

Disability Discrimination Act

Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) has existed since 1995. However, Part 3 of the Act came into force on October 1st 2004. Part 3 has the potential to affect all businesses operating in the UK.

DDA Part 3 states quite clearly that all providers of a service – including hair-dressing and training services - must put in place reasonable measures to ensure that no individual is placed at a disadvantage whilst trying to access their goods or services.

In effect this means that, whenever practicable, businesses must ensure they do everything possible to allow disabled persons to have the same access to their goods or services as fully able people.

Businesses that do not do all they can to allow disabled access are liable to civil action by a disabled person (or a representative) on the grounds of discrimination. The emphasis, however, is for the company to take all reasonable steps.

DDA – Our Policy

Cheynes Training's vision is a society where everyone can participate fully on equal terms regardless of disability. We are committed to challenge prejudice against disability and we will continue to develop policy, procedures and practices to actively deal with discrimination.

To achieve our vision, Cheynes Training is committed to a charter for the disabled:

Every disabled person has the right to be treated in the same way as any other person, without pre-judgement about disability or the quality of life and must be able to make use of all Cheynes Training's services and facilities without avoidable hindrance.

Recruitment and Selection

Any applicant who has a disability and meets the minimum essential criteria for a place on a Cheynes Training programme will be interviewed and will not be subject to random selection or any other selection method aimed at reducing a large shortlist.

Training and Development

We will provide any learner with a disability with an equal opportunity and equal access to training and development opportunities based on their training needs. We will endeavour to meet and special requirements arising from their disability subject to the requirements of the DDA.

Access to Goods, Facilities and Training Services

Cheynes will make every effort to eliminate barriers facing disabled people when using our services. We recognise that some of the companies we work with have premises that are more accessible than others. For advice regarding accessibility please contact the Cheynes Training head office on 0131 476 7100.

DDA Procedures – please note this document is intended for guidance purposes only, a full DDA audit should be undertaken by an appropriately qualified person in order to comply with the current DDA legislation.

DDA Champion: As Programme Director, William Howarth will take on the role of DDA Champion at Cheynes Training and will keep disability access at the core of our business thinking.

Access Audit: Cheynes Training will develop an Access Audit check list for salons who we work with. This access audit is essential for measuring where each salon is at in terms of disability access.

Making Necessary Changes: Following the Access Audit, Cheynes Training will make recommendations to salon owners regarding essential physical changes; this may involve some minor additions.

Statements: All businesses are required to have a 'Corporate Policy' on disabled access, we will draft up a general policy for discussion with salon owners. In addition, salons are required to have an 'Access Statement' which details the level of service available to disabled users and sets out reasonable alternatives if the salon cannot meet the needs of a disabled Client, Cheynes Training has developed a draft a general Access Statement that may be used by salons.

DDA access plan: Each company must also have a DDA Access Plan which sets out what we intend to do to improve access for disabled people, in what timescales and how this will be measured and monitored. , Cheynes Training has developed a draft of a general access plan that salons may use.

Training: The majority of cases brought to the Disabilities Rights Commission result from an 'unhelpful attitude' from service provider staff. Although this is unlikely to happen we need to make everyone fully aware of the issues.

Websites: The DDA Regulations also cover websites. Blind people in particular have problems accessing websites that have not been set up in a specific way. This does not alter the 'look' of the website, it simply gives the user options to switch off, certain elements e.g., graphics, these can be extremely confusing to blind people using audio browsers.

Review: We must keep DDA at the forefront of our thinking. The key to the legislation is that any disabled person (or their carer) who feels they cannot access the same service as everyone else can bring a complaint and seek compensation. Review of our DDA policy will take place annually each January.

William Howarth, Programme Director, Cheynes Training, January 2010