



Update for the Learning Disabilities Programme Board Meeting – 7 March 2013

Business mentors

We are working with businesses to improve the ways people in work can link with workers in other companies to get help and support with their jobs and with training. This is called 'mentoring'. It is a bit like the buddy scheme which some disabled people will have heard of.

This scheme helps workers and their businesses grow and works to help the economy has a better skilled and supported workforce.

The scheme is open to very small businesses as well as large companies

The scheme already has around 27,000 mentors and includes 15,000 volunteer mentors trained through the a project called 'Get Mentoring'

We now want to increase interest in mentoring and encourage more businesses to make use of this support.

Business in You campaign

We are looking for role models to take part in our 'Business in You' campaign. These role models will inspire people, including disabled people to start and grow their own business.

The Business in You campaign was launched in January 2012 and so far there have been nearly 400,000 unique visitors to the website and over 18,000 people have signed up to take part in the campaign.

We also have the *Be the Boss Scheme* which was started 2010.

There are nearly 1,000 people taking part and they are all at different stages in developing their business.

University and Higher Education

The Government continues to provide funding for all disabled students in higher education through the Disabled Students' Allowances. These allowances help students in higher education with any extra costs they may have on their course because of their disability. These allowances are not means tested and do not have to be repaid.

Further Education and Skills

1. Apprenticeships

We are working hard to make the Apprenticeships scheme much more inclusive for disabled people. Funding for young people to take part an Apprenticeship is now a priority area. This will include funding for disabled people aged 16-24.

We carried out quite a lot research to see what we needed to do remove the problems that stopped employers or providers from taking on disabled people. To start to solve these problems we have now produced advice for business on how they could help to take on more disabled people as Apprentices.

2. Traineeships

BIS is looking at creating a scheme called Traineeships. A Traineeship will be a chance for young people including young people who have a disability to get work experience within a company while at the same continuing their learning. The 'placement' will be for at least 6 months but this could be extended if someone has a particular learning need and needs longer to take part. We hope to launch the scheme in September 2013.

3. Funding for Skills Training

We recently published a Skills Funding paper. This shows where the priorities are for the government funding of skills training. We were extremely pleased to get a positive message in this paper about the importance of skills training for disabled people. We want to make this a reality.

Further information from

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