



## Charter on the Inclusive Recruitment of Students with Disabilities

### Objective

This Charter has been designed as a pact for universities and employers to work together in order to develop long-term and sustainable approaches to the inclusion of people with disabilities. Universities will support organisations to recruit the best and most diverse talent; organisations will aim to adopt the following principles in their employment practices.

### General Principles

#### Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Procedures:

- Employment of people with a disability should form an integral part of all Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies and practices
- The job specification (or ‘person requirements’) of a vacancy should not exclude disabled people from applying for a job
- You can ask if a candidate needs an adjustment to the recruitment process to allow them to be considered for the job, or you can wait to be told
- You can make adjustments if they’re reasonable (see Reasonable Adjustment Guidelines)
- If appropriate to the vacancy, as much as possible of the recruitment process should be conducted as ‘anonymous’ recruitment (removing personally identifiable information from applications before shortlisting) (See Anonymous Recruitment Methodologies document)
- You can provide a direct point of contact within the organisation who can provide confidential advice to enable all students to participate in the recruitment process.

**Staff Training and Disability Awareness:**

- All PACES partner universities will provide training for employers and staff about awareness of disability and support for people with disabilities
- Unconscious bias training can also be provided to recruiters or those involved in hiring decisions.

**The Working Environment:**

- Reasonable adjustments should be made to ensure that the working environment does not prevent people with disabilities from taking up positions for which they are suitably qualified (see Reasonable Adjustment Guidelines).

**Fair and Inclusive Recruitment Commitment:**

- Recruitment procedures should be reviewed and developed to encourage applications from, and the employment of, people with disabilities
- Marketing materials should be designed to encourage all eligible students to apply and be clear that all students are welcome to apply.

**Career Development:**

- Reasonable adjustments should be made to ensure that employees with disabilities have the same opportunity as others to develop their full potential within the organisation.

**Retention, Retraining and Redeployment:**

- Full support should be given to any employees who acquire any disability, enabling them to maintain or return to a role appropriate to their experience and abilities within the organisation.

**Training and Work Experience:**

- People with a disability should be included in work experience, training and education opportunities.

**People with Disabilities in the Wider Community:**

- The organisation should recognise and respond positively to people with disabilities as clients, suppliers, and members of the community at large.

**Involvement of People with Disabilities:**

- Employees should be involved in implementing this agenda to ensure that, wherever possible, employment practices recognise and meet the needs of all staff.

**Monitoring Performance:**

- The organisation should monitor its progress in implementing the key points, for example by an annual audit of performance, reviewed at board level. Achievements and objectives should be published to employees and in the annual report.

**Support Mechanisms:**

- Employers can liaise with the university, its accessibility centre and careers centre for support on hiring students with disabilities. Support can include design of inclusive recruitment processes, advice on reasonable adjustments or advice on blind recruitment (see accompanying documents).

**Supporting Documentation:**

- The PACES project has created documentation to support businesses to attract and hire diverse, good quality applicants, which can be viewed in support of this charter if necessary:
  - Document A: Employer's Responsibility guidelines
  - Document B: Accessibility Action Plan
  - Document C: Reasonable Adjustment Guidelines
  - Document D: Anonymous recruitment and Contextualised recruitment methodologies
  - Document E: University Accessibility Centre Mission and University support for transition to work.

## Document A: Employer's Responsibility Guidelines

Employing people with disability is likely to attract new skills and bring new and valuable perspectives to any organisation. Not only will this increase talent in an organisation, but by accommodating people with disability employers are gaining loyal and committed employees who will contribute to achieving business objectives.

Our employer factsheets are designed to give employers who are at the beginning of their disability inclusion journey a brief overview of their legal and social responsibilities.

### Employing People with Disability

There are already many people with disability successfully employed in the Moroccan workforce, and many are employed in professional, managerial and administrator roles. People with disability bring high potential and a diverse range of skills and abilities to the marketplace and work in a wide range of occupations and industries.

Contrary to common misconceptions, many people with disability have completed tertiary education, or attained vocational or other professional qualifications.

### Business benefits of hiring people with disability

Employees and customers with disability represent a substantial opportunity to business. In fact, more than three million Moroccans, that's one in four people, experience disability.

Making sure an organisation can welcome people with disability in an accessible and inclusive way, is not just the right thing to do, but it makes good business sense, too.

The reasons are as follows:

- **Attract and cherish talent**

When organisations make their recruitment processes and workplaces barrier-free to people with disability, they ensure that all potential employees with the

relevant skills, qualifications and experience can be hired and do their best work. Diversity attracts and retains from the widest possible talent pool and employees in inclusive workplaces are likely to be more engaged, motivated and productive. Employees will also stay with the business for longer.

- **Build image and brand**

Numerous studies have shown that employees and customers are more loyal to organisations that demonstrate they value diversity and inclusion and that their workforce reflects the community as a whole. Increasingly evidence of inclusion is being taken into consideration when awarding contracts and tenders.

- **Improve marketing and customer retention**

Having employees with disability can help an organisation to understand what its customers or clients with disability may need, and give it an edge over its competitors. In addition, a workforce that reflects the diversity of the wider community is likely to lead to greater customer loyalty and satisfaction.

- **Mitigate risk**

Research on workers with disability show they often have lower absenteeism and employee turnover and low incidence of workplace injury, which all help to create cost effective businesses. Organisations which have built capability for inclusion will also minimise risk of injury, complaint or breach of discrimination law.

- **Uphold Rights**

Visibly and actively recognise and uphold the rights of people with disability.

If an organisation is worried about increased costs associated with employing people with disability, it does not need to be. Evidence shows that employing people with disability does not cost any more than employing people without disability. Overall, building an inclusive, diverse workforce benefits everyone – employees, the organisation and the community as a whole.

## Corporate Social Responsibility

A commitment to the communities in which an organisation operates is called Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR is an important contributor to long-term business success, and should be viewed in a strategic business sense rather than simply for its “feel-good” factor.

The biggest barrier to employment faced by people with disability is the attitude of employers. Changing attitudes comes down to raising awareness of disability issues, and repositioning disability as a business concern. Employers can help by providing mentoring, work experience and internships for people with disability, and will benefit from:

- Less absenteeism
- Increased retention
- Lower recruitment costs
- Increased work performance
- Increased worker morale
- Fewer workplace injuries.

Employing people with disability as part of an effective Corporate Social Responsibility campaign can benefit the organisation, the employee and the wider community.

## Document B: Accessibility Action Plan

### What is an Accessibility Action Plan?

Many leading organisations now use the term Accessibility Action Plan.

An Accessibility Action Plan is an outward sign of an organisation's intention to eliminate discrimination and outlines its plan for how this will be tackled.

It details how an organisation is making its workplace, products and services accessible to people with disability, and informs the public how it is approaching diversity and inclusion.

An Accessibility Action Plan can also reduce the likelihood of discrimination complaints and the costs that accompany this. It is a formal document with particular requirements

For an organisation to benefit from the work involved in developing an action plan, it is recommended that an action plan should:

- Eliminate discrimination in an active way
- Enhance organisational image
- Reduce the likelihood of complaints being made
- Increase the likelihood of being able to successfully defend complaints
- Increase the likelihood of avoiding costly legal action
- Allow for a planned and managed change in business or services

Developing and implementing an Accessibility Action Plan is a voluntary, proactive approach. It has benefits both for organisations and for people with disability. For organisations, the development and implementation of action plans enhances corporate image, delivers services more efficiently and accesses a wider market. It also enables organisations to set objectives and actions, assign accountability and responsibility and measure outcomes through effective evaluation methods.

## Document C: Reasonable Adjustment Guidelines

### What is a workplace adjustment?

Previously referred to as a 'reasonable adjustment', a workplace adjustment is a change to a work process, practice, procedure or environment that enables an employee with disability to perform their job in a way that minimises the impact of their disability.

Workplace adjustments allow a person to:

- perform the inherent or essential requirements of their job safely in the workplace
- have equal opportunity in recruitment processes, promotion and ongoing development
- experience equitable terms and conditions of employment
- maximise productivity.

Employers should make adjustments to accommodate an individual's disability, unless that adjustment would result in unjustifiable hardship. Many employers accept that workplace flexibility is an attraction and retention strategy.

### Examples

Examples of workplace adjustments that create an inclusive environment include:

- Allowing a person with disability to have some flexibility in their working hours, such as working part-time or starting and finishing later, or teleworking for part of the week
- Redistributing minor duties (i.e. not inherent requirements of a job) that a person with disability finds difficult to do
- Purchasing or modifying equipment like voice-activated software for someone with a vision impairment, an amplified phone for a person who is hard of hearing, or a digital recorder for someone who finds it difficult to take written notes
- Providing additional training, mentoring, supervision and support



- Providing increased font size for people with vision impairment
- Providing agendas in electronic formats for people who find it difficult to manipulate pages.

## **Interviewing People with Disability**

The main purpose of any recruitment process is to find out whether an applicant has the skills and capability to undertake the “inherent or essential requirements” of the job. In order to ensure that potential applicants are able to make it through to the interview stage, the application must be accessible. This involves making application forms and other material available in accessible formats, having an accessible website, and providing further information acknowledging workplace adjustments and your disability employment policy.

Many employers may not need to modify their current interviewing practices. In some cases, an applicant may not disclose their disability at the time of application, in order to avoid potential discrimination. Because of this, it is recommended that all applicants proceeding to interview, not just those who advise they have a disability, are asked whether they require any adjustments or assistance to participate in the interview.

For some people with disability, an interview may not be the best way to demonstrate their skills. Some may be nervous about interviews, particularly if they have been unemployed for some time. A person with disability may have the skills to perform the job but not interview well. In this instance, there are alternatives to consider. Adjustments may involve offering work for a contractual period, or an alternative means of assessing an applicant's suitability. This could include a work trial, or offering the applicant the opportunity to have a support person attend with them.

## **Interview preparation**

If a candidate shares their disability upon application, ask them what adjustments they may need for the interview. For example, a person with vision impairment may need detailed instructions and extra time to find the building. Your building and interview room need to be accessible, as do your processes. If any paper work needs to be completed during the interview, make sure they are available in alternative, accessible formats.

## Types of questions

Members of recruitment and selection panels need to be disability aware and confident. Ask the applicant the same questions that you would anyone else. Ensure the questions address the inherent requirements or job essentials.

Use behavioural interview questions that are framed around the job essentials. This allows applicants to demonstrate where they gained their skills and abilities, regardless of the context.

For example, instead of asking “describe your call centre experience”, ask “tell me about a time where you’ve solved a problem for a difficult customer”. This will allow an applicant to demonstrate they have the skills required for a customer service role.

## What questions can I ask a person about their disability?

The only questions an employer can lawfully ask about a disability or injury relate to:

- Any adjustments required to ensure a fair and equitable interview/selection process.
- How the person will perform the inherent requirements of a job.
- Any adjustments that may be required to complete the inherent requirements of the job.

Any other questions about an individual’s disability are inappropriate, including questions about:

- How the individual acquired their disability
- Specific details of the individual’s disability.
- How the disability will impact ability to perform aspects of the role

## General interview etiquette

- Don't patronise people with disability. Treat adults as adults.
- Don't be embarrassed if you use common expressions such as "see you later" to a person with vision impairment.
- If you offer assistance, wait until the offer is accepted. Be prepared for your offer to be refused.
- Use a normal tone of voice when extending a welcome. Do not raise your voice unless asked.
- Speak directly to the person with disability, rather than through a companion, interpreter or aide if they are present.
- Allow sufficient time for an applicant to respond to questions.
- Never pretend to understand if you don't. Instead, repeat what you have understood and allow the person to respond. The response will guide your communication.

## Interviewing people with physical disability

- Offer to shake hands even if they have limited hand use or wear an artificial limb. A left-hand shake is acceptable.
- Never lean on a person's wheelchair as the chair is their personal space.

## Interviewing people who are blind or have low vision

- Allow a person with who is blind or has low vision to take your arm near the elbow to guide them rather than propel them.
- Always identify yourself and others who may be with you.

## Interviewing people who are deaf or hard of hearing

- To gain attention, tap the person on the shoulder or wave your hand.
- Look directly at the person.
- For those that can read lips, face the light and keep your mouth clear when speaking.
- Be aware of the impact of background noise for people who are hard of hearing.

## Interviewing people with intellectual disability

- Speak in a straightforward manner and check understanding.
- Be patient and wait for the person to finish what they are saying.
- Don't pretend to understand the person if you don't. Ask them to repeat what they have just said or to say it in another way (using different words, for instance).

## Disability information sharing

There is no legal obligation for an employee to disclose a disability unless it is likely to affect their performance in a role. However, you should explain your workplaces' diversity policies to applicants. This will assure them that your organisation actively encourages applicants from diverse backgrounds, and that it has an inclusive culture.

## Tips for Communication with jobseekers with Disability

- When approaching a jobseeker **with Disability**, be polite, introduce yourself, and ask how you can help.
- Wait until your offer is accepted before trying to assist someone.
- Be considerate of the extra time it may take some jobseekers **with Disability** to do or say some things.
- Don't patronise or talk down to a person with disability, or assume that they won't understand you.
- Be aware that some people may need written information to be provided in different formats, such as electronic, large font, braille or audio. Verbal instructions can also be very helpful.
- If a person is blind or has a vision impairment, consider describing the layout of the area to them, especially any obstacles like stairs or furniture.
- Speak directly to the jobseekers **with Disability**, even when they are accompanied by an interpreter or assistant.
- Always make sure you're facing the jobseekers **with Disability** when you speak to them, so that they can read your lips if they need to. Don't cover your mouth or speak when your back is turned.

- Don't shout, use big hand gestures, or speak extra slowly to someone who is hard of hearing or has difficulty understanding - just speak clearly.
- Try and put yourself at eye level with jobseekers **with Disability** who are wheelchair users, and speak directly to them.
- Don't push a person's wheelchair if they haven't asked you to, and never lean on or hang things from a person's wheelchair.
- Try and make sure sign-in counters are low enough to be reached by a wheelchair user. If that's not possible, come around to the front of the counter to talk to the customer, and offer a stable surface for them to write on if needed.

## Document D: Anonymous recruitment and Contextualised recruitment methodologies

### What is Anonymous Recruitment?

It involves removing the candidate's name and other identifying factors – such as age, address or location, years of experience, and school or university names – from their application.

The idea is that removing such information makes it easier for hiring managers, recruiters and HR professionals to make objective decisions about a candidate's skills, experience and suitability for a role, and to lessen the risk of bias (whether conscious or unconscious) affecting the decision-making process.

It cannot be implemented to all processes but where possible should be considered as part of the inclusivity and accessibility charter.

### How to implement anonymous recruitment?

Because every organisation is different, each will need to decide exactly how the concept of anonymous recruitment fits with its hiring practices. You will need to:

- Decide what personally identifiable information you might want to omit from applications. This may include name (first name and surname), age, address, names of educational institutions, number of years of experience, gender, sexual orientation, and hobbies or personal interests. You may want to omit all of this information, or only the information that is relevant to any bias problem you have specifically identified
- Create processes that support hiring in this way. You might want to use an applicant tracking system (ATS) that can automatically hide identifying information from hiring managers, or ask someone who is not involved in the hiring process to manually do that for you. You may also want to use practical online tests – related to the job that the candidate would be doing – to help gauge their skills objectively before inviting them in for a face-to-face meeting

- Educate staff, especially managers, about how to recognise and overcome their unconscious bias. (*In May 2018, coffee-shop giant Starbucks held racial bias training for all its US staff; these learning materials are free-to-access online and are a useful introduction to bias-awareness training*).

### **What are the advantages of anonymous recruitment?**

Anonymous recruitment promotes having a more diverse workforce. This brings advantages including gaining a better understanding of your customers, better team performance, and an improved ability to retain top talent.

### **What are the disadvantages of anonymous recruitment?**

If you have specific quotas, such as around gender or ethnicity, the results of anonymous hiring may not be in line with these goals

It may take lengthen your hiring process – if you don't use an ATS that can hide applicants' personal information automatically, someone will need to do this manually. This could be problematic if you are handling a significant number of applications each month

Anonymous recruitment only makes a difference at the earlier stages of the hiring process: bias can still creep in during face-to-face interviews, in particular.

### **What is Contextualised Recruitment?**

Contextualised recruitment promotes equality in recruitment processes by using background data to assess talent over credentials. The process is used behind the scenes to avoid a clash with anonymous recruitment and could include seeing the average performance of a student at a particular university and comparing the applicant's grade to this average grade and applying a score to this contextualised grade. For example, a student with an A grade from a university that has an average of a C grade has contextually performed higher and could be a higher performer than a student who achieved a B grade from a university with an average grade of A+.

The principle is that contextualised recruitment assesses tangible skills that outweigh an applicant's background.

## Advantages of Contextualised Recruitment

- Increased talent pool. Increasing the number of applicants, with a more accurate screening process, leans towards the assumption that at least one of them will have exactly what you want.
- Wider skills base. This links hand-in-hand with the increased talent pool; no candidate is the same as the next, meaning there will be a greater variety of skills at your disposal.
- Builds public profile. You begin to get noticed more by a wider group of people; there is not one type of person that will apply – you are seen to be making offers to different people with different skills.

## Disadvantages of Contextualised Recruitment

- Following CR too strictly can lean back towards a sense of inequality in your recruitment process. It's easy to fall back into the routine of hiring the same person every time. Taking the easy option of avoiding the repetitive, tedious work that comes with sifting through copious amounts of applications may seem the best thing to do, because it provides you with more time to focus on other things. The idea behind Contextualised Recruitment isn't to say that Candidate B is always going to be the better option. The idea is simply in place to ensure that you can pick the most suitable candidate for the best reasons. The fear of not receiving fair assessment is enough to discourage candidates from applying.



## **Document E: University Accessibility Centre Mission and University support for transition to work**

### **Accessibility Centre Mission:**

#### **Welcome and Inform**

- Identify the specific needs of each student with disabilities to put in place appropriate actions so that the studies and life of SwD at the university are conducted under the most favorable conditions possible.
- Inform students about the organisation of the university: organisation of studies, examinations, etc.

#### **Accompany**

- Accompany students to the pedagogical difficulties they may face.
- Ensure the interface between the students, the teaching teams and the different services of the university.
- Put in place the necessary teaching and technical aids.

#### **Plan**

- Implement the necessary accommodations and seek solutions to obstacles and difficulties that ESH might encounter.
- Make premises accessible: Ensures the accessibility of classrooms and university services.
- Arrange for examinations according to the type of disability.

#### **Provide Technical Support**

- Travel aids: wheelchairs or other equipment
- Aids to compensate for the difficulties of hand- writing or reading: adapted peripherals or software (keyboards, mouse, software: voice synthesis, dictation).

## **Train**

- Offer specific training on tools and software
- Provide information on the subject of disability.

## **Programmes run by the University**

UIT runs internships workshops to support students with disability to transition from study to employment.

The internship workshops run for a minimum of four hours for four weeks.

The workshops offer preparation for employment by:

- Identifying Interests
- Evaluating Qualifications
- Recognizing the Changing Nature of Jobs
- Choosing a Career Path.

UIT's Career Center, along with its partner the National Employment Agency, helps bridge the employment gap for jobseekers and students with disability. Students are matched to an experienced professional who will help them identify and reach their personal development goals and build their workplace confidence.

These intermediaries seek to equip students with background knowledge necessary for them to communicate in the workplace. This starts with courses on how to write a CV, a cover letter, how to sit for collective and individual interviews and how to use the phone to get appointments with potential employers.

## **Transition to Work**

Career information can be obtained from the Accessibility Center (AC) or from the branch of the National Employment Agency based at the heart of the university. These assist career planning, career pathways and work transitions. They provide information and support for career development for individuals, and for those who support or influence career choices.

The space for students with disabilities is dedicated to the reception and educational support of students who have a valid diagnosis of disability, in order to better develop their study paths and exams and to enable them to study in the most favourable conditions.

AC provides Students with Disabilities (SwD) with specific support for their integration.

As part of its development strategy ITU has given prime importance to the needs of SwD, through the establishment of ramps and access in and between all its facilities to facilitate accessibility.