in customer provision. The case studies indicated that the DDA had acted both as a driver and a ‘road map’ for those organisations where a commitment to providing services for disabled people was already a core value.

• The cost of making adjustments for disabled employees was of concern to employers, especially small ones. There was a degree of uncertainty as to what constitutes ‘best practice’ among employers in the case studies. Impartial and authoritative guidance, including practical examples, would be welcome.
Summary

The Disability Discrimination Act

Under Part II of the Disability Discrimination Act, which came into force on 2 December 1996, it is unlawful for employers covered by the Act to discriminate against employees or job applicants on the grounds of disability. As part of the protection offered by the Act employers may have to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ to their recruitment arrangements and/or premises so that disabled people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared to other people. At that time the Act applied to employers with 20 or more employees. On 1 December 1998 the exemption threshold of 20 was reduced to 15, and the Government intends to remove it in October 2004 and cover most currently excluded occupations.

Part III of the Act places specific requirements on the way goods, facilities or services are offered to disabled people. It is unlawful to treat disabled people less favourably than other people for a reason related to their disability or impairment and reasonable adjustments must be made for disabled people (since October 1999). This includes the provision of auxiliary aids or services by alternative methods, as well as overcoming physical barriers by providing the service using a reasonable alternative method.

On 1 October 2004 the final stages of the access duties in Part III of the DDA will come into force. Part III will then require service providers to remove, alter or avoid physical barriers, or provide alternative means of using the service, where physical features of their services make access for disabled people unreasonably difficult or impossible.

Knowledge of the employment and service provision elements of the DDA

Awareness of the employment provisions of the DDA was usually higher in larger organisations, and in public and voluntary sector organisations as opposed to private sector organisations. Awareness of the legislation was also higher among employers at workplaces where there have been disabled employees.

The case studies showed that there was also greater awareness at Head Office rather than the local office level, although respondents’ knowledge of the Act also depended on their role. Human Resources specialists and policy advisers made most frequent spontaneous reference to the Act and could often state its content, including the requirement for reasonable adjustments and the 2004 changes. Local staff, particularly those in small single-site organisations, showed less knowledge of the Act.

Not all small organisations in the case studies (totalling under 15 employees) were aware of Part II of the DDA and questioned its implications for them. There was some concern amongst this group about having to comply with the Act by October 2004.
Only 30 per cent of service providers were spontaneously aware of laws giving rights to disabled customers or clients and only five per cent could name the Disability Discrimination Act. Just under one-half of service providers aware of legislation (46 per cent) knew of the forthcoming changes to Part III of the DDA.

Nearly one-third of service providers were unaware of both the employment (Part II) and the customer provisions (Part III) of the DDA, though awareness of Part II was slightly greater than of Part III.

The concept of ‘reasonable adjustment’ was poorly understood in the case studies, and some respondents were unaware of the term. Others considered the term subjective and difficult to interpret, although some speculated that relevant considerations must include ease of implementation, cost-effectiveness, feasibility, sustainability, and common sense.

**Policies for disabled employees and customers**

There were few examples of organisations with a separate disability policy for employees. Larger organisations tended to have some form of written policy at Head Office, most commonly an all-embracing Equal Opportunities policy in which there was a general anti-discrimination clause referencing disability, usually alongside gender, race and sometimes age. Even where written policies were in place at Head Office level, the case studies suggested that staff at the local workplace had limited knowledge about their content. Small, single-site organisations relied more heavily on verbal communication than any formal written policy.

The case studies indicated that very few service providers had a formal policy in place specifically for disabled people, although some respondents said that non-discrimination is a core value of the organisation expressed through customer care policies, plans and statements. Service providers were more likely to have policies in place specifically covering employees/applicants with disabilities, than for disabled customers.

In some cases, policies had been drawn up in response to the DDA, although in other cases it was reported that it would be difficult to draw up customer service policies on the basis of the DDA because the Act was perceived as vague (particularly the concept of ‘reasonable adjustment’).

**Recruiting and employing disabled people**

Two-fifths of employers (37 per cent) said that their workplace had employed disabled people and nearly one-quarter of employers (24 per cent) said that their workplace currently had at least one disabled employee. Voluntary and public sector workplaces were more likely to have employed disabled staff than private sector organisations. There was also a higher likelihood of employing disabled staff at workplaces where overall awareness of Part II of the DDA was reported, as well as at workplaces with an employment policy. There was a significant association between workplace size and likelihood of employing disabled staff, with larger workplaces more likely to have employed a disabled person than smaller workplaces.
Nearly all employers (94 per cent) agreed that their workplace always sought to recruit the best person for the job, regardless of any disability, with four-fifths (81 per cent) saying that they agreed strongly. There was, however, variation between sub-groups, with smaller employers slightly less likely to agree, and employers at workplaces that had never had disabled employees less likely to agree that they always employ the best person for the job.

However, many employers felt that it was difficult to employ somebody with a disability. With the exception of severe facial scarring, a significant proportion responded that it would be difficult or impossible to employ someone with any of the conditions listed in the questionnaire. Employers with fewer than 100 staff were more likely to report this than larger employers, possibly because the latter group may have a broader range of jobs to accommodate a wider variety of people. Nearly one-half of all employers said that their workplace would find it difficult to keep on an employee who became disabled. Workplaces which had employed disabled people were more likely to report that it is easy to employ a person with a disability.

There were misconceptions and myths around mental illness. For example, someone with schizophrenia was considered by the majority of employers to be difficult or impossible to employ. This finding suggests that little is understood by employers about the condition, given that someone with schizophrenia can control the condition with medication and would not require any physical adaptations to their work environment. Case study respondents expressed personal concerns about employing someone with schizophrenia because they had heard stories in the media of people with schizophrenia becoming violent. This suggests that schizophrenia sometimes carries a stigma and this may impact on an employer’s willingness to accommodate someone who has openly disclosed the condition. Similar misunderstandings were expressed concerning people with clinical depression.

One-third of employers (33 per cent) agreed with the statement that taking on disabled employees was a major risk for the employer. Encouragingly, employers at workplaces where there had been disabled employees were significantly less likely to agree with this statement than those where there had not (25 per cent compared to 39 per cent). Six per cent of employers at workplaces with over 100 employees agreed that it was major risk to take on a disabled employee compared to nearly two-fifths (38 per cent) of those with fewer than 15.

**Adjustments that have been made to employment and service provision by organisations**

The case studies indicated that companies appeared to have given little consideration to the potential adjustments that could be made to assist disabled people through the application and interview process. However, the survey showed that employers would not necessarily find it difficult to make special provisions for disabled people in the application process. For example, three-quarters of employers (76 per cent) said that it would be easy to guarantee disabled applicants an interview.
Nearly one in five employers at workplaces who have ever had disabled employees (17 per cent) said that they did not have any adjustments in place specifically to help disabled employees. It tended to be the smaller workplaces that did not have any adjustments in place specifically for disabled employees.

The cost of making adjustments was of concern to some employers in the case studies, especially small ones. It was felt that certain adjustments could be expensive. This was especially the case in relation to installing wheelchair lifts, ramps and accessible toilets which it was felt could all entail considerable building work. Even large case study companies considered themselves to have financial constraints, in spite of some large companies having ring-fenced funding reserved for DDA adjustments. However, 72 per cent of employers who had made changes said that it had been easy to make the adjustments, while only 14 per cent said that it had been difficult.

Seven in ten service providers reported that there were adjustments in place at their workplace to assist disabled customers. The changes and adjustments which had been made or planned by service providers for their customers tended to be for those with physical impairments. Changes or adjustments which would be required for less observable types of impairment were less frequently reported as being in place or planned for the future.

Workplaces with disabled employees were more likely to have made adjustments for disabled customers as were larger workplaces. Around four-fifths of service providers who had employed a disabled person had provision in place or planned for disabled customers.

**The effect of the DDA as a motivating factor for making adjustments**

More than nine out of ten (92 per cent) service providers who were aware that adjustments had been made to the way they provided services to disabled people stated that they were implemented because it was the ‘right thing’ to do for disabled customers. Sixty-eight per cent stated that the benefit of making the changes outweighed the costs. The case study evidence also suggested that business incentives (such as widening the customer base) were often viewed as key factors for changes in customer provision. Positive public relations were also seen as important, and some respondents highlighted customer expectations for certain provisions (for example, disabled accessible toilets) to be in place.

The DDA was more influential in changes made for customers than employees. The case studies showed that some organisations were already making provisions for their disabled customers before the Act. These changes had been introduced under a general ethos of looking after customers, or in reaction to customer feedback, rather than in direct response to the DDA. However, the case study findings also suggest that the DDA had acted both as a driver and a ‘road map’ for those organisations where a commitment to providing services for disabled people was already a core value.
Sources of information and advice
There was a degree of uncertainty as to what constitutes ‘best practice’ in making adjustments and respondents reported that practical examples would be welcome. There was little spontaneous mention of the Disability Rights Commission which points to potential for broader publicity of its role and services. One possibility would be for the Disability Rights Commission to establish and market a dedicated service specifically to help employers and service providers comply with the Act.

Conclusions
This finding suggests that there is a lack of knowledge about disability on the part of employers, in particular small employers, who have not employed a disabled person and that employers, especially small ones, still do not have as broad a perception of disability as is set out by the DDA. Disability still carries connotations of physical and visible impairments. There are misunderstandings and prejudices around mental illness. This points to the need for Government to counter the myths and misconceptions about disability and the requirements of the Act and the potential for a more general education and awareness campaign about the breadth of disability and the inclusion of conditions such as epilepsy and diabetes.

There was generally greater awareness of the DDA in organisations with a policy for disabled customers/employees/applicants compared to organisations without such policies. These organisations were also more likely to have made adjustments. This suggests that one way of concentrating minds would be to encourage organisations to set up policies for disabled people.
1 Introduction

This study explores how employers and service providers are responding to both previous and forthcoming provisions in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995.

The research objectives are:

• to explore how employers and service providers have responded to existing requirements of the DDA, in particular policies and practices on:
  - recruitment;
  - employment;
  - service provision;
• specifically, to examine:
  - awareness of the Act;
  - awareness and use of sources of advice and information;
  - adjustments made and planned;
• to explore whether, and if so how:
  - service providers are preparing for new access duties to be introduced in October 2004;
  - employers are preparing for the changes to the employment provisions including abolition of the 15-employee exemption threshold in October 2004;
• to investigate whether organisations (acting as employers and service providers) are adopting a holistic approach to the requirements of the Act;
• to identify the development of best practice and sources of information.
1.1 Background

The present Government is committed to achieving a fairer ‘inclusive society’, whereby people are given full opportunity to participate in all aspects of society, regardless of sex, age, ethnicity or ability (DSS, 1999, Treasury, 2002).

For more than 30 years disabled people in Britain have been calling for legislation which protects them from various forms of discrimination and which entitles them to the same rights as other members of society and which ‘outlaws and requires removal of the environmental and social barriers which prevent us from participating on equal terms in the ordinary activities of daily life’ (Davis, 1996). The position of disabled people in society led Gliedman and Roth (1980) to state that:

‘The label of disability carries with it such a powerful imputation of inability to perform any adult social function that there is no other descriptor needed by the public.’

(cited in Davis 1995:9)

The point that the authors made 20 years ago is that few people see beyond the impairment and that society does not allow a ‘disabled individual’ to be anything other than disabled. Various studies have shown that disabled people experience discrimination in all aspects of their lives and some authors have argued that it is not the inability of an individual which determines disability but society’s inability to adapt. For example Hahn (1986) suggests that:

‘Disability stems from the failure of a structured social environment to adjust to the needs and aspirations of citizens with disabilities rather than from the inability of a disabled individual to adapt to the demands of society.’

(Hahn 1986: 128)

Other studies have looked specifically at certain aspects of discrimination. For instance, Barnes (1991) explored the barriers and discrimination that disabled people encounter as they search for employment. More generally, research in the last decade examined the level of disadvantage that disabled people experience in the labour market. For example, they are up to three times more likely to be unemployed than are non-disabled people (although recent results from the Labour Force Survey estimate that disabled people are about 1.4 times more likely to be unemployed than non-disabled people). Research also shows that the incidence of unemployment might increase with the severity of the disability. (Martin et al., 1989, Prescott-Clarke, 1990, Berthoud et al., 1993; Hyde 1996; Loumidis et al., 2001a and 2001b; Office for National Statistics, 2002). Indeed, some disabled people moving from benefits to work face multiple disadvantages in the labour market (Ashworth et al., 2001)
Previous attempts to prevent discrimination have had limited success. For example, the 1944 and 1958 Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts introduced employment quota schemes\(^1\), which required all employers to recruit at least three per cent of its workforce from (registered) disabled people (employers with fewer than 20 employees were exempt from this legislation). However, these schemes were generally ineffective and very few employers were prosecuted for ignoring the quotas (Finn, 1993).

In 1979 the Committee on Restrictions against Disabled People (CORAD) was given the task of examining some of the barriers that created discrimination against disabled people. One of its recommendations was that there should be anti-discrimination legislation to make discrimination on the grounds of disability illegal. Despite the rising public awareness of disability issues, it was not until 1995 that legislation was introduced.

The DDA 1995 came into force on 2 December 1996. It introduced new laws and measures aimed at ending the discrimination which many disabled people face in the areas of: employment; access to goods, facilities and services; the management, buying or renting of land or property; and the duties of trade organisations to their members and applicants. The Act was seen by many as fundamental in shifting the emphasis away from a medical approach\(^2\), towards a societal or social approach that seeks to overcome disadvantage by adapting society, social and economic institutions to ensure that everyone’s abilities are accommodated (Priestley, 2000). Although some have argued that the barriers faced by disabled people are similar to those confronting non-disabled people, and that they have a mutual interest in securing equal rights and access to work, goods, services and premises (Christie with Mensah-Coker, 1999).

The DDA defines disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. ‘Long-term’ is usually defined as 12 months or more. More specifically, the Act lists a number of functions that may be affected, including mobility, manual dexterity, speech, hearing, eyesight and memory. People with a learning disability (such as difficulty concentrating, learning or understanding), or with a long-lasting clinically well-recognised mental health condition could also fit within the Act’s definition. As well as people who are currently disabled, the Act also covers those who have been disabled in the past. (Further details on the definition of disability under the Act are available in guidance issued by the Secretary of State (Secretary of State, 1996; DRC, 2002a).) The Act’s definition of disability is important, because previous research shows that employers and service providers adopt a rather narrow definition of disability that emphasises sensory and physical impairments (Stuart et al., 2002).

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\(^1\) The scheme was abolished with the introduction of the DDA.

\(^2\) Which looks for medical or rehabilitative ways to overcome disadvantage.
Under Part II of the Act, which came into force on 2 December 1996, it is unlawful for employers covered by the Act to discriminate against employees or job applicants on the grounds of disability (see also DRC, 2002b). As part of the protection offered by the Act, employers may have to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ to their recruitment arrangements and/or premises so that disabled people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared to other people. At that time the Act applied to employers with 20 or more employees and excluded certain types of employee, namely, police officers, fire fighters, prison officers, members of the armed services, employees who work wholly or largely outside Great Britain, and employees working on board ships, aircraft or hovercraft. However, most currently excluded occupations, including police officers, fire fighters and prison officers will also be brought within the scope of the Act’s employment provision from October 2004. On the 1 December 1998 the exemption threshold of 20 was reduced to 15, and the Government intends to remove it in October 2004. As a consequence, the study encompasses small businesses to explore how they are preparing for the forthcoming change in legislation.

Part III of the Act places specific requirements on the way goods, facilities or services are offered to disabled people (see also the Code of Practice (DRC, 2002c)). The Act defines as a service provider anyone who provides goods, facilities or services to the public or a section of the public in the UK. Thus, it excludes manufacturers and designers of goods and firms supplying services to other businesses; in addition, there are certain exemptions to the legislation, notably private clubs with a member selection process and the use of public transport. However, most services are covered, and under the Act:

- it is unlawful to treat disabled people less favourably than other people for a reason related to their disability or impairment (since December 1996); and
- reasonable adjustments must be made for disabled people (since October 1999). This includes the provision of auxiliary aids or services by alternative methods, as well as overcoming physical barriers by providing the service using a reasonable alternative method (for example, if a disabled person has difficulty accessing premises to providing an ‘at home’ service).

On 1 October 2004 the final stages of the access duties in Part III of the DDA will come into force. Part III will then require service providers to remove, alter or avoid physical barriers, or provide alternative means of using the service, where features of their services make access for disabled people unreasonably difficult or impossible. Examples of relevant physical features are steps, kerbs, parking areas, toilets, public facilities (such as telephones or counters), lifts and escalators.

3 If the number of employees falls below the current threshold then the employer becomes (temporarily) exempt. In addition, independent franchise holders are exempt if they employ fewer people than the threshold, even if the franchise network has more than 15 employees.
Part IV of the Act requires schools, colleges and universities to provide information about arrangements for disabled people. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 has amended the DDA, and since 1 September 2002 it has been unlawful for providers of educational and related services to discriminate against disabled people (including prospective students/pupils) for an unjustified reason related to their disability. Changes in the education sector are to be phased in three stages, ending in September 2005.

In addition, under Part V of the Act the Government has set minimum standards so that disabled people can use public transport easily.

Two previous studies of the Disability Discrimination Act have been published. These are Stuart et al. 2002, which examined how employers and service providers are responding to the Act and Meager et al., also 2002, which looked at the costs and benefits to service providers of making reasonable adjustments under Part III of the Act. For the reasons stated in Section 1.2.1, any comparisons between the present study and the previous studies must be treated with extreme caution.

1.2 Research design and methods

In this section we outline our research design and methodology. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were incorporated in the study in order to both explain and measure attitudes and responses to the DDA. Further details of the approaches taken for both methods are included below.

1.2.1 Quantitative method

The quantitative survey was conducted by telephone using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The interviews were conducted at the workplace level with the person responsible for the recruitment and management of employees at that site. All service providers at workplaces with over 100 employees were asked whether they were the appropriate person to answer questions about their customers. Service providers who said that they were not the most appropriate person were asked if they could provide details of who should be contacted. In total 17 respondents directed us to contact somebody else within the organisation, this was equivalent to less than one per cent of the weighted data set. All service providers at workplaces with 100 or fewer employees were presumed to have enough knowledge to be able to answer questions about their workplaces’ customers. In total there were 2,022 interviews with employers and the interview lasted an average of 25 minutes. Fieldwork was carried out at the beginning of 2003 in January and February.

Workplaces were randomly sampled within country and workplace size strata from the BT business database. Workplaces were sampled within strata as the intention was to over-represent larger workplaces and workplaces in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It was felt necessary to over represent these workplaces as a simple random sample would not deliver analysable sample sizes for these key groups of
interested. For analysis purposes the data has been weighted back to match the workplace profile of the Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR) as this provides a comprehensive count of workplaces in the UK.

Table 1.1 shows the proportion of workplaces interviewed by country and workplace size and the proportions they were weighted back to from the IDBR.

Table 1.1 Sample profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Original (%)</th>
<th>Weighted (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>84.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 or fewer employees</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 14</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 99</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100+</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample characteristics

This survey was conducted at the workplace level rather than at the level of the organisation as a whole. The term ‘organisation’ refers to the overall size of a business, whereas the term ‘workplace’ refers to each single business unit. Both variables will be referred to in the report. When referring to multi-site businesses, the term ‘organisation’ is used to refer to the business as a whole and ‘workplace’ to a local unit within the organisation. When referring to single-site organisations, the term ‘organisation’ and ‘workplace’ may both be used depending on the context. By focusing on the local ‘workplace’ rather than the ‘organisation’ it was possible to talk to line managers rather than HR specialists and get at actual practice rather than policy.

This is in contrast with the previous survey looking at how employers and service providers are responding to the DDA (Stuart et al., (2002)), which looked at the reporting level unit as its focus was more on policy responses to the DDA. This means that any comparisons with the previous survey must be treated with extreme caution as there are significant differences in the sampling frames used in the two studies.

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4 ‘Reporting unit level’ refers to the head office or regional office that files tax returns to the Inland Revenue.
Table 1.2 below shows the distribution of workplaces by the 1992 Standard Industrial Classification. As the armed services, and emergency services are excluded from the DDA, they were also excluded from the sample. Also excluded from the sample were some workplaces in the Education sector, specifically those in primary, secondary and higher education. Workplaces in adult and other education were included in the sample.

After the Employment section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked a further question about their workplace relating to their customers or clients to assess whether they were a service provider. If respondents stated that their customers were ‘members of the public only’ or ‘a mixture of the general public and other businesses or organisations’ they were defined as being providers of a service and went on to answer the second half of the survey.

It could be the case that businesses have a mixture of customer types such as other businesses and organisations AND members of the general public which may account for the appearance of some manufacturing or construction businesses in the service provider category which would not typically be considered as ‘service providers’.

**Table 1.2 Workplace SIC code**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIC Description</th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distribution and repair</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate, renting and business activities</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other community, social and personal activities</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and social work</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport storage and communication</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial intermediation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration and defence</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, hunting and forestry</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, gas and water supply</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining and quarrying</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All employers 2022

In addition to looking at the SIC of workplaces, we also asked employers whether their workplace was in the public, private or voluntary sector. Just over four out of five workplaces were in the private sector (82 per cent), one in ten were in the public
sector (nine per cent) and five per cent were in the voluntary sector. A further five per cent of employers were not able to say which category their workplace was in.

The size exemption in Part II of the DDA relates to the overall size of the business rather than the size of the workplace, so employers were asked whether or not their workplace was part of a larger business. Just over two-fifths of employers said that their workplace was one of a number of workplaces belonging to the same organisation (42 per cent) and just under three-fifths said that their workplace was a single independent workplace (58 per cent). The overall organisation size for workplaces in the sample is shown in Table 1.3.

**Table 1.3  Overall size of business**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 or fewer employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 to 499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All employers 2022

Table 1.4 shows the job title of employers interviewed in the quantitative survey. Nearly two-fifths of employers either owned or were directors of their business (44 per cent), a similar proportion were responsible for the management of employees at their workplace (40 per cent). Only four per cent of respondents to this survey worked specifically in human resources or personnel.

**Table 1.4  Employers’ job titles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner/director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR/personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All employers 2022

**Analysis**

The analysis uses both bivariate and multivariate techniques. Bivariate analysis examines the two-way associations of each of a number of selected outcome variables with potential explanatory factors such as workplace size and workplace
sector individually in order to identify certain factors as potentially important. An examination of each of these two-way associations helps to illuminate particular workplace characteristics that appear to distinguish organisations who are more likely to employ disabled people or make adjustments. However, as many of these characteristics are themselves inter-related, logistic modelling was also used to identify those characteristics that showed independent associations with the employment of disabled people.

**Logistic regression**

Logistic regression analysis is a statistical tool by which the key characteristics that distinguish organisations who are more likely to employ disabled people could be identified. It compares the likelihood (or odds) that known characteristics distinguish one group from another, and estimates the statistical significance of these differences. At the same time, it controls for other characteristics which are included in the analysis model. Further details of the method of logistic regression analysis are provided in Appendix B.

**1.2.2 Qualitative method**

The case studies were conducted using qualitative depth interviews. There were 74 interviews in total across 385 case studies, and interviews generally lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. The sample was recruited from a list of workplaces taken from the BT Business Database and interviews conducted with staff at the sampled workplace, and where appropriate, at the head or regional office of the organisation. The fieldwork was carried out between April and July 2003.

**Analysis**

The case studies were analysed using a tool called Matrix Mapping. The interviews were transcribed in full and then summarised into analysis charts. The analyst then reviewed the charts, comparing and contrasting the perceptions, accounts, or experiences and searching for patterns or connections within the data set.

**Sample characteristics**

The purposive sample aimed to maximise diversity in order to ensure that as wide a range of opinion and experience was explored. For this reason, the sample included employers only and employers who were also service providers. Case study interviews were conducted across the UK in the North, Midlands and South of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to ensure a geographical spread.

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5 The number of case studies increased from the original research design due the difficulty encountered securing the proposed (up to five) number of interviews per larger case study. Hence, additional case studies were included in the research often with fewer interviews conducted per case study, therefore obtaining the required number of interviews overall.
The sample was based on the size of workplace, as measured by number of employees (see Table 1.5). The actual number of staff in workplaces ranged from three to over one thousand. The sample covered workplaces that were stand-alone operations and those which were part of organisations with multiple outlets. Most workplaces employing 100+ staff were part of multi-site organisations and similarly more of those employing 3-14 staff were single-site rather than multi-site operations. Overall organisation size varied from a one-site organisation of three employees to those with thousands of outlets.

### Table 1.5 Number of employees at case study workplace/ organisation structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3-14</th>
<th>15-99</th>
<th>100+</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single-site</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-site*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22 + 1*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* One multi-site business was not based at a workplace level

There was also considerable variation in the number of staff employed throughout an organisation, ranging from as few as three staff in single-site organisations to tens of thousands in the larger Government and international organisations.

Although spread across sectors, the case study sample predominantly consists of private sector organisations (see Table 1.6). It does also include public sector organisations such as local authority and Government agencies, but only one voluntary sector organisation. All of the employer only case studies were private sector companies.

### Table 1.6 Case study sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Voluntary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employer only</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment service provider</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employer only businesses included construction, wholesale suppliers and manufacturing industries covering a range, e.g. food, alcohol, electroplating and transport production. Service providers covered financial/legal services, hospitality and leisure services, public services, food and non-food retailers, childcare, transport and media services. Most provided services through face-to-face contact with customers, though this differed for a small minority who used telephone or postal contact, e.g. for a surveyor, or produced forms of media for public consumption.
The aim of the case studies was to conduct local workplace-based interviews and where an organisation was part of a multi-site operation, to also conduct interviews with Head Office personnel to gain an organisational perspective.\(^6\)

The number of interviews depended on the size of workplace and overall organisation. In larger workplaces more interviews were secured (up to four at a local level) and included staff in specific roles such as personnel, customer service, and TU reps.

Local level interviews were most often with people involved with recruiting and training staff. In some larger workplaces interviews took place with staff in a specific role, such as Personnel/Training managers where there was such a role, or Customer Service managers for some service providers. However, in smaller workplaces or organisations, the workplace manager, partner or proprietor of the business had a more generic role.

Where case study workplaces had a separate organisational Head Office, interviews were often with organisation Personnel and/or Training Managers. In a few cases interviewees were in specialist Disability or Diversity roles. In some, notably the larger organisations, roles included Employment Law, Occupational Health, and Policy managers. Again in smaller companies who had a separate Head Office, roles were more generic, for example, Company Operations manager or a Partner of the firm.

1.2.3 The report

- Chapter 2 examines how employers have responded to existing requirements of the DDA, in particular awareness of the Act, sources of information and advice, policies and practices on recruitment and employment and adjustments made or planned, in particular whether employers are aware of the abolition of the 15-employee exemption threshold in October 2004;

- Chapter 3 examines service providers’ awareness of the Act, sources of information, and advice, policies and practices for customers with disabilities and adjustments made or planned, in particular whether service providers are preparing for new access duties to be introduced in October 2004;

- Chapter 4 investigates whether organisations (acting as employers and service providers) are adopting a holistic approach to the requirements of the Act;

- The Conclusion summarises the key chapter findings and identifies the development of best practice and potential sources of information to heighten awareness of the new provisions.

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\(^6\) In a small minority of case studies it was not possible to secure both Head Office and local interviews.
2 The employment of disabled people: Employers’ responses to Part II of the DDA

2.1 Introduction

Part II of the DDA makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate against disabled employees and applicants. In the original legislation small businesses were exempt from all of the provisions within Part II, although they were covered by Part III of the Act relating to service providers. The initial definition of a small business was one with fewer than 20 employees. In accordance with the DDA this was revised downwards to fewer than 15 employees in 1998. In October 2004 the Government intends to remove this exemption altogether.

This part of the research aims to explore:

- awareness of Part II of the DDA and its provisions;
- adjustments in place at workplaces with disabled employees;
- the proportion of workplaces employing disabled people; and
- how recruitment practices affect disabled applicants.

Throughout this chapter the following conventions have been used in tables:

* Figure less than 0.5 per cent (weighted)
0 No observations

Where Chi-square tests have been applied, responses of ‘don’t know’ or ‘not stated’ were excluded from the sample tested in each individual case.
In particular, this research aims to assess to what extent employers who are currently exempt from Part II of the legislation (who employ fewer than 15 staff in the overall organisation), are aware of the changes that will come into force in October 2004. The research also seeks to assess the attitudes of employers to employing disabled people on a number of key issues.

Section 2.2 of this part of the report looks at awareness of the DDA, what is contained in current legislation and employers’ perceptions of disability. Section 2.3 examines the employment of disabled people in the workplace. Following this, Section 2.4, describes existing employment policies and practices ‘on the ground’. Section 2.5 covers recruitment practices, including how difficult employers perceived it to be to employ people with a variety of specified conditions. The penultimate Section, 2.6, seeks to assess what adjustments are in place to help disabled employees and why changes have been made. Finally, Section 2.7 explores employers’ attitudes to employing disabled people at their workplace and in general.

2.2 Awareness and knowledge of the DDA employment provisions

2.2.1 Spontaneous awareness of legislation

All employers were asked whether they were aware of any legislation giving rights to employees and job applicants with long-term health problems or disabilities. Respondents who said yes were asked if they knew the name of the legislation and interviewers then coded the responses as either ‘Yes – DDA’, ‘Yes – some other name’, ‘Yes – don’t know name’ and ‘Not aware of any legislation’. The results are shown in Table 2.1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spontaneous awareness of legislation</th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes – DDA</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes – some other name</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes – don’t know name</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not aware of any legislation</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base: All employers</strong></td>
<td><strong>2022</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three-fifths of employers (63 per cent) said they were aware of some legislation giving rights to disabled employees or applicants. When asked the name of the legislation, half of all employers said that they did not know. However, one in ten employers (10 per cent) were able to spontaneously name the DDA. A small number
of respondents mentioned other generic names such as ‘Equal opportunities’ or ‘Disability Act’.

Employers in larger workplaces were more likely to be aware of legislation giving rights to disabled employees and job applicants, 92 per cent in workplaces with 100+ employees compared to 60 per cent in workplaces with fewer than 15 employees. They were also more likely to be aware of the DDA. Three-fifths of employers in workplaces with 100+ employees (60 per cent) spontaneously named the Act compared to just six per cent of those with fewer than 15 employees.

Taking into account overall organisation size, a similar awareness trend is observed to that seen with increasing workplace size. Over half of employers at workplaces which were part of an organisation with up to six employees were aware of some legislation (56 per cent) compared to nearly three-quarters of employers at workplaces in organisations comprising 500 or more employees (74 per cent).

Awareness of the legislation was also higher among employers at workplaces where there have been disabled employees. Over two-thirds of these employers (69 per cent) were aware of some legislation compared to just under three in five employers at workplaces where there had never been disabled employees (59 per cent). These employers were also more likely to name the DDA specifically, 16 per cent compared to just six per cent of employers at workplaces which had never had an employee with a disability.

Nearly nine in ten employers in the voluntary sector (88 per cent) and four-fifths of employers in the public sector (78 per cent) were aware of legislation giving rights to disabled employees compared to just under three-fifths of employers in the private sector (59 per cent). They were also more likely to be able to spontaneously name the DDA, 26 per cent compared to seven per cent of employers in the private sector.

Employers at workplaces which were part of a larger organisation were more likely to be aware of legislation than those whose workplace was a single-site (68 per cent compared to 59 per cent). These employers were also more likely to specifically name the DDA than employers at single-site businesses (16 per cent compared to five per cent).

The case studies mirrored the quantitative findings in that knowledge of the DDA was usually higher in larger organisations (of 100 or more personnel overall). There was greater awareness at Head Office rather than the local office level. Respondents’ knowledge of the Act also depended on their role. Human Resources specialists and policy advisers (again usually based at Head Office) made most frequent spontaneous reference to the Act and could often state its content, including the requirement for

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8 This and subsequent analysis of overall size is comprised of workplace size for cases of single-site workplaces and the overall organisation size for workplaces which were part of multi-sites.
reasonable adjustments and the 2004 changes. Local staff, particularly those in small single-site organisations showed less knowledge of the Act.

‘A lot of the staff who aren’t management, aren’t supervisors aren’t aware of it …’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

Respondents who did not spontaneously mention the DDA in the survey were then given a brief description of the Act and asked whether they were aware of it prior to the survey. A further 52 per cent of all employers were aware of the Act when prompted, so in total just over three-fifths (62 per cent) had heard of the DDA. Interestingly, two-fifths of employers (39 per cent) who had said they were not aware of any legislation when asked initially said they had heard of the DDA when prompted.

Employers in larger workplaces were more likely to have a higher overall awareness of the DDA (spontaneous and prompted combined) than those in smaller workplaces. Nearly all employers at workplaces with 100+ employees had heard of the DDA (93 per cent) compared to just over half of employers at workplaces with six or fewer employees (56 per cent). Employers at workplaces that have had disabled employees were also more likely to have heard of the DDA, 70 per cent compared to 57 per cent of employers at workplaces which have not employed disabled people. Employers in the public and voluntary sectors were also more likely to be aware of the DDA than those in the private sector. Seventy-one per cent of employers in the public sector and 75 per cent of employers in the voluntary sector were aware compared to 61 per cent of employers in the private sector. Employers whose business had a policy covering the rights of disabled employees were also more likely to be aware of the DDA, 71 per cent compared to 53 per cent of employers whose business did not have a policy covering the rights of disabled employees.

The results of the multivariate model showed that, when analysed together, workplace size, presence of a policy giving rights to disabled employees and whether employers currently have disabled employees remained significant factors. However, the sector of the workplace was no longer a significant indicator of awareness. Full details of the analysis conducted can be found in Appendix B.

2.2.2 Sources of information about the DDA

Employers who were aware of the employment provisions of the DDA were asked how they first heard of the Act. The media tended to be the main source of awareness at smaller workplaces. Nearly a third of employers at workplaces with six or fewer employees (31 per cent) said they had heard of the Act through the media, compared to just under one in ten of those at workplaces with 100 or more employees (eight per cent). The business itself was a source of awareness for employers at workplaces with over 100 employees, with nearly one in five mentioning HR/Head Office (19 per cent) and a similar proportion mentioning training (19 per cent).
The case studies also reflected the survey findings in that the media was felt to have been an important factor in raising disability awareness. The Internet was a favoured information tool for those staff actively seeking information about the DDA and disability-related matters. It was the first point of reference for some respondents. There was positive mention of the DTI and DWP as well as the Disability Rights Commission websites. There was little spontaneous mention of the Disability Rights Commission itself within the case studies overall however. There was isolated comment that, although helpful, the Disability Rights Commission can be difficult to contact.

‘It’s proving frustrating and more difficult to get actually in contact with them because they’re obviously being used very, very heavily now.’

(ESP/3-14/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

Some of the larger companies interviewed within the case studies had run training sessions for their Head Office staff to inform them of the provisions of the Act. Local managers who were aware of the DDA said that it was through the organisation’s intranet or via training.

### 2.2.3 Factors impacting on awareness

The case studies identified factors that impacted upon employees’ levels of knowledge of the DDA. In larger organisations (100+ personnel) external advisers and experts such as Human Resources advisers or legal consultants appeared to have filtered information through. There was also mention of information being passed from Disability Employment Advisers in Jobcentres. Some larger organisations used internal or external Occupational Health professionals who were considered the organisation’s specialists with regard to the DDA and a key reference point in dealing with an employee disability issue. There was also an example of the DDA being mentioned through an organisation’s trade union. In addition, companies that belonged to forums felt that issues relating to legislation were raised at these. Forums were considered a useful platform for discussion of the practical implications of legislation and exchanging suggestions about best practise. They were also felt to produce useful practical guidance for companies, although at a cost. One example of this was Employers’ Forum on Disability guidance packs, which one manager had found very useful, even though his organisation had had to pay for them.

‘The Employers’ Forum produce these really, really good packs and they have got information from making practical adjustments for people with back problems or diabetes ... everything you could possibly think of.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head Office)

Smaller organisations within the case study sample rarely had recourse to specialist advisers or expertise, perhaps one reason why their knowledge of the DDA was generally lower. In small companies, individuals frequently performed numerous roles and felt they had little time to source specialist information. The expense of paying consultants was considered too high for some smaller organisations. Even
some of the larger companies (100+ staff) that had once had a designated equality, disability or policy specialist had terminated the role in an effort to reduce costs. Nevertheless, there were reported benefits of having personnel dedicated to monitoring legislation:

‘Big companies, they have HR people, that’s all they do, day in day out, but if you haven’t got a dedicated member of staff doing that then I am sure it is quite difficult and I am sure the smaller the store, the harder it must be, because if you are running a greengrocer how do you get hold of this information?’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Multi-site/Head Office)

2.2.4 Awareness of the main provisions of legislation

All employers who said they were aware of some legislation were then asked a series of questions to ascertain their level of knowledge as to what was covered by it. First of all, they were asked to describe, in their own words, what the main provisions of the legislation were. The most common responses are shown in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2 Main provisions of legislation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provision</th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No discrimination on grounds of disability/ill-health</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal consideration for job applicants</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal opportunities</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasonable provisions and adjustments in the workplace</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility to facilities/buildings</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal rights</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair chance for all</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory positive discrimination/disability quotas</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled people have equal ability to do the job</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusting job and workload to meet needs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All aware of DDA or some legislation 1561

Nearly half of all employers aware of legislation said that the legislation made it illegal to discriminate on grounds of ill-health or disability (46 per cent). It was also a common assumption amongst the case study staff that there must be anti-discrimination legislation in existence (even when detailed knowledge was low).
‘I would have thought you were obliged to treat every person equally. I would have thought that is the main objective. That you are not allowed to discriminate against anybody because of the fact that they have got a disability.’

(ESP/3-14/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

Around one in six said that equal consideration had to be given to all job applicants (16 per cent) and a similar proportion mentioned equal opportunities (15 per cent). Other descriptions of provisions in the legislation focusing on the general area of equality were ‘equal rights’ (seven per cent) and ‘a fair chance for all’ (seven per cent). Overall, nearly three-quarters of employers gave a description of the legislation that focused on promoting equality or banning discrimination.

Just over one in ten employers (13 per cent) said that the legislation required them to make ‘reasonable’ adjustments to the workplace for their disabled employees. These employers tended to be from the larger workplaces, 51 per cent at workplaces with over 100 employees. However, it is worth noting that around one in ten employers from workplaces with fewer than 15 employees (10 per cent) were also aware of this and it was the fourth most common description of the legislation’s provisions. There was a view among some of the more senior case study staff that awareness of companies’ obligations to consider adjustments in the workplace had improved over time due to publicity of the DDA.

Encouragingly, only three per cent of employers thought that the legislation meant that there were mandatory quotas on the number of disabled people that they had to employ. This was the only misconception about the legislation that was mentioned in any notable numbers.

Around one in six employers who were aware of some legislation (16 per cent) said they did not know what the main provisions were. As might be expected, employers at smaller workplaces were more likely to say this. A fifth of workplaces with fewer than six employees (20 per cent) could not describe the legislation’s provisions compared to three per cent of employers at workplaces with over 100 employees. Employers at workplaces which had never had disabled employees were also more likely to say that they could not describe the provisions of the Act, 20 per cent compared to nine per cent of those where there have been disabled employees.

Staff interviewed within the case studies sometimes felt that the Government could have fed more information directly through to them rather than leave companies to source information themselves. One manager even felt that this extended to a moral obligation. This view tended to be expressed by the smaller, private organisations that did not have specialist personnel designated to update the organisation on legislative changes.
‘If the Government introduces the Act then I think the Government has a moral obligation to inform companies what they want them to do. It just seems pointless to set up Act after Act and not have any kind of communication so that people are aware of it. There may be things that people could do, or grants available, that people don’t know about.’

(EO/3-14/Private/SINGLE-site)

It was suggested that the most useful communication would be in uncomplicated, concise language.

‘I don’t tend to read legislation ... I’m not a lawyer so I tend to go for interpretations of it, and guidelines ... it’s a question of making any legislation guidelines user-friendly ... that a non-legal expert can read and understand.’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

Someone suggested producing a memo that might be passed down to staff at all levels within the organisation. Practical examples of changes made and the resultant benefits were considered more useful than detailed legal text. Staff who were aware of the Codes of Practice said that they had found them very useful.

‘I want to see real examples. You know, if there were – And if this is going to be helping people decide how to educate us, the HR community, and managers in general, then short real examples, because I can’t stand reading lots of pages of stuff, I just want it short and sharp.’

(EO/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head Office)

2.2.5 Reasonable adjustment

Overall, the concept of reasonable adjustment was poorly understood and, as evidenced by the case study participants, there was considerable uncertainty as to what is meant by it. Respondents who did know of the provision for reasonable adjustment interpreted it in different ways. Some people considered reasonable adjustment in relation to current employees and did not spontaneously consider its relevance to job applicants, whereas others felt that it applied to everyone. There was a tendency for case study respondents to interpret reasonable adjustments in light of access issues and to think of large-scale adjustments such as installing accessible toilets and lifts rather than small ones (perhaps also because of the immediate association of wheelchairs with disability).

‘We would look into access and all that would be dealt with from Head Office.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

Respondents expressed a desire for clearer guidelines about specific issues in relation to the Act:

- What is ‘reasonable’ in the context of my business?
- What examples of best practise can I draw on?
‘The law has been written to be fairly vague and open because disability is such a wide area. But I think there could be some basic guidelines, some ground rules that everybody could work to, which might be useful ... A guide as to what is reasonable, what is good practice for a business to do in particular areas. That’s the sort of thing we’ve struggled to find in the areas of disability.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site, Head office)

There was awareness that there had been debate surrounding the question as to what constitutes ‘reasonable’ and larger organisations in closer contact with the Government anticipated further clarification in this area.

### 2.2.6 Changes to the legislation

Employers who were aware of legislation were then asked a number of questions about the size exemption for smaller businesses that is due to be removed in 2004.

Firstly they were asked whether they were aware that the legislation included an exemption for businesses with fewer than a certain number of employees. Just over two-fifths (42 per cent) said that they were aware of this exemption. The proportion of employers at businesses who are affected by the exemption (those with fewer than 15 employees) was very similar (43 per cent). Looking at all employers at organisations with fewer than 15 employees, a third of these employers (13 per cent) were aware of legislation giving rights to disabled employees and that there was an exemption for smaller businesses.

All employers who said they were aware of the exemption were asked what they thought was the maximum number of employees a business could have to be exempt. A quarter said that they did not know the level the legislation set. Three in ten (30 per cent) thought that the exemption was set at fewer than ten employees, this was especially the case amongst employers at the smallest workplaces (38 per cent). In total over half of employers aware of the exemption (54 per cent) knew the correct level or thought it was lower than it currently is, compared to just one in five (20 per cent) who thought it was higher.

Employers who were aware of the exemption were then asked whether they were aware that it is due to be lifted and one in eight said they were (13 per cent). These employers were then asked whether they knew when it was to be lifted, and nearly two-fifths (38 per cent) knew that it was going to be lifted in 2004.

Nearly one in ten employers at organisations with fewer than 15 employees who were aware that there was an exemption in the legislation (nine per cent) knew that this exemption will be lifted. This was equivalent to just three per cent of all employers at organisations with fewer than 15 employees, the group that will be affected by the change. While this may seem like a small proportion, it should be remembered that this is because a large number of employers were not aware of an exemption to begin with.
The case studies revealed some anxiety on the part of personnel in small organisations (with under 15 employees). They were not all aware of Part II of the DDA and questioned its implications for them. There was some concern about having to comply with the Act by October 2004.

‘Until you came along and spoke, although we knew of the Disability Act, we didn’t actually know it was going to be extended to a reduced number of employees. The Government are just passing the buck down the line ‘you will do this’, but not telling anyone about it … and then everyone will start getting fines if they are not doing their job right.’

(EO/3-14/Private/Single-site)

2.2.7 Awareness of what is meant by disability

In addition to measuring awareness of the Act and its provisions, the quantitative survey also attempted to find out what employers understood by the term ‘disability’. This was important in order to uncover whether individuals’ definitions and the Act’s definition of disability correlated. The DDA defines a disability as:

‘A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’

It is important to note here that the Act does not specifically cover a list of conditions but defines disability as a condition that impacts on day-to-day activities.

The term ‘day-to-day activities’ must include:
- mobility - moving from place to place;
- manual dexterity - for example, use of the hands;
- physical co-ordination;
- continence;
- the ability to lift, carry or move ordinary objects;
- speech, hearing or eyesight;
- memory, or ability to concentrate, learn or understand;
- being able to recognise physical danger.

In addition to this, the Act can also cover people with severe disfigurements, people with progressive conditions and those who had a past disability.

Employers were read out a list of nine conditions which may qualify as disabilities under the Act and asked whether they considered somebody with that condition to be disabled. The proportions are shown in Table 2.3, along with the precise descriptions provided in the interview. The wording of the descriptions avoided reference to degree of severity, as this is a subjective matter, and, aside from a disability being something which limits day-to-day activity, few specific degrees of severity are specified as qualification criteria in the Act.
Table 2.3  Proportions considering condition to be a disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobility problems – difficulty getting around or moving from place to place</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifting/dexterity problems – difficulties using their hands to lift or carry everyday objects</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facial or skin disfigurement</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing impairment – which affects their ability to take part in everyday speech</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual impairment – not corrected by glasses</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A mental illness</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A learning difficulty – used to be called a mental handicap</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A speech impairment – which affects their ability to take part in spoken conversation</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A progressive illness such as cancer or Parkinson’s disease</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All employers 2022

Given that each of the conditions described may qualify as a disability under the DDA, the results of this question are perhaps surprising (Table 2.3). None of the conditions was universally acknowledged as a disability, and acknowledgement fell to as low as one in 12 respondents for facial or skin disfigurement.

The case study findings were broadly similar to those of the survey but also enabled us to understand perceptions of disability more fully. When asked for their personal definition of disability, respondents usually raised mobility (often in relation to wheelchairs), sight and hearing difficulties spontaneously. Learning disabilities were also mentioned. There was a tendency, however, for people to equate visual above hidden conditions and physical above psychological ones with disability.

‘Generally people think, people with a disability are people who can’t get about, don’t they? … They do, they think they can’t get about or, they can’t walk very well, or, you know, they are blind or they are deaf, or whatever, and I mean I have to say, I probably wouldn’t have thought that mental illness or depression is a disability. On face value, you wouldn’t would you?’

(E0/3-14/Private/Single-site)

There was a general perception that disability is a long-term condition (often acquired from birth) that affects a person’s ability to function as fully as their peers. One view was that only someone who was registered disabled would be covered under the DDA, whereas another was that any medically recognised condition might be covered. Respondents’ associations with disability were influenced by their personal exposure to it. Respondents within the case studies included some disabled people, who had sometimes read the DDA provisions for their own information so they had greater insight into how the Act defines disability.
When prompted with the list of conditions (also used in the quantitative survey) respondents struggled to recognise certain conditions as disabilities. Respondents questioned why drug-controlled conditions were disabilities, the rationale being that disability usually affects someone’s daily performance, whereas a drug-controlled condition may only occasionally impact upon an individual’s performance.

‘Things like diabetes or epilepsy would affect a job but I wouldn’t have thought of that personally as being a disability as such, it’s a condition, sure.’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

Conditions such as Multiple Sclerosis also caused some confusion because of their variable and intermittent nature, as did psychological conditions which were considered challenging to define, largely due to the perceived variability of individual cases. The DDA description of disability as a condition that has lasted 12 months or more was not familiar to many case study respondents. Some senior staff made spontaneous mention of this guidance but even then it was questioned how easily a time-scale could be attributed to a condition, especially if the condition was erratic. This also raised the question as to when an illness or health problem becomes a disability.

Some respondents could not always understand why aesthetic conditions such as facial scarring counted as disabilities either, because they struggled to identify how such a condition would impact on someone’s ability to function in the workplace. In some cases, respondents did not consider the impact on the individual as spontaneously as they might do with a wheelchair user, for example. However, other peoples’ reactions to this kind of disability were considered more spontaneously.

‘I don’t think a facial scar prevents you from doing your job or from moving about or anything.’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

The question arose as to why the Act was retrospective and people who had been disabled in the past were still covered by the DDA. This was particularly so for employers who had not knowingly employed a disabled person. Employers questioned who would fall under this description and questioned why employees were covered if they were not currently ‘disabled’.

‘Someone who was disabled in the past but they’re OK now ... Not very clear that bit. I knew about people who come in with disabilities and if they get disabled through the workplace ... but that’s it.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

However, employers with staff who had undergone operations (such as kidney transplants) or been in severe accidents, found it easier to relate to why such individuals were included in the Act.

There was also confusion as to what can or cannot be classified as a disability. Staff said that back problems were a common complaint among employees but there was
some doubt as to whether back pain is classified as a disability or not. One senior manager made a reference to the problem of alcoholism and drug addiction among employees, commenting that these were common issues worth the organisation’s attention. The manager in question was aware that these conditions were not covered by the DDA but suggested that companies should have policies to cover these categories as well.

The case studies also highlighted how difficult it can be for an organisation to understand a person’s condition fully. Back pain was one condition, for example, which even doctors found difficult to assess and relied on individuals’ recounted experience in order to judge its severity. Staff said that they had received very ambiguous medical reports in relation to back pain, leaving it largely up to the employee to define how it was affecting them and what their limitations were. This illustrates the extent to which disability is largely self-defined by the person in question. It was considered by respondents to be important to treat each person independently in acknowledgement that individual perspectives can be very different.

‘You may have two people with a condition and one person may consider themselves disabled and one may not. And how you consider that comes back to people being individually assessed on what they are able to do.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

An additional problem for staff was employees disclosing rare conditions that staff had little knowledge about. In these instances, employers either referred cases on to an occupational health specialist or sought more detail about the condition from the employee in question or specialist organisations. Such specialist organisations and charities were felt to have been useful additional sources of advice.

The survey findings indicated that employers at larger workplaces (100+ employees), those with better than average awareness of the DDA, and the voluntary sector were most likely to acknowledge each of the conditions listed in Table 2.3 as a disability. The scale of the difference was much lower where overall acknowledgement was higher (for example mobility problems), but much larger where overall acknowledgement was low (for example, facial or skin disfigurement).

These differences are not surprising. The voluntary sector may typically contain a relatively high proportion of staff working with, or on behalf of, disabled people, or on related matters, and can therefore be expected to have higher acknowledgement. Large organisations, particularly the very large with 500+ employees, have high awareness of the DDA, so these two elements ‘merge’, and very probably reflect the fact that in such organisations the respondents tended to have been human resource professionals.

Interestingly, past or current employment of a disabled person did not make a major difference to acknowledgement of the specified conditions as disabilities. Though such ‘experienced’ employers did tend to have slightly higher levels of acknowledgement in this respect, the difference from those without such experience was not large in most cases.
The findings from the case studies highlight a marked lack of knowledge about disability on the part of employers and staff. The findings emphasise a need for clarification of specific issues, including:

- What is the difference between disability and sickness/illness?
- What is covered under the category of employees who have been disabled in the past?
- How ought employers to treat intermittent/unstable conditions?
- What is the significance of the severity of each individual condition (e.g. when does hearing difficulty become a disability)?
- When does registration/medical certification become an issue for consideration?

The language of disability was also raised as a point of interest. Case study participants suggested that ‘disability’ can have negative connotations for some people and carry a degree of stigma.

‘I think there’s still a stigma attached to disability regardless of how much progress has been made. You speak to someone with a disability especially if it’s visible then they will tell you for the most part they are still treated differently. Certain organisations have done a lot of work trying to overcome that and try to reduce the impact of the stigma, but in a sense it’s still there.’

(EIF/100+/Private/Single-site)

One respondent suggested that this might be due to the word itself which focuses on the negative impact of a physical or psychological condition; someone’s ‘inability’ to function. There was also a rejection of the broad label of ‘disability’ as conditions and individuals were felt to differ considerably.

‘It’s horrible to class somebody, to put them in that sort of bracket.’

(EIF/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

2.3 Employment of disabled people

2.3.1 History of disability in the workplace

After hearing the conditions that are covered by the Act, employers in the survey were asked whether or not their workplace had ever had a disabled employee. The questionnaire was structured this way after piloting had shown that respondents were sometimes saying that they had never had a disabled employee but then contradicting themselves later in the interview (at least as far as the DDA definition is concerned). By, in effect, prompting the respondent to think of the DDA’s wider definition of disability, it was possible to make a better assessment of its impact on the ground. The cases studies also reflected the tendency of staff to claim never to have employed anyone who was disabled but then later recall someone with a hidden disability. This supports the finding that many conditions covered under the
DDA are not thought of as disabilities. The point was also made that employees themselves may not always acknowledge or recognise that they have a disability, either through ignorance of the condition or definition, or a reluctance to be labelled ‘disabled’.

‘Most people with a disability don’t even know they’ve got it.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Single-site)

The proportion of employers involved in the survey who said that there had ever been a disabled employee at their workplace is shown in Table 2.4 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.4</th>
<th>Whether workplace ever employed disabled person by workplace size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 or fewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base: All employers</td>
<td>825</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly two-fifths of employers said that there had been a disabled employee at their workplace. As expected, the largest workplaces were more likely to have ever had a disabled employee. Nine in ten workplaces with over 100 employees (90 per cent) said there had been disabled employees working at the site compared to just under three in ten workplaces with six or fewer employees (27 per cent). Workplaces in the public and voluntary sectors were also significantly more likely to have had a disabled employee (54 per cent and 59 per cent respectively) than those in the private sector (36 per cent). Within the private sector, workplaces in manufacturing (43 per cent) and agriculture, fishing and mining (44 per cent) were the most likely to have had disabled employees. Workplaces in the construction (29 per cent), transport (30 per cent) and Hotel and restaurant sectors (30 per cent) the least likely. There was no variation between workplaces whose customers were other businesses only, the general public or a mixture of both.

In order to look in more detail at the key factors behind the employment of disabled people, multivariate analysis was conducted that looked at variables that were significant at the bivariate level in a multivariate model. The results of the multivariate model showed that, when analysed together, workplace size, presence of a policy giving rights to disabled employees and awareness of Part II of the DDA were significant factors. The analysis also found that workplaces in the private sector were less likely to have had disabled employees than those in the public or voluntary sectors. Full details of the analysis conducted can be found in the Appendix B.
The case studies helped to illuminate these survey findings. Staff within the construction, transport and catering sectors often felt that the nature of their work precluded certain disabilities. It was considered impossible for someone with poor sight to drive, for example. In addition, the roles in these sectors were thought to demand a lot of physical work which, it was suggested, might be challenging for someone with restricted mobility. The environment of these jobs was felt to pose problems as well. This was either due to the constraints of space or for health and safety reasons. It was considered impossible to accommodate a wheelchair behind a bar, for example. Likewise, there was concern about employing people with certain impairments in a hazardous environment, for example, people with epilepsy in a kitchen or a chemical environment. It also was considered inadvisable to employ a disabled person on a construction site, due to the need for alert senses in order to avoid accidents.

‘Building sites are lethal ... for able bodied people, so to put someone in a wheelchair would be suicide.’

(EO/100+/Private/Single-site)

The repetitive nature of manufacturing was felt to make it easier for manufacturers to employ disabled people, including people with learning disabilities.

When interpreting these findings, however, it is important to bear in mind that those companies that had been in existence longer (usually the large ones) had more employment history to draw upon. Since companies did not have records of disabled employees, both the case study and the survey interviews were dependent on the respondent recalling how many disabled staff they had had. The level of respondents’ detail of knowledge varied depending on the relation of the respondent to their staff (for example, a line manager sometimes knew more about their employees’ health than someone with a policy function based at Head Office). The length of service of the respondents in question also had an effect, as staff with a shorter employment history within the organisation had less experience to draw upon.

### 2.3.2 Circumstances of disabled employees

Employers who said there had been disabled employees at the workplace were then asked whether any of them had been disabled before starting work there. Nearly three-quarters of these employers (73 per cent) said that the workplace had taken on someone who was disabled before starting work. Case study respondents could also describe a variety of applicants who had impairments ranging from cancer to hearing problems. It is worth noting, however, that these respondents said that they had not always been aware of the health problem or impairment when people were first taken on. This was especially the case for applicants with mental health conditions.

Employers were then asked whether there had ever been somebody who became disabled after starting at the workplace, just over a third said that there had (34 per cent). As might be expected, this was particularly the case at the largest workplaces,
74 per cent of workplaces with over 100 employees said that an employee had become disabled since starting there. The issue of work-related disabilities emerged through the case study interviews. Manufacturers, and especially employers whose staff were engaged in demanding physical activity, were conscious of the fact that some disabilities can be either aggravated or brought on by work. Repetitive strain injury and the development of allergies were two conditions of concern within production and manufacturing organisations. In some of these types of companies, employees were encouraged to undergo frequent health screening, whereas in others there was a more reactive approach to employees’ health with managers waiting for employees to raise any concerns with them.

2.3.3 Current disabled employees

Employers were then asked how many disabled employees there currently were at the workplace. Nearly a quarter of all employers (24 per cent) said that there was at least one disabled employee at the workplace. Unsurprisingly, the largest workplaces were significantly more likely to have disabled employees. Nearly nine in ten workplaces with 100 or more employees (87 per cent) currently had a disabled employee compared to just one in six workplaces with six or fewer employees (16 per cent). Interestingly, although large organisations often had disabled staff it was commented within the case studies that these people often filled more junior rather than senior positions. Respondents questioned whether it was as easy for disabled people as it was for their peers to progress within their organisation. It was difficult for them to assess this, however, as companies were not monitoring the disabilities of either their current employees or job applicants.

2.3.4 Disability monitoring

The lack of disability monitoring was felt to make it challenging for employers to gain a sense of overall numbers of disabled employees. Staff felt that disability issues were usually raised through employees approaching their line managers or immediate supervisors. Although some staff members within the cases studies felt that monitoring would provide useful insight into the range of impairments and possibly prompt closer consideration of potential adjustments, they were not always certain how their organisation would use the information and so it was questioned how much value it would bring. Respondents reported being generally wary of anything that entailed additional paperwork, unless there were clear benefits attached. Additionally, some were concerned about the ethics of monitoring for disability. Senior personnel, in particular, reported feeling uneasy about asking employees to disclose issues that they might feel uncomfortable about, and felt that they would welcome guidance as to how to go about monitoring in a fair and non-intimidating manner.

‘The thing is it’s not necessary to know sometimes. I mean I may be disabled but I may still be doing my job perfectly, and be treated as able-bodied. I don’t think employers can possibly know how many disabled people they have.’

(EO/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head Office)
2.4 Policies for disabled employees and applicants

The previous survey, Stuart et al., (2002), focused on employers at the Head Office level and so included a substantial number of questions about policies. As this survey focuses on employers at the workplace level it was decided that a large number of questions on policy would not be appropriate. Instead, the case studies focused on policy issues while the quantitative survey just looked at the presence of a policy at the workplace and some general statements about businesses’ practices towards disabled employees.

The case studies suggested that the overall organisation size was the most influential factor in determining whether or not an organisation had formal written policies. The larger organisations tended to have some form of written policy at Head Office. Most common within the case study sample was an all-embracing Equal Opportunities Policy in which there was a general anti-discrimination clause referencing disability, usually alongside gender, race and sometimes age and social status. In Northern Ireland, religious discrimination was a bigger issue than elsewhere in the UK and many companies referenced this as well. A specialist unit had usually drafted this policy, sometimes with the assistance of external legal consultants.

There were few examples of companies with a separate disability policy or recruitment policy. The DDA had prompted a few of the larger organisations to create a separate disability policy. There were examples within the case studies of large organisations in which guidance had been produced for distribution to staff, explaining the content and implications of the DDA for the business. Few of the companies within the case study sample had made recent changes to policy but where this had been the case, it tended to have been a reactive change. There was a view within some larger organisations that more attention needed to be given to their written policy, and these companies were undertaking policy reviews at the time of the research. It was unclear whether this had been prompted by the DDA research itself or other factors.

The survey suggested that there was some generic awareness of the existence of Head Office policy within local workplaces. When employers at local workplaces were asked whether their business has a policy covering the rights of disabled employees and applicants, over half of all employers (52 per cent) said that their business did have such a policy (Table 2.5). The question did not specify that this needed to be a formal written policy so informal policies based on precedent could be included. Also, a general equal opportunity policy could be regarded by respondents as covering the rights of disabled employees and applicants, even if it did not specifically reference them.
Table 2.5  **Whether business has policy covering rights of disabled employees and applicants by workplace size**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6 or fewer</th>
<th>7-14</th>
<th>15-99</th>
<th>100+</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All employers 825 534 484 177 2022

As might be expected, employers at larger workplaces were more likely to say that their business had a policy than those at smaller workplaces. Just under nine in ten employers at workplaces with 100 or more employees (86 per cent) were aware of a policy, while just under two-fifths of employers at workplaces with six or fewer employees (39 per cent) were aware of one. However, smaller workplaces that were part of a larger organisation were significantly more likely to say that their business had a policy in place than those that were a single-site (64 per cent compared to 35 per cent). This would be expected as, although they may not have human resource (HR) professionals on site, as part of a larger organisation there is a greater chance that they have staff at Head Office responsible for disseminating policy.

### 2.4.1 Local knowledge of policy content

Even where written policies were in place at Head Office level, the case studies suggested that staff at the local workplace (even at HR level) had limited knowledge about their content and respondents usually indicated that they would need to look up the detail. Organisations with better internal communication systems (usually organisations of 100+ employees overall) had filtered disability policy information down through their intranet and tried to incorporate basic awareness into training programmes. Diversity training initiated by HR personnel was one forum for raising awareness. Staff also mentioned discussing employee rights and entitlements upon induction. Staff handbooks appeared to be one popular means of raising staff awareness of their rights and obligations, although these tended to provide practical guidance rather than referencing specific policies. Local staff felt more supported when they knew where to look for information should the need arise. Not all local staff within the case study sample felt this was the case.

As suggested by the survey findings, small, single-site organisations relied more heavily on verbal communication than any formal written policy. When questioned about an absence of formal policy, staff sometimes acknowledged that ideally they would have one but cited limited time, a lack of legal expertise, and concern for mounting bureaucracy as obstacles.
‘I’m trying to do a catalogue, I’m trying to sort out sales reps, I’m trying to generate sales, I’m trying to survive, and believe me it hasn’t been very easy, and I mean, the last thing I’ve got time for really is to start looking at a load of legislation.’

(EO/15-99/Private/Single-site)

An additional deterrent was the perceived cost of employing external legal consultants. There was also a view in some smaller case study organisations that a written policy was unnecessary given the small number of employees (sometimes family members). It was generally felt by employers within small organisations that their intimate size promoted higher levels of trust and closer consultation than would be the case in a larger organisation.

2.4.2 The impact of other legislation

Within the case studies, the impact of additional legislation on employee rights was explored. Employers often alluded to Health and Safety requirements, not only as a source of protection for their employees but for them and their business as well. There was some concern among employers as to how to balance the requirements of Health and Safety regulation against the provisions of the DDA. For example, respondents may consider schizophrenia to be a potentially dangerous condition (even when drug controlled). Although the DDA discourages discrimination, these employers said that they might decide not to employ someone with schizophrenia in order to protect their customers and employees from potential harm and therefore ensure Health and Safety compliance. It was also suggested that because Health and Safety compliance is closely monitored (unlike the DDA at present) there might be more emphasis on that above the DDA.

2.4.3 Business practices

Having explored policy issues, the survey then explored business practices in relation to policy. Employers were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements about business practices at their workplace. The results are shown in Figure 2.1.
Just over four-fifths of employers (82 per cent) agreed with the statement that their workplace has equal opportunities for disabled employees. Nearly all employers at workplaces with over 100 employees (97 per cent) agreed with this statement, while just under four-fifths of workplaces with six or fewer employees (78 per cent) agreed. As might be expected, employers at workplaces that currently had disabled employees were also significantly more likely to agree that their workplace had equal opportunities for disabled employees (91 per cent compared to 79 per cent).

Three-quarters of employers (76 per cent) agreed with the statement that their workplace has good practices towards disabled employees. Again, it was employers at larger workplaces who were more likely to agree with this statement. Nearly all employers at workplaces with over 100 employees (98 per cent) agreed compared to seven in ten employers at workplaces with six or fewer (70 per cent). Employers at workplaces which have had disabled employees were more likely to say that their workplace has good practices (92 per cent) than those at workplaces which have never had disabled employees (66 per cent). This is to be expected, as employers at workplaces which have never had disabled employees will obviously find it harder to say what their practices would be. This is reflected in the fact that significantly more employers from workplaces which have never had disabled employees said ‘don’t know’ to this statement (19 per cent compared to six per cent). The case studies suggested that there was a degree of uncertainty as to what constitutes ‘best practice’ and that practical examples would be welcome.

Nearly half of all employers (47 per cent) agreed with the statement that their workplace would find it difficult to keep on an employee who became disabled. Employers at workplaces with six or fewer employees were significantly more likely to agree with this than those at workplaces with over 100 employees (53 per cent compared to 19 per cent). This is understandable, as employers at smaller workplaces...
will tend to have fewer resources with which to implement any necessary changes. Employers at workplaces where employees had become disabled were significantly less likely to agree than those where this had never happened (32 per cent compared to 49 per cent), although it is worth noting that a sizeable minority of these employers did still agree with this statement.

Just over a third of employers (34 per cent) said that their workplace did not have flexible procedures that would allow it to employ disabled people. This figure may seem quite high but the severity of disability was not specified in the statement so some employers may be considering the most extreme case that they can imagine, rather than saying that they could never employ a disabled person. This is evidenced by the fact that fewer than a quarter of employers who currently employ disabled people agreed with this statement (22 per cent). As might be expected, employers at smaller workplaces were more likely to agree that they do not have flexible procedures than those at the larger workplace (39 per cent at workplaces with six or fewer employees, compared to 16 per cent at workplaces with more than 100).

2.5 Recruitment and selection

The quantitative survey looked at employers’ recruitment and selection practices. The questionnaire looked at the use of health questionnaires, proactive encouragement of disabled applicants and steps that could be taken at the workplace to assist disabled applicants. In addition to this, employers were also asked how easy it would be for them to employ applicants with various conditions at their workplace.

2.5.1 Advertising of vacancies

In order to look at whether employers encouraged disabled applicants, it was necessary to establish whether or not they advertised vacancies at their workplace. Three-quarters of employers (76 per cent) said that vacancies at their workplace were advertised either locally or nationally including with recruitment agencies or Jobcentres. All of the workplaces with over 100 employees advertised vacancies and nearly two-thirds of the smallest workplaces employing six or fewer employees (65 per cent) said they did. The case study findings suggested that whether jobs were advertised to the general public or not depended not only on policy but the perceived ease of filling the position or finding a suitable candidate. When companies knew that demand would be high for the vacant post and had established contact with a prospective pool of talent (such as a local university), word of mouth was often considered to be an adequate means of sourcing a suitable candidate. There was felt to be a greater need to advertise jobs that demanded specific, more unusual skills or experience and therefore could not be sourced internally.

Within the survey, all employers whose workplaces advertised vacancies were then asked whether they took certain steps in their job adverts to encourage disabled
applicants. They were asked whether reference was made specifically to the rights of disabled applicants, whether reference was made to an equal opportunities policy and whether the Two Ticks disability symbol is shown. The results are shown in Table 2.6 below.

**Table 2.6 Policies referenced in job adverts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An equal opportunities policy</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rights of disabled applicants</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Two Ticks disability symbol</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of these</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All who advertise vacancies 1599

Nearly half of employers (47 per cent) referenced one of the measures when they advertised vacancies at their workplace. The most common measure referenced was an equal opportunity policy (46 per cent), although this may not specifically cover the rights of disabled applicants. Around one in six employers (16 per cent) referenced the rights of disabled applicants in their job adverts, although this was significantly higher amongst the largest workplaces. Over half of workplaces with 100 or more employees (51 per cent) mentioned the rights of disabled applicants compared to one in ten workplaces with six or fewer employees (11 per cent). The Two Ticks symbol was used by less than one in ten employers (nine per cent), most of whom were at large workplaces (35 per cent of workplaces with 100+ employees compared to six per cent of those with fewer than 15).

There was discussion within the case studies as to what constitutes best advertising practice.

It was questioned whether or not to elaborate upon an equal opportunities statement. Some organisations chose to qualify what is meant by equal opportunities (for example that it covers race, gender, disability etc) as this was felt to add clarification. Other organisations chose not to add further explanation as it was felt that additional small print is costly and may be ignored completely for appearing unwieldy.

Some organisations preferred not to include any form of equal opportunities clause through concern that this may signal positive discrimination practices that they do not operate. There was also concern among some, usually smaller, organisations about stipulating that they are open to considering disabled applicants for fear that they may not then be able to accommodate a disabled person in a specific role. Case study participants questioned whether a disability or equality clause was necessary provided that adverts appeared in locations that were accessible to disabled people.
‘By advertising there, I’m going to reach as many disabled people as there are available in the same way as I’m reaching able-bodied people. So, I’m presuming that I don’t have to do too much to change the way I advertise.’

(EO/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head Office)

Case study respondents questioned whether sufficient thought had gone into ensuring that their advertisements were accessible to disabled people. The case studies also raised the issue that some organisations advertise heavily through Jobcentres or recruitment agencies and in these instances depend on these bodies not to discriminate.

‘We don’t really see anybody other than what the Jobcentre send to us. It may be more this type of discrimination is going on, is coming from the Jobcentres, maybe they are not giving the disabled people the chances to come for jobs.’

(EO/3-14/Private/Single-site)

2.5.2 Health information

Employers within the survey were then asked whether or not applicants to the workplace are required to give information about health and disabilities at any stage in the application process. This was in order to understand how health information was used within organisations and whether it was being used to affect selection decisions or to help make adaptations for interviewees or potential employees. Just over half of all employers (54 per cent) said that, at least sometimes, they asked for this information. As might be expected it was the larger workplaces, who will tend to have formal applicant selection procedures in place, who were more likely to ask for this information. Three-quarters of workplaces with over 100 employees asked for health information (76 per cent) compared to just over half of all workplaces with 7-14 employees (55 per cent) and just over two-fifths of workplaces with fewer than six employees (42 per cent).

Respondents who said that their workplace did, at times, request information about health and disabilities were asked if the information was used for a number of purposes. The results are shown in Table 2.7 below.
### Table 2.7 Purpose of health information by workplace size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of Health Information</th>
<th>6 or fewer</th>
<th>7-14</th>
<th>15-99</th>
<th>100+</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help make practical arrangements to allow employee to do their job</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess whether workplace would be suitable for the applicant</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess suitability for the job</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor the composition of the workforce</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base: All who ask questions about health/disability</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>1096</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eighty-five per cent of employers said that they used the information about health and disabilities to help them make practical arrangements at the workplace, to allow the employee to do their job. There were no significant variations between subgroups for the likelihood to use health information for this purpose. Four out of five employers (80 per cent) said that they used the information to assess whether the workplace would be suitable for the applicant. Smaller workplaces were more likely to say they used the information for this reason. Over four-fifths of employers at workplaces with six or fewer employers said they used health information to assess the workplace’s suitability for the applicant (83 per cent) compared to seven in ten employers at workplaces with 100 or more employees.

Just under seven in ten respondents (68 per cent) said that they used the information about health and disabilities to assess the applicant’s suitability for the job. Smaller workplaces were again significantly more likely to mention this as a purpose of the health information. Seven in ten workplaces with fewer than 15 employees (71 per cent) used health information to assess the applicant’s suitability compared to a half of workplaces with 100 or more employees (50 per cent). This is perhaps due to the comparative ease with which a larger workplace can accommodate a new employee with health problems due to more developed resources such as occupational health therapists. Within the case studies respondents felt that the behaviour of one member of staff (for instance, taking significant sick leave for health reasons) could have greater impact in a small organisation. Case study respondents said that it was necessary in some cases to conduct rigorous health checks in order to ensure compliance with Health and Safety regulations. To give one example, a food manufacturer said that they would be forbidden to recruit anyone to the processing factory who suffered from a contagious skin condition, as it would jeopardise the hygiene of their produce. There were examples of companies in which the Health and Safety team was consulted to ensure that a potential employee would not pose a threat to themselves or others in their benchmarked role.
‘If we had someone with severe epilepsy it would not affect them being taken on but we would want to consult Health and Safety to check that they were not a danger to themselves or others.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

Respondents in the case studies reported that health questionnaires were usually completed at the point of making a job offer rather than at the initial stages of the application process. Staff felt that this helped to eliminate discrimination. There was a view that this has changed over time as companies have become more aware of equality issues. Nevertheless, this also raised an interesting dilemma: is it better to know about someone’s disability prior to interview so that adequate provision can be made? Some companies had tackled this issue by inviting applicants to disclose a disability in an application form and asking ‘Do you have any special requirements for interview?’ It was suggested that some applicants still might be unwilling to disclose this information for fear of being discriminated against. This could suggest that it is better for companies to ask applicants about adjustments only after having offered them an interview, however, case study staff said that it could be important to know that someone had a disability at application stage in order not to discriminate against them. One such example was of a manager who said that his organisation would normally discard a badly worded application form with mistakes unless an applicant was known to have dyslexia in which case the organisation would be more likely to make allowances for this.

Managers had numerous examples of disabled applicants who had chosen not to disclose them at application stage.

‘Managers do get a bit concerned and upset because they send out the application form and people don’t actually say that they’ve got an issue and I think that might be because people fear that it’s going to be held against them.’

(EO/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

The failure to disclose disabilities was viewed with concern, not only because it was felt to signal a sense of mistrust of companies’ recruitment processes, but also because it was considered potentially dangerous at times. One food retailer gave the example of a girl who did not disclose a peanut allergy in her application form and when working in close proximity to nuts, experienced anaphylactic shock. It was, therefore, felt that some applicants ought to have a duty to disclose disabilities that may impact on their work or the people around them.

Managers felt that they would welcome guidance and advice about best practice in relation to recruitment. It was suggested that the best approach may be to treat disability as a standard consideration from the outset as this would signal that the organisation is used to disabled applicants and open to discussion about potential adjustments.
2.5.3 The ease of making adjustments to the application process

Part II of the DDA makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a disabled person ‘in the arrangements which he makes for the purpose of determining to whom he should offer employment’. Employers were asked how easy it would be to take certain steps to assist disabled job applicants. These questions were posed hypothetically in order to gauge how easily these steps could be made in future, if not already taken. The results are shown in Figure 2.2.

**Figure 2.2 How easy it would be to help disabled job applicants**

Providing disability awareness information for staff involved in recruitment was regarded as easy to do by nearly four-fifths of employers (78 per cent). Employers in the smallest workplaces were the least likely to regard it as easy although, even amongst them, only four per cent thought that such a measure would be impossible. Just over seven in ten employers at workplaces with fewer than six employees (73 per cent) said it would be easy to provide disability awareness information to staff, while nearly all employers at workplaces with more than 100 employees (95 per cent) said this would be easy.

Perhaps surprisingly, over three-quarters of employers (76 per cent) said that they would find it easy to guarantee disabled applicants an interview. This of course is not the same thing as guaranteeing a job to a suitable disabled applicant, but nonetheless is an encouraging result. There was one case study organisation that was considering a written policy that guaranteed anyone with a disability an interview.

‘We’re trying to develop a guaranteed interview scheme whereby anybody who says they have a disability and who meets the criteria for the job will be guaranteed an interview.’

(ESP/100+/Public/Multi-site/Head office)
Larger workplaces were slightly more likely to say this would be easy. Just over four-fifths of workplaces with 100 or more employees said that this would be easy (83 per cent) compared to just over seven in ten workplaces with six or fewer employees (73 per cent).

A slightly smaller proportion of employers (72 per cent) said that it would be easy to check at the interview stage whether the applicant would need any adaptations or adjustments if appointed. This seems a small proportion given that employers were just being asked if they could check information from the applicant. However, this may simply reflect the fact that some employers were thinking about the ease of making any changes rather than simply enquiring about changes that might be necessary. Again, employers at larger workplaces were more likely to say that this would be easy for them to do. Over nine in ten workplaces with 100 or more employees (91 per cent) said that it would be easy to check for adaptations that may be required compared to just over two-thirds of workplaces with six or fewer employees (67 per cent).

Just over two-fifths of all employers (42 per cent) said that it would be easy for them to provide application forms in alternative formats. Among the larger employers this was significantly higher. Over three-fifths of employers with 100 or more employees said they could provide application forms in alternative formats (62 per cent) while two-fifths of employers at workplaces with fewer than 15 employees said they could (41 per cent).

Providing help with communication, such as a sign language interpreter, was something that very few employers felt they could do easily (16 per cent) and nearly a fifth (19 per cent) thought that this would be impossible. It was suggested within the case studies that the time it can take to book an interpreter (sometimes a couple of weeks) might also prejudice a potential candidate, as not all employers may be willing to wait.

Overall, the findings from the case studies suggested that companies had not given a lot of consideration to the potential adjustments that could be made to assist disabled people through the application and interview process. This was acknowledged to be a potential area for improvement. Most companies within the case study sample had made accommodations reactively, once applicants had disclosed disabilities rather than open up a dialogue offering to make adjustments from the outset.

Senior staff interviewed within the cases studies commented that recruitment personnel still had some anxieties about what they should and should not ask in interview in relation to disability and would benefit from further training about how to ask an applicant about their requirements. The case studies revealed examples of employers who had best practice guidelines in place, recommending that applicants be asked whether they need any adjustments for interview. However, not all employers followed this practise.
'It [recruitment guide] explains what is good for equality purposes ... so if someone calls up for an interview, on our application form it asks if they have any disabilities and could they let us know so we can make adjustments for the interview.'

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

2.5.4 Work experience

The research asked companies about work placements for disabled people as it was felt that experience might be an important way in which to increase one’s employability. It was not always considered easy to take on disabled people for work placements. The larger organisations within the case study sample, usually those with established links with disability organisations, offered greater opportunities than the smaller ones. However, it was sometimes recognised that companies could be doing more to actively forge links with organisations and offer work experience programmes.

2.5.5 Staff training

There appeared to be little by way of consistent, ongoing training for line managers in relation to disability. Training programmes tended to be more customer- or role-focused and not much attention given to employees’ rights. There were, nevertheless, numerous examples of individual staff having been trained to help disabled colleagues. The provision of this kind of training had often been contingent on a line manager to recognise the need for it and then act accordingly. Line managers had not always been fully trained to enquire about employees’ health needs and so a lot of what was happening in practice depended on the personality and competence of the individual in question.

2.5.6 The ease of accommodating specific disabilities

Employers were then asked how easy they believed it would be to employ people with certain conditions at their workplace. This was in order to explore how easy employers perceived it to be to accommodate specific disabilities and why. In total, employers were asked about 11 different conditions which can be covered by the Act. This did not attempt to cover all conditions that might be covered under the DDA but rather a cross-section of different conditions in order to explore how different conditions were perceived. The survey results for each condition are shown in Table 2.8.
Table 2.8  How easy it would be to employ someone with a disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>Difficult</th>
<th>Impossible</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair user</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthritis</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facial scarring</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profound deafness</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impaired vision</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning difficulties</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical depression</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizophrenia</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe stammer</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkinson’s disease</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilepsy</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base – All respondents
Weighted base – 2022

The results indicate that employers feel that it is difficult to employ somebody with a disability. With the exception of severe facial scarring, a significant proportion of employers felt that it would be difficult or impossible to employ someone with any of the conditions described.

Firstly, employers were asked how easy it would be to employ someone who needed to use a wheelchair. Three in ten employers (31 per cent) felt that it would be easy to employ somebody who needs to use a wheelchair but two-fifths (39 per cent) thought it would be difficult. Three in ten (29 per cent) thought it would be impossible to employ such a person. The greatest barrier to employers accommodating wheelchair users in the case study research was either the role in question or the nature of the workplace. Certain jobs (such as working behind a bar) were thought to demand a particular level of physical activity which, it was felt, would preclude wheelchair users. Some offices and work environments were acknowledged as having poor access and it was not always considered easy to adapt them, especially when the building was listed or leased them from a third party. The cost of making adaptations also played a part in decision-making and will be discussed later on.

‘There are certain jobs that people in wheelchairs just wouldn’t be able to do ... Some counters are so deep or high that they would not be able to work there.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

A person who has arthritis that can at times severely limit physical ability was considered easy to employ by just over two-fifths of employers (42 per cent), yet
nearly half (48 per cent) said that someone with the condition would be difficult to employ and one in ten (nine per cent) thought that it would be impossible. The case studies corroborated this finding, although it was commented that a lot would depend on the role in question and the way in which someone’s arthritis affected them.

Of all the conditions mentioned, someone with **severe facial scarring** was considered to be easy to employ by the highest proportion of employers. Perhaps this is because this condition was most unlikely to be acknowledged as a disability (just eight per cent regard it as a disability). Nine in ten (90 per cent) employers said someone with this condition would be easy to employ, nine per cent thought it would be difficult and just one per cent thought it would be impossible. Nevertheless, some organisations admitted a reluctance to employ someone with facial scarring or physical disfigurement in a sales or public-facing role for fear of diminishing the brand image. There was also concern to protect staff from members of the general public who may be rude or make them uncomfortable if they were in a public-facing role.

‘Somebody I would say who has a severe disfigurement is something where I’d put them in an office environment where people are used to them, and can cope with it.’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Single-site)

A person who is **profoundly deaf** was felt to be amongst the most difficult person with a disability to employ, with only a quarter (24 per cent) of employers considering someone with this condition easy to employ and over three-fifths (63 per cent) saying it would be difficult to employ someone with this condition, and one in eight (13 per cent) saying it would be impossible. Staff interviewed within the case studies suggested that people with severe hearing impairment would struggle in a communication role and felt that this significantly narrowed down their options. Not much spontaneous consideration was given to possible alternative means of communication and this will be further explored in the section about reasonable adjustments. There was an example in one organisation of someone who had been appointed to a call centre via a recruitment agency. The call centre manager had turned him away assuming that his hearing impairment would prevent him answering the phone. The individual had then accused the organisation of discrimination as he said that he had made reference to adjustments that would enable him to perform the role. The organisation had admitted liability and settled out of court.

Someone with **severely impaired vision** was also thought by the majority of employers to be difficult to employ. They were also most likely to be considered ‘impossible’ to employ. Only eight per cent of employers felt someone who has severely impaired vision would be easy to employ, over three-fifths (62 per cent) thought it would be difficult to employ someone with this condition and three in ten (30 per cent) said it would be impossible. Case study interviews showed that severely impaired vision was felt to have a significant impact on a person’s ability to carry out
most roles, physical or desk based. There was concern about the risk that the environment might also pose to a sight-impaired person as well (also mentioned in relation to deafness). Not all employers felt that their premises were hazard free. Nevertheless, there were examples of companies that had employed people with severe visual impairment and it was commented that recent technological advances render accommodation easier, although it was also questioned whether new technology is advertised widely enough.

Over half of employers thought that it would be difficult or impossible to employ someone with learning difficulties. Under two-fifths (38 per cent) felt it would be easy to employ somebody with learning difficulties, half (51 per cent) considered it would be difficult and eight per cent thought it would be impossible. Most staff interviewed within the case studies felt that whether they could accommodate someone with a learning disability depended on the nature of the work. There was a perception that candidates with learning disabilities would cope well with repetitive and manual tasks but that it would be inappropriate to place them in jobs which demanded multi-tasking or complex subject matter. The ability of companies to accommodate applicants was, therefore, often felt to be dictated by how many manual jobs they had within the organisation. Most roles within the case study organisations were felt to demand some multi-tasking and this may explain the difficulty personnel had in the survey envisaging how they would accommodate someone with a learning disability.

A person with clinical depression was considered easy to employ by just under half of employers (47 per cent), however 44 per cent felt that it would be difficult to employ someone with this condition and four per cent thought it would be impossible. Some case study respondents also voiced apprehension about employing someone with depression. The main concern appeared to be the amount of absence an employee with depression may need to take off and how this might impact on fellow staff. This was felt to be of particular consideration the more demanding the role and the smaller the organisation’s number of employees. One director acknowledged that he would probably favour someone who did not have depression over someone who did in a sales role, since he considered liveliness and ‘spark’ to be key attributes of a potential candidate.

Someone with schizophrenia was considered by the majority of employers to be difficult or impossible to employ. Just 18 per cent of employers thought that someone with the condition would be easy to employ, nearly three-fifths of employers (58 per cent) felt that it would be difficult and 15 per cent thought it would be impossible to employ them. This finding is surprising given that schizophrenia can be controlled with medication and therefore not require any physical adaptations to the work environment. Given such a high proportion of employers would consider it difficult or impossible to employ someone with this condition suggests that little is understood by employers about the condition. Certain members of staff interviewed within the case studies expressed personal concerns about employing someone with schizophrenia because they had heard stories in the media of people
with schizophrenia becoming violent and hurting others. This would also suggest that schizophrenia sometimes carries a stigma and this may impact on an employer’s willingness to accommodate someone who has openly disclosed the condition.

‘Schizophrenia, I don’t think that’s … You’re not going to employ somebody, certainly not dealing in a public capacity.’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

However, the opposite view was also expressed:

‘There’s a lot of prejudice around mental illness. Government has a role to play in educating away these prejudices and misconceptions. We’ve done quite a lot for people with physical disabilities but not enough in terms of tailoring jobs for people with mental illnesses.’

(ESP/100+/Public/Multi-site/Local office).

Over half of employers (52 per cent) thought that someone with a severe stammer would be easy to employ, just over two-fifths (43 per cent) felt they would be difficult to employ and three per cent thought it would be impossible to employ them. Case study interviews suggested that the main challenge with this type of impairment was felt to be how it impacted on someone’s ability to communicate. Employers suggested that it would not be appropriate to offer someone with a speech impediment a customer-facing role but that they could be given a back office role more easily.

‘Speech impairment ... depending on how severe it is, because if you think about the fact we’re a retail, customer-facing businesses, that could have an impact on a face-to-face customer role.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

Someone with Parkinson’s disease was considered to be easy to employ by three in ten employers (29 per cent), over half felt that it would be difficult to employ them and eight per cent thought it would be impossible. Staff interviewed in the case studies had some concerns about employing a person with a progressive condition for fear that they may have to keep making more and more accommodations. They felt it would be difficult to know when it was ‘reasonable’ to stop.

‘The difficult one will be the progressive illness such as cancer, multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer’s disease and the path of Alzheimer’s can be really short or very long.’

(ESP/100+/Public/Multi-site/Local office)

Finally, employers were asked how easy it would be to employ someone with Epilepsy. Overhalf (52 per cent) thought a person with this condition would be easy to employ, just over a third (36 per cent) thought it would be difficult and nearly one in ten (nine per cent) felt it would be impossible. Case study personnel usually said that provided that the condition was drug-controlled they could not envisage too many limitations apart from certain roles which were felt to be unsuitable for
someone with epilepsy, due to the risk it may pose to them. One such position was anything involving dangerous electrical equipment (for example a kitchen-based role). There were examples of employers moving people who had experienced epileptic fits into back-office positions away from potential hazards. It was sometimes questioned what someone with epilepsy should and should not be allowed to do. For example, one food retailer had told someone that because of their epilepsy it was inappropriate for them to work at the checkout because of the potential for the lighting to provoke a fit. The individual in question (whose condition was controlled with drugs and who had not experienced a fit in three years) had complained that this was discriminatory.

It is noticeable that employers are more likely to feel that it would be impossible to employ somebody who has a condition that directly impacts on their physical ability than someone who has a disability that does not. Nearly three in ten employers (29 per cent) felt it would be impossible to employ somebody who needs to use a wheelchair and a similar proportion (30 per cent) felt it would be impossible to employ someone with severely impaired vision. This compares to just one per cent of employers who thought it would be impossible to employ someone with severe facial scarring and three per cent who felt it would be impossible to employ someone with a severe stammer.

There are also some interesting trends amongst the subgroups in relation to respondents’ perceptions of employing disabled people. Larger employers (at workplaces with 100+ staff), those that have employed disabled people, and the voluntary sector were most likely to consider that it is easy to employ disabled people.

For all 11 conditions mentioned, employers at workplaces with 100+ staff were more likely to feel that it would be easy to employ people with that condition than smaller employers (fewer than 100 staff). For example, 62 per cent of larger workplaces felt that it would be easy to employ someone who has learning difficulties compared to 38 per cent of smaller workplaces. Case study evidence suggested that because large organisations did not always recruit to a specified role this could afford them greater flexibility than smaller organisations in creating a role for someone. The point was also made that larger organisations tend to have a broader range of jobs, making it easier for them to accommodate a wider variety of people.

‘I think that a lot of it comes down to size because in a large organisation there are a lot more opportunities for people to move into.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

Not surprisingly, workplaces which have in the past employed or currently employ disabled people were more likely to feel that it is easy to employ a person with a disability. For example, one in seven (14 per cent) employers who currently employ disabled people feel that it is easy to employ someone with severely impaired vision compared to just five per cent of employers who do not currently employ disabled people.
Of the three employment sectors, the voluntary sector was most likely to consider that it is easy to employ someone with a disability. As mentioned earlier, voluntary sector employers will comprise a relatively high proportion working with disabled people and related matters, so this finding is not surprising.

Overall, the case studies indicated that the ease with which an organisation could employ someone with a disability depended on a number of factors. First, the nature of the organisation appeared to be key as this dictated the range of jobs available and the diversity of the roles in question. Secondly, the requirements of the role an organisation was recruiting to were felt to be key. There were some roles felt to demand a minimum level of mobility, communication, comprehension or interpersonal skills which was felt to eliminate certain disabilities. This issue points to the importance of job descriptions in helping disabled applicants to determine whether or not they have the capacity to perform a specific role. Not all companies had job descriptions in place or made explicit job descriptions available at application stage. Lastly, staff’s personal views and prejudices clearly also had a bearing on how willing they would be to accommodate someone with a disability. As seen in relation to some mental health conditions, personal prejudice could have an influence.

Some staff members interviewed within the case studies felt that more effort is currently made to accommodate existing employees who became disabled than to embrace disabled applicants. This could be driven by a number of factors, including:

- the value placed on current employees in terms of their skills and abilities (especially where employees were well known and liked);

- a fear of the implications of current employees taking legal action. (It was felt that current employees would also have a stronger legal case against an employer than a job applicant);

- the considerable cost of replacing an employee (especially in the case of highly skilled and experienced individuals).

‘I mean, I suppose in truth, if somebody came in for an interview and said ‘I’m depressed’, right, they wouldn’t get the job because basically you want somebody sparky and, you know? If somebody had worked for you well and then had a bout of depression and one thing and another, then okay, we’d treat it like any other illness.’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Single-site)

It was commonly suggested within the case studies that if a disabled person had the best skills for the job that they would be the preferred candidate. However, some employers admitted that if there were two candidates displaying equal skills then the disabled person would probably be rejected in favour of the alternative candidate. There was additional concern about exercising positive discrimination in favour of someone who is disabled.
‘If you had two people who were otherwise identical and one was disabled and one wasn’t, it would be difficult to make a choice wouldn’t it? Because on the one hand if you chose the able person you fear being accused of disability discrimination, and on the other hand, if you chose the disabled person ... you’d feel you were doing it for the wrong reasons...’

(EO/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

There was an expectation amongst some case study respondents that disabled employees would be less productive than their counterparts and this was felt to deter some employers from taking on disabled staff.

‘The honest truth is retail is very tight at the moment, budgets are very tight and if you have got someone who is going to be working who is not going to be producing the same output as somebody else the store will certainly be grateful if they get some funding at the very least.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

The issue of productivity also raised an interesting additional issue. Some organisations had provisions in place whereby disabled employees could be set lower productivity targets where necessary. However, in some other organisations where there were disabled employees who were less productive than their colleagues, this was not taken into account. This, therefore, meant that local managers were effectively penalised by the fact that they had disabled staff because no allowance was being built in for their staff’s lower productivity when judging their local branch’s performance. It could be argued that this might deter local managers from employing disabled staff, although there was not enough evidence to either refute or support this within the case studies.

2.5.7 Seeking advice

All employers were asked whether they had ever sought advice on any aspect of employing disabled people, this could include advice about making physical adjustments to the workplace or advice about legal requirements. This was in order to identify both how easily people had found information and what the areas of uncertainty were. A fifth of employers (20 per cent) said they had sought advice. Employers at larger workplaces were more likely to say they had sought advice, 68 per cent of employers at workplaces with 100+ employees compared to 13 per cent of those with six or fewer employees. As might be expected workplaces that have had disabled employees were more likely to have sought advice, 36 per cent compared to 10 per cent of workplaces that have never had a disabled employee.

Employers who said they had sought advice on employing disabled people were then asked from where they had sought advice. A fifth of employers (20 per cent) had sought advice from within the business, either from Head Office or from other colleagues at the workplace. Just under one in five employers (17 per cent) said they had sought advice from a Jobcentre. The next most common sources of advice were local or planning authorities (13 per cent) and specialist consultants (12 per cent).
The case studies contained examples of people who had sought information about specific conditions. They had often contacted named organisations for this purpose (for example The National Society for Epilepsy) for more detailed information and guidance in order to understand a condition. The internet was found to be a useful tool for searching for information of this kind. Employers commented that it would be useful to receive guidance on the types of adjustment they might consider implementing for specific conditions. Individuals who had referred to the DDA guidance notes found these helpful and welcomed practical examples of solutions.

2.6 Adjustments at the workplace

Part II of the DDA requires that reasonable adjustments be made to help disabled employees at the workplace. To ascertain this, employers at workplaces where there had ever been a disabled employee were asked whether a number of adjustments were in place to specifically help disabled employees. After being read the list, employers were then asked if there was anything else at the workplace specifically to help disabled employees. The results are shown in Table 2.9 below.

Table 2.9 Adjustments at the workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjustment</th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car parking space for disabled employees</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible working time or varying hours for disabled employees</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapted work environment to help disabled employees (e.g. adapting premises, furniture, lighting)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible work organisation (e.g. transferring people to other jobs, rearranging work duties)</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferring people or jobs to other premises to assist disabled employees</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing appropriate physical assistance (e.g. interpreters for a person who is deaf)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing working from home for disabled employees</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No adjustments in place for disabled employees</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All where there have ever been disabled employees 835

Nearly three-fifths of all workplaces which have ever had disabled employees (56 per cent) said that they provided car parking spaces for disabled employees. The larger workplaces were significantly more likely to say that they did this. Over four-fifths of workplaces with 100 or more employees (84 per cent) provided car parking spaces, compared to nearly half of workplaces with fewer than 15 employees (47 per cent). Workplaces whose customers were ‘other businesses only’ were more likely to say that they had this provision than those who dealt with the general public (68 per cent compared to 53 per cent). This may be due to the fact that workplaces that deal
solely with other businesses tend to have larger numbers of employees and so have larger premises which they can allocate to car parking spaces for disabled employees. Employers who were aware of Part II of the DDA were also more likely to have this in place (61 per cent compared to 44 per cent) as were those who currently had disabled employees (59 per cent compared to 47 per cent).

A similar proportion of employers (55 per cent) said that they had flexible working time to help disabled employees. Larger workplaces were slightly more likely to do this. Three-quarters of workplaces with 100 or more employees (75 per cent) said they had flexible working time, two-thirds of workplaces with 15-99 employees (67 per cent) also said they did this, as did nearly half of the smallest workplaces with six or fewer employees (47 per cent). Workplaces in the public sector were more likely to offer this than those in the private sector (78 per cent compared to 50 per cent). Employers who were aware of Part II of the DDA were also more likely to say that their workplace had flexible working time (58 per cent compared to 48 per cent), as were those who currently had disabled employees (61 per cent compared to 46 per cent).

Just over two-fifths of employers (42 per cent) who have had a disabled employee said that there was an adapted work environment at their workplace. The largest workplaces were again more likely to have this adaptation in place. Just under three-quarters of workplaces with 100 or more employees (74 per cent) had an adapted environment while just under three in ten workplaces with six or fewer employees (29 per cent) had this in place. Workplaces in the public sector were significantly more likely to have an adapted environment for disabled employees than those in the private sector (68 per cent compared to 37 per cent).

Around a third of employers who have had disabled employees (35 per cent) said that their workplace had a flexible organisation that allowed employees to be transferred to other jobs, or work duties to be re-arranged. There was some difference between the small and very small workplaces, a fifth of those with six or fewer employees (20 per cent) had flexible work organisation compared to nearly a third of workplaces with seven to 14 employees (32 per cent). Workplaces with 100 or more employees were the most likely to say they had a flexible work organisation (82 per cent). Employers who were aware of Part II of the DDA were more likely to say their workplace had a flexible organisation (39 per cent compared to 24 per cent) as were those who currently have disabled employees (40 per cent compared to 23 per cent). Unsurprisingly, employers at workplaces that were part of a larger organisation were also more likely to say that they could be flexible in transferring jobs and roles (46 per cent compared to 24 per cent). As mentioned before, smaller companies generally considered themselves to be more constrained due to the limited number of staff and magnified impact of one employee’s behaviour on his/her colleagues. Over half of employers at public sector workplaces (54 per cent) said that they had a flexible work organisation compared to three in ten of those in the private sector (31 per cent). The case studies found that dedicated staff within the public sector organisations also recognised that they were covered by the DDA and felt themselves to have a moral obligation to comply.
‘I’d know that as a public authority that we have clear responsibilities under the Act but also, I think, there is moral responsibilities as a large recognised servants of the public.’

(ESP/100+/Public/Multi-site)

There were a number of examples within the case studies of disabled people being given flexible working hours and allowed to work part time. Employers tended to feel themselves under obligation to try and accommodate a current employee in an alternative role should they become incapable of performing their current job.

‘If they can obviously offer him alternative employment, that’s the first option they got to take, before they terminate anybody, we got an agreement, you’ve got to see if there is alternative employment they can take.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Singl-site)

The Working Time Directive was felt to have promoted greater flexibility towards employees and it was felt that this might also have had an impact in encouraging employers to consider alternative working patterns. One organisation had been considering ways in which to transfer manual labourers (who would usually take early retirement) into more office-based positions. This issue was also discussed in relation to older employees who may want to continue in work beyond the standard retirement age but downscale their hours or adjust to a gentler role. There was a feeling that greater flexibility to accommodate an ageing workforce may also impact on disabled employees.

Transferring people or jobs to other premises was possible at 15 per cent of workplaces that have ever had a disabled employee. Again, the largest workplaces were more likely to say that they had this adjustment in place (54 per cent of workplaces with 100+ employees). The case studies suggested that it was easier for larger companies because they had numerous branches, unlike small organisations which sometimes only had one workplace. Workplaces whose customers included members of the general public were more likely to be able to transfer jobs between premises than those whose customers were other businesses only (seven per cent compared to 17 per cent). Again, employers who were aware of Part II of the DDA were more likely to say that their workplace transferred jobs to other premises to assist disabled employees (20 per cent compared to five per cent). Employers at workplaces in the public sector were also more likely to say that they transferred jobs to assist disabled employees than those in the private sector (32 per cent compared to 13 per cent).

Just over one in ten employers at workplaces which have ever employed someone with a disability (12 per cent) said that they provided physical assistance for disabled employees. As might be expected, the largest workplaces were the most likely to say they provided this adjustment (37 per cent of workplaces with 100+ employees). Very few of the smaller workplaces said they provided physical assistance to disabled employees (six per cent of workplaces with six or fewer employees). Workplaces which were part of a larger organisation were also more likely to provide this
adaptation than single-site enterprises (19 per cent compared to seven per cent). Once again, employers at workplaces in the public sector were more likely to offer this adjustment than those in the private sector (35 per cent compared to nine per cent).

A similar proportion of employers (12 per cent) said that they allowed disabled employees to work from home. Employers at larger workplaces were again more likely to say they had this adjustment for disabled employees but the differences were not as large as for other adjustments. Nearly three in ten workplaces with 100 or more employees (29 per cent) allowed disabled employees to work from home compared to nearly one in ten employers at workplaces with six or fewer employees (eight per cent). This could be due to the fact that larger workplaces routinely allow employees in general to work from home, so this is not a specific adjustment for disabled employees. The case studies suggested that whether provision could be made for people to work from home depended largely on the nature of the role. It was felt that some jobs tied employees to the workplace. Manufacturing and catering roles, for example, were felt to afford less flexibility than computer-focused ones.

Nearly one in five employers at workplaces who have ever had disabled employees (17 per cent) said that they did not have any adjustments in place specifically to help disabled employees. As might be expected, smaller workplaces were more likely to say they had no adjustments in place. Nearly a quarter of workplaces with six or fewer employees (23 per cent) had no adjustments compared to just two per cent of workplaces with 100 or more employees. The lower level of familiarity of the DDA and its terminology among smaller companies compared to large ones might partly explain this result. Some employers had made changes for individuals but did not immediately recall them or think of them in the light of ‘reasonable adjustment’ as set out by the Act.

A multivariate analysis was carried out that looked at the characteristics of workplaces which had any adjustments planned or currently in place to assist disabled employees. The results of the multivariate model showed that, when analysed together, workplace size, presence of a policy giving rights to disabled employees, awareness of Part II of the DDA and whether employers currently have disabled employees were not significant factors in having adjustments in place. However, whether or not the workplace had ever sought external advice on the employment of disabled people was a significant factor in the multivariate model. Full details of the analysis conducted can be found in Appendix B.

2.6.1 Changes at workplaces with disabled employees

All employers who have had disabled employees at their workplace were then asked whether they had to make any changes to the workplace or working practices. This section, unlike the previous one, therefore, focused on changes that had to be made in practice rather than adjustments that were already in place. Just over a quarter of these employers (28 per cent) said that they did have to make changes. Perhaps
surprisingly, employers at smaller workplaces were less likely to say they had to make any changes. Only a fifth of employers at workplaces with fewer than six employees (19 per cent) needed to make any changes, while nearly two-thirds of employers at the workplaces with 100 or more employees (65 per cent) needed to make changes. Employers who currently have disabled employees were more likely to say that the workplace required changes than those who only had disabled employees in the past (33 per cent compared to 17 per cent). Employers who were aware of Part II of the DDA were slightly more likely to have made some changes, although the difference was not statistically significant (30 per cent compared to 23 per cent). As mentioned earlier, respondents within the case studies often mentioned physical adjustments and only later recalled other subtle, yet effective, changes. Some staff had a broad definition of reasonable adjustment however.

‘The disabled have the same rights to access goods and services and this doesn’t mean simply suddenly flooding our network with ramps. They can get our services in another acceptable form, whether that’s by internet or telephone or whatever facility their disability can cope with and that requires us to provide interpreters, for example … sign language.’

(ESP/100+/Private/ulti-site/Head office)

Some examples of changes that had been made by organisations interviewed within the case studies were as follows:

- **Equipment:**
  - Hearing loops for employees with reduced hearing.
  - Computer equipment for employees with limited dexterity or poor eye sight.
  - Replacement chairs for employees with back problems.
  - Adjusted counters/tills for wheelchair users.

- **Environmental adjustment:**
  - Lights on equipment and pagers for people with hearing difficulty.
  - Fluorescent tape around lights/paint around corners and edges for employees with poor sight.
  - Clearer signage.
  - Lifts for wheelchairs.
  - Accessible toilets.

- **Working patterns:**
  - Working at home (where possible).
  - Flexible shifts.
  - Change to work roles.
  - Alternative means of communication/assisted communication.
• Emotional support:
  – Mentoring for people with learning disabilities (sometimes co-workers from external agencies);
  – Counselling for employees with depression/work-related stress.

  ‘We’ve had people come back who have suffered from stress and depression, we’ve arranged for additional training to be provided for them and support from the Support and Living Team.’

  (ESP/100+/Private/Single-site)

The case studies showed that many of these changes had been made reactively following an employee request on an ad-hoc basis rather than as a result of mainstreaming. This was because it was deemed more cost effective to look at individual cases. However, some changes (such as flexible working and emotional support) were already in place and considered part of the organisation’s culture.

It was suggested by some respondents that it would be helpful to have someone visit the location and give practical advice on potential adjustments.

  ‘Perhaps somebody coming to visit and explaining it in layman’s terms then, would be handy and perhaps somebody who could look around your business and say well actually you would need to change this.’

  (ESP/3-14/Public/Single-site)

Employers who said that they had to make changes to their workplace or working practices to assist disabled employees were asked a series of questions about what was involved in making these changes. First, they were asked how easy it was to make the changes. The results are shown in Table 2.10 below.

### Table 2.10  Ease of making changes to the workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very easy</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite easy</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither easy or difficult</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite difficult</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very difficult</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All who made changes to the workplace 273
2.6.2 Ease of making changes

Nearly three-quarters of employers who had made changes to their workplace or working practices (72 per cent) said that these changes were easy, and within this a third of employers said that the changes were very easy to make. Employers at workplaces in the private sector were significantly more likely than those in the public sector to say that making changes was easy (76 per cent compared to 53 per cent). One in eight employers (14 per cent) said that the process of making changes to the workplace or working practices had been difficult. Employers who were aware of Part II of the DDA were less likely to say that making the changes was easy (68 per cent compared to 85 per cent), perhaps indicating that these employers made bigger changes to the workplace in response to the legislation. Employers at the smaller workplaces were no more likely to say that they found the process of making the changes difficult than those at the larger workplaces. These findings may reflect the case study finding that some of the larger adjustments had been undertaken within a general refurbishment programme and so posed no significant additional effort.

2.6.3 The role of cost

Employers were also asked whether there was a direct cost incurred for the changes to the workplace. Over two-thirds of employers (68 per cent) said that there was a direct cost for some of the changes to the workplace. These employers were then asked to estimate how much these adjustments had cost the workplace in the last 12 months, excluding grants or other income from third parties. The results are shown in Table 2.11.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How much adjustments cost the workplace in the last 12 months</th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£1 - £99</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£100 - £499</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£500 - £999</td>
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<td>£1,000 - £4,999</td>
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</tr>
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<td>£5,000 - £9,999</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£10,000 and over</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base 196

Base - Employers who made changes and stated they incurred a direct financial cost

Weighted base - 142

Unweighted base - 196
Nearly a fifth of employers (19 per cent) said that the changes had not cost the workplace anything in the last 12 months. A similar proportion (18 per cent) said they did not know what the total cost for the workplace had been. Nearly a third (31 per cent) said that the total cost for the workplace had been less than a £1,000 and a fifth said that the changes had cost between £1,000 and £4,999. Just over one in ten employers said that the changes had cost the workplace in excess of £5,000. The decision about whether or not to pay for adjustments was usually made at Head Office level within our case study sample. Line Managers sometimes also took it upon themselves although in these instances the cost was usually minimal.

The cost of making adjustments was of concern to employers, especially small ones. It was felt that certain adjustments could be expensive. This was especially the case in relation to installing wheelchair lifts, ramps and accessible toilets which it was felt could all entail considerable building work.

There was concern expressed by one respondent that the tightening of legislation may work to the detriment of disabled people as it could deter small companies from even attempting to take on disabled applicants for fear of being forced to spend large amounts of money on adjustments. Some of the comments made by staff suggested that, in small and medium sized organisations especially, this was a valid concern:

‘If somebody said ‘I’ve got a bad back, I need a special chair’; ‘I’ve got poor eyesight, I need a special screen’; ‘I’ve got poor eyesight I need some special software’ or ‘I need a special phone’ ... that wouldn’t phase me at all but there we’re talking a couple of hundred quid for somebody who can do the job ... When you start talking about when we’ve got to seriously alter the building, or the design, or something which is going to cost thousands of pounds then it has to be a factor, just on the economics of employing that sort of person.’

Even large case study organisations considered themselves to have financial constraints, in spite of some having ring-fenced funding reserved for DDA adjustments. There was one example of an organisation with thousands of employees in which someone with poor eyesight had asked for their workstation to be adapted with new technology to enable them in their role. The organisation had refused the adaptation on the grounds that it would cost £25,000. The case had gone to court and was awaiting judgement.

It was also commented that the cost of some adjustments was easier to pre-empt than for others. Absence was felt to incur an expense to the organisation but it was not as obvious or predictable as, for example, the cost of building a new counter. This may also help to explain a manager’s unwillingness to take on someone with an intermittent condition with associated absence.

The amount employers were willing to spend on adjustments depended on numerous factors, including:
• organisation profitability/turnover (size often a factor):

‘I think it’s harder for a big company to argue that things are not reasonable because its resources are so much greater, so what’s reasonable for us is going to be not necessarily reasonable for somebody who employs 10 people.’

(EO/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

• the perceived value of individual applicant/employee:

‘Reasonable adjustment is as long as a piece of string. In the first instance, what somebody who is relatively new thinks is reasonable in their circumstances might be a completely different answer to somebody with 25 years’ service …’

(ESP/3-14/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

• the perceived long-term benefits of adjustment;
• the number of employees benefiting;
• the potential conflict with other parties/sectors.

Employers felt that it was difficult to know what was a reasonable level of expenditure for adjustments. It was felt that the acceptable level of adjustments would become clearer over time once cases have passed through the law courts. Not everyone felt this was very fair:

‘Case law isn’t a good way of implementing things, because it’s a bit unfair. It’s some unlucky people get hit to start with then everybody else says okay that’s what that means then, so we’d better do this.’

(ESP/3-14/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

However, there was also a view that it is preferable to tighten regulation up this way than to start with a prescriptive set of rules which might penalise smaller, more vulnerable organisations.

There was a sense among some of the managers that the extent to which they would be prepared to make adjustments depended on what the competition was doing. They felt that if a competitor made certain accommodations that it would raise the pressure for them to follow suit.

‘If one organisation is perceived to be meeting that standard or exceeding it the other players would have to raise their game because that would be perceived as the standard.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

There were examples in the case studies of disabled people having been given assisted places at companies and funding being provided by charities or voluntary bodies. Staff said that the additional funding acted as a real incentive to employ disabled people as it helped to cover the expense of any adjustments. It was also felt to compensate for the lower productivity of some disabled people. Not all employers knew of funding and felt that it could be better publicised.
‘Obviously I would have thought that as a small business I would be concerned about any cost implications, because as much as I would want and be willing to comply, as a small business where there’s not much money and that would be an issue. So if there was funding available to change my surroundings to comply then I would be happy to do it.’

(ESP/3-14/Private/Site-site)

### 2.6.4 Reasons for making changes

It is important to understand the motivations behind employers who make adjustments at their workplace for their disabled employees. In particular to understand whether changes are as a result of legislation or more generally in response to the needs of employees. Employers were then given a number of statements and asked which of them applied to why they went ahead with changes at their workplace. The proportions agreeing with each statement are shown in Table 2.12.

#### Table 2.12 Why changes were made at workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was the right thing to do for the disabled employee</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We assumed the benefits would exceed the cost</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The change had wider benefits for employees at the workplace</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In response to a request from an employee</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The costs were small</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation policy required us to make changes</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The law required us to make the change</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustments were made as part of a general refurbishment</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All who made changes to the workplace 273

As might be expected, nearly all employers (98 per cent) said that part of the reason they made changes to the workplace was that it was the right thing to do for the employee.

The next most common reasons given for making the adjustments were to do with the interests of the workplace. Just over three-quarters of employers (78 per cent) said that they thought that the benefits to the workplace would exceed any costs. Perhaps surprisingly, workplaces whose customers were solely members of the general public were less likely to view this as a reason for making changes than workplaces who deal solely with other businesses (69 per cent compared to 91 per cent). Employers who incurred a direct financial cost as a result of making changes were slightly more likely to give this as a reason than those who had no extra cost (82 per cent compared to 72 per cent). Although this difference is not statistically significant, it is encouraging to note that a direct financial cost for the workplace
does not automatically make employers believe that changes are not financially viable.

Around three-fifths of employers (62 per cent) made changes because they thought they would have wider benefits for employees at the workplace. Again, employers at workplaces that incurred a direct financial cost were more likely to give this as a reason for any changes (64 per cent compared to 55 per cent), although this was not statistically significant.

The low costs of any changes made was mentioned by half of all employers who made an adjustment at their workplace (50 per cent). The case studies suggested that this could be a contributory factor in making changes as it was commonplace for organisations to carry out a financial assessment before embarking on physical adjustment (if not less tangible adjustments such as flexible working hours).

Just over half of employers who made changes to their workplace (56 per cent) said they did so in response to a request from an employee. This happened more often in the larger workplaces. Over three-quarters of employers in workplaces with 100+ employees (78 per cent) made changes in response to a request from an employee, compared to just under half of employers at workplaces with fewer than 15 employees (46 per cent). Workplaces that currently have disabled employees were also more likely to say that changes made at the workplace were in response to a request from an employee (62 per cent compared to 34 per cent). This was probably due to the fact that respondents are less likely to know the origins of changes if disabled employees are no longer there.

Around two-fifths of workplaces that had made changes to help disabled employees (42 per cent) said they did so in response to their organisation’s policy. As might be expected, smaller workplaces were less likely to say that changes were made in response to their organisation’s policy. A quarter of workplaces with six or fewer employees (25 per cent) said changes were made due to the organisation’s policy compared to seven in ten workplaces with 100 or more employees (70 per cent).

Just under three in ten employers (29 per cent) said that they made changes as part of a general refurbishment to the workplace. Employers who had a direct cost as a result of the changes were more likely to say that the changes were part of a general refurbishment (36 per cent compared to 14 per cent). This may explain why employers who had a direct financial cost from the changes were also more likely to say that they assumed the benefits would exceed the costs and that they would have wider benefits for the workplace.

Employers were also asked whether they made changes to the workplace because the law required them to, and just over a third (35 per cent) said that this was part of the reason. Perhaps surprisingly, employers were no more likely to give this as a reason for changes made whether they were aware of Part II of the DDA or not. This would imply that even employers who are not specifically aware of the DDA itself, are aware, at a more general level, that there is a legal requirement to make
adaptations for disabled employees. Employers at larger workplaces were more likely to say that they had made changes in response to legislation, seven in ten employers at workplaces with 100+ employees (70 per cent) compared to just over a quarter at workplaces with fewer than 15 (26 per cent). Two-fifths of employers at workplaces which had a direct cost as a result of changes (42 per cent) said they made them because the law required them to, compared to a fifth of employers (21 per cent) where there was no direct cost. Employers in the public sector were also significantly more likely than those in the private sector to cite legal reasons for changes to the workplace (55 per cent compared to 29 per cent).

Employers who knew of the DDA provisions and cited legislative motivations were asked whether they would have made the changes without legislation. Half of these employers (50 per cent) said that they would have made all of the changes, just over two-fifths (43 per cent) said that they would still have made some of them and only three per cent said that they would not have made any changes without the legislation. The case studies indicated that legislation helped to enforce change and it was questioned how much would have been done without legislation.

‘I think anything that’s gonna be improved will be done by legislation anyway, so I can’t see any company will go out of their way at a cost off their own back.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Single-site)

This perception was reinforced in companies in which staff recalled the ‘green card’ system that obliged organisations to employ a quota of disabled employees. There was a feeling within some of these organisations that, although now no longer in place, the quota system had been responsible for setting the initial trend for recruiting disabled applicants.

It was also suggested that legislation could be used to enforce progress where there might otherwise be some resistance.

‘I think that we were probably doing some of them before the DDA came on board, but the DDA has been a tool that helps to facilitate some of the moves a little bit more. So it was almost legislation that backs up what we do.’

(EO/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

Employers who said that they had not made any changes for their disabled employees were then asked why. A significant minority of these employers (30 per cent) said that one of the reasons they had not made any changes to the workplace was that they had never had any disabled employees, contradicting an answer they had given earlier in the survey. This could be related to the fact that respondents were prompted with the definition of disability from the DDA before being asked whether they had any disabled employees. This may not match their personal definition of what a disability is and, therefore, they are reasserting their own definition at this question, in effect saying that the employee did not ‘really’ have a disability.
Nearly half of all employers (48 per cent) said that no changes had been made because disabled employees did not require adjustments at the workplace, and just over a third (34 per cent) said that the necessary facilities or arrangements were already in place. A fifth of employers (18 per cent) said that they had not made any changes as their premises are rented, although under the terms of the DDA the employer would still be responsible for ensuring that reasonable adjustments were made to the premises through requests to the landlord. Encouragingly, fewer than one in ten employers (eight per cent) said that they had not carried out adjustments because of the costs involved.

### 2.6.5 Ease of implementing different measures

All employers at workplaces which had never had disabled employees were presented with a number of measures that could be taken to enable them to employ disabled people. They were asked to comment on how easy or difficult it would be for them to implement each measure in their own workplace. These measures have been grouped into themes below to assist in analysis.

In reading these results, it should be noted that employers tended to answer questions based on the practicalities of making these adjustments rather than their willingness to do so. Employers who were not aware of the employment provisions of the DDA did not tend to respond more negatively than those who were aware of it.

Figure 2.3 describes the measures that relate to physical adjustments that employers could make to assist disabled employees.

**Figure 2.3 How easy it would be for workplace to make physical adjustments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>Difficult</th>
<th>Impossible</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing car parking spaces</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapted work environment to help disabled employees</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing appropriate physical assistance</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Workplaces where there have never been disabled employees (1187)
The adjustment which employers were most likely to find easy was providing car parking space for disabled employees. Three-fifths of employers said they thought this would be easy, and two-fifths thought this would be very easy. Employers at larger workplaces were more likely than those at smaller workplaces to find it easy to provide car parking (56 per cent of employers of six or fewer employees compared with 78 per cent of employers with 15 or more staff).

Employers said they would find it more difficult to make other physical adjustments to their workplace. Nearly two-thirds (62 per cent) of employers said they would find it difficult or impossible to adapt the physical work environment and almost nine in ten (87 per cent) would find it difficult or impossible to provide physical assistance, such as providing interpreters. Once again, employers at smaller workplaces were more likely to have difficulty - 66 per cent of employers of six or fewer would have difficulty adapting the physical environment, compared with 53 per cent of employers of 15 people or more.

Further measures, relating to flexible working practices, are shown in Figure 2.4.

**Figure 2.4  How easily workplace could change working practices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>Difficult</th>
<th>Impossible</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flexible working hours</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible work organisation</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferring people/jobs to other premises to assist disabled employees</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing working from home</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Workplaces where there have never been disabled employees (1187)

Over half of employers who did not currently employ disabled people felt that it would be easy to introduce flexible working time or different hours for disabled employees. Employers felt that other flexible working practices would be more difficult to implement, with over half (52 per cent) thinking it would be impossible for them to allow disabled employees to work from home. As before, employers at smaller workplaces were more likely than those at larger workplaces to find it difficult to introduce flexible measures to allow them to employ disabled people.

The case studies indicated an expectation on the part of staff that applicants and employees with impairments also behave ‘reasonably’ in relation to adjustments. Organisations felt that sometimes employees expected too much of them without
recognising the difficulties from their point of view. For example, one disabled person had become incapable of performing their role and was offered an alternative position with the same salary (which they had been advised they ought to be able to do) but the employee in question refused it.

‘It takes two to tango. We need to make an adjustment, and you need to accept that the adjustment be made ... It’s a stupid example but if we put in a ramp to allow somebody who uses a wheelchair to come in the door he can’t refuse to use the ramp and say he can’t get into work.’

(EO/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

2.7 Attitudes towards employing disabled people

Employers were asked to agree or disagree with six statements about their views on the employment and retention of disabled employees. This was designed to try to understand the spectrum of opinion among employers. Three of the statements related to the employer’s experiences at their workplace, and three were about the recruitment and retention of disabled employees in general. Figure 2.5 below shows the agreement with the statements relating to the employer’s workplace.

**Figure 2.5 Agreement with statements - recruitment and retention of disabled employees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Slightly agree</th>
<th>Slightly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We always seek to recruit the best person for the job, irrespective of whether they have a disability or not</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s very rare that we have a disabled person apply for a job</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking on a person who had a disability or severe illness in the past but has now recovered would be a risk for this business</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly all employers (94 per cent) agreed with the statement that their workplace always sought to recruit the best person for the job, regardless of any disability, with four-fifths (81 per cent) saying that they agreed strongly. Although there was a high level of agreement with the statement, there was some variation between subgroups. Employers at smaller workplaces were slightly less likely to agree that they always employ the best person for the job (92 per cent at workplaces with six or fewer employees compared to 98 per cent at those with 100). Employers at workplaces
that have never had disabled employees were also less likely to agree with the statement (92 per cent compared to 98 per cent).

The high proportion of employers who say that they always seek to employ the best person for the job, irrespective of disability, appears to contradict the fact that a high proportion of employers also said that their workplace does not have flexible procedures that would allow it to employ disabled people (see Section 2.4.3). This may be explained by the fact that whilst employers have high aspirations they are also mindful of the constraints of their business.

‘I think if you have got someone who is really enthusiastic about their job, and maybe likes it and good at their job, it would be false economy not to employ them because they have a disability but I think, likewise, it would be silly to employ someone who had a disability if they weren’t good at their job.’

(ESP/3-14/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

The survey showed that five per cent of employers said that they did not always seek to recruit the best person for the job, irrespective of disability. The qualitative case studies pointed to isolated examples of employers saying that disabled people would be actively excluded from employment. For example, one person working in Public Relations felt that an attractive physical appearance was an important credential which would eliminate someone with severe facial scarring. Most employers’ views about an applicant’s level of competence were nevertheless governed by the applicant’s ability to perform a role rather than their physical appearance.

Nearly nine in ten employers agreed with the statement that it was very rare for them to have a disabled person apply for a job. As might be expected, employers from smaller workplaces were much more likely to agree with this statement (89 per cent at workplaces with fewer than 15 employees compared to 62 per cent at those with 100). Employers at workplaces where there were currently no disabled employees were also more likely to agree that it was very rare for them to have disabled people apply for a job (92 per cent compared to 77 per cent). This finding may reflect the tendency to forget about, or not know about, hidden disabilities as respondents within the case studies acknowledged that they would not always know if an applicant had a disability or not.

The fact that a large proportion of employers say it is rare that they have a disabled applicant may also explain the discrepancy between the fact that nearly all employers say that they employ the best person for the job regardless of disability and the low proportion of workplaces employing a disabled person.

Just over a fifth of employers (22 per cent) agreed with the statement that it would be a risk for their business to take on a person who had a disability or severe illness in the past but who has now recovered. Employers at smaller workplaces were more likely to agree with this, although a significant minority of larger workplaces also agreed with the statement. A quarter of employers at workplaces with fewer than
15 employees agreed that it would be a major risk to take on somebody who had a disability in the past (25 per cent) compared to just over one in ten employers at workplaces with 100 or more employees (13 per cent). It should be noted that although employers agree that it would be a risk to take on an employee who had an impairment in the past but who had since recovered, this is not to say they would not employ them.

Employers were also asked to agree or disagree with three statements about the recruitment and retention of disabled employees in general, not necessarily about the practices at their workplace. The proportions agreeing with each statement are shown in Figure 2.6.

**Figure 2.6  Agreement with statements - recruitment and retention of disabled employees**

Just over half (53 per cent) of all employers agreed with the statement that making adjustments for an employee who becomes disabled usually costs less than recruiting a new one. Employers at larger workplaces were more likely to agree with this statement than those at smaller workplaces. Just over three in five employers (62 per cent) at workplaces with 100+ employees, compared to half (50 per cent) at workplaces with fewer than 15 employees, agreed that making adjustments for an employee who becomes disabled would cost less than recruiting a new one. Employers at workplaces which currently had disabled employees were also more likely to agree with this statement (63 per cent compared to 50 per cent of those that did not).

A third of employers (33 per cent) agreed with the statement that taking on disabled employees was a major risk for the employer. It is interesting to note that nearly all of these same employers said that they always took the most suitable person for the job. Unfortunately, we cannot say to what extent the perceived risk that a disabled employee may have for the business determines an individual employer’s evaluation
of an applicant’s suitability. Encouragingly, employers at workplaces where there had been disabled employees were significantly less likely to agree with this statement than those where there had not (25 per cent compared to 39 per cent). Less than one in ten employers at workplaces with over 100 employees (six per cent) agreed that it was a major risk to take on a disabled employee compared to nearly two-fifths (38 per cent) of those with fewer than 15.

Encouragingly, less than one in five employers (18 per cent) agreed with the statement that disabled employees tended to be less productive than other employees. Again, employers at workplaces where there have been disabled employees were less likely to agree with this statement than those where there had not (12 per cent compared to 22 per cent). Employers at larger workplaces were also less likely to agree with this statement (two per cent at workplaces with over 100 employees compared to 21 per cent at workplaces with fewer than 15). The greater wariness of employers at smaller workplaces may reflect the fact that they are less likely to have had experience of employing disabled people.

Staff with experience of employing disabled people felt that they were no different to other employees and provided as good a service as their peers.

‘People that we’ve employed so far are excellent ... It’s shame that people do discriminate because they provide just as good a service if not better sometimes.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

By accepting applications from disabled people, staff said that they were broadening their choice of prospective employees.

‘I think the benefits are that you get a good mix of people and you understand that we’ve all got disabilities ... There’s things that everybody can do differently and at different levels, whether we come under the Act or not.’

(EO/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

They also felt that, once recruited into the organisation, disabled people would create a more diverse employee base.

It was suggested by some employers that some disabled people may experience difficulty getting work and that, once an opportunity arises, they are likely to be more appreciative of it than their peers and possibly show greater loyalty to an organisation.

‘I am aware that if disabled people are given an opportunity, they are often fiercely loyal, they will try exceptionally hard for the company, whereas some of the other drivers perhaps take their job for granted.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Single-site)

It was also felt to reflect well on a business if they were seen to be employing disabled people and caring for disabled staff.
3 The provision of services to disabled people: Service providers’ responses to Part III of the DDA

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines service providers’ responses to the DDA. Under the DDA 1995, provisions relating to service providers are covered by Part III of the legislation. Within Part III, a service provider is classified as a person or organisation concerned with the provision of goods, facilities or services to the public, or section of the public, whether paid or free of charge. Service providers can deliver goods and services on or off their premises and through a variety of methods such as in person or by telephone. Under Part II of the DDA employers with 15 or fewer employees are currently exempt from the requirements of the Act (although this will be lifted in October 2004). There is no such size exemption covering Part III.

Duties under Part III, all of which are anticipatory, are coming into force in three stages:

- Treating a disabled person less favourably because they are disabled has been unlawful since December 1996.

- Since October 1999, service providers have been required to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ to the way they deliver their services in order that disabled people can use them.

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The final stage of the duties, which requires service providers to make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access, comes into force in October 2004.

This chapter draws on evidence from the case study element to inform and further explore some of the issues raised by the survey findings to examine:

- awareness of Part III of the DDA and its provisions, including awareness of the provisions that will become effective from October 2004;
- policies and practices for disabled customers;
- adjustments made to accommodate customers with impairments and adjustments planned.

Section 3.2 examines service providers’ awareness of provisions contained in Part III of the DDA including sources of information and advice and understanding of the term ‘reasonable adjustment’: Section 3.3 describes the approach to providing services for disabled people, including whether there is a policy in place and if so how policy is implemented: Section 3.4 explores adjustments for disabled customers that are already in place or planned, including physical adjustments, adjustments to the way services are provided and provision of staff training relating to disabled customers as well as the role of cost and barriers to change.\(^\text{10}\)

### 3.2 Awareness of service provider provisions (Part III) of DDA

This section looks at service providers’ awareness of Part III of the DDA. Respondents’ levels of awareness of Part III of the DDA varied. Some had detailed knowledge and could spontaneously name the Act, some could recall the name after prompting and others had no recollection or were unaware of the Act.

Respondents of the survey\(^\text{11}\) were first asked whether they were aware of any laws that give rights to clients or customers with long-term health problems or impairments.

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\(^{10}\) See Chapter 1 for survey methodology.

\(^{11}\) The interviews were conducted at the workplace level with the person responsible for the recruitment and management of employees at that site. The person responsible for the recruitment and management of employees at workplaces with over 100 employees were asked whether they were also the appropriate person to answer questions about their customers. Service providers who said that they were not the most appropriate person were asked if they could provide details of who should be contacted. In total 17 respondents directed us to contact somebody else within the organisation, this was equivalent to less than one per cent of the weighted data set. All service providers at workplaces with 100 or fewer employees were presumed to have enough knowledge to be able to answer questions about their workplaces’ customers.
Overall, five per cent of service providers knew the Act spontaneously by name. A further 22 per cent of service providers were aware of the existence of legislation but were unable to recall the name, three per cent stated ‘others’. In summary, 30 per cent had some spontaneous awareness of laws giving rights to disabled customers or clients. The remaining 70 per cent were not spontaneously aware of any laws that give rights to clients or customers with long-term health problems or impairments.

### Table 3.1 Overall awareness of Part III of the DDA (spontaneous and prompted) by workplace size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column percentages</th>
<th>6 or fewer</th>
<th>7-14</th>
<th>15-99</th>
<th>100-499</th>
<th>500+</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heard of the Act</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>[50]</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have not heard</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>[50]</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the Act</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unweighted base</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1623</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base - Service providers (All workplaces which are public facing)

Weighted base - 1639

Unweighted base - 1623

The 95 per cent of service providers who did not identify the DDA by name were then asked the following question:

‘The Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 introduced rights for customers/clients with long-term health problems or disabilities. Prior to this survey, did you know this?’

In total, 33 per cent of this group of service providers claimed they were familiar with Part III of the DDA before taking part in the survey and 67 per cent said they had not heard of it. In total, the overall awareness of any legislation giving rights to disabled customers was 41 per cent.

Awareness levels varied by a number of factors, principally the size of workplace, whether the workplace was a single establishment or part of a larger organisation (multi-site), whether the service provider had previously employed disabled people and by industrial sector.

Overall, the likelihood of awareness of Part III of the DDA increased with the size of the workplace. For example, just over a quarter (26 per cent) of service providers in workplaces with six or fewer employees had heard of the DDA compared to half (50 per cent) of those with 500 or more employees\(^{12}\) (Table 3.1). (This overall trend that awareness is greater amongst larger workplaces is consistent with findings from

\(^{12}\) (p<0.001). For information about significance levels refer to Appendix B. Chi-square tests were applied throughout this chapter.)
previous research, i.e. Meager et al., (2002), although this comparison must be treated with caution due to the usage of different sampling frames.)

The only exception to this trend was that awareness levels of workplaces with 100 – 499 employees (37 per cent) were lower than of those workplaces with 15 – 99 employees (46 per cent).

Also consistent with past research (Meager et al., 2002) is the finding that service providers in workplaces which were part of a multi-site organisation had a higher overall awareness of Part III of the DDA (38 per cent), than did those which were single-site (29 per cent).13

Taking into account overall organisation size, a similar awareness trend is observed to that seen with increasing workplace size.14 Twenty-four per cent of workplaces that are part of an organisation with up to six employees were aware compared with 46 per cent of workplaces in organisations comprising 500 or more employees.15

Private sector workplaces had the lowest awareness levels of Part III of the DDA (30 per cent) compared with the public (51 per cent) and voluntary sectors (54 per cent).16 This is also consistent with previous findings (Meager et al. (2002)); again, because different sampling frames have been used findings are not directly comparable.

Service providers who had previously (i.e. within the past 10 years) or currently employed disabled staff had a higher rate of awareness of Part III of the DDA than did other respondents. Forty-one per cent of service providers who had ever employed a disabled person were aware of the Act compared with 28 per cent who had not.17

In addition, examination of the levels of awareness by different industrial sectors indicates that there is some variation, with those in the public and social services sector (public administration and defence, compulsory social security, training providers and health and social work) being the most aware out of the industry sectors. At the other end of the scale, those in agriculture, hunting and fishing, manufacturing18, wholesale and retail trade and transport storage and communication were the least likely to be aware of Part III of the DDA.19 (This trend is consistent with findings from Stuart et al. (2002) although different sampling frames have been used so the figures are, again, not directly comparable).

13 (p<0.001).
14 Where the organisation is comprised of a single-site, organisation and workplace are synonymous.
15 (p<0.001).
16 (p<0.001).
17 (p<0.001).
18 See Chapter 1 for information about categorisation of service providers.
19 (p<0.001).
Logistic modelling was used to identify the characteristics that showed independent associations with overall awareness of Part III of the DDA. Public sector and voluntary service providers are both more likely to be aware of Part III of the Act than are private service providers. Having a policy for disabled customers and clients is also associated with increased likelihood of awareness of Part III of the DDA.

The model also showed that workplaces which have had disabled employees were significantly more likely to be aware of the DDA compared to those where no disabled staff had been employed.

There was no significant effect of size of workplace or whether the workplace was a part of a multi-site as opposed to single-site organisation on awareness of Part III of the DDA.

The case study findings for service provider awareness are similar to those reported for employers in Chapter 2. Public sector organisations within the case study sample were generally more aware of the Act than private sector organisations. This suggests that public sector organisations are better informed than private sector organisations. There was also greater knowledge of the Act within organisations that provide services through face-to-face contact with customers compared to organisations providing services via the telephone or through mail order.

Knowledge of the DDA was also usually higher in larger organisations (of 100 or more personnel overall) and at a Head Office rather than a local office level.

Respondents' knowledge of the Act also depended on their role. Customer service specialists and policy advisers (again usually based at Head Office) made most frequent spontaneous reference to the Act and could often state its content, including the requirement for reasonable adjustments and the 2004 changes. Once again, local staff appeared to have less knowledge of the Act.

While specialist staff, usually based at Head Office, are involved in making policy for providing services to disabled customers, it is local front-line staff who have the daily face-to-face contact with customers and who are, therefore, implementing the organisations' policy as well as confronting new situations and challenges. These findings suggest that even amongst organisations with high awareness at Head Office level, there may be insufficient communication mechanisms to ensure on the one hand that such awareness filters down through the organisation and on the other that organisations may not be drawing systematically on their own experiences in providing services to disabled customers and these experiences may not be feeding back into organisation policy making.

3.2.1 Sources of information and advice about the DDA

The case studies found that the customer service side of organisations tended to draw on the same sources of information as the employer side. These included Government internet sites, professional forums and publications and the media in general. Some respondents said that the media had played a role in raising the levels
of general awareness of disability. Some also said that levels of awareness in society in general were rising as the result of disabled people articulating their needs.

‘I think there is this whole change in society, society’s expectations and disabled people themselves have become a more vocal group ... and have made sure it is in the public eye.’

(ESP/3-14/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

Again there was positive mention of the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department for Work and Pensions as well as the Disability Rights Commission websites, although once again there was little spontaneous mention of the Disability Rights Commission itself. One respondent said that in their opinion the DRC are not forthcoming with practical advice for employers and place more emphasis on taking up cases when the legislation is breached. Another said that the level of publicity had decreased over the last two or three years:

‘There were TV adverts two or three years ago and there was also a fair bit of coverage in the papers several years ago ... it did keep the issue a little bit more to the forefront and I think that has slipped a bit.’

(ESP/15-99/Public/Multi-site/Head office)

Some respondents said that they would welcome a code of practice setting out how to meet the requirements on a practical basis:

‘There’s a lack of working advice, people can introduce legislation but someone’s got to explain the interpretation of it and how on a day-to-day basis you actually comply with it.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

This finding may suggest lack of awareness of existing guidance setting out practical ways of making adjustments. Other respondents said that they were aware that information is available but pointed out that people who neither work in HR nor have everyday dealings with disability may not be aware or know where to look.

There was mixed opinion amongst service providers about how familiar customers themselves were with the DDA provisions. Service providers’ opinions on customers’ familiarity with the DDA ranged from a view that customers were familiar with their rights and indeed some could be very demanding, to a view that members of the public might be better informed about what they ought to expect from companies.

### 3.2.2 Factors impacting on awareness

Some case study respondents said that it was easier for large organisations who have experts and resources to find, gather and interpret information than for small organisations without specialist staff and expertise. One respondent said that there was a greater onus on public sector organisations to comply with legislation and that this implied being aware of developments.
Some large private case study organisations reported using access consultants. However, there was a view expressed that some consultants do not always understand the nature of the business and the specific issues involved. Sometimes consultants focused on structural adaptations without considering possible changes that could be made in delivering the service. There was even some suspicion that some consultants did not always provide impartial advice and mention was made of ‘over-selling on the back of the DDA’. For example, one respondent said that he felt that he had been wrongly advised about the number of hearing loops he should install which had subsequently proved to be unnecessary.

### 3.2.3 Awareness of the main provisions

Service providers within the survey who stated they were aware of Part III of the DDA, or of some legislation for customers with longstanding illnesses or impairments, were asked what they believed to be the main provisions in relation to disabled customers and clients.

Half (50 per cent) of those who were asked believed it was related to issues of equal treatment and opportunities for disabled customers and a further 11 per cent stated that it was concerned with ensuring help and support is provided for disabled customers and clients (Table 3.2). A third (34 per cent) believed that Part III of the DDA was concerned with physical access to premises and a further ten per cent stated specific physical provisions they believed to be necessary under the Act such as accessible toilets and parking.

**Table 3.2 Knowledge of the Act**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiple response</th>
<th>Aware of DDA or legislation for disabled customers and clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal opportunities/treatment</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help/support for disabled customers</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical access</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific physical facilities required</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unweighted base</td>
<td>694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base - Service providers who were aware of legislation for disabled customers</td>
<td>Unweighted base - 694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted base - 675</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The case studies revealed wide variation in the degree of knowledge of the provisions of the Act. Some respondents, mainly those with specialist roles in Head
Office had a very good understanding of the principles and details of the legislation. Knowledge at the local level varied. In one organisation the legislation had been translated into policy. This allowed local staff to feel confident that when they are applying policy they are, at the same time, complying with the requirements of the Act:

‘A lot of the detail if you like of the legislation is translated into policy for us so that although I might not be able to quote chapter and verse of the legislation what I am able to do is say well our policies say this must happen and that’s how the (organisation) goes about feeding the legislation down into working practices.’

(ESP/15-99/Public/Multi-site/Local office)

Others based at branch level, were less knowledgeable and, even when aware of the existence of legislation, had no detailed understanding of its contents.

‘... so I am aware that there’s lots going on without actually knowing too much about it.’

(ESP/3-14/Voluntary/Single-site)

Some case study respondents felt that the learning process applied to customers as well as service providers:

‘I think sometimes they expect too much ... some disabled people have a knowledge that there is legislation to protect them, but they don’t really understand what it is ... I think there’s a bit of a disconnection with sometimes what disabled people think their rights are. I think it’s an education, not just for organisations, but for disabled people as well ... understanding more what the legislation means on a practical level.’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

3.2.4 Awareness of ‘reasonable adjustment’

Some respondents were unaware of the term ‘reasonable adjustments’. Many of those who were aware of the concept said that they considered it to be problematic and many said they found the concept difficult to interpret. Some reported that they found the term too subjective. There were examples of respondents who were aware of the term and had given careful thought to its requirements and some speculated that considerations must include ease of implementation, cost-effectiveness, feasibility, sustainability, and common sense.

‘I guess it means is it reasonably easy to do. Is it reasonably cost-effective to do. Is it going to happen, is it going to be sustained ... It’s quite a difficult judgement, and I guess we’ve just got use our common sense.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)
3.2.5 Awareness of changes to legislation

Service providers within the survey who were aware of Part III of the DDA or of legislation for disabled customers and clients with longstanding illnesses or impairments were asked whether, prior to taking part in the survey, they knew that the final access duties of Part III of the DDA will be implemented in October 2004.

As described in Section 3.1 above, the forthcoming legislation means that, in addition to the existing duty of providing a service by a reasonable alternative method, service providers will be required to make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access from October 2004.

Just under half of service providers aware of legislation (46 per cent) were aware of the forthcoming changes (Table 3.3). Looking at the number aware of the changes as a proportion of all service providers shows that just under a fifth (19 per cent) of all service providers claimed they were aware of the forthcoming legislation.

In line with findings concerned with overall awareness of Part III of the DDA, it appeared that workplace size is related to awareness of the incoming legislation. Two-fifths (40 per cent) of workplaces with six or fewer employees claimed to be aware of the legislation compared with four-fifths (81 per cent) of the largest workplaces, (i.e. those with 500 or more employees)²⁰ (Table 3.3).

There was also an association between awareness levels of the forthcoming legislation and workplaces where disabled people had been employed. Specifically, 55 per cent of workplaces which currently, or at some point in the past 10 years, employed disabled people were aware of the forthcoming legislation for Part III of the DDA. This compares with 39 per cent of workplaces without disabled employees²¹, suggesting that employers of disabled staff are perhaps more familiar with a range of aspects of the DDA including existing customer provisions and are therefore more aware of the forthcoming provisions.

Variation by workplace sector was again evident, with those in the private sector being less aware of the forthcoming legislation (41 per cent) than the public and voluntary sectors (56 per cent and 71 per cent respectively)²². Some variation by industrial sector was also evident.²³

Perhaps surprisingly when the variation in overall awareness of Part III of the DDA by single-site and multi-site workplaces was considered, no significant differences in awareness of the new legislation by these workplace types emerged from the survey.

²⁰ (p<0.01).
²¹ (p<0.001).
²² (p<0.001).
²³ (p<0.001).
### Table 3.3  
**Awareness of final part of Part III of the DDA coming into force by workplace size**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6 or fewer</th>
<th>7-14</th>
<th>15-99</th>
<th>100-499</th>
<th>500+</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aware</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>[57]</td>
<td>[82]</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaware</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>[43]</td>
<td>[18]</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|          | 239        | 198  | 199   | 31      | 26   | 694 |

Base - Service providers who were aware of legislation for disabled customers  
Weighted base - 675  
Unweighted base - 694

The case studies found that levels of awareness of the forthcoming provisions of the Act varied considerably between different service providers and suggest that size of workplace is a factor, in line with the survey findings, as well as size of organisation. Specialist personnel within large organisations tended to have greatest awareness.

The case studies also found, again in line with the survey findings, that there were low levels of awareness of the forthcoming changes in DDA legislation amongst smaller service providers. Again, it appeared that the case study public sector workplaces had greater awareness than those in the private sector. The local public sector offices visited for research purposes were well informed about the DDA provisions. This may be explained by the resources available to large organisations and may suggest that public sector organisations have systems in place to transmit information about the Act to branch level.

‘...we have a whole personnel section ... which is just one of the five or six departments of the (organisation) and obviously information that’s gained from the various sections ... filters down through the policies to grass roots level ... and any changes to the legislation or whatever will come down that way. And ... we have a disabilities officer so if there is anything we are not sure about ... we can call upon him and he’ll come out and give us some advice ... in terms of the building or anything reasonable so it tends to come top down ... we are all aware that the DDA is approaching the deadline, it is time now for making sure all our services etc are available. We’re all aware of that.’

(ESP/15-99/Public/Multi-site/Local office)

#### 3.2.6 Perceived impact of the new legislation

The survey also explored the perceived impact of the new legislation from the viewpoint of service providers. This question was asked of those service providers who were aware of either Part III of the DDA or of some legislation for customers with longstanding illnesses or impairments (N=694). Over half (54 per cent) believed that the duty would have an effect upon their business, 13 per cent stated the effect would be major and 41 per cent stated it would be minor (Table 3.4).
In particular, perceived impact of the new legislation increased with the size of workplace (Table 3.4). Forty-eight per cent of workplaces with six or fewer employees stated it would have an effect on their business compared with 88 per cent of workplaces comprising 500 or more employees.²⁴

### Table 3.4 Perceived effect of new provision on business by workplace size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6 or fewer</th>
<th>7-14</th>
<th>15-99</th>
<th>100-499</th>
<th>500+</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major effect</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>[13]</td>
<td>[27]</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor effect</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>[63]</td>
<td>[64]</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No effect</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>[25]</td>
<td>[9]</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>[0]</td>
<td>[0]</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 239 198 199 31 26 693

Base - Service providers who were aware of legislation for disabled customers
Weighted base – 675
Unweighted base – 693

Respondents in workplaces which were part of multi-site organisations were slightly more likely than those in single-site workplaces to state that the incoming legislation would have an effect (56 per cent compared with 52 per cent) (Table 3.5). However, single-site workplaces were more likely to perceive the effect to be major (17 per cent) compared with workplaces which were part of a multi-site organisation (10 per cent).²⁵

There was also slight variation in the perceived impact level of the new legislation by industry sector. Respondents in hotels and restaurants (21 per cent) and transport, storage and communication industries (19 per cent) as well as other social, personal and community activities (25 per cent) were most likely to perceive the effect to be major. Therefore, some industry sectors perceived the requirement to remove or alter physical features in order to make it possible for disabled people to use their service to be greater than others.²⁶

Within workplace sector, those within the public sector were slightly more likely to anticipate that the legislation will have an effect (68 per cent) compared to workplaces in the voluntary sector (57 per cent) and private sector workplaces (51 per cent).²⁷

²⁴ (p<0.05).
²⁵ (p<0.05).
²⁶ (p<0.001).
²⁷ (p<0.01).
When compared to past research (Stuart et al., 2002) it is clear that a higher number of respondents within this survey anticipated that the legislation would have an effect than previous findings indicated. Stuart et al., reported that a third of service providers (31 per cent) believed that forthcoming legislation (removal of physical barriers) would have an effect, whereas two-thirds (61 per cent) stated that the legislation would have no effect.

Table 3.5 Perceived effect of new provision on business (single-site or multi-site workplace)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Single-site workplace</th>
<th>Multi-site workplace</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major effect</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor effect</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No effect</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 330 363 693
Base - Service providers who were aware of legislation for disabled customers
Weighted base - 675
Unweighted base - 693

Overall, alteration to the layout of, or access to, premises was the most commonly cited change that would have to be implemented (24 per cent) (Table 3.6). For those who stated that the effect would be major, the most common reason given was that the premises were either too old, listed or rented, or in some way very difficult or impossible to alter (31 per cent).

Other commonly cited changes by respondents included general alterations or improvements to their existing facilities (20 per cent). Furthermore, just under a fifth (18 per cent) stated that specific physical adjustments would be required at their premises to adhere to the legislation. Perhaps encouragingly, for the majority of cases these physical adjustments were mentioned by service providers who perceived that the impact will be minor, as opposed to major, suggesting that these changes are perhaps not viewed as being difficult to implement.
Table 3.6 Reasons given for expected level of impact of the legislation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Major effect</th>
<th>Minor effect</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Layout of or access to premises will have to be changed</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General alterations/improvements/improve current facilities</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Already in place/premises already adequate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical adjustments</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too old/listed/impossible to alter</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The cost of the requirements</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff training/awareness</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-evaluation of safety measures</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocating/moving to new building</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unweighted base</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base – Service providers who said new legislation will have major/minor effect
Weighted base – 366
Unweighted base – 381

Of the service providers who were aware of some form of legislation for disabled customers and clients, two-fifths (43 per cent) stated that the final part of the legislation would have no effect on their business. The most common reason given for this was that there were no physical barriers on the premises to prevent access by disabled people (70 per cent). A further three-fifths (60 per cent) stated that requirements have already been met because the necessary changes had been put in place (Table 3.7).

Of those service providers who stated that the necessary changes had already been made, it is apparent that those who have ever or currently employed disabled staff were more likely to report that changes had already been made (68 per cent) compared with workplaces with no disabled staff (54 per cent). This suggests that having disabled employees may make workplaces more aware of the required adjustments.

28 (p<0.05).
Furthermore, 69 per cent of workplaces that were part of a multi-site organisation claimed changes had already been made compared with just over half (52 per cent) of single-site workplaces. This may, in part, be explained by the increased likelihood of there being a Head Office as part of multi-site organisations, which may contain a Human Resources section responsible for keeping workplace sites informed about policy issues, including requirements of forthcoming legislation.

Interestingly, 28 per cent of service providers who stated that the legislation would have no effect stated that this was because the legislation is not relevant to the service provided at the establishment. Service providers who provide their service entirely off the premises were over three times more likely to state this (72 per cent) compared to service providers whose businesses takes place both on and off the premises (21 per cent). Service providers who stated that the legislation would have no impact because there were no physical barriers on the premises or those who believed that the legislation is not relevant to their business are, in fact, basing this on inaccurate knowledge of the DDA by not considering wider barriers to the service they provide.

Table 3.7 Reasons given for no expected impact from the legislation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Multiple response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No physical barriers on the premises</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Necessary changes have already been made to remove, alter or avoid physical barriers</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation is not relevant to the service provided at the establishment</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers do not come onto the premises</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal with it on an individual basis/already accommodating individuals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 296
Base - Service providers who said new legislation will have no effect
Weighted base - 289
Unweighted base - 296

3.3 Policies for disabled customers

This section looks at policies for disabled customers. Service providers were asked whether their business operated a policy covering the provision of goods and

29 (p<0.01).
services to disabled customers or clients. This question was worded to include any type of policy and not necessarily a formal or written one. Overall, 41 per cent of service providers within the survey were aware of having such a policy in place. This is a higher figure than might have been expected, since a smaller proportion of service providers (33 per cent) stated they were aware of Part III of the DDA.

However, the case study findings suggested that very few service providers had a formal policy in place specifically for disabled people. Some respondents said that non-discrimination is a core value of the organisation expressed through customer care policies, plans and statements:

‘We don’t single out anybody with a disability ... we want to provide a service to everybody in the community, whoever they may be.’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

Others said that the organisation understands the diversity of their customers and that this diversity includes people with impairments. In some cases the organisation’s customer care policy was the closest they had to a formal policy:

‘Most of our service policies and all our service plans will include some mention about disability, because I’d like to say it’s mainstream really, it is always a consideration.’

(ESP/15-99/Public/Multi-site/Head office)

Looking at local workplace level, the survey showed that the awareness of a policy was generally greater in larger workplaces (Table 3.8). Sixty-one per cent of workplaces with more than 500 employees claimed that their business was covered by a policy for disabled customers and clients compared with 36 per cent of smaller workplaces with six or fewer employees.\(^{30}\)

Furthermore, workplaces which were part of a larger organisation were more likely to state that they had a policy (48 per cent) compared with those which were single-site (35 per cent).\(^{31}\) This again, may be indicative of a Head Office influence.

Whether an organisation has ever employed disabled people was also shown to impact upon whether or not there was a policy in place. Half of workplaces (49 per cent) currently or previously employing disabled persons claimed to have a policy covering the rights of disabled customers and clients compared to 37 per cent of workplaces without disabled employees.\(^{32}\)

In addition, when considering service providers’ awareness of Part III of the DDA, those who were aware were also more likely to operate a policy (57 per cent compared with 33 per cent)\(^{33}\). The overall proportion of service providers who stated

\(^{30}\) (p<0.001).
\(^{31}\) (p<0.001).
\(^{32}\) (p<0.001).
\(^{33}\) (p<0.001).
that they had a policy covering the provision of goods and services to disabled people was greater than the number who stated they were aware of Part III of the DDA. This suggests that either policy formation could have occurred independently of the Act or else that respondents were more aware that the organisation was covered by a policy than of its origins. It should be noted that the question about whether or not the organisation is covered by a policy was asked before collecting information concerning awareness levels of Part III of the DDA which could impact upon the answers given.

Variation by workplace sector was also evident. For example, workplaces in the construction sector\textsuperscript{34} were the least likely to have a policy covering the provision of goods and services to disabled customers or clients (22 per cent). Conversely, workplaces in the public and social services sector (public administration and defence, compulsory social security, training providers and health and social work) were the most likely to report that they operated a policy (64 per cent).\textsuperscript{35}

In general, public sector workplaces were the most likely to state they were covered by a policy for disabled customers and clients (58 per cent). The next most likely were workplaces in the voluntary sector (45 per cent) with private sector being the least likely (39 per cent).\textsuperscript{36}

\textbf{Table 3.8} Whether business has a policy on the provision of goods and services to disabled people by workplace size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6 or fewer</th>
<th>7-14</th>
<th>15-99</th>
<th>100-499</th>
<th>500+</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have policy</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>[61]</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No policy</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>[17]</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>[0]</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>[22]</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 705 444 369 60 44 1623
Base – Service providers (All workplaces which are public-facing)
Weighted base – 1639
Unweighted base – 1623

The case studies reflected the survey findings in that the existence of policy often related to size, as those without customer service polices for disabled people were often workplaces with a smaller overall organisation size. The case study public sector organisations within our sample were more likely to have a policy in place or planned than the private sector organisations visited.

\textsuperscript{34} See Chapter 1 for information about categorisation of service providers.

\textsuperscript{35} (p<0.001).

\textsuperscript{36} (p<0.001).
In some cases policies had been drawn up in response to the DDA, although some respondents said that it was difficult to draw up customer service policies on the basis of the DDA because the Act was vague, and in particular the concept of ‘reasonable adjustment’ was problematic.

In some cases other legislation had been the main driver of policy formation.

‘It was in response really to the racial equality standards and now that’s been overtaken by the overall equality standards ... which covers racial, gender, sexual discrimination and age. So it’s there to show commitment, to show a positive steer to our ... customers.’

(ESP/100+/Public/Multi-site/Head office)

3.3.1 Local knowledge of policy content

Some respondents, mainly those with specialist roles in Head Office, had a very good understanding of the principles and details of the policy. However, it was recognised that for policy to be effective it has to be implemented at the customer interface:

‘... there has to be a level of guidance to the person with management responsibility to make sure that the professional and administrative staff are actually implementing the policy. ... you can’t have somebody in (HQ) sitting saying ‘is x complying with disability?’ It has got to be the (manager in the local branch).’

(ESP/3-14/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

However, as was the case with knowledge of the Act, the case studies showed that local knowledge of the content of policy varied between organisations. In some cases local staff were aware of policy content while in others knowledge of policy content, or indeed even the existence of a policy, had not filtered down to the local level. Systems to monitor whether the policy was being implemented and adhered to were rarely in place:

‘We tend to monitor the hard way, which is if we get a complaint we investigate it ... to be perfectly honest it is completely new territory for us and we are struggling with that aspect of it.’

(ESP/3-14/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

3.4 Implementation of adjustments and practices for disabled customers

The issue of whether adjustments and practices are being implemented for disabled customers and clients at workplaces is key to establishing to what extent the DDA is being adhered to or prepared for. More specifically, it is important to consider how service providers are preparing for new access duties to be introduced in October 2004.
As already mentioned, the measures that are currently in place relating to duties of service providers were introduced in two phases. Since December 1996 it has been unlawful to treat disabled people less favourably than other people for a reason related to their disability. Since October 1999, a service provider has been required to make reasonable adjustments to their service for disabled people. From October 2004, a service provider may be required to make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access. Both the existing and forthcoming requirements under Part III are anticipatory.

### 3.4.1 Adjustments in place or planned

**Table 3.9 Adjustments/practices made or planned at workplace to help customers with disabilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes to physical accessibility</th>
<th>Improvement to communication</th>
<th>Staff training in disability issues</th>
<th>Changes to way service is provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Currently in place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 1623 1623 1623 1623

Base – Service providers (All workplaces which are public facing)
Weighted base - 1639
Unweighted base - 1623

Service providers were asked which, of a range of adjustments or changes to help customers with disabilities, were already in place at the workplace and which were planned for the future. This information provides a good indication of how service providers have responded to existing provisions of the DDA and additionally how prepared they are for new legislation.

In total, 74 per cent of service providers claimed to have had at least one of the four measures listed in Table 3.9 in place or were planning to implement one or more of them in the future.

At local workplace level, larger workplaces were generally more likely to have either made any of the adjustments or planned to do so, although the most likely were workplaces with 15 to 99 employees where almost nine out of ten (88 per cent) workplaces stated that one or more of the measures were currently in place or planned.37

37 (p<0.001).
When considering the overall organisation size of workplaces, increased incidence of adjustments in place or planned was observed by increased size of organisation. Service providers at workplaces which were part of a multi-site organisation were more likely to state changes were planned or had been made (83 per cent) compared to respondents at single-site workplaces (66 per cent). This again suggests a Head Office influence.

Sectoral variation by industry sector was again apparent with more than nine out of ten workplaces in the public and social services sector (public administration and defence, compulsory social security, training providers and health and social work) having made or planned to make changes (92 per cent) for disabled customers. The proportion for workplaces in the construction sector who had or planned to make changes was just four out of ten (40 per cent). Again, workplaces in the public and voluntary sectors were more likely to have made or planned to make adjustments for disabled customers (84 per cent and 89 per cent respectively) compared with private sector workplaces (72 per cent).

Workplaces where disabled employees had ever been, or were currently, employed were more likely to have made, or planned to make, any of the adjustments or changes for disabled customers (83 per cent) than workplaces who have not (68 per cent). Additionally, service providers who were aware of Part III of the DDA were more likely to have made, or planned to make, some or all of, the changes (88 per cent compared with 67 per cent). Furthermore, workplaces covered by a policy covering the provision of goods and services to disabled customers and clients were more likely to have made changes, or planned to do so (88 per cent), compared with those without a policy (or unaware of having one) (63 per cent).

Service providers who stated that business takes place entirely off the premises were less likely to state any of the changes had been made or were planned (51 per cent) compared with workplaces where at least a proportion of service delivery takes place on the premises (77 per cent).

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38 (p<0.001).
39 See Chapter 1 for information about categorisation of service providers.
40 (p<0.001).
41 (p<0.001).
42 (p<0.001).
43 (p<0.001).
44 (p<0.001).
45 (p<0.001).
46 (p<0.001).
Once again, the case studies are in line with the survey findings. Larger service providers both at workplace and organisational level and those that were part of multi-site organisations reported more often than smaller service providers that they had made, or were planning to make, adjustments to comply with the Act. Service providers who were aware of Part III of the DDA also reported more often than those who were not that they had made, or planned to make, changes. Sometimes these changes were being made in response to, and explicitly in line with, the DDA.

In line with findings reported earlier on the perceptions of disability being closely linked to physical impairments, the changes and adjustments which had been made or planned by service providers for their customers tended to be for people with physical impairments. Changes or adjustments which would be required for less observable types of impairment were less frequently reported as being in place or planned for the future.

Amongst survey correspondents, changes to physical accessibility, such as improved access, ramps, accessible toilets and disabled parking spaces, were the most common adjustment made (47 per cent). Approximately a third (35 per cent) stated that changes to the way services were provided were already implemented and a quarter (25 per cent) of service providers stated that staff at their workplace had been trained in disability issues. The least common adjustment made was improvements to communication such as Braille and large print, with just 14 per cent of workplaces having this in place to aid disabled customers.

In addition to providing information about whether the four measures were in place or planned, respondents were asked if any other adjustments and changes were in place to help disabled customers. The most commonly reported ‘other’ was patience, understanding and helpfulness towards disabled customers (six per cent). Three per cent reported that their workplaces adapted goods and systems to meet the needs of disabled customers and a further two per cent stated the provision of personal assistance.

Findings from the case studies also show that physical adaptations for customers generally seemed to be foremost in respondents’ minds, although changes to working practices were evident, particularly where face-to-face customer service was key to the business, such as retail, restaurant, hotel sectors. Typically, adjustments for customers with physical impairments were reported such as ramps, accessible toilets and disabled parking bays and wheelchair access. However, adaptations made also depended on the type of service provided. Mention was made of dropped curbs, indented crossings, and pedestrianised zones, providing wheelchairs, trolleys for use with wheelchairs, website links to talking pages for home shopping, hearing loops and audio versions of publications.

Adaptations to working practices for customers were generally viewed as being relatively easy to implement. In workplaces where physical adaptations had been in place for some time, for example, where a workplace was located in a new or reconstructed building which had been designed with disabled access, provision for
disabled customers was often seen as unproblematic. However, providing physical access to small, old or listed buildings was of concern to some respondents. One respondent thought that Part III of the Act was unlikely to be enforceable in listed buildings due to objections from English Heritage. This respondent felt that the perceived different agendas of the Disability Rights Commission and English Heritage put some organisations in a potentially difficult position and suggested that the only way around it would be to relax listed buildings status:

‘On one hand you’ve got English Heritage saying you can’t make an adaptation to this building, it’s listed, on the other hand you’ve got the Disability Rights Commission saying you’re not making the building accessible. Until the Government decides what it’s going to do in terms of getting those two Government bodies together and deciding what the policy’s going to be, it won’t be enforceable. ... the Government has to get it’s own agencies together ... they fund the Disability Rights Commission. They need to get the likes of them round the table with English Heritage and decide how do we overcome the situation.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

For changes to physical accessibility, staff training and communication improvements, larger workplaces were considerably more likely to report having these adjustments or changes in place. For example, 72 per cent of workplaces with 500 or more employees stated changes to physical accessibility were in place, whereas the smallest workplaces with six or fewer employees were only half as likely (36 per cent) to have made these adjustments.

Additionally, 44 per cent of workplaces with 500 or more employees had made improvements to communication compared with 10 per cent of workplaces with six or fewer employees. However, the incidence of workplaces that had already implemented the fourth measure ‘changes to the way the workplaces’ service is provided’ did not appear to vary a great deal by workplace size.

In terms of measures that were planned for the future, only a minority of workplaces had any plans to implement the measures. The most common were changes to physical accessibility and staff training in disability issues, for which approximately one in ten (nine per cent) of workplaces were planning to introduce. Furthermore, five per cent of workplaces had communication improvements planned and three per cent mentioned changes to service delivery as a target for the future.

The survey then explored whether or not service providers were aware of any changes which had been made to the workplace or practices (n=353). Out of this sub-set of service providers, around a fifth (21 per cent) stated that they made changes at their workplace for disabled customers and clients.
As shown in Table 3.10, the likelihood of having made changes was greater with increased size of workplace. Additionally, the likelihood of having made changes varied both by industry sector, with awareness that changes had been made highest in public and social services (41 per cent) and lowest in manufacturing (10 per cent), financial intermediation (10 per cent) and construction (six per cent). Variation was also observed by overall workplace sector with the public sector the most likely to have made changes or be aware of them (38 per cent), followed by the voluntary sector (30 per cent) and finally the private sector (18 per cent).

### Table 3.10 Awareness of having made changes to workplace or working practices to assist disabled customers by workplace size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6 or fewer</th>
<th>7-14</th>
<th>15-99</th>
<th>100-499</th>
<th>500+</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>[39]</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>[39]</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>[0]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>[22]</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 705 444 369 60 44 1623

Base – Service providers (All workplaces which are public facing)
Weighted base – 1639
Unweighted base – 1623

The analysis also shows that whether or not the workplace had disabled employees is again influential. Twenty-seven per cent of workplaces that had employed disabled people had made changes for customers compared to just 17 per cent of workplaces which have not (p<0.001). This suggests that a holistic approach operates in workplaces with either the presence, or not, of disabled employees impacting on the implementation of changes and vice versa.

Furthermore, workplaces that operated a policy covering the provision of goods and services to disabled customers and clients were more likely to have made changes to the workplace or to assist disabled customers, or at least be aware that they have been made, compared with workplaces with no such policy (27 per cent compared with 18 per cent).  

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47 (p<0.001).
48 See Chapter 1 for information about categorisation of service providers.
49 (p<0.001).
50 (p<0.001).
51 (p<0.001).
3.4.2 Provision of training relating to disabled customers

One way in which workplaces can address the needs of disabled customers is to provide specific training for frontline staff on disability-related issues. Service providers within the survey were asked whether staff at their workplace who had direct contact with customers or clients had undertaken any training in issues related to dealing with disabled customers. Overall, a quarter (25 per cent) of respondents stated that staff in their workplace had undertaken training.

Table 3.11 Whether staff have undergone training in issues relating to disabled customers by workplace size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6 or fewer</th>
<th>7-14</th>
<th>15-99</th>
<th>100-499</th>
<th>500+</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>[72]</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>[0]</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>[6]</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>[22]</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 705 444 369 60 44 1623

Base - Service providers (All workplaces which are public facing)
Weighted base - 1639
Unweighted base - 1623

The likelihood that staff have taken part in this type of training increases greatly as size of workplace increases, with 14 per cent of the smallest workplaces with six or fewer employees provided with this training compared with 72 per cent of workplaces with 500 or more employees\(^{52}\) (Table 3.11). This same pattern is observed when taking overall organisation size into account although it is less pronounced. Thirteen per cent of workplaces part of an organisation with six or fewer employees reported staff received this type of training compared with 45 per cent of workplaces part of an organisation of 500 or more employees.

Additionally, service providers at multi-site workplaces were more likely (33 per cent) than those at single-site (18 per cent) to state that staff had undertaken training in disability-related issues (p>0.001).

Workplace sector again appears influential in the incidence of disability-related training for staff. A fifth (20 per cent) of frontline employees in the private sector received training compared with half (50 per cent) of frontline staff in public sector workplaces and almost three-fifths (58 per cent) of staff in the voluntary sector (p<0.001).

\(^{52}\) (p<0.001).
Furthermore, workplaces who had employed disabled people were almost twice as likely to report that staff members had undertaken training in issues related to disabled customers compared to those who had not employed disabled people (35 per cent compared with 19 per cent) (p<0.001) (Table 3.12). This does not automatically indicate a causal relationship between having employed someone with a health condition or impairment and training frontline staff on disability issues. Rather it may mean that those organisations employing disabled people may be more aware of disability issues and hence more likely to both employ disabled people and provide disability awareness training.

It is also apparent that there is a degree of variation by sector with workplaces in manufacturing, electricity, gas and water supply being the least likely to report staff having had training (seven per cent). Those in public and social services sector (public administration and defence, compulsory social security, training providers and health and social work) were the most likely to have been involved in training (64 per cent).

It is interesting to consider whether workplaces that stated that they operated a policy for disabled customers were more likely to provide training than those without a policy. Indeed, two-fifths (41 per cent) of workplaces with a policy reported training staff compared to less than a quarter (14 per cent) of workplaces who did not operate such a policy. This, therefore, suggests that operation of a policy is an indicator of the prevalence of other disability-related provisions.

**Table 3.12  Whether staff have undergone training in issues relating to disabled customers and clients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disabled employees in last 10 years</th>
<th>No disabled employees in last 10 years</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>[16]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>[71]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>[13]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>[0]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 652 937 34 1623

Base - Service providers (All workplaces which are public facing)

Weighted base - 1639

Unweighted base - 1623

Looking next at the types of training which staff had undertaken, in four-fifths of workplaces (79 per cent) this was part of ongoing customer care training.

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53 See Chapter 1 for information about categorisation of service providers.

54 (p<0.001).

55 (p<0.001).
fifths (61 per cent) stated that the training was specifically related to disability training and a similar proportion (59 per cent) reported that it was part of an induction package. Just under half (45 per cent) of respondents stated that the training took part under the umbrella of ‘equal opportunities’ (Table 3.13).

Further analysis indicates that the incidence of disability-related training for staff who had direct contact with customers or clients was fairly consistent between the two workplace types, although a slightly higher figure was reported for multi-site organisations. Sixty-two per cent of respondents at multi-site organisations said staff received such training compared with 58 per cent in single-site workplaces.

However, disability training which formed part of ongoing customer care training, part of induction training or equal opportunities training, was significantly more prevalent in multi-site than single-site workplaces.\(^56\) Therefore, in some cases the range of training offered appears to be linked to type of workplace. This supports findings from Stuart et al., (2002) who reported that larger organisations have a wider range of disability training events. However, due to the different sampling frames used, such comparisons should be treated with caution.

### Table 3.13 Type of training provided to staff relating to disabled customers and clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Type</th>
<th>Multiple response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part of ongoing customer care training</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific disability related training</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of induction training</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of equal opportunities training</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training as part of general professional training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff had training before starting job</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 441

Base - Workplaces where staff have been on training on issues relating to disabled customers/clients

Weighted base - 405

Unweighted base - 441

The case studies identified both inertia and good practice. While most organisations considered staff to be the key to good service provision, disability awareness training was, in many cases, patchy. It appeared that there was very little regular systematic training for staff in how to meet the needs of disabled customers. It was evident that most organisations with face-to-face customer contact made employees aware of customer service policy and practice, (inclusive of disabled customers) during staff

\(^56\) (p<0.01).
induction and via handbooks. Some large organisations sent out a one-off communication to stores for staff to read to make them aware of the service provision part of DDA legislation and customer expectations. However, in some cases, respondents said that these initiatives had not been followed up. Some respondents in large organisations acknowledged this deficiency and said that they saw training staff in the issues surrounding service provision to disabled customers as a priority area for future improvement. Others said that training was unnecessary. This was either because staff said they would automatically help a person with an impairment as part of general customer service ethos, or because being helpful was viewed as ‘part of human nature’ and the most ‘common sense approach’ (ESP/15-99/Private/Local office)

On the other hand, respondents in some organisations were concerned to provide systematic, good quality training on disability issues for all their staff:

‘We carried out a lot of briefings on DDA as it was coming in for Parts II and III. We actually produced a pack which was sent to each service point, probably about 120 odd places where we had people actually meeting our customers. We produced a pack called, ‘Giving Our Customers Service’, included in that was a lot of general customer services and training stuff, and we included the DDA and Department of Employment booklets on the DDA, we also included the Employers’ Forum on Disability communication, ‘Communicating with Disabled People’. There were probably about 25 to 30 items in the pack. The idea being that having got that message to the front line where it’s most needed the team leader, manager, supervisor, whoever, would actually brief folks on the related issues and we would try and track that.’

(ESP/15-99/Public/Multi-site/Head office)

A respondent from the same organisation, at the local level, made the point that disability training ought to cover broad issues and not legislation alone:

‘We endeavour to get all the staff trained in disability issues and we’re in the process of getting all the staff here qualified. ... we organise a disability equality course using a local consultant who herself is blind and she talks about the social model and the positive attitude and then goes on to talk about some practical dos and don’ts about communicating with disabled people ... we’ve had somebody coming in and do actual physical training with the staff in terms of interpreting that into how would you feel if you were coming into this centre in a wheelchair, you couldn’t hear, how is that going to affect you? I quite like that hands on approach as well so I wouldn’t like to see that go because there is now this move towards ... the DDA.’

(ESP/15-99/Public/Multi-site/Local office)

3.4.3 Reasons for making changes

This section considers those workplaces within the survey where respondents were aware of changes made for disabled customers and clients (n=353).
For the majority, it appears that ‘moral’ reasons contributed to the justification for making changes. More than nine out of ten (92 per cent) of service providers who were aware that changes had been made stated that they were implemented because it was the right thing to do for disabled customers and clients. A further 68 per cent also stated that the benefit of making the changes outweighed the costs (Table 3.14).

Some case study respondents expressed the view that complying with the requirements of the legislation is the minimum response:

‘I would like to ... think yes we do have a legal role in terms of inclusion but also we have a moral and social role we need to fulfil and I think that comes through understanding of disability not just the understanding of the Act if you see what I mean, more understanding.’

(ESP/100+/Public/Multi-site/Head office)

Some respondents thought that the requirement must put a different obligation onto a large organisation than a smaller one:

‘But it is about reasonableness in that I think the example I’ve been given is that a small business might not be expected to make the same level of adjustment that a large company has.’

(ESP/100+/Public/Multi-site/Local office)

This was usually justified by turnover and profit; the expectation being that larger companies have more money to spend on adjustments.

A sizeable proportion of survey respondents who had made changes stated that they had made changes because they were required to; 57 per cent stated they had to pay for changes regardless of costs, 43 per cent stated that the policy of the organisation required the changes and 44 per cent made changes because of legislation.

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57 Question wording: ‘It was the right thing to do for the disabled customers/clients’.
Table 3.14  Reasons for making changes for disabled customers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Multiple response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was the right thing to do for the disabled customers/clients</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits outweighed the costs</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We just knew we had to pay regardless of the costs</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation policy required us to make changes</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The law required us to make the change</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The costs were negligible</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In response to a request from a customer</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 353

Base - Service providers who made changes for disabled customers
Weighted base - 339
Unweighted base - 353

Those who stated that the law required them to make the change were asked whether they would have made the adjustments regardless of this. Table 3.15 shows that 57 per cent stated they would have made all of the changes, 31 per cent would have made some, but not all and just 12 per cent stated that they would not have made the changes without legislation.

Table 3.15  Whether changes would have been made without legislation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes - all of them</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes - some of them</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 168

Base - Service providers who made changes for disabled customers and gave a reason that the law required them to make the changes
Weighted base - 149
Unweighted base - 168
In addition to it ‘being the right thing to do’ the case studies identified the following reasons for making adjustments to accommodate disabled customers:

- compliance with the Act;
- to broaden the customer base;
- positive public relations; and
- long-term investment.

**Compliance with the Act**

The case studies found that all companies were concerned to comply with the legislation. However, some respondents said that, although they believe that they are trying their best to comply, they need more support from Government on how to. Some respondents said that they were:

‘...concerned that due to lack of information on the practicalities of adjustments, businesses may breach legislation without realising it.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

It was suggested that expectations may also be influenced by the type of organisation. For example, one respondent said that there was a greater onus on public sector organisations to comply with all legislation and that there is an expectation that public sector organisations will go beyond the legal aspects and follow good practice as well.

**Broaden the customer base**

The case study evidence also suggested that business incentives were often viewed as key factors for changes in customer provision. For example, widening the customer base to attract sales, particularly in a competitive environment where customer service was seen as crucial and profit dependent on direct customer through-flow such as retail, hotels, or restaurants.

‘We want everybody in the community to consider us as somewhere where they’d go and eat, and that includes disabled people, because they’ve got enormous spending power and we want their money, it’s as simple as that.’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Head office)

**Positive public relations**

An awareness of positive public relations and the need to be seen to be embracing the needs of disabled people and responding to the DDA was also considered by some organisations when making provisions for disabled customers. Some respondents said that there is a customer expectation that certain things, for example accessible toilets, should be in place.

‘The benefits are that you’re seen by conscientious members of the public to be embracing the Act and the disabled people themselves have somewhere to stay of a similar standard to a full able bodied person, so it’s good for PR.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)
Long-term investment

Some respondents also saw permanent physical adjustments to property as a long-term investment. These respondents considered that investment in lifts and accessible toilets would increase the value of a property when selling it on as a buyer would not themselves have to make changes to comply with the legislation.

The role of the DDA

The case studies also found that some provisions which benefit people with impairments had been made, either prior to, or without awareness of, the DDA or were not necessarily in response to the Act. Changes had thus been introduced under a general ethos of looking after customers or in reaction to customer feedback.

However, the case study findings also suggest that the DDA had acted both as a driver and a ‘road map’ for those organisations where a commitment to providing services for people was already a core value:

‘It’s quite difficult to measure the impact actually ... Service provision, I suppose we’d say the same thing (“it hasn’t made that much difference there because there were good practices and good intent there in the first place. It’s a long standing core value”) but it has given that extra leverage. It has tended to move required improvements up the list of priorities ... The idea is we’ve been planning this for the past few years so that we have made those changes because of DDA but it’s been progressive.’

(ESP/15-99/Public/Multi-site/Head office)

On the other hand another service provider said:

‘I just know the industry and I suppose unless they’re forced to do it then they would possibly have tried not to if there’s a cost implication.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

3.4.4 Experience of making changes

A sizeable proportion (40 per cent) of service providers within the survey who had made changes reported that they had not experienced any problems or difficulties when implementing these (Table 3.16). From Table 3.16 it can be seen that workplaces which were part of a multi-site organisation were more likely to have reported this trouble-free experience with 45 per cent stating no problems or difficulties compared with 36 per cent of respondents in single-site workplaces.58

58 (p<0.01).
The role of cost

For those service providers who did report a problem, the most common was the costs incurred (26 per cent). This reason was also found to be the most commonly cited problem in the previous survey by Stuart et al., (2002) in which the high cost of changes was reported by 16 per cent of respondents. Again, these results are not directly comparable because of the different sampling frames used.

Table 3.16 Problems/difficulties encountered in making the changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem/difficulty</th>
<th>Single-site workplace</th>
<th>Multi-site workplace</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No problems/difficulties</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High cost of changes</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space constraints</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning constraints/problems</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The age of the building</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premises difficult to alter</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties relating to staff attitudes/training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge about changes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruption to workplace during development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of time/speed of changes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unweighted base</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base - Service providers who made changes for disabled customers
Weighted base - 339
Unweighted base - 353

The survey also collected information about whether the changes made had a direct financial impact upon the workplace. Overall, two-thirds (65 per cent) of service providers who made changes for disabled customers and clients reported to have incurred a direct financial cost (Table 3.17).

Service providers where there had been a direct financial cost were then asked how much the changes had cost the workplace over the last 12 months, excluding grants or other income from parties. Nearly a quarter (23 per cent) said the changes had not cost the workplace anything over the last 12 months, while just under a third (32 per cent) said that they did not know how much they had cost. Nearly a fifth (18 per cent)
said that the total cost for the workplace had been less than a £1,000 and a tenth (11 per cent) said that the changes had cost between £1,000 and £4,999. Fifteen per cent of service providers said that the changes had cost the workplace in excess of £5,000.

Of the service providers who reported that no direct costs were incurred, the most commonly reported reason was that the adjustments formed part of a general refurbishment to facilities.

**Table 3.17 Whether changes had a direct financial cost**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 353

Base – Service providers who made changes for disabled customers
Weighted base - 339
Unweighted base - 353

**Table 3.18 How much adjustments cost**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Column percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£1 - £99</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£100 - £499</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£500 - £999</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£1,000 - £4,999</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£5,000 - £9,999</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£10,000 and over</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of these</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 230

Base – Service providers who made changes and stated they incurred a direct financial cost
Weighted base – 220
Unweighted base – 230

Cost was also a concern for some service providers within the survey who had not made changes. Around a third (30 per cent) stated that they had not made changes due to the anticipated financial cost.
Within the case studies, some respondents reported that cost was considered to be a major constraint to making physical changes to accommodate disabled people.

‘Of course things come at a cost and that’s always a good excuse not to do things. And that may have been the case with some of the access issues, certainly with the big issues like putting a lift in and so on.’

(ESP/15-99/Public/Multi-site/Head office)

Evidence from the case studies also suggested that there was no single figure allocated to adjustments across sectors because costs and benefits were assessed on the basis of:

- organisation profitability/turnover with size often a factor;
- perceived long-term benefits of adjustment;
- number of customers benefiting.

Some case study respondents said that although they were currently unclear about the financial implications, it would be impossible to make all the adjustments they felt would be required to meet the Act by October 2004 and that they would have to prioritise those which they considered to be more important.

‘I don’t think it’s 100 per cent realistic to think that every restaurant is going to be fully geared up for the most severe case of a disability ... just on the off chance that somebody with a disability might walk into that restaurant – now I don’t think that’s reasonable.’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

Another respondent suggested, however, that if the focus is on adapting the way services are delivered, costs are unlikely to be prohibitive:

‘...[they think it will take] an awful lot of money in investment to do it and that’s often the excuse you get, but you don’t, it’s more in terms of adaptability of our service, that’s the key thing and it doesn’t need a lot of money, it needs basically people’s confidence to help someone and offer assistance in most cases ... that’s the emphasis we try to get across to them.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

There was the view expressed that the costs were easier for large organisations to absorb.

Accommodating disabled customers

The case studies show that different types of impairment presented different challenges depending on type of service provided:

‘...disabled ... are not an homogenous group. Two people with what sounds like the same disability might not want to be dealt with in the same manner.’

(ESP/3-14/Private/Multi-site/Local office)
Some respondents said that while they could anticipate the needs of people with visible physical disabilities, it was more difficult to know how to provide for those whose disability is not immediately apparent:

‘If they’ve got a heart condition and they take a turn for the worse, it’s having the qualified personnel there willing to deal with something like that. I’m a first aider but really someone with a heart condition frightens me – that type of thing, so that is more difficult to deal with than someone who’s got a wheelchair and needs a hand pushing it.’

(ESP, 100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)

3.4.5 Reason why no special arrangements were being made for customers

Service providers within the survey who stated that they had not had to make changes to their workplace or practices for disabled customers were asked why this was so. The most frequently mentioned reason was that adjustments/changes were not required because the service was already fully accessible to disabled customers (71 per cent). Many respondents may not have been aware of the changes actually being made at the workplace, although they were aware of their existence. Additionally, a small number (12 per cent) of service providers stated that changes had been planned but not yet made (Table 3.19).

Considering the other reasons which were provided, half (51 per cent) of service providers stated that they had too few disabled customers for them to be able to make changes and half (50 per cent) said their premises are rented. It is likely that these reasons are not valid under the Act for not making premises accessible and do not make them exempt. This, in turn, may indicate a lack of knowledge about the provisions of the Act. For example, workplaces in rented premises are still required to make reasonable adjustments.

A finding of some concern was that 47 per cent (N=574) stated that they were unclear about requirements of the new legislation. Examining this group’s prior knowledge of the Act reveals that more than four-fifths (81 per cent) reported earlier in the survey that they had not heard of Part III of the DDA. The fact that they were unaware of the DDA helps to explain why they were unclear of requirements of the legislation and reinforces the importance of promoting and informing service providers with regard to the DDA provisions. Consequently, lack of awareness of the Act can translate into inaction.
Table 3.19  Reasons for no changes being made for disabled customers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Multiple response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service already accessible to disabled customers</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes are planned but have not been made</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too few disabled customers</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premises are rented</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear of requirements of legislation</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning constraints</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers don’t come onto premises</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally unnecessary/inappropriate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocating/moving premises soon</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No room to install facilities/physically impossible</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted base 1247

Base - Service providers who did not make changes for disabled customers
Weighted base - 1284
Unweighted base - 1247
4 Overall response to the Act

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 examined employers’ responses to Part II of the DDA; Chapter 3 covered the responses of employers who are also service providers to Part III of the Act. This chapter covers the responses of employers who are also service providers to both Part II and Part III of the DDA. It explores consistencies and differences in responses to their requirements under the DDA as both employers and services providers (hereafter referred to as ‘service providers’ to examine whether an integrated approach is being adopted with regard to compliance with Part II and Part III of the Act.

Section 4.2 explores service providers’ awareness of current and forthcoming legislation for employment of, and provision of services to, disabled people. Section 4.3 looks at whether policies are in place for disabled employees or customers and the provisions made for both groups are explored in Section 4.4. Together, these two sections cover the changes made or planned as well as reasons and motives, cost implications and future priorities. Section 4.5 examines the extent to which each part of the Act covering employees and customers has impacted on service providers.

4.2 Service providers’ awareness

The first part of this section looks at the level of consistency between awareness of the DDA provisions for both disabled employees (Part II of the DDA) and customers (Part III of the DDA). The second part examines awareness amongst employers who are service providers of the new requirements to both parts of the Act.

4.2.1 Awareness of current DDA legislation

In the survey, approximately a quarter (27 per cent) of service providers were aware of the existence of both the employment provisions and customer provisions of the DDA (Table 4.1). However, almost a third (31 per cent) claimed to be unaware of both parts of the Act.
In examining the characteristics of service providers that were unaware of both parts of the DDA (n=505) it is apparent that there is an association with the size of the workplace and also by overall size of organisation. Smaller workplaces or organisations were generally more likely to be unaware of both parts of the DDA than were those of a larger size. The incidence of service providers that were unaware of both Parts of the DDA was higher amongst single-site (35 per cent) than multi-site organisations (27 per cent).

Sectoral variation was also apparent with the likelihood of being unaware of both provisions highest in manufacturing, construction, agricultural and motor and less likely in public and social services.\(^{59}\)

Where service providers were aware of only one part of the Act, this was more likely to be the employment provisions contained in Part II. Thirty-six per cent of service providers were aware of the DDA with regard to employment provisions but were unaware of the Act in relation to customers, whereas just six per cent were aware of the DDA in relation to customer provisions but unaware of its existence for employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.1</th>
<th>Awareness of both parts of the Disability Discrimination Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cell percentages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Customer provisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heard of the Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment provisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heard of the Act</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not heard of the Act</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base - All Employers who are also service providers
Weighted base - 1640
Unweighted base - 1623

The case studies reflected the survey in that respondents who had very limited, or in a small number of cases, no awareness of either the employer or service provision elements of the DDA, were generally in small, single-site, private sector organisations.

As described in Chapters 2 and 3, knowledge of the DDA was often dependant on a respondent’s role. Those in more senior positions, specialist staff such as Human Resource and Personnel Managers typically in place at larger workplaces, and those at a Head Office level tended to have a greater understanding of both parts of the

\(^{59}\) See Chapter 1 for information about categorisation of service providers.
DDA. However, there was evidence of detailed knowledge of both parts of the DDA at a local level amongst respondents in public sector workplaces.

Where case study respondents were more familiar with one part of the legislation than the other, this sometimes reflected respondents’ past experience, for example, having become familiar with the employment aspect of the DDA when employing someone with a disability. More specific knowledge was also evident where case study respondents in larger organisations, often at a Head Office level, held specialist positions, which focused specifically on one aspect of the business, either employment, or customer service. At the workplace level, where respondents had a more general managerial role, this often covered both the employment and service provision aspects of the business. For example, most survey respondents who were responsible for recruiting or managing employees, considered themselves to be the appropriate person to answer the section on service provision. Some case study respondents in larger workplaces did have specialist roles, most often in Personnel or Human Resources, however, this role sometimes also encompassed the service provision aspect of the DDA, for example through responsibility for staff training (including customer service), or more general legal obligations.

It was also suggested by some case study respondents that it is likely that awareness of Part III of the Act will increase over time as the employee-focused legislation had been in place longer than legislation for customers.

4.2.2 Awareness of new requirements

As described in Chapter 1, there are several new requirements which will come into force in October 2004. These include:

- abolition of the exemption for employers with fewer than 15 staff from the provisions of Part II of the Act;

- additional occupations (police officers, fire-fighters and prison officers) currently exempt from Part II will be brought into the scope of the Act’s employment provision.

- under Part III of the Act, service providers will be required to remove physical barriers, or provide alternative means of using the service, and features of their services which make access for disabled people difficult or impossible.

Table 4.2 shows awareness amongst service providers of the lifting of the size exemption for Part II and the introduction of the final provision of Part III. Just two per cent of service providers were aware of both the removal of the size exemption for smaller business under Part II of the Act and the final provisions of Part III. Seven per cent were aware that the final provisions of Part III of the Act were coming into force but were not aware that the size exemption for smaller business is due to be removed. A further one per cent were aware that the size exemption is due to be removed but not that the final provision in Part II is coming into force. In total, 90 per cent of service providers were not aware of either change.
Table 4.2  Awareness of new requirements from 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness of final access duties of Part III coming into force</th>
<th>Aware</th>
<th>Not aware</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of forthcoming removal of exemption for small businesses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not aware</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base - All service providers  
Weighted base - 1640  
Unweighted base - 1623

Awareness of the forthcoming changes amongst small organisations

As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, the case studies revealed low levels of awareness of the forthcoming changes to DDA legislation amongst smaller organisations. This was also reflected in the survey findings, in that respondents from organisations that employed fewer than 15 staff and were also service providers tended not to be aware of the change to either Part II or Part III of the DDA.

The survey data showed that of service providers who were aware that there is currently an exemption for small businesses, awareness of the forthcoming removal of the exemption was no higher amongst those who will be directly affected. Nine per cent of service providers in organisations with fewer than 15 employees were aware of the removal compared to 13 per cent of service providers in all sizes of organisations.

Lack of awareness of the forthcoming changes amongst case study organisations employing fewer than 15 staff generally applied equally to both parts of the Act and reflected more limited knowledge amongst this group of the DDA in general.

The case studies revealed no greater knowledge of the forthcoming changes to Part II of the Act amongst organisations with fewer than 15 staff who were service providers than amongst employer only organisations. This suggests that being within the scope of Part III of the Act had little impact on awareness of forthcoming changes to Part II of the Act for these respondents.
4.3 Policies for disabled people

Survey respondents were asked in their capacity as employers whether their business had a specific policy covering the rights of disabled employees and applicants and similarly, in their role as service providers, if their business had a policy covering the provisions of goods and services to disabled people.

Analysis of the survey data presented in Chapters 2 and 3 shows that a sizeable proportion of service providers stated that their business was covered by a policy for employees and applicants (54 per cent) and disabled customers (41 per cent). Overall, 29 per cent of service providers had both a policy covering the rights of disabled employees/applicants and a policy covering the provision of goods and services to disabled people (Table 4.3). Two-thirds (66 per cent) had at least one policy in place covering either disabled employees and applicants or disabled customers, while 27 per cent had neither policy in place.

Workplaces that were part of a larger organisation were more likely to state that they were covered by both customer and employee disability policies. Two-fifths of multi-site organisations (41 per cent) had a policy for both groups compared with around a fifth (19 per cent) of single-site businesses.

Policies for both disabled employees and disabled customers also varied by sector, with public and social services being the most likely to have a policy, whereas having a policy for both employees and customers was less common in construction, transport communication and manufacturing industries.60

Of those service providers who had a policy in place for one of the areas (37 per cent), the policy was almost twice as likely to be for employees/applicants than for disabled customers. Just over one in ten service providers (13 per cent) had only a policy which covered the provision of goods and service for disabled customers and clients compared to a quarter (24 per cent) who had only a policy covering disabled employees and applicants.

---

60 See Chapter 1 for information about categorisation of service providers.
Table 4.3  Existence of policies for disabled people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whether organisation has a policy for disabled employees and applicants</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base - All Employers who are also service providers
Weighted base - 1638
Unweighted base - 1623

Case study respondents reflected the survey findings in that, where mentioned, policies covering disability most commonly related to recruitment and employment. Differences in awareness of the organisation’s policies was sometimes evident in large workplaces and multi-site organisations. On occasions, where policies had been stated to exist by respondents in more specialist or Head Office level roles, respondents in lower level or more generalist positions were either not aware that the policy existed, or were unfamiliar with its content. As discussed in Chapter 3, this highlights the need for effective communication of policies within organisations.

Within case study organisations, the existence of a policy for disabled employees was not usually linked with the development of a policy for disabled customers. A few respondents, notably in Head Office roles of large organisations with well-established employment policies covering disability, felt that there was no need for their organisation to establish a policy for disabled customers. One view was that disabled customers were adequately covered by the organisation’s Customer Care policy. Another view was that policies should be led by legislation. As discussed in Chapter 3, the service provision legislation, particularly the concept of ‘reasonableness’ was thought to be unclear and not helpful in forming a disability-related customer service policy.

Respondents who held more specialised positions tended to be in Personnel and Human Resource roles which may contribute to higher levels of awareness of company employment policies (see Section 4.2.1).
Some customer-facing service providers indicated that they would take into account the perceived prejudices of customers towards disabled people when making employment decisions.

‘It is people’s prejudices as well. We are a customer-facing environment and if you did have somebody who was very badly disfigured, I might get over that and my staff would get over that but how do you know the customers will?’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

In this context, the types of impairment mentioned were speech or hearing impairment, disfigurement and learning difficulties. The main concerns raised by respondents were that an employee should be protected from potential abuse from members of the public, for example it was thought that a customer could react in a ‘rude’ or ‘stroppy’ manner if they mistakenly believed that an employee with a hearing impairment was ignoring them. Some respondents were afraid of customer complaints and lost business.

On the other hand, some organisations felt that it was important that the profile of their staff should match that of their customers in general and that this implied recruiting disabled people.

‘The benefits (of employing disabled people) are to have a workforce that reflects the community served by the organisation. This is a business imperative. It goes with the grain.’

(ESP/100+/Public/Multi-site/Local).

Another concern occasionally mentioned was a concern for customer safety, this was particularly the case when discussing schizophrenia, as respondents, several of whom felt they knew little about the condition, perceived this to be an unpredictable ‘scary’ illness, the effects of which could impact upon customers. One organisation involved in childcare expressed reluctance to employ someone with schizophrenia for fear of putting their customers at risk and failing to comply with health and safety regulation.

‘The Policy states that we have no discriminatory issues with anybody with any form of disabilities, however our overriding concern is for the health and safety of the children in our care.’

(ESP/15-99/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

However, as described in Chapter 2, the opposite view was also expressed; that there is a great deal of prejudice around mental illness that is the result of misunderstanding:

‘People need to be educated more broadly to understand what are the issues and problems (around mental illness). It’s a question of changing perceptions.’

(ESP/100+/Public/Multi-site/Local office).
4.4 Provisions for disabled employees and customers

4.4.1 Provisions and adjustments currently in place for employees and customers

This section explores the extent to which service providers have been adopting a holistic approach to the requirements of Parts II and III of the Act.

Survey respondents in their capacity as ‘employers’ were asked what provisions were in place at the workplace to assist disabled employees. They were similarly asked in their capacity as ‘service providers’ about the practices and adaptations currently operating at their workplace to assist disabled customers. Employers who mentioned any or all of the following seven measures being in place were grouped:

- transferring people or jobs to other premises to assist disabled employees;
- adapted work environment to help disabled employees;
- flexible work organisation;
- flexible working time, or varying hours for disabled employees;
- providing appropriate physical assistance;
- allowing working from home for disabled employees;
- providing car parking spaces for disabled employees.

This was also the case for service providers who mentioned any or all of the four measures:

- changes to physical accessibility;
- improvement to communication;
- staff training in disability issues;
- changes to the way service is provided.

The survey analysis in this section is based on employers (who are also service providers) who currently, or previously in the past ten years, have employed disabled staff at the workplace.

Table 4.4 shows whether provisions were in place at the workplace to help employees and disabled customers. Just under seven in ten workplaces (68 per cent) had one or more of the measures listed above in place for both employees and customers. Only six per cent of service providers at workplaces which have had a disabled employee said there were no adjustments in place to assist disabled employees or customers. Just over one in ten service providers said that there were only adjustments in place to assist disabled employees (11 per cent) and a similar proportion said that there were only adjustments in place to help disabled customers (15 per cent).
Table 4.4  Provisions in place for disabled employees/customers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whether any of the provisions were in place for disabled customers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base - All Employers who are also service providers who have disabled employees now or in the past
Weighted base - 605
Unweighted base - 651

The case studies showed that plans were more commonly in place or being developed for disabled customers than for disabled employees, perhaps reflecting the more anticipatory nature of Part III requirements. Some organisations had started to make assessments of their premises, typically in terms of access for disabled customers, ahead of changes to Part III of the DDA, whereas respondents reported that future adjustments for employees were likely to be implemented in response to individual circumstances as they arose, as required under Part II of the Act. It is worth noting here, however, that the new Part III duties place the emphasis on physical adjustment and so respondents perhaps focused on this aspect when talking within the context of Part III. Employers had sometimes made more subtle adjustments for employees (such as assisted communication and flexible hours) which were not mentioned until prompted.

In the survey, service providers who had had disabled staff at the workplace were then asked if they had made changes to the workplace or working practices for disabled employees or for customers. Those who were aware of changes being made were asked further questions.

Twelve per cent of respondents who had made changes, had made adjustments for both disabled employees and customers. Those who made changes were just as likely to have made them for disabled employees (15 per cent) as for disabled customers (15 per cent).

The case study evidence revealed in more detail the different types of adjustment that had been made to reach the existing level of provision for both employees and customers with disabilities. As discussed in Chapter 3, respondents thought about adjustments for customers primarily in terms of physical adjustments, typically in terms of physical access to buildings. However, when discussing employees, respondents mentioned a greater range of adjustments. Changes more commonly
made for employees were: the introduction of flexible working time, adjustments to equipment, changes to working practices such as adjustments to roles, hours, and communications. Physical adjustments for employees tended to be more often mentioned by respondents at a Head Office level when discussing provision made by the organisation as a whole.

A key difference between employee and customer provision was that adjustments made for disabled employees were usually made for an individual in response to a specific situation. However, provision for customers involving physical adjustments was often anticipatory and focused on specific impairments. These changes were sometimes also intended to benefit other customer groups, such as those with pushchairs (for example, with ramps) or older people who were not necessarily considered to be ‘disabled’ (for example, installing handrails).

Case study respondents generally found changes to working practices (for either employees or customers) relatively unproblematic to arrange. However, the prospect of making future physical adjustments, particularly structural changes to a building, was sometimes a cause of concern. This concern was raised in terms of customer access and was associated with the respondents’ focus on physical adjustments and the anticipatory requirements of Part III of the Act.

4.4.2 Reasons for making changes

This section investigates all survey respondents who reported that they had made changes for disabled employees and disabled customers in their capacity as both employers and service providers (n=88).

Respondents were presented with a number of reasons for why they may have made changes for both disabled employees and customers. Seven in ten (71 per cent) cited as a reason that the benefits would outweigh the costs. The organisation’s policy was mentioned as a reason for making changes for both disabled employees and customers by 42 per cent of respondents.

Just under a fifth of respondents (18 per cent) said that low cost was a reason why they had gone ahead with making changes for both disabled employees and customers Only eight per cent said that the low cost of the change was a factor in going ahead with changes for customers but not for employees. In contrast, 37 per cent of service providers said that low cost was a reason why they had gone ahead with changes for employees but not a factor in their reasons for making changes for disabled customers.

More than a third (35 per cent) of respondents attributed the changes made for both disabled employees and disabled customers to the DDA legislation. However, 39 per cent of those who had made changes for both employees and customers did not cite the legislation as the reason. (Table 4.8)

A quarter (26 per cent) of respondents gave the legislation as a reason why they had made changes for either disabled employees or disabled customers. However, this
was more commonly given as one of the reasons for changes made for customers (20 per cent) than for employees (six per cent).

### Table 4.5 Whether changes were made because of legislation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whether adjustments made for customers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>whether adjustments made for employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>were made because of legislation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base - All Employers who are also service providers who said they made changes for disabled employees and customers

Weighted base - 71

Unweighted base - 88

As in the survey, the case studies revealed that the DDA had more influence on the decision to make changes for customers than employees. When explored further, motives for making changes for customers often differed to those for employees. Where the DDA was mentioned as a reason for having made adjustments, it was generally by specialist or Head Office staff. This could reflect lower levels of awareness of the DDA in local workplaces and smaller organisations.

The DDA appeared to be more of a factor in plans to comply with Part III in October 2004 (fear of prosecution was sometimes expressed), than in changes already undertaken. Where changes had been made for employees, respondents seldom felt that adjustments were driven solely by the DDA, though in some cases it had provided a focus or helped to inform change:

‘Prior to the DDA we were trying to be a good employer but the DDA concentrated minds and made us realise that we need to be doing it now. We wouldn’t be as far down the road if it hadn’t been for the legislation.’

(ESP/100+/Public/Multi-site/Local)

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Organisations employing fewer than 15 staff are currently only covered by Part III of the DDA, their exemption from the employment provision of Part II will be lifted in October 2004.
Business incentives were often given as key reasons for changes to customer provision. For example, there were perceived advantages in accommodating disabled people in order to widen the customer base. This was particularly the case in competitive environments, such as retail, hotel, or restaurants. As described in Chapter 3, the desire for a positive public image with regard to disability issues also influenced some organisations to make provisions for both disabled customers and employees.

As described in Chapter 2, the retention of employees, a sense of loyalty to staff and maintaining good workplace relations were the most common reasons given for making changes for disabled employees. These reasons were expressed by service provider and non-service provider organisations, suggesting that the presence of customer provision for disabled people had not directly influenced decisions involving adjustments for employees.

Adjustments for employees were commonly made in response to the needs of a particular individual, although employment tribunals were occasionally mentioned by case study respondents. Provision for customers, on the other hand, was often anticipatory, although there was also evidence of the influence of customer feedback or complaints on initiating adjustments. However, some respondents (particularly those in Head Office roles) expressed the view that some disabled customers did not fully understand their rights under the DDA, which they argued sometimes led to inflated expectations.

4.4.3 The influence of cost

Employers and service providers who stated that they made changes for both disabled employees and customers (N=88) were asked whether the adjustments they had made had incurred a direct financial cost for the workplace.

In the survey, almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of workplaces reported that they incurred a direct financial cost as a result of the adjustments made for both disabled employees and customers. Only a small minority (six per cent) of respondents who had made changes in both their capacity as an employer and service provider did not encounter any direct financial costs (Table 4.6). When costs were incurred for adjustments made under only one part of the Act this was almost as likely to be for disabled customers (13 per cent) as for disabled employees (16 per cent).
Table 4.6 Whether changes made incurred an additional cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whether changes made for disabled customers incurred an additional cost</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether changes made for disabled employees incurred an additional cost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base - All Employers who are also service providers who said they made changes for disabled employees and/customers

Weighted base - 70

Unweighted base - 88

The cost of making adjustments for both customers and employees was explored further in the case studies. This uncovered more complex views relating to the cost implications for businesses. Generally, cost was more often associated with adjustments that had been made for customers than for employees. Although respondents sometimes identified costly adjustments made for employees, in many cases the cost of adjustments for employees was considered to be low. This could reflect respondents’ perception of adjustment, in that adjustments for employees had often involved alterations to working practice and were less likely to be spontaneously identified as a change, than the often more physical adjustments made for customers. Furthermore, the cost of physical adjustment was perhaps more easily calculated in financial terms, whereas changes to employees’ hours or job roles were more likely to be absorbed into the working practices of a workplace.

Furthermore, when employers considered the issues involved in accommodating disabled employees in the future, cost was raised as an important concern, and sometimes perceived as a prohibitive factor. Cost was perceived as an issue most often when it was thought to involve a large outlay, such as equipment for an individual employee, which a few respondents thought may lie outside the DDA concept of ‘reasonableness’. This was particularly an issue with physical adjustments requiring a substantial outlay or where the organisation was a small one. However, as reported in Chapter 2 some case study respondents indicated that their decisions regarding the extent of adjustment (including financial outlay) could be influenced by factors such as an employee’s length of service and their relationship with the employer. This suggests that some employers may be more willing to make changes to accommodate existing employees than new recruits.

‘It’s different if someone’s employed first and then contracts an illness or a disability develops, that’s different, you would try and do all you could to support them’.

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)
Cost-benefit discussions tended to relate to physical adjustments for employees and customers. However, a few respondents, often Head Office staff, expressed the view that more emphasis should be placed on adapting working practices in order to accommodate disabled customers challenging what they felt to be the commonly held assumption within organisations that adjustments demand physical adaptation and hence financial cost.

‘[Local managers think it will take] an awful lot of money in investment to do it and that’s often the excuse you get, but you don’t, it’s more in terms of adaptability of our service, that’s the key thing and it doesn’t need a lot of money, it needs basically people’s confidence to help someone and offer assistance in most cases.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

4.4.4 Future priorities

Despite expressing a view that adjustments for disabled employees were often minimal and cost-effective as tailored to the individual, the prevailing priority amongst case study respondents was on budgeting for customers. This was generally due to the perception that it was more economically viable to make adjustments for customers as there are more customers than employees, hence any adjustment would potentially benefit a greater number of people.

‘Well if you needed to do a risk assessment to decide whether you buy a piece of equipment that someone can operate to do their job, that is more involved and more costly than to say, well we are going to have ramps that’s for wheelchair use and pushchair use. With the employee side you are treating one individual.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Single-site)

However, an opposite view was expressed that it would be more costly to make changes for a large, hypothetical group of customers than for a single familiar employee whose needs were understood. Some respondents, notably those in Head Office positions of large organisations, observed that the financial implications of making adjustments for a diverse public were likely to be considerable if implemented across the whole of the organisation.

‘The cost of producing a separate catalogue in Braille and making sure it is available in all of our stores is very significant and weighing that balance up against the benefits to us and then weighing it against the DDA ...’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

However, it is not clear that the costs across a large organisation would be proportionately greater than those for a small organisation. Nevertheless, because of the perceived scale of the potential outlay, a few large service providers felt that it was important to focus on staff training to facilitate adjusting practices for customers, for example providing a personal rather than self-service facility, which it was felt would comply with legislation where structural adjustments would be
difficult or expensive. Another reason for prioritising customers was the view that a business may only have one chance to meet a customer’s need, whereas the nature of the employer/employee relationship would usually allow more time to consider the issue.

The importance of attracting and retaining customers in organisations where customer service was central to business (for example, retail or hospitality) led some to place emphasis on customer provision. However, several respondents noted that provisions primarily installed for customers could also benefit employees should the need arise.

‘We try to be accessible to customers where we can ... the reason for doing it is to assist guests ... but our member of staff benefits because they are using the same environment, so we’ve not done it to help the member of staff, we’ve actually done it to help the guest but the member of staff would benefit.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi site/Head office)

The view that both parts of the Act were interlinked was expressed by some case study respondents. It was felt that the employment of disabled people expanded their pool of staff which could in turn benefit customers. Another view was that employing disabled staff demonstrated that the organisation had a positive attitude towards disability which could in turn attract disabled customers.

‘Because of the nature of the commercial organisation if we were to have to make a choice between the employee and customer we’d come down on the side of the customer but having said all that, as part of a larger strategy, we are working on making the business understand that you can have a better customer composition if your employee composition is broader. They’re not exclusive.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Head office)

4.5 Impact of DDA

Case study respondents’ views about which part of the DDA had most impacted on a workplace or organisation often depended on their business perspective and current policies. Some respondents thought that the service provision aspect had more influence because they felt they were already complying with the employment requirements, regardless of the legislation. Also, the forthcoming change to Part III of the Act was expected to impact on their business in terms of the financial cost of adjustments. Indeed, several case study respondents, generally Head Office personnel, mentioned that their organisation was preparing for October 2004, for example commissioning access audits of their premises.

However, there was a view amongst a few customer-focused businesses that the DDA had encouraged them to address the employment of disabled people more seriously than might have been the case otherwise.

‘I think, historically, the service side would have taken precedence but I think nowadays being a conscientious employer is also important.’

(ESP/100+/Private/Multi-site/Local office)
5 Conclusions

The present Government is committed to establishing a fairer ‘inclusive society’, whereby people are given full opportunity to participate in all aspects of society, regardless of sex, age, ethnicity or ability (DSS, 1999; Treasury, 2002).

The aim of this study was to explore how employers and service providers are responding to both previous and new provisions in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. In looking at the responses of employers and service providers to the DDA, the report also draws conclusions about attitudes and practices on disability in businesses.

5.1 Employers and service providers’ perceptions of disability

5.1.1 Perceived ease of employing someone with a disability

The findings show that employers feel that it is difficult to employ somebody with a disability. Nearly half of all employers said that their workplace would find it difficult to keep on an employee who became disabled, while a third of employers thought that taking on disabled employees was a major risk. However, employers at workplaces where there had been disabled employees were significantly more likely to say that it is easy to employ a disabled person and much less likely to consider it a major risk than those who had not.

With the exception of severe facial scarring, a significant proportion of employers felt that it would be difficult or impossible to employ someone with any of the health conditions mentioned in the questionnaire. Nearly one in five employers at workplaces who had, at one time or another, employed a disabled person said that they did not have any adjustments in place specifically to help disabled employees.

These findings suggest that many organisations have not given a lot of consideration to the potential adjustments that could be made to assist disabled people to enter or remain in work.

The difficulties and risks were perceived to be greater amongst small employers. Larger employers were more likely to feel that it would be easy to employ people
with a health condition mentioned in the questionnaire. This may be because larger organisations tend to have a broader range of jobs, making it easier for them to accommodate a wider variety of people and have more easy access to (in-house) specialist services. However, this is significant in view of small employers being brought under the Act from October 2004.

Encouragingly, fewer than one in five employers agreed with the statement that disabled employees tended to be less productive than other employees. Importantly, employers at workplaces where there have been disabled employees were more likely to consider disabled employees to be as productive as their non-disabled colleagues. Employers at larger workplaces were also more likely to consider disabled employees to be equally productive. The greater wariness of employers at smaller workplaces may reflect the fact that they are less likely to have had experience of employing disabled people. This suggests, first, that the ‘business case’ for employing disabled people needs to be made and targeted at small employers. Secondly, small firms may need easy access to both support and specialist advice services. Services that larger firms may have available in-house but which could be provided to small businesses on an area and/or industrial sector basis using a variety of delivery channels as required.

5.1.2 Sources of information

Both the customer service side and the ‘employer’ side of organisations tended to draw on the same sources of information. These included Government internet sites, professional forums and publications and the media in general. Some case study respondents said that the media had played a role in raising the levels of general awareness of disability. Some also said that levels of awareness in society in general were rising as the result of disabled people articulating their needs. There was a sense that any information disseminated would be best if kept concise and included practical examples which employers could translate across to their own business perspective. There was little spontaneous mention of the Disability Rights Commission in either the survey or the case studies, which points to potential for broader publicity of its role and services. One possibility would be for the Disability Rights Commission to establish and market a dedicated service specifically to help employers and service providers comply with the Act.

5.2 Employers’ and service providers’ responses to the requirements of the DDA

5.2.1 Knowledge and understanding of the Act

The research identified factors likely to increase awareness of the DDA within an organisation. The first of these was size, larger organisations being more likely to be aware of it than smaller ones. Secondly, knowledge of the Act was higher in the public sector and lowest in the private sector. Finally, there was generally greater awareness of the DDA in organisations with a policy for disabled employees and/or
a current employee with a disability. The first two are not readily amenable to public policy interventions. However, Government could encourage organisations to establish diversity policies and to recruit and retain disabled people, for example, through promoting good practice and developing access to rehabilitation services through initiatives like the Incapacity Benefit pilots (see DWP 2002).

If compliance is associated with knowledge of the Act, then one of the aims of policy is to increase organisations’ understanding of the legislation at both Head Office and workplace level. The case studies found that there was uncertainty about how companies should interpret ‘reasonable adjustment’ in the context of their business. Reasonable adjustment had, in practice, been interpreted in different ways. This pointed to a desire for a more precise definition of the concept, although it was feared that the definition was likely to be developed by case law. Rather than allow the definition to evolve through case law especially for Part III of the Act where there are relatively few cases, there may be a need for further guidance on how the concept can be implemented by businesses.

Overall, very few employers were aware that there was a size exemption within Part II of the legislation and that this was due to be removed in 2004.

Awareness of changes to Part III of the DDA was significantly higher than for those to Part II. These findings would suggest that information about the changes could usefully be targeted towards small and private sector organisations to improve awareness and preparedness. Information could be delivered through a variety of channels. These could include advertising on television and in the national and trade press and delivery of information through existing channels between Government and small organisations, such as VAT returns.

The case studies indicated that awareness of legislation could be heightened either through specific internal roles, created to monitor and implement policy, or through links with external contacts. The Jobcentre Plus, Department of Health, GPs, voluntary disability organisations and outside legal or health advisers have potential to heighten education and awareness. There may be scope to improve links between small companies and these parties.

5.2.2 Existing policies for employees and customers

Overall, just over half of all workplaces had a policy that covered the rights of disabled employees and applicants and around two-fifths of service providers had a policy for their customers. There was little evidence within the case studies for a separate disability policy either at the local or Head Office level. Most common was an Equal Opportunity policy which may or may not cover disabled employees’ rights.

Even where written policies were in place at Head Office level, the case study findings suggested that staff at the local workplace (even at HR level) had limited knowledge about their content and usually indicated that they would need to look up the detail. Small, single-site organisations relied more heavily on verbal communication than any formal written policy.
This suggests that if best practice is to be disseminated then it should include guidance on how to set up and communicate a policy for providing services to disabled customers and employees.

5.3 Provisions for disabled employees and customers

5.3.1 Recruitment and selection of employees

There was little evidence that organisations had formal guidelines in relation to recruitment. The survey showed that around half of all employers said that they asked applicants about any long-term health problems or disabilities. There was no conclusive evidence to suggest that health questionnaires were being used to discriminate against disabled applicants. The case studies demonstrated uncertainty among employers as to whether to ask applicants to disclose a disability when applying. They also suggested that employers were aware of the need to respect applicants’ confidentiality and often regarded this as best practice. Over three-quarters of workplaces said that they felt it would be easy to guarantee a disabled applicant an interview, which at least suggests a willingness among employers to assist disabled applicants in the application process.

5.4 Making adjustments

5.4.1 Adjustments in practice

Employers were more likely to have made adjustments for their employees than service providers were for their customers. The case studies and survey pointed to a range of adjustments in place. Positively, these included changes to working hours and practices as well as physical adjustments. The Working Time Directive was felt to have promoted greater flexibility towards employees and it was felt that this might also have had an impact in encouraging employers to consider alternative working patterns. There was a feeling that greater flexibility to accommodate an ageing workforce may also impact positively on disabled employees. The research indicated, however, that adjustments were more likely to be made to accommodate current employees than applicants.

Eighty per cent of employers made changes because they believed the benefits would outweigh the costs. Employers who incurred a direct financial cost from changes were more likely to give this as a reason, indicating that this additional cost can still be a worthwhile investment.

The study found that 74 per cent of service providers had at least some adjustments in place to assist disabled customers. Larger service providers, those that were aware of Part II or Part III of the Act, and those that had policies covering the rights of disabled customers and clients or disabled employees and applicants were more likely to have made adjustments.
The changes and adjustments that had been made or planned by service providers tended to be geared to customers with physical impairments. Changes or adjustments which would be required for less apparent disabilities were less frequently reported as being in place or planned for the future. Service providers who said that they had not made any changes at their workplace were likely to cite the small number of disabled customers and the fact that their premises were rented as the reasons.

5.4.2 Perceptions of adjustments

Some adjustments were felt to be easier to make than others. The easier ones were flexible working hours and finding car parking spaces for employees. The harder ones were felt to be adapting the work environment e.g. accommodating wheelchairs (especially in a listed/rented building). The case studies revealed concern about the potential cost of making adjustments within small organisations. This was especially the case in relation to installing wheelchair lifts, ramps and accessible toilets which it was felt could all entail considerable building work. This concern also applied to customers, although additional costs were considered more justifiable when more than one person was affected. Even large case study companies considered themselves to have financial constraints, in spite of some large companies having ring-fenced funding reserved for DDA adjustments.

This finding suggests that there is a lack of knowledge about disability on the part of employers, in particular small employers, who have not employed a disabled person and that employers, especially small ones, still do not have as broad a perception of disability as is set out by the DDA. Disability still carries connotations of physical and visible impairments. There are misconceptions and prejudices around mental illness. This points to the need for Government to counter the myths and misunderstandings about disability and the requirements of the Act and the potential for a more general education and awareness campaign about the breadth of disability and the inclusion of conditions such as epilepsy and diabetes.

There was generally greater awareness of the DDA in organisations with a policy for disabled customers/employees/applicants compared to organisations without such policies. These organisations were also more likely to have made adjustments. This suggests that one way of concentrating minds would be to encourage organisations to set up policies for disabled people.
Appendix A
Case studies overview

The following outline of the case studies includes:

- whether the case study is an Employer only (EO) or an employer who also provides services to the public (ESP);
- case study sector type;
- workplace size based on number of employees;
- whether the workplace is a single-site operation or part of an organisation with multiple outlets;
- the overall size of the organisation based on total number of employees (where this information was available);
- the type of business;
- geographic region.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workplace size</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Single/Multi-site</th>
<th>Organisation size</th>
<th>Type of business</th>
<th>Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>EO</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Single-site</td>
<td>3-14</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>England - Mids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EO</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Single-site</td>
<td>15-99</td>
<td>Wholesaler</td>
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<td>Private</td>
<td>Single-site</td>
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<td>Mail Order</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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<th>Organisation size</th>
<th>Type of business</th>
<th>Region</th>
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<td>ESP 15-99</td>
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<td>15-99</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>N Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP 15-99</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Single-site</td>
<td>15-99</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
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<td>Multi-site</td>
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<td>Non-food retail</td>
<td>England - Mids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>500+</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
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<td>Multi-site</td>
<td>500+</td>
<td>Public amenities</td>
<td>Wales</td>
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<td>Private</td>
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<td>100-499</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>England - South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP 100+</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Multi-site</td>
<td>500+</td>
<td>Non-food retail</td>
<td>England - South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP 100+</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Single-site</td>
<td>500+</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>England - South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP 100+</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Multi-site</td>
<td>500+</td>
<td>Non-food retail</td>
<td>England - South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP 100+</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Multi-site</td>
<td>500+</td>
<td>Food retail</td>
<td>England - South</td>
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<td>Private</td>
<td>Multi-site</td>
<td>500+</td>
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<td>Multi-site</td>
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<td>ESP 100+</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Multi-site</td>
<td>500+</td>
<td>Food retail</td>
<td>National (HO only)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These case studies were interviewed with an employer-only focus.

** For this organisation, business type cannot be given without identifying the organisation. Therefore, for confidentiality reasons, it is omitted.
Appendix B
Logistic regression

Five multivariate analyses were undertaken. The first (A.1) looks at factors associated with whether the workplace has ever employed disabled staff. The second and third (A.2 and A.3.) are concerned with awareness of the DDA, Part II (employers) and Part III (service providers). The final two models (A.4. and A.5.) look at whether adjustments were in place and/or planned at the workplace, firstly for disabled employees (by employers) and then disabled customers (by service providers).

The analysis in earlier chapters of this report examined the two-way associations of each of these dependent variables with factors such as workplace size and workplace sector individually. Analysis from these earlier chapters identified certain factors as potentially important. However, the associations that exist between the independent variables themselves (such as between workplace size and workplace sector) mean observations based on bivariate analyses can only be tentative. Multivariate analysis enables us to examine factors together to identify their unique contribution to each of the outcomes.

Logistic regression is a statistical modelling technique used to predict whether or not an event will happen (such as disabled staff employed). This is done by taking a dichotomous dependent variable and examining the effect of independent variables such as workplace size and sector. These independent, or predictor, variables may be categorical or continuous.

For each of the categorical independent variables one value is chosen as the reference (e.g. in the case of type of workplace sector, this is the private category) and is assigned as odds ratio of 1.00. The odds ratios for the other values of the variable are then contrasted with this reference category.

An odds ratio of more than 1.0 means that membership of this category increases the odds of the event occurring (e.g. having employed disabled staff). Similarly, an odds ratio of less than 1.0 means that the odds are reduced compared to the reference category.
B.1 Significance levels

The probability of making a Type 1 Error, i.e. an error made by wrongly rejecting a true null hypothesis. This might involve incorrectly concluding that two variables are related when they are not or wrongly deciding that a sample statistic exceeds the value that would be expected by chance. The lower the error, the higher the statistical significance.

**P=<0.05**

This significance level means we are at least 95 per cent confident that we are correct in accepting that the distributions are different.

**P=<0.01**

This significance level means we are at least 99 per cent confident that we are correct in accepting that the distributions are different.

**P=<0.001**

This significance level means we are at least 99.9 per cent confident that we are correct in accepting that the distributions are different.

Table B.1 Whether ever had disabled employees at the workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sector</strong></td>
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<td>1.520</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-site</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Continued
Logistic regression modelling allows us to explore factors associated with workplaces where disabled staff have ever been employed. Overall, 37 per cent of employers stated that there had been a disabled employee at their workplace.

The log odds of having employed disabled staff were two and a half times as high in the voluntary sector as in the private sector. Workplaces located within the public sector were also more likely to have employed disabled staff, although this was to a lesser degree (1.520).

At workplaces where overall awareness of Part II of the DDA was reported there was a higher likelihood of employing disabled staff compared to workplaces unaware of Part II of the Act (1.388). Additionally workplaces with an employment policy had an increased likelihood of employing disabled staff (1.475).

There was a significant association between workplace size and incidence likelihood of employing disabled staff. Compared to workplaces with 100+ employees, those with up to six (0.053), seven to 14 (0.077) and 15 to 99 employees (0.149) had less than half the odds of employing disabled staff.

There was no significant association between the likelihood of disabled staff being employed at multi-site workplaces compared with single-site.
### Table B.2  
**Awareness of DDA: Part II**

<table>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Single-site workplace</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-site</td>
<td>1.149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Workplace size</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-6 employees**</td>
<td>0.185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-14 employees**</td>
<td>0.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-99 employees**</td>
<td>0.250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100+ employees</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whether employ disabled staff</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Previously</td>
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<tr>
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Base: 1865 respondents (unweighted). Significant differences: * = P<0.05, ** = P<0.01

Reference group: private sector, no policy for disabled employees, single-site workplace, workplace size of 100 or more employees, never employed disabled staff.

Logistic regression: dependent variable – aware of DDA Part II (=1), unaware of DDA Part II (=0)

Logistic regression modelling allows us to explore factors associated with overall awareness of the Disability Discrimination Act. Overall, 62 per cent of employers were aware of the DDA (spontaneous and prompted).

Compared to workplaces where disabled staff have never been employed, establishments which currently have disabled employees have a significantly higher likelihood (1.490) of being aware of Part II of the DDA.
Workplace size was also found to be influential. Compared to the largest workplace with 100+ employees, awareness levels were significantly lower in workplaces with 15-99 (0.250), 7-14 (0.221) and especially six or less employees (0.185).

Having a policy covering the rights of disabled employees and applicants is associated with an increased likelihood of having awareness Part II of the DDA (1.807).

There was no significant association between awareness of Part II of the DDA and workplace sector, although the likelihood of awareness of Part II of the DDA was highest in the voluntary sector (with a log odds of 1.58 compared to the reference category of the private sector).

### Table B.3  Awareness of DDA: Part III

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<tr>
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Table B.3  Continued

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<tr>
<td>Whether employ disabled staff</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1.000</td>
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<td>Currently</td>
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<td>Place of business</td>
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<td>On and off premises</td>
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<tr>
<td>Off premises only</td>
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</table>

Base: 1475 respondents (unweighted). Significant differences: * = P<0.05, ** = P<0.01

Reference group: private sector, no policy for disabled employees, no policy for disabled customers, single site workplace, workplace size of 100 or more employees, never employed disabled staff, business takes place off premises only.

Logistic regression: dependent variable – aware of DDA Part III (=1), unaware of DDA Part III (=0)

Logistic modelling was used to identify the characteristics that showed independent associations with overall awareness of Part III of the DDA. Overall, 33 per cent of service providers were aware of Part III of the DDA (spontaneous and prompted).

Compared with workplaces in the private sector, those in the voluntary sector have more than twice the odds of being aware of Part III of the DDA (2.441). Public sector workplaces also have a significantly higher likelihood of being aware than those located in the private sector (1.864).

Having a policy for disabled customers and clients is associated with increased likelihood of awareness of Part III of the DDA (1.888). Furthermore, having a policy for disabled employee and applicants is also associated with an increased likelihood (although to a lesser degree) of being aware of Part II of the DDA (1.431).

Compared to workplaces who have never employed disabled staff, those who have previously have a significantly higher likelihood of awareness (1.391). Those who are currently employing disabled staff also have a slightly higher (although statistically non-significant) likelihood.
There is no significant effect of size of workplace on awareness of Part III of the DDA. Additionally, no significant association was observed according to whether the workplace was a part of a multi-site as opposed to single-site.

### Table B.4  Adjustments in place and/or planned - Employers

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</thead>
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<td><strong>Policy covering disabled employees/applicants</strong></td>
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<td>1.516</td>
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<td>15-99 employees</td>
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<tr>
<td>100+ employees</td>
<td>1.000</td>
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<td><strong>Whether currently employ disabled staff</strong></td>
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<td>1.000</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aware of Part II of the DDA</strong></td>
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<td>1.000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sought external advice about employing disabled person</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes**</td>
<td>3.006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: 797 respondents (unweighted). Significant differences: * = P<0.05, ** = P<0.01

Reference group: private sector, no policy for disabled employees, single-site workplace, workplace size of 100 or more employees, do not currently employ disabled staff, not aware of Part II of the DDA, had not sought advice about employing disabled person.

Logistic regression: dependent variable - adjustments in place and/or planned (=1), no adjustments in place and/or planned (=0)
This analysis was carried out by amalgamating any mention of the seven adjustments as being in place or planned into a new variable:

- transferring people or jobs to other premises to assist disabled employees;
- adapted work environment to help disabled employees;
- flexible work organisation;
- flexible working time, or varying hours for disabled employees;
- providing appropriate physical assistance;
- allowing working from home for disabled employees;
- providing car parking spaces for disabled employees.

Logistic modelling was used to identify the characteristics which showed independent associations with having adjustments in place and or planned to help disabled employees in workplaces who have ever had disabled employees.

Compared with workplaces which were part of the private sector, the log odds of workplaces in the voluntary sector were more than four times as high (4.514). Public sector workplaces also had a higher (although statistically non-significant) likelihood of having adjustments in place or planned than the private sector.

Workplaces who have sought information about employing a disabled person had over three times higher odds of having adjustments in place or planned for disabled employees (3.006).

Although it is not statistically significant, compared to workplaces with 100 or more employees, workplaces with up to six, seven to 14 and 15 to 99 employees had less than half the odds of having an adjustment in place or planned.

### Table B.5  Adjustments in place and/or planned - Service providers

<table>
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<th>Odds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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Continued
### Table B.5  Continued

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<td>Single-site workplace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-site**</td>
<td>1.519</td>
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<td>0-6 employees</td>
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<td>1.108</td>
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<tr>
<td>100+ employees</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Whether employ disabled staff</strong></td>
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<td>Never</td>
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<td>Currently</td>
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<td>Yes**</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Sought external advice about employing disabled person</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes*</td>
<td>1.614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of agreement with ‘Taking on a disabled person is a major risk for the employer’</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree**</td>
<td>1.657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1.376</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Base: 1465 respondents (unweighted). Significant differences: * = P<0.05, ** = P<0.01

Reference group: private sector, no policy for disabled employees, no policy for disabled customers, single-site workplace, workplace size of 100 or more employees, never employed disabled staff, business takes place off premises only, not aware of Part II of the DDA, not aware of Part III of the DDA, not sought external advice, agree that taking on a disabled person is a major risk for the employer.

Logistic regression: dependent variable – adjustments in place and/or planned (=1), no adjustments in place and/or planned (=0)
This analysis was carried out by amalgamating any mention of the four adjustments as being in place or planned into a new variable:

- changes to physical accessibility;
- improvement to communication;
- staff training in disability issues;
- changes to the way service is provided.

An examination of each of these two-way associations helps to show particular factors which appear associated with either having adjustments in place or planned or not.

However, as many of the characteristics are inter-related logistic modelling was used to identify characteristics that showed independent associations with having adjustments in place and/or planned for disabled customers.

Workplaces with a policy covering the rights of disabled customers and clients have over twice the odds of having adjustments in place or planned (2.834). Furthermore, having a policy covering the rights of disabled employees and applicants is significantly associated with an increased likelihood of having adjustments in place or planned for disabled customers (1.456).

Compared to single-site organisations, being part of a multi-site increase the likelihood of adjustments being in place or planned for disabled customers (1.519).

As might be expected, in workplaces where at least some business takes place on the premises the log odds of adjustments being in place or planned are nearly three times as high as in workplaces where business only occurs off the premises (2.927).

Workplaces which had sought information regarding employing disabled staff had a higher likelihood of having adjustments in place or planned for disabled customers (1.614).

Awareness of Part III of the DDA results in twice the odds of having adjustments in place and/or planned for disabled customers (2.016). Awareness of Part II of the DDA also increases the likelihood of having adjustments for disabled customers in place or planned (1.408).

The attitude statement ‘taking on a disabled person is a major risk for the employer’ was included in the model as it could potentially be an indicator of the employer’s attitude to employing disabled staff. Workplaces who disagreed with the attitude statement that ‘taking on a disabled person is a major risk for the employer’ had a higher likelihood of adjustments being in place or planned (1.657).
Appendix C
Survey questionnaire and case study topic guide

Case study topic guide

Section A: Background

A1 Explain aims of the research.

Emphasise that is **not** to scrutinise performance in the employment of people with disabilities, rather to explore issues surrounding the employment of (and provision of services to) people with disabilities from the employers’ point of view in the context of the DDA. Commissioned by DWP, conducted by independent research orgs,

A2 Explain purpose of visit and interview procedure. Assert confidentiality of the research.

A3 Explain that we may be talking to others and that consent has been given to contact them.

A3 Confirm organisation address, number of employees, sector, whether provide services. How are services provided (e.g. face to face, by telephone)?

A4 Confirm position (if any) of branch in organisation.

A5 Record names and job titles of all interviewees.

NB - where interview to cover employer and SP aspect – BEGIN with section G SP questions
Employers

Section B: Awareness of the Act

B1  Awareness of legislation covering the employment of disabled people.

   If aware of the legislation:
   • When and where first heard?
   • Main provisions of the legislation.
   • Probe how disability is defined in the Act.
   • Whether believes firm/establishment is covered by, or exempt from, the employer provisions of the Act.
   • Have they heard of the term ‘reasonable adjustments’? If so what does the term mean to them in the context of their business?

   If covered, ask Topic B2, if not covered ask Topic B3.

B2  If covered, understanding of the obligations of business under the act’.

B3  For employers below the 15 threshold). Awareness that the threshold for employers is to be removed in October 2004? How will this affect the business? What will be your likely response to the removal of this threshold?’

   (Ask All)

B4  Where does the business/workplace get information about disability legislation? Also, where would it like to get information if it has not sought info. already?

B5  What sort of information or advice is sought? Why sought? From whom? Which sources are helpful, and which less so? Why? What advice was lacking?

B6  What practical steps could be taken to raise awareness of the Act amongst businesses? By whom? What sort of information would the workplace/business like to receive?
Section C: Policies and practices

C1 Does the firm have a formal written policy on recruitment and employment of disabled people? (If so, ask for a copy). This may include an Equal Opportunities policy.

If yes, ask Topics C2-11. If no, go to Topic C12

C2 How long has a formal policy been in place?

C3 Who sets the policy/how is the policy decided?

C4 What does the policy cover? Probe for recruitment, employment, retention if necessary. How disability is defined within their policy

C5 Why was your policy developed? Was the DDA a factor?

C6 When was your policy developed? Have any changes been made?

C7 How are staff made aware of the policy?

C8 Are local variations allowed?

C9 How is the policy put into practice? Who is responsible for implementation? Any training of those involved?

C10 How are the policies monitored? Is this formal? Who is involved in the procedures (e.g. management, trade unions, disabled employees themselves, external advisers)?

C11 Perceived effectiveness. What aids/limits effectiveness?

Go to Section D.

C12 If no formal policy, why not and are there any plans/thoughts of setting one up?

C13 Is there an informal policy?

If “yes”, ask Topics C3-C11
Section D: Recruitment and selection

D1 (Workplace interviews – local level, H/O interviews – general level.)

Has the firm recruited a disabled employee? How many? Check when – recently/in past. (Does this include part-time, contract workers etc., or just full-time staff? Work placements/experience) What type of disability? Then check using CARDS showing DDA definition of disability and different types).

D2 Do you get many applications from people with disabilities? Has this changed in recent years? Views on why.

D3 Has the business made any changes to staff recruitment and selection processes recently? What?

If Yes

D4 Why have these changes been made? Have these changes been made in response to the DDA?

D5 What is the process for recruiting and selecting employees?

(Prompts: use press adverts, recruitment agencies/consultants, assessment centres, formal sifting and selection procedures, carry out health screening of applicants?) (To get overview of process).

• Is anything included about the employment of people with disabilities in your press adverts?

• On application forms?

• Whether carry out health screening of applicants? Why? How does this work – at what stage is this used and how influential is it?

• Whether any form of test procedures are used? Would any allowances made for people with a disability?

D6 If, at interview, a candidate has declared they have an impairment or long-term illness would staff ask about any changes to the workplace or working practices that might be made interviewees ever fail to disclose relevant medical information? How is this handled if so?

D7 How does information about health affect the decision about a person’s suitability for a job? Would you say that a disabled person is less likely to be employed even if they have the skills to do the job? To what extent does this depend on the type of job?

D8 What has worked well and what less well in terms of the recruitment and selection policy and procedures in relation to people with disabilities? Why? Have there been any significant problems?
Section E: Employment of disabled people

E1 (Workplace interviews – local level, H/O interviews – general level.) Differentiate from QD1 which covered recruitment.

Estimated number of disabled employees? (Does this include part-time, contract workers etc., or just full-time staff? Work placements/experience?)

E2 What sort/range of disabilities do the firm’s disabled employees have? (can remind of types using card)

E3 In what occupations?

E4 Why does the business/workplace (not) employ disabled people?

E5 Is it easy for the business/organisation to employ someone with any type of disability?’ (show card). If it is hard to employ, ask for explanation – why would it be hard? e.g. what do they mean by not able to do a job?

E6 What are the benefits and costs of employing disabled people?

Section F: Adjustments for disabled employees

F1 Have any changes been made to the workplace to assist disabled people? What? What criteria determine whether action is taken? (Point out to respondents that changes can be to workplaces (e.g. physical) and working practices.)

Where adjustments have not been made go to Topic F7:

F2 Were they made at request of the employee/trade unions/health and safety requirements/others? In response to/anticipation of the DDA?

F3 Would the firm have made the changes without the DDA?

F4 Did changes cost anything? How much?

F5 What have been the benefits and costs?

F6 How well are the arrangements working in practice?

Where adjustments have not been made ask Topic F 7:

Establish whether aids/adaptations were needed but not made.

F7 Why have changes not been made?

F8 What changes would the firm have been prepared to make (if they had been necessary) at up to what cost? Would these have included flexible working hours/working from home?
(Ask All)

F9 What changes are/would be easy/difficult to make to support disabled employees and why? Check for different types of disability.

Are there any constraints to what the business is able to do? How important is cost in determining what action is taken and why? (For those businesses without disabled employees ask ‘If you did have a disabled employee, what changes would be easy/difficult to make and why? How important is cost in determining what action is taken and why?)

F10 Has any staff training been provided to raise general awareness of working with disabled colleagues? To whom? Was this formal or informal? What sort of issues did it cover? Has it proved useful?

F11 How do they consult disabled employees about their needs?

F12 If so, what was feedback? How was it dealt with?

Service providers

Section G: Awareness of the Act

G1 Awareness of any laws giving rights to customers with disabilities?

G2 Awareness of the main provisions of any laws?

G3 Whether workplace/business is covered by/exempt from these laws? Why?

G4 Awareness of when the final part of the customer service provision of the DDA comes into force and what it requires.

G5 (If not already asked of respondent ask G5, G6 and G7) Where does the firm get its information about disability legislation?

G6 What sort of information or advice is sought? Why sought? From whom? Which sources are helpful, and which less so? Why? What advice was lacking? Where would workplace/business like to get information?

G7 What practical steps could be taken? By whom? What sort of information would the firm like to receive?
Section H: Policies and practice

H1 Does the firm have a formal written policy on the provision of goods and services to disabled people?

(If “Yes”, ask for a copy). If “no” go to Topic H5.
- When produced?
- Who sets the policy? How is the policy decided?
- Main provisions?
- Why was this policy developed?
- Was the DDA a factor?
- How often is the policy reviewed and by who?
- What changes have been made to the policy recently? Why made?
- Are local variations allowed? (Where relevant).

H2 How is the policy put into practice? Who is responsible? How are staff made aware? Any staff training?

H3 How well has the policy worked in practice?

H4 How are the policies monitored? Is this formal? Who is involved in the procedures?

If formal policy go to I1

H5 If no formal policy, why not and are there any plans/thoughts of setting one up?

H6 Is there an informal policy?

If “Yes”, ask Topics H 2 - H 4

Section I: Effect of Act on establishment

I1 Do you think you have disabled customers? Do you have an idea of how many?

- What type of disability? Then check using CARDS showing DDA definition of disability and different types).

I2 What arrangements are made for disabled people/customers? Is there any difference for different types of disability?

(Remind respondents that we are asking about changes to services as well as those to the physical environment).
I3 Have you heard of the term ‘reasonable adjustment’? What does the term mean in the context of the business?

I4 What has the business/workplace done in response to the act?’

If answer is ‘positive’ i.e. have done something, then ask Topics I 5- I 10

If answer ‘negative’ i.e. have not made any changes then ask Topic I 11

I5 How decided what changes to make. Where customers consulted? Did they seek advice from any other bodies? If so, which ones?

I6 How easy or difficult was it to make these changes? Were there any problems? Was cost an issue?

I7 Did you get any financial help from public sector or voluntary bodies towards the costs of changes?

I8 Perceived benefits of the adjustments? Benefits to disabled customers/other customer groups? Benefits to business?

I9 What staff training has been carried out? Who received the training?

I10 What future staff training is planned? Covering what aspects? For whom? When might this training be carried out?

Ask Topic 11 to those who said that they have not made any changes

I11 Reasons for not making/planning changes. What is seen as reasonable?

(Ask All)

I12 How will the workplace/business respond to the requirements that will come into effect in October 2004’.

These will need explaining to respondents at this point. (SEE CARD – DDA outline)

I13 Do you think these changes will be easy or difficult to make? What are the issues for the business? What kind of information would be help the business decide what they need to do/whether they need to do anything?

Ask Topics I 14 and 15, if answer to Topic I 12 is “none”

I14 Do you think that the business meets the provisions of the Act?

I15 Have all physical barriers that prevent a customer with a disability from accessing services been altered to a reasonable extent? Is there anything else you think could be done?
Have you received any feedback from staff about dealing with disabled customers? Do they feel able to deal with the needs of disabled customers?

**Section J: Linkages between the Parts of the Act**

Alter order of employer/SP depending on emphasis of interview.

**J1** Did the fact that the firm made adjustments as an employer/lead it to make adjustments as a service provider (or vice versa)? Why or why not?

**J2** What made the firm think that the Act might have implications for other aspects of its business? Who had the responsibility for finding out? How find out more?

**J3** Which aspect of the Act has impacted the most on the business up till now – as an employer or service provider? Why? Which will have the greatest impact in the future? Why?

**J4** Has the Act raised understanding of the difficulties faced by disabled people? Why? In what way? What does your organisation do differently as a result of this?

**J5** (For employers below the 15 threshold). Even though the firm is presently exempt as an employer, did you consider whether you were covered as a service provider, or was it assumed that the firm was exempt from the other Parts also? How did you find out?

**J6** To what extent have changes made benefited both employees and customers and has this had implications for obtaining funding.

**J7** Have employees or customers received priority for funding changes?
Annex A

Show card: Types of Disability

Have you ever had an employee/customer (as appropriate)

- with a difficulty getting around or moving from place to place
- who has difficulties lifting or carrying everyday objects or with using their hands
- with a severe disfigurement, such as a malformed limb or a facial scar or skin disease
- with a hearing difficulty
- who has difficulty seeing, so that they find it hard to read, even with glasses
- with a mental illness, such as depression or schizophrenia
- with a learning difficulty which affects their ability to cope with unfamiliar situations (this includes people who used to be known as ‘mentally handicapped’).
- who has a speech impairment which affects their ability to participate in a spoken conversation
- with a long-standing condition such as diabetes, epilepsy or a heart condition
- with a progressive illness such as cancer, multiple sclerosis or Alzheimer’s disease
- who had a disability or long-standing illness in the past but who has now recovered
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Good morning/afternoon, my name is ____________ calling from BMRB Social Research on behalf of the Department of Work and Pensions and we are conducting a survey about disability issues amongst businesses. Can I speak to someone at this workplace who has the responsibility for the recruitment or management of employees? IF YES THEN ATTEMPT TO INTERVIEW.

WHEN SPEAKING TO PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR RECRUITMENT AT THE WORKPLACE.

IF DIFFERENT PERSON FROM INITIAL CONTACT REPEAT INTRODUCTION:

Would you be able to spare some time to speak to us? Please be assured that everything you say will be treated in the strictest confidence. (If asked; The interview should take 15-20 minutes.). If unable to take part in interview at present time, arrange a more suitable time. Date ____________ Time ____________

Some of the information we need will require you to estimate numbers. Please answer as best you can as even an estimate will help us.

Q.1. Firstly, could tell me what your position or job title is?

- General/duty manager 1 (271)
- Assistant manager 2
- Human resources/Personnel manager 3
- Supervisor 4
- Owner/proprietor 5
- Don’t Know Y
- Refused Z
- Other 0

Other specify... (272 - 275)
Q.2. Is this workplace...........?

READ OUT

One of a number of workplaces belonging to the same organisation 1 (276)
A single independent workplace not belonging to any other organisation 2
Don’t Know Y
Refused Z

IF Q.2 = One of a number of workplaces belonging to the same organisation

Most of the questions I will ask you are about your particular workplace, i.e. the premises that you are based in and the employees that are based there even if they work from home or spend a lot of their working time travelling. Some questions will refer to your business/organisation as a whole, I will make this clear at the appropriate questions.

End of Filter ibig

Q.3. Can you tell me how many people are currently employed at this workplace, including part-time and temporary staff and those who are on long-term sick leave?

IF RESPONDENT IS NOT SURE ASK THEM TO ESTIMATE
REMEMBER TO INCLUDE RESPONDENT IN TOTAL

(277 - 280)

Numeric Range

Don’t Know Y (277)
Refused Z

Permitted Range
0 TO 9999 (Numeric Range)
IF Q3 One of a number of workplaces belonging to the same organisation - Termination with data (Quit)

I’m sorry we only need to speak to people at workplaces with 3 or more employees. Thank you for your time

IF Q.2 = One of a number of workplaces belonging to the same organisation

THEN ASK: Q.4

Q.4. And can you tell me how many people are there in the organisation as a whole?

IF RESPONDENT IS NOT SURE ASK THEM TO ESTIMATE

(308 - 312)

Numeric Range
Don’t Know Y (308)

Permitted Range
0 TO 99999 (Numeric Range)

IF Q4 < 3 - Termination with data (Quit)

I’m sorry we only need to speak to people at businesses with 3 or more employees. Thank you for your time
Q.5. Can I just check, is this workplace...........?

READ OUT

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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An area/regional office</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The head office</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A franchised organisation</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
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<tr>
<td>Something else (specify)</td>
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Other specify... (314 - 317)

End of Filter ibig2

Q.6. Would you say that this workplace was part of the ...........?

READ OUT

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<td>Public sector</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary sector</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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Q.7. What service do you provide?

IF NECESSARY: What is the nature of your business?

PROBE

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<tr>
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<td>X</td>
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</table>
Now I would like to ask you some questions about the recruitment and employment of people with disabilities and long-term health problems.

Q.8. Are you personally aware of any laws giving rights to employees and job applicants with long-term health problems or disabilities?

IF YES, PROBE FOR NAME. IF KNOW NAME AND IT IS NOT DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT, CHOOSE OTHER AND ENTER NAME THERE

Yes - Disability Discrimination Act 1 (323)
Yes - don’t know name 2
No 3
Don’t Know Y
Yes - other specify 0

Other specify... (324 - 327)

IF Q.8 <> Yes - Disability Discrimination Act OR

THEN ASK: Q.9

Q.9. The Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 introduced rights for employees and job applicants with long-term health problems or disabilities. Prior to this survey, had you heard of this part of the act?

Yes 1 (328)
No 2
Don’t Know Y
**End of Filter inodda**

**IF Q.8 = Yes - Disability Discrimination Act OR Q.9 = Yes**

**End of Filter isv1**

**IF ( Q.8 = Yes - don't know name OR Q.8 = Yes - other specify ) AND ( Q.9 <> Yes)**

**End of Filter isv1a**

**IF Q.8 = Yes - Disability Discrimination Act OR Q.9 = Yes**

**THEN ASK: Q.10**

**Q.10. How did you first hear of the Disability Discrimination Act?**

DO NOT PROMPT.

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<td>Job applicant</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Friend/relative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leaflet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal adviser</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Other</td>
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Other specify... (331 - 334)
End of Filter iddayes

IF Q.8 = Yes - Disability Discrimination Act OR Q.8 = Yes - don’t know name
OR Q.8 = Yes - other specify OR Q.9 = Yes
THEN ASK: Q.11, Q.12

Q.11. Can you tell me what you believe the main provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act are regarding employment? Just tell me in your own words.

DO NOT PROMPT. PROBE FULLY

Don’t Know Y (335)
Refused Z
(335 - 338)

Q.12. Did you know that businesses with less than a certain number of employees are exempt from the employment and recruitment section of the Disability Discrimination Act? I mean a business as a whole not just an individual workplace

INTERVIEWER NOTE - EMPHASISE THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE BUSINESS RATHER THAN JUST THE WORKPLACE

Yes 1 (339)
No 2
Don’t Know Y
Refused Z
IF Q.12 = Yes

THEN ASK: Q.13, Q.14

Q.13. Could you tell me what you understand to be the maximum number of employees a business can have for it to be exempt from the employment and recruitment section of the Disability Discrimination Act?

IF RESPONDENT NOT CERTAIN ASK THEM TO GIVE A ROUGH ESTIMATE

(340 - 343)

Numeric Range

Don’t Know Y (340)

Permitted Range

0 TO 9999 (Numeric Range)

Q.14. Are you aware that this exemption is due to be removed?

Yes 1 (344)
No 2
Don’t Know Y
Refused Z

IF Q.14 = Yes

THEN ASK: Q.15, Q.16
Q.15. How did you become aware of this?

DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Head office/HR manager 1 (345)
Work colleague 2
Employee 3
Job applicant 4
Friend/relative 5
Professional/trade press 6
Media (e.g. TV, newspapers etc.) 7
Leaflet 8
Internet/website 9
Trade Union 0 (346)
Training 1
Disability Rights Commission 2
Disability charity/organisation 3
Accountant 4
Legal adviser 5
Chamber of commerce/business link 6
Don’t Know Y (345)

Q.16. In which year do you think this exemption will be removed?

(347 - 350)

Numeric Range

Don’t Know Y (347)

Permitted Range
2000 TO 2199 (Numeric Range)

End of Filter iaw aex
End of Filter ismall
End of Filter iaw are
Now I am going to ask you whether you consider people with certain conditions as being disabled.

Q.17. Do you consider a person with ... to be disabled?

Yes 1 (351)
No 2
Don’t Know Y

This question is repeated for the following loop values:
- Mobility problems - difficulty getting around or moving from place to place
- Lifting/dexterity problems - difficulties using their hands to lift or carry everyday objects
- Facial or skin disfigurement
- Hearing impairment - which affects their ability to take part in spoken conversation
- Visual impairment - Not corrected by glasses
- A mental illness
- A learning difficulty - used to be called a mental handicap
- A speech impairment - which affects their ability to take part in spoken conversation
- A progressive illness - such as cancer or Parkinson’s disease

A total of 9 iterations occupying columns (351) to (359)

Under the Disability Discrimination Act people with all of the conditions I have just mentioned may be classified as being disabled.
The next few questions are about the employment of disabled people

Q.18. As far as you are aware, in the last 10 years, have there ever been, or are there currently, any people with disabilities or significant long-term health problems that affect their day-to-day activities employed at this workplace?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 (360)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>Z</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IF Q.18 = Yes**

THEN ASK: Q.19, Q.20, Q.21

Q.19. To your knowledge were any of these employees known to have a disability before they started working at this workplace?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 (361)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>Z</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q.20. Did any of these employees develop their disabilities or long-term health problems after they had started working at this workplace?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 (362)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>Z</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q.21. How many disabled employees are currently employed at this workplace?

IF RESPONDENT IS UNSURE ASK THEM TO ESTIMATE
YOU CAN NOW CODE ZERO EMPLOYEES

(363 - 365)

Numeric Range
Don’t Know
Permitted Range
0 TO 999 (Numeric Range)
End of Filter idisev

Q.22. Does your business have a policy that covers the rights of disabled employees and applicants?

INTERVIEWER NOTE - EMPHASISE THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE BUSINESS RATHER THAN JUST THE WORKPLACE

Yes 1 (366)
No 2
Don’t Know  Y
Refused Z

Q.23. I am now going to read out some statements about your workplace, can you tell me whether you agree or disagree with each one.

Strongly agree 1 (367)
Slightly agree 2
Slightly disagree 3
Strongly disagree 4
Don’t Know  Y
Refused  Z

This question is repeated for the following loop values:
- This workplace has good practices towards disabled employees
- This workplace would find it difficult to keep on employees who became disabled
- This workplace does not have flexible procedures that would allow it to employ disabled people
- This workplace has equal opportunities for disabled employees

A total of 4 iterations occupying columns (367) to (370)
I would now like to ask you some questions about your recruitment practices

Q.24. Are vacancies at your workplace ever advertised externally? This includes jobs that are posted with Jobcentres or recruitment services

Don’t Know  Y
Refused  Z

IF Q.24 = Yes

Q.25. When vacancies are advertised is any reference made to.......?

...  1 (372)
No  2
Don’t Know  Y

This question is repeated for the following loop values:
- The rights of disabled applicants
- An equal opportunities policy
- The Two Ticks disability symbol

A total of 3 iterations occupying columns (372) to (374)

End of Filter ijobad
Q.26. Are applicants to your workplace required to give information about their health and disabilities, at any stage in the application process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IF Q.26 = Yes OR Q.26 = Sometimes

THEN ASK: Q.27**

Q.27. Is the information about health and disabilities used to............?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess suitability for the job</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess whether the workplace would be suitable for the applicant</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help make practical arrangements to allow the employee to do their job effectively</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor the composition of the workforce</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of these</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other specify... (377 - 380)

**End of Filter ihequ**
Q.28. How easy would it be for your workplace to........?  

...  

READ OUT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very easy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite easy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite difficult</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very difficult</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impossible</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question is repeated for the following loop values:
- Provide application forms in alternative formats
- Provide disability awareness information for staff involved in recruitment
- Provide help with communication (e.g. sign language interpreter)
- Check at interview if applicant would need any adjustments or adaptations if appointed
- Guarantee disabled applicants an interview

A total of 5 iterations occupying columns (408) to (412)

Q.29. Have you ever sought advice on any aspect of employing disabled people? This includes advice on adapting workplaces or any legal requirements the workplace may have

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IF Q.29 = Yes

THEN ASK: Q.30
Q.30. From where did you seek this advice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Head office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Colleagues at workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Specialist consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Solicitor/legal advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Job centre/employment service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Acas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Trade Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Trade/employer organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Another business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Landlord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Local/planning authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Disability Rights Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Disability charity/organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Citizens Advice Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>DTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Refused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other specify... (416 - 419)

End of Filter iadvyes
Q.31. How easy would it be for this workplace to employ someone ..........?

... READ OUT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very easy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite easy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite difficult</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very difficult</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impossible</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question is repeated for the following loop values:
- Who needs to use a wheelchair
- Who has arthritis which can fluctuate and at times severely limit their physical capacity
- Who has severe facial scarring which cannot be completely masked
- Who is profoundly deaf (not helped by hearing aid)
- With severely impaired vision who needed to use Braille and other such aids
- Who is dyslexic
- Who has learning difficulties (used to be called a mental handicap)
- Who suffers from clinical depression
- Who has Schizophrenia
- Who has a severe stammer and finds it hard to communicate verbally
- With Parkinson’s disease
- With epilepsy

A total of 12 iterations occupying columns (420) to (431)

IF Q.18 = Yes

THEN ASK: Q.33
Which of the following are currently in place or planned at this workplace to assist disabled employees.

Q.32.

...  
Currently in place 1 (432)  
Planned 2  
Neither 3  
Don’t Know Y

This question is repeated for the following loop values:
- Transferring people or jobs to other premises to assist disabled employees  
- Adapted work environment to help disabled employees (e.g. adapting premises, furniture, lighting)  
- Flexible work organisation (e.g. transferring disabled people to other jobs, rearranging work duties)  
- Flexible working time, or varying hours for disabled employees  
- Providing appropriate physical assistance (e.g. interpreters for a person who is deaf)  
- Allowing working from home for disabled employees  
- Providing car parking space for disabled employees

A total of 7 iterations occupying columns (432) to (438)

Q.33. Has anything else been done at this workplace to help disabled employees?

Don’t Know Y (439)  
None of these X  

(439 - 442)

IF Q.32(1) = Planned OR Q.32(2) = Planned OR Q.32(3) = Planned OR Q.32(4) = Planned OR Q.32(5) = Planned OR Q.32(6) = Planned OR Q.32(7) = Planned  
THEN ASK: Q.34
Q.34. You said that there were adjustments planned for this workplace that have not yet been made, when would these changes be completed?

**READ OUT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within the next 6 months</td>
<td>1 (443)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 6 months but within 1 year</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 1 year but within 2 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 2 years but within 5 years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 5 years but within 10 years</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 10 years</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**End of Filter iplan**

Q.35. Have you actually had to make any changes to the workplace or working practices for your disabled employees?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 (444)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IF Q.35 = Yes**

**THEN ASK: Q.36, Q.37**

Q.36. Generally how easy was it to make these adjustments?

**READ OUT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very easy</td>
<td>1 (445)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite easy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither easy or difficult</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite difficult</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very difficult</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q.37. Which of these applies to why you went ahead with these adjustments?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

- The costs were small 1 (446)
- Adjustments were made as part of a general refurbishment 2
- We assumed the benefits would exceed the cost 3
- It was the right thing to do for the disabled employee(s) 4
- Company policy required us to make changes 5
- In response to a request from an employee 6
- The change had wider benefits for employees at the workplace 7
- The law required us to make the change 8
- Don’t Know Y
- None of these X

IF Q.37 = None of these

THEN ASK: Q.38

Q.38. What was the reason you went ahead with the adjustments?

PROBE

Don’t Know Y (447)

End of Filter icosre2

IF Q.37 = The law required us to make the change

THEN ASK: Q.39

Q.39. Would you have made these changes without the legislation?

READ OUT

- Yes - all of them 1 (451)
- Yes - some of them 2
- No 3
- Don’t Know Y

End of Filter ilawem
Q.40. Did any of the adjustments made have a direct financial cost for the workplace?

Yes 1 (452)
No 2
Don’t Know Y
Refused Z

IF Q.40 = Yes
THEN ASK: Q.41

Q.41. Approximately how much in total, excluding grants or other income from 3rd parties, has it cost this workplace in the last 12 months for adjustments made to help disabled employees? This includes costs incurred by changes to working patterns and practices

READ OUT

£1 - £99 1 (453)
£100 - £499 2
£500 - £999 3
£1,000 - £4,999 4
£5,000 - £9,999 5
£10,000 and over 6
Don’t Know Y
Refused Z
None of these X

End of Filter iadjco1

IF Q.40 = No
THEN ASK: Q.42
Q.42. Why was there no direct financial cost from the adjustments made?

DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Adjustment was part of general refurbishment to facilities 1 (454)
Adjustment was in response to company policy 2
Adjustment was just a change in practice 3
Landlord paid 4
No costs were incurred 5
Costs were funded by an external agency 6
Don’t Know 7
Other 8

Other specify... (455 - 458)

End of Filter iadcono

End of Filter idischa

IF Q.35 = No

THEN ASK: Q.43

Q.43. Why has this workplace not had to make any adjustments to jobs, the working environment or working conditions to enable you to employ or continue to employ disabled people?

CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Never had any disabled employees 1 (459)
Changes are planned but have not been completed 2
Necessary facilities/arrangements at the workplace were already in place 3
Premises are rented 4
Disabled employees did not require adjustments at the workplace 5
Adjustments to the workplace are planned but are not yet completed 6
Will be done but not a priority to date 7
We could not afford to make necessary adjustments 8
Don’t Know 9
Refused 10
Other 11

Other specify... (460 - 463)

End of Filter idisnad

End of Filter idisem
IF Q.18 <> Yes

Q.44. How easy would it be for this workplace to make these changes to enable it to employ or continue to employ disabled people?

...  

Very easy 1 (464)  
Quite easy 2  
Quite difficult 3  
Very difficult 4  
Impossible 5  
Don’t Know Y

This question is repeated for the following loop values:

- Transferring people or jobs to other premises to assist disabled employees
- Adapted work environment to help disabled employees (e.g. adapting premises, furniture, lighting)
- Flexible work organisation (e.g. transferring disabled people to other jobs, rearranging work duties)
- Flexible working time, or varying hours for disabled employees
- Providing appropriate physical assistance (e.g. interpreters for a person who is deaf)
- Allowing working from home for disabled employees
- Providing car parking space for disabled employees

A total of 7 iterations occupying columns (464) to (470)

End of Filter inodiem

People’s views on the employment and retention of disabled people can vary. Here are some things employers have said, can you tell us how much you agree or disagree that the following statements apply to your enterprise?
Q.45. ...

READ OUT

| Strongly agree | 1 (471) |
| Slightly agree | 2       |
| Slightly disagree | 3       |
| Strongly disagree | 4       |
| Don’t Know       | Y       |
| Refused          | Z       |

This question is repeated for the following loop values:

- Taking on a disabled person is a major risk for the employer
- We always seek to recruit the best person for the job, irrespective of whether they have a disability or not
- Adjustment(s) for an employee who becomes disabled usually costs less than recruiting a new one
- Taking on a person who had a disability or severe illness in the past but has now recovered would be a risk for this business
- People with disabilities tend to be less productive than other employees
- It’s very rare that we have a disabled person apply for a job

A total of 6 iterations occupying columns (471) to (476)

I would now like to ask some questions about your customers or clients.

Q.46. Firstly, are your workplace's customers..........?

READ OUT

| Other businesses or organisations only | 1 (477) |
| Members of the public only            | 2       |
| A mixture of the general public and other businesses or organisations | 3       |
| Don’t Know                            | Y       |

IF Q.46 = Members of the public only OR Q.46 = A mixture of the general public and other businesses or organisations
IF Q.3 > 100

THEN ASK: Q.47

Q.47. Are you the appropriate person who can answer some questions about your customers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 (478)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IF Q.47 = No

THEN ASK: Q.48

Q.48. Would you be able to give us the name and telephone number of the person who would be most appropriate to answer some questions about your customers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 (479)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IF Q.48 <> Yes

QUANCEPT ITEM:

End of Filter Ino

IF Q.48 = Yes

THEN ASK: Q.49, Q.50, Q.51
Q.49. What is their name please?

Don’t Know Y (508)

Q.50. And their contact number?

INTERVIEWER: IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THERE ARE NO BRACKETS OR SPACES WITHIN THE TELEPHONE NUMBER, IT SHOULD BE ONE LONG STRING OF DIGITS.

Don’t Know Y (512)

Q.51. Are they available now?

Yes 1 (516)
No 2
Don’t Know Y

IF Q.51 <> Yes

That’s the last of the questions I have to ask you. Thank you for your help in completing this survey.

Can I just make an appointment to speak to ...?

QUANCEPT ITEM:

QUANCEPT ITEM:

End of Filter Inot
IF Q.51 = Yes

THEN ASK: Q.52

Could I speak to them please?

WHEN SPEAKING TO THE CORRECT PERSON: PRESS RETURN

Q.52. Good afternoon/evening, my name is ______________ calling from BMRB Social Research on behalf of the Department of Work and Pensions and we are conducting a survey about disability issues amongst businesses.

Would you be able to spare some time to speak to us?. Please be assured that everything you say will be treated in the strictest confidence. (If asked; The interview should take no longer than xx minutes.). If unable to take part in interview at present time, arrange a more suitable time.

Date__________ Time___________

Yes - Proceed 1 (517)
Yes - Appointment 2
No 3
Don’t Know Y

QUANCEPT ITEM:

End of Filter Iyes
End of Filter Iappt
Q.53. Firstly, could tell me what your position or job title is?

General/duty manager 1 (518)
Assistant manager 2
Human resources/Personnel manager 3
Supervisor 4
Owner/proprietor 5
Don’t Know Y
Refused Z
Other 0

Other specify... (519 - 522)

End of Filter inoper
End of Filter ibig3

Q.54. When your customers or clients obtain goods or services from your workplace, or use any facilities on it, does this occur.................?

READ OUT
Entirely on your premises 1 (523)
Entirely off your premises 2
Both on and off your premises 3
Don’t Know Y

Q.55. In which of these ways do you deal with your clients and customers.................?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY
By mail 1 (524)
By telephone 2
In person 3
electronically (e.g. internet, email, kiosks) 4
Don’t Know Y
Other 0

Other specify... (525 - 528)
Q.56. Does this business have a policy that covers the provision of goods and services to disabled people?

INTERVIEWER NOTE - EMPHASISE THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE BUSINESS RATHER THAN JUST THE WORKPLACE

- Yes 1 (529)
- No 2
- Don’t Know Y

IF Q.47 <> No

We’ve talked about legislation relating to the employment of disabled employees. Now thinking about your customers...

End of Filter

Q.57. Are you aware of any laws giving rights to clients/customers with long-term health problems or disabilities?

IF YES, PROBE FOR NAME. IF KNOW NAME AND IT IS NOT DDA, CHOOSE OTHER AND ENTER NAME THERE

- Yes - Disability Discrimination Act 1 (530)
- Yes - don’t know name 2
- No 3
- Don’t Know Y
- Yes - other specify 0

Other specify... (531 - 534)

IF Q.57 <> Yes - Disability Discrimination Act

THEN ASK: Q.58
Q.58. The Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 introduced rights for customers/clients with long term health problems or disabilities. Prior to this survey, were you aware of this?

Yes 1 (535)
No 2
Don’t Know Y

End of Filter icusno

IF Q.57 = Yes - Disability Discrimination Act OR Q.58 = Yes

End of Filter itva2

IF (Q.47 = No) AND (Q.57 = Yes - Disability Discrimination Act OR Q.58 = Yes)
THEN ASK: Q.59
Q.59. How did you first hear of this?

DO NOT PROMPT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head office/HR manager</td>
<td>1 (536)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work colleague</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job applicant</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend/relative</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional/trade press</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media (e.g. TV, newspapers etc.)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaflet</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet/website</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Union</td>
<td>0 (537)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Rights Commission</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability charity/organisation</td>
<td>3</td>
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Other specify... (538 - 541)

End of Filter icusa2

IF Q.57 = Yes - Disability Discrimination Act OR Q.57 = Yes - don’t know name OR Q.57 = Yes - other specify OR Q.58 = Yes

THEN ASK: Q.60, Q.61, Q.62

Q.60. Can you tell me what you believe the main provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act are in relation to disabled customers/clients? Just tell me in your own words.

DO NOT PROMPT. PROBE FULLY.

(542 - 545)

Don’t Know                     Y (542)
None of these                  X
Q.61. New duties under the Disability Discrimination Act are effective from October 2004 when businesses must take reasonable steps to remove or alter physical barriers which make it unreasonably difficult for a disabled person to use a service. Alternatively they must provide a reasonable means for disabled customers to avoid such barriers. Before today were you aware that these duties will come into force in 2004?

Yes 1 (546)
No 2
Don’t Know Y

Q.62. What effect will this requirement have on your business?

READ OUT

Major effect 1 (547)
Minor effect 2
No effect 3
Don’t Know Y
Refused Z

IF Q.62 = Major effect OR Q.62 = Minor effect
THEN ASK: Q.63

Q.63. In what way?

PROBE

(548 - 551)
Don’t Know Y (548)

End of Filter iysig

IF Q.62 = No effect
THEN ASK: Q.64
Q.64. Do you say no effect because.......?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

There are no physical barriers on the premises 1 (552)
The necessary changes have already been made to remove, alter or avoid physical barriers 2
The legislation is not relevant to the service provided at this establishment 3
Don’t Know Y
Some other reason 0

Other specify... (553 - 556)

End of Filter iynot
End of Filter icusawa

Which of these practices or adaptations to your workplace are currently in place, or planned, to help customers with disabilities?

Q.65. ...

PROBE: Have you made this change or are you planning to make it?

Currently in place 1 (557)
Planned 2
Neither 3
Don’t Know Y

This question is repeated for the following loop values:
- Changes to physical accessibility (e.g. improved access, ramps, disabled toilets, disabled parking spaces etc.)
- Improvements to communication (e.g. Braille, large print, subtitles, special phone system etc.)
- Staff training in disability issues
- Changes to way service is provided (e.g. home delivery)

A total of 4 iterations occupying columns (557) to (560)
Q.66. Is there anything else this workplace does to help customers with disabilities use or access any of its services or facilities?

PROBE

Don’t Know  Y  (561)
None of these  X

Q.67. Have you had to make any changes to your workplace or practices for disabled customers?

Yes  1  (565)
No  2
Don’t Know  Y

IF Q.67 = Yes

THEN ASK: Q.68, Q.69

Q.68. What, if any, would you say were the main difficulties or problems in making these changes?

DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

No problems/difficulties  1  (566)
Space constraints  2
Planning constraints or problems  3
The age of the building  4
Problems getting head office to agree  5
Premises difficult to alter  6
Problems with Health and Safety  7
High cost of changes  8
Difficulties relating to staff attitudes/training  9
Lack of knowledge about changes  0  (567)
Don’t Know  Y  (566)
Other  0

Other specify...  (568 - 571)
Q.69. Did any of the adjustments made for customers have an additional direct cost for the workplace?

Yes 1 (572)
No 2
Don’t Know Y
Refused Z

IF Q.69 = No

THEN ASK: Q.70

Q.70. Why was there no direct financial cost from the adjustments made?

DO NOT PROMPT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Adjustment was part of general refurbishment to facilities 1 (573)
Adjustment was in response to company policy 2
Adjustment was just a change in practice 3
Landlord paid 4
No costs were incurred 5
Costs were funded by an external agency 6
Don’t Know Y

End of Filter icosno

IF Q.69 = Yes

THEN ASK: Q.71
Q.71. Approximately how much in total, excluding grants or other income from 3rd parties, has it cost this workplace for the necessary adjustments in the last 12 months?

DO NOT READ OUT.

£1 - £99 1 (574)
£100 - £499 2
£500 - £999 3
£1,000 - £4,999 4
£5,000 - £9,999 5
£10,000 and over 6
Don’t Know Y
Refused Z
None of these X

End of Filter icosyes

Q.72. Which of these applies to why you went ahead with these adjustments?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

The costs were negligible 1 (575)
Benefits outweighed the costs 2
We just knew we had to pay regardless of costs 3
It was the right thing to do for disabled customers/clients 4
Company policy required us to make changes 5
In response to a request from a customer 6
The law required us to make the change 7
Don’t Know Y
None of these X

IF Q.72 = None of these
THEN ASK: Q.73

Q.73. What was the reason why you went ahead with the adjustments?

(576 - 579)
Don’t Know Y (576)

End of Filter iwhypay
IF Q.72 = The law required us to make the change

THEN ASK: Q.74

Q.74. Would you have made these changes without the legislation?

READ OUT

Yes - all of them 1 (580)
Yes - some of them 2
No 3
Don’t Know Y

End of Filter ilaw

End of Filter icusch

IF Q.67 = No

THEN ASK: Q.75

Q.75. Some businesses tell us that there are reasons why they have not had to make any changes for disabled customers, which of these apply to you?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Changes are planned but have not yet been made 1 (608)
Service already accessible to disabled customers 2
Premises are rented 3
Unclear of requirements of legislation 4
Cost 5
Planning constraints 6
Too few disabled customers 7
Don’t Know Y
Other 0

Other specify... (609 - 612)

End of Filter inowt
Q.76. Thinking now about staff at your workplace who have direct contact with customers or clients. Have any of these staff undertaken any training in issues related to dealing with disabled customers?

Yes 1 (613)
No 2
Don’t Know Y
Refused Z

IF Q.76 = Yes

THEN ASK: Q.77

Q.77. Was this.......?

READ OUT

Specific training related to disability 1 (614)
As part of equal opportunities training 2
As part of induction training 3
Part of ongoing customer care training 4
Don’t Know Y
Other training 0

Other specify... (615 - 618)

End of Filter itrain

End of Filter ipubfa

That’s the last of the questions I have to ask you. Thank you for your help in completing this survey.
References


References


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