



GRADUATE
MARKETING:
UNDERSTANDING
HOW GRADUATES
SEARCH FOR JOBS

Feedback Report

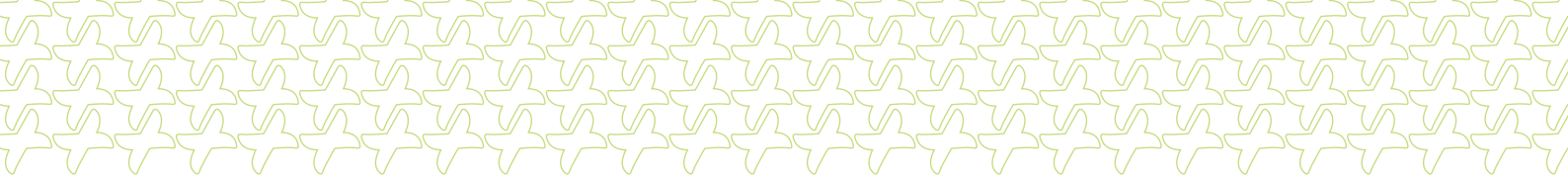
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The ACCESS Disability Network
Lloyds Banking Group

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“Banking is about people - their goals and their money. Lloyds Banking Group makes business sense but we also need it to make sense for people. We are creating an organisation that attracts, retains and develops the best talent in the industry and one that embraces diversity too.”

Organisations are continually looking to attract and recruit the very best graduates; to do so means having to be totally inclusive in all their recruitment practices.

Whilst much progress has been made to recruit more female graduates and graduates from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups into industries such as finance and banking, law and professional services little, if any, progress has been made to attract and recruit graduates who have a disability or long term health condition.

The reasons for this are many and varied including not knowing how to approach it, a fear of getting it wrong, and not feeling comfortable about how to interact and engage with disabled people. However the overriding reason is that graduate recruiters do not understand this target group of candidates and therefore do not know how to best engage with them and market their opportunities to them. To make real progress in attracting and recruiting disabled graduates employers first have to understand how they search for graduate job and also how they choose their graduate employer.

This piece of independent research has been carried out by Lloyds Banking Group to understand how disabled graduates search for jobs. It is the first time this subject has been explored in any depth and the results provide crucial information that can be used to more effectively engage with this talent group and encourage them to apply to the organisation. The results highlight what is important to disabled graduates, provides insights into how best to engage to with them, and details the types of support and guidance they are looking for and which, if provided, will encourage them to view a prospective employer more favourably.

It is hoped that this ground breaking piece of research will provide Lloyds Banking Group with the information it needs to make real progress in attracting and recruiting talented disabled graduates to its organisation.



Introduction

Lloyds Banking Group (LBG) is a major recruiter of talent; a key objective of LBG is to be a diverse organisation and to take an inclusive approach to attracting, recruiting and retaining employees. This includes individuals who have a disability or long term health condition.

Every year LBG recruits approximately 165 graduates onto their 'inspiring' two year Graduate Leadership Programme (GLP); each programme last for two years and consists of four six month placements. LBG also recruits around 60 interns onto a ten week summer vacation programme each year. A high percentage of these go on to join the full GLP.

Whilst diversity is central to the business, LBG recognises that progress still needs to be made in all aspects of graduate recruitment if they are to attract and recruit a truly diverse workforce. However it is in the area of disability where most work is required. In 2010 7.5% of students at university in the UK declared a disability. In 2010-11 0.9% of applicants who applied to LBG's GLP and Interns scheme declared a disability and only one offer was made to an applicant who is disabled.

In order to successfully engage with graduates who have a disability or long term health condition Lloyds Banking Group recognised the need to market themselves as an employer of choice for disabled graduates. To successfully do this Lloyds Banking Group wanted to understand how this group of people searches for graduate jobs. The information collated would then be used to tailor their marketing activities to be most effective.

Objectives of the graduate research project

The aim of the research project was to find out how graduates with a disability or long term health condition search for graduate jobs. The areas to be researched included:

- Understanding how disabled graduates search for jobs.
- Importance of messaging on employer websites.
- Concerns around applying to prestigious organisations.
- How concerns can best be addressed.
- Views on Lloyds Banking Group as a graduate recruiter.

Whilst the key focus on the research project was to understand how disabled graduate search for jobs, it was also recognised that the project itself could have a

positive impact on raising the company's reputation as an employer of choice for disabled graduates.

Scope of the graduate research project

To understand how a disabled graduates search for jobs, all aspects that could potentially impact on their decision making was included in the research project. The areas reported on include:

- Demographics
- Academic results
- Occupational choice
- Job searching
- Careers events
- Choosing an employer
- Applying for graduate roles
- Lloyds Banking Group as an employer of choice

Methodology

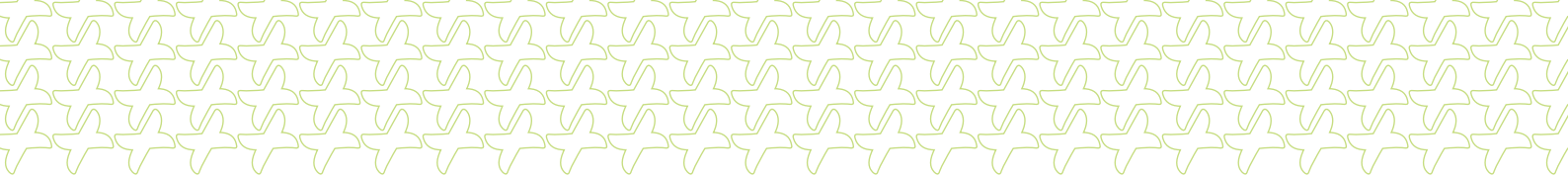
To achieve robust data it was crucial to gain input to the research from as many disabled graduates as possible. To achieve quantitative data an online survey was used. This was distributed to respondents using the following channels:

- University careers services
- University welfare / disability offices
- Milkround.com
- My Plus Consulting

Feedback from non-disabled graduates was also collated to provide a control group.

To provide a greater depth of understanding to the results collated from the online survey focus groups were conducted. The following focus groups were conducted; each focus group had between 3 and 8 participants:

- Lloyds Banking Group; with graduates currently on the graduate leadership programme who had a disability or long term health condition
- Lloyds Banking Group; with graduates currently on the graduate leadership programme who did not have a disability or long term health condition
- Oxford University
- Manchester University; including Manchester Metropolitan University



Response

1,509 students / graduates completed the online survey. 665 identified themselves as either disabled or having a long term health condition; 833 identified themselves as not disabled or having a long term health condition; and 11 respondents chose not to identify themselves as either.

Data analysis and processing

Data analysis and processing was carried out by Dr Neil Scott, Registered Occupational Psychologist. The analysis focused on the educational and occupational attitudes and experiences of students with disabilities. In particular it sought to establish if and how these differ from those of students without disabilities and how they relate to an interest in careers in the banking sector.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following summarises the key points of the research including the main findings and key recommendations.

Background

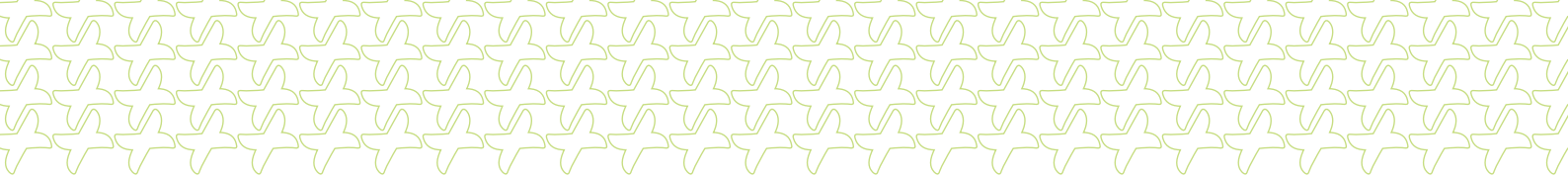
- 1,509 individuals completed the online survey of whom 665 indicated that they had a disability or a long-term health condition.
- The disabilities covered by the respondents was very broad and included, but was not limited to: dyslexia, Autism / Asperger's Syndrome, learning difficulties, wheelchair users, hearing impairments, speech impairment and long term or progressive health conditions.
- Over 50 universities were represented by respondents in the survey with 48% of the respondents attending Russell Group universities.

Key Findings

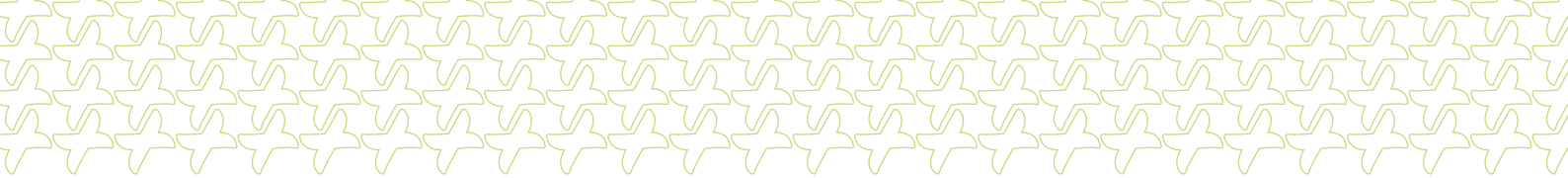
- Banking and Finance was most endorsed as the first choice of industry sector for a career with 11% overall selecting it as their first choice. However, whilst 13% of non-disabled respondents identified it as first choice, only 9% of disabled respondents did. Similarly, 39% of non-disabled said it does not appeal compared with 56% of disabled respondents.
- The most common method used by disabled students to search for a job is the university careers service and / or careers advisers; this is followed by graduate websites, employer recruitment websites and careers fairs.
- Where disabled respondents were consulting a Careers Adviser in their search for a job, 74% said that they were much more likely to apply to an organisation if their Careers Adviser / Service said that an organisation is 'disability confident'.
- A much higher % of students said that they were consulting their Disability Officer in their search for work than those who said they were consulting their Careers Adviser; 91% versus 22%.
- Whilst only 3% of respondents used specialist diversity or disability press, 54% of respondents said that having a presence on diversity websites made an employer either more attractive or much more attractive.
- 74% of disabled respondents said that they had either attended or planned to attend Graduate Careers Fairs.
- 49% of disabled respondents said that they were either more likely or much more likely to apply to employers that explicitly talk about disability or have disabled staff profiles.
- 57% of respondents stated that they would be encouraged to apply to a company if they were able to explain other mitigating circumstances about their application.
- 71% of respondents stated that they were either concerned about declaring their disability or would prefer not to disclose it at all.
- 57% said that they would be more likely or much more likely to apply to a company if they had the opportunity to speak to someone about their disability or health requirements.

Key Recommendations

- Lloyds Banking Group (LBG) must market their graduate opportunities to universities outside of the Russell Group. Failure to do so will exclude high calibre candidates from being aware of the graduate opportunities that exist.
- To encourage more disabled students to apply to LBG and to ensure that applicants are not unfairly screened out of the process due to their disability or for a reason related to it, it is important that LBG provide the opportunity for them to explain any mitigating circumstances about their application.
- LBG need to more effectively promote banking as a career to disabled students who are studying business related subjects yet are not considering it as a career.
- LBG must also more effectively promote banking as a career to those disabled students who are not studying a business related degree. There is an opportunity to educate these students as to what a career in banking involves and to encourage them to consider it as an option.
- LBG must build upon the existing relationships it has with University Careers Services to proactively promote its career opportunities to disabled graduates. This will involve identifying and working with specific Careers Advisers who provide support and guidance to disabled graduates.
- Since many disabled students are consulting their Disability / Welfare Officer in their search for work; Lloyds Banking must work with them to proactively promote its career opportunities to disabled graduates.
- Disabled students rely heavily on searching an employer's website to find graduate opportunities. Lloyds Banking group must greatly improve the messaging and content of its website if it is to be an effective tool which actively welcomes and encourages disabled graduates to apply. The website must also be more effective at addressing the concerns disabled graduates have about disclosing their disability and requesting the necessary support.
- Lloyds Banking Group should provide someone for applicants to contact regards their disability and what their requirements are. This would build the confidence of, and actively encourage, disabled graduates to apply for career opportunities.
- LBG should have a presence on [Milkround.com/diversity](https://www.milkround.com/diversity) as a way of enhancing its reputation as a disability confident organisation.



- To gain a competitive edge Lloyds Banking Group must implement activities and initiatives which are not currently occurring. These may include sponsorship of the Disability / Welfare Office or the National Association of Disabled Students, a greater presence at relevant events, articulating existing partnerships with assisted technology organisations such as Microlink, etc



In summary

Recruiting graduates, regardless of disability, is complex, challenging and, at times, difficult. There is no simple solution, no 'one size fits all', no 'quick win' when it comes to attracting and recruiting from this talent pool. Instead, recruiters have to implement a strategy which uses a wide range of different methods and techniques to effectively engage with this large and diverse pool of talented graduates. Recruiters have to be creative and flexible and continually rethink and evolve their strategies as more and more tools and technology becomes available.

The same is true when recruiting disabled graduates. The research has shown that there is much difference in how disabled graduates search for jobs. Recruiters will therefore need to devise and implement a strategy that accounts for this difference. This will involve identifying and implementing a range of activities and initiatives in order to most effectively reach a wide range of disabled applicants.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. DEMOGRAPHICS

1.1. Disability

1,509 individuals completed the online survey. 665 defined themselves as having a disability or long term health condition; 833 said they did not have either a disability or a long term health condition and 11 did not indicated either way.

Of those respondents who indicated that they had a disability, 76% indicated they had one disability, 19% indicated they had 2, 4% said they had 3 and 1% said they had 4.

The disabilities covered by the respondents included dyslexia, autism, wheelchair user, visual impairment and long term health condition.

1.2. Ethnicity

All respondents recorded their ethnicity. A higher proportion of White respondents (49%) reported a disability compared to other ethnic groups.

1.3. Gender

57% of the respondents who declared a disability were male and 43% were female.

1.4. Age

All but one respondent recorded their age giving an average of 33.5 years, with the mid point being 22 and most common being 21.

2. ACADEMIC RESULTS

2.1. UCAS points

Of those responding, 60% of non-disabled respondents took A levels (as opposed to other entry qualifications) compared with 70% of disabled respondents.

Non-disabled respondents had slightly more UCAS points than disabled respondents (391 vs 372)

2.2. University

48% of non-disabled respondents attended Russell Group universities compared to 39% of disabled respondents. However much higher proportions of disabled respondents came from some Russell Universities than others when compared with non-disabled respondents.

Recommendations

2.2.1. Lloyds Banking Group must market their graduate opportunities to universities outside of the Russell Group. Failure to do so will exclude high calibre candidates from being aware of the graduate opportunities that exist.

2.3. Impact of disability on study

17% of respondents indicated that their disability had impacted on their choice of study.

2.4. Subject Studied

The HESA categories for subject were used for the drop-down options for respondents to indicate what subject they were studying.

14% of disabled respondents indicated they were studying English, 11% History & Philosophy, 9% Business and Finance and 9% Physical & Earth Sciences. The most conspicuous difference is in the Business & Finance section with only 9% of disabled respondents studying this as compared to 23% of non-disabled respondents.

2.5. Degree class

Data on degree class, expected or obtained, was available for 88% of respondents.

There were no statistically significant overall differences between disabled and non-disabled respondents in the class of degree they obtained.

When those reporting themselves as having dyslexia are compared with all other respondents, they do have a slightly different profile with fewer achieving higher grades e.g. 19% obtain first class honours (compared with 23% of others) whilst 16% obtain 2/2s, compared to 9% of other respondents. It is therefore possible that candidates with dyslexia are being screened out of the process due to their lower class of degree.

Recommendations

- 2.5.1. All applicants must to be given the opportunity to account for obtaining a lower degree class. Mitigating circumstances must be taken into consideration where disability is a factor in being awarded a lower degree class.

2.6. Impact of academic screening criteria

If LBG use an academic screening cut off of 300 UCAS points and an upper 2nd class honours degree, 63% of disabled respondents would meet this requirement compared to 73% of non-disabled respondents.

The research found that the UCAS cut-off of 300 points impacts disproportionately on disabled applicants. Whilst degree class alone does not, when it is combined with the UCAS results the impact is exacerbated.

Recommendations

- 2.6.1. All applicants must to be given the opportunity to account for obtaining lower academics which would screen them out of the recruitment process. Mitigating circumstances must be taken into consideration where disability is a factor in achieving lower academics.
- 2.6.2. The screening process should be reviewed to ensure that where applicants state mitigating circumstances that this is picked up and screened in light of the information provided.
- 2.6.3. Those responsible for screening application forms must be knowledgeable to screen applications where mitigating circumstances have been stated, and to ensure that they are dealt with fairly. It is recommended that training is provided.

3. OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE

3.1. Attitudes towards choosing a company / career

During the focus groups the respondents were asked how they *felt* about choosing the right job and company. Many of the feelings were similar to those expressed by those without a disability however they also expressed feeling anxious due to 'knock backs' they had had in the past.

In addition, they were concerned about how the employer would view their disability, and in particular any perceived limitations. They also believed the employer would take what could be considered the *easier* option when selecting graduates.

"Why would they be interested in me when they can have their pick (of graduates)?"

Recommendations

3.1.1. Only by addressing these types of concerns and building the confidence of disabled graduates will LBG attract more disabled graduates to apply to the graduate leadership programme.

The marketing communications must include messages that address these types of issues and actively aim to build the confidence of potential disabled applicants.

3.2. Occupational choice

Respondents were asked to rate their level of interest in various occupational areas on a four point scale where 1=does not appeal, 2=moderately appealing, 3=very appealing and 4=first choice of sector.

Banking and Finance was the most endorsed as first choice of sector with 11% overall selecting it as their first choice. However, whilst 13% of non-disabled identified it as first choice, only 9% of disabled respondents did. Similarly, 39% of non-disabled respondents said it does not appeal compared with 56% of disabled respondents.

It was found that those studying Maths/Stats, Business & Finance and Computer Science are the most interested in a career in banking. The lower proportion of disabled respondents choosing to study business related areas will transfer in part to lower numbers interested in careers in the area.

Recommendations

3.2.1. LBG need to more effectively promote banking as a career to disabled students who are studying business related areas yet are not considering it as a career. This will include addressing the negative perceptions that disabled students may have about banking, particularly the long-hours culture and requirements to travel.

3.2.2. LBG must also more effectively promote banking as a career to those disabled students who are not studying a business related degree. There is an opportunity to educate these students as to what a career in banking involves and to encourage them to consider it as a career.

3.3. Impact of disability on occupational choice

During the focus groups participants said that their disability did not directly affect their choice of career however in some instances it did raise questions and concerns. There were particular concerns about having to travel abroad or spend a placement abroad due to medical requirements. There were also concerns about how flexible an employer would be; this was again related to the need for medical care or time off to support their health issue.

“My priorities are still what they were (in choosing a career) before I had other issues to consider”.

“I would compromise salary if I knew they were flexible and could support my health issue”.

Recommendations

3.3.1. To position LBG as an attractive employer to disabled graduates LBG must articulate the support that is available particularly around time required to manage a disability or health condition.

3.3.2. Travel, both in the UK and abroad, is also a concern; flexibility around the requirement to do this needs to be considered and articulated to ensure disabled graduates are not deterred from applying

4. JOB SEARCHING

4.1. Method of job search

Respondents were asked which methods they use to search for jobs. The most common method used by disabled students is the university careers service and / or careers advisers with 58% of respondents stating that they used this method; this is followed by employer recruitment websites (48%), graduate websites (44%) and careers fairs (33%). Specialist diversity press or disability press is used by relatively few of the disabled group; only 3% stated that they used this method.

Recommendations

- 4.1.1. LBG must ensure that they maximise their use of the University Careers Service to market their opportunities to disabled students.
- 4.1.2. The majority of University Careers Services have a Careers Adviser who is specifically dedicated to supporting disabled students. It is imperative that LBG identifies who this person is in each Careers Service and builds a good working relationship with that person. This person will be key to better marketing LBG as an employer of choice for disabled graduates, and to reaching this target market.
- 4.1.3. Many University careers services run specific programmes for their disabled students; these include skills sessions, mentoring opportunities, and careers events. It is recommended that LBG understand what opportunities exist and identify which they will become involved with.
- 4.1.4. LBG must also ensure that they have a presence on graduate websites, such as Milkround and Prospects.
- 4.1.5. Disabled graduates also rely heavily on employer's website in their search for graduate opportunities. LBG must ensure that their graduate website is a strong marketing tool for their graduate opportunities. The website must include information which is relevant to disabled graduates. Since many disabled graduates are concerned that employers will not support them if they have a disability or long term health issue it is imperative that LBG uses its website to address these concerns.

Examples of information the graduate website should contain include the following; this list is by no means exhaustive:

LBG as a diverse employer

- Employer networks
- How to request an adjustment during the recruitment process
- Examples of adjustments that can be made / have been made in the past
- How to request an application form in an alternative format
- Who to contact if they require support with their application / have questions
- Profiles of graduates

4.2. The Careers Service

Respondents were asked specific questions around how they used the Careers Service and whether they were consulting a Careers Adviser. 22% of disabled respondents stated that they were consulting a Careers Adviser; of these 74% said that they were much more likely to apply to an organisation if their Careers Adviser / Service said that an organisation is 'disability confident'.

Recommendations

4.2.1. The Careers Service must accurately represent LBG to disabled students as an employer who is 'disability confident'.

The graduate team must provide the Careers Service with key messages about LBG being a disability confident employer and what this means in practice.

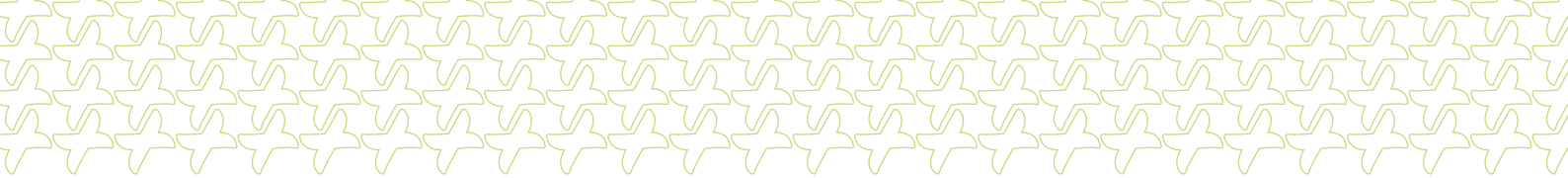
4.2.2. Since many disabled students do not declare their disability it is important that these messages go to all Careers Advisers, and not just those dedicated to supporting disabled students.

4.3. The Disability / Welfare Office

The role of the Disability / Welfare Office is to provide information and guidance to disabled students in order that they obtain the support they require during their time at university.

Many disabled students will have contact with the Disability / Welfare Office prior to actually starting at university and will continue for the duration of their time there.

A much higher % of students said that they were consulting their Disability Officer in their search for work than those who said they were consulting their Careers Adviser; 91% versus 22%.



Recommendations

- 4.3.1. LBG must form effective working relationships with the Disability / Welfare Office and use them to reach disabled students. The Disability / Welfare Office can market LBG's career opportunities directly to disabled students.

- 4.3.2. LBG should also consider other marketing opportunities e.g. sponsorship of the Disability / Welfare Office, a presence at events, distribution of careers information, etc

4.4. Diversity Websites

Whilst only 3% of respondents used specialist diversity or disability press, 54% of respondents said that having a presence on diversity websites made an employer either more attractive or much more attractive. 40% said that they were more likely or much more likely to apply to a company that had advertised on a diversity website. The most commonly used website was Milkround.com/diversity however only 11% of respondents had registered to receive emails from Milkround.com specifically from equal opportunities employers.

During the focus groups, participants said that they referenced diversity websites of interest to them; if a company ranked well on these they made the assumption that they would more than likely take other diversity strands, such as disability, seriously. Two websites that were reference were Stonewall and Mind.

Recommendations

- 4.4.1. LBG should consider having a presence on Milkround.com/diversity as a way of enhancing its reputation as a disability confident organisation. However it is not recommended that it uses Milkround.com/diversity to email students as such a small % had signed up to receive these; budget could be better used else where e.g. sponsoring the Disability Welfare Office.

- 4.4.2. LBG should identify other relevant websites where they want the brand to appear.

4.5. Specialist disability recruitment companies

Respondents were asked whether they had heard of certain specialist disability recruitment companies including Scope, Employability and Prospects. Of the disabled respondents who provided an answer 20% said they had heard of Scope and 16% they had heard of either Employability or Prospects.

When asked if they were more likely to apply to a company if they could apply through such a specialist 3rd party disability organisation 77% said that either it would make no difference or it would actually make them less likely to apply. Only 23% said it would make them more likely to apply.

During the focus groups the participants stated that they would not want to have a separate method of applying for graduate roles. Instead they wanted to be treated like any other graduate and to go through the standard recruitment process; this included how they actually applied for the vacancy.

“(It is) most impressive when it is direct recruitment as it shows they are making a real effort”.

Recommendations

4.5.1. It is not recommended that LBG uses external specialist disability recruitment companies to either attract or manage disabled applicants to their graduate programmes.

LBG must ensure that all applicants, regardless of whether or not they are disabled, can apply to them directly and any requirements can be catered for.

5. CAREERS EVENTS

5.1. Attendance at Careers Events

74% of disabled respondents said that they had either attended or planned to attend Graduate Careers Fairs. However during the focus groups the participants said that it was very difficult to ask the questions that they really wanted to ask at the presentations that companies made as they were too formal; they said that a more informal opportunity was required to talk in depth about some of the questions they would have.

“At the presentations you can’t ask what you really want to because it is too formal; (you) need a more informal setting to ask the real questions”.

Recommendations

5.1.1. LBG must ensure that all company representatives at careers events are disability confident. These individuals are the first contact many potential applicants will have with LBG and it is imperative that they are confident and comfortable to engage with students with disabilities. They must also be knowledgeable to talk about what support is available during the recruitment process and on joining the company.

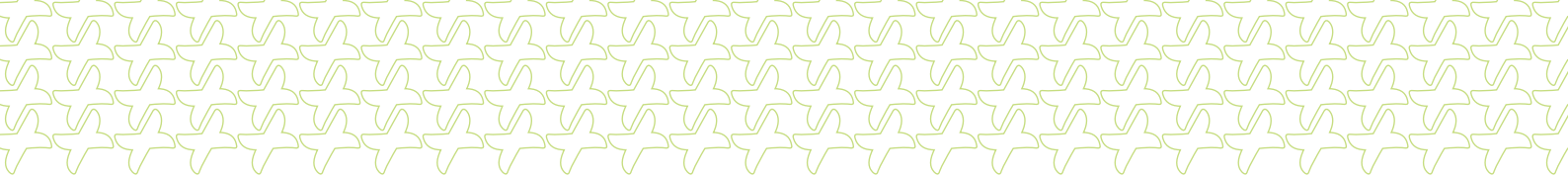
5.1.2. LBG must also ensure that the careers events they attend are accessible in the broadest sense; this includes wheelchair access, hearing loops, facilities for people with mobility issues or long term health conditions, etc.

5.1.3. LBG must provide opportunities where graduates can ask the questions that they have particularly questions relating to disability which will not be applicable to the vast majority of attendees at an event.

5.2. Separate careers fairs and skills sessions

Respondents were asked whether employers should run separate careers events and skills sessions for disabled students. 23% of respondents said they should run separate events, 58% said they should not and 19% had no opinion on this.

It is therefore evident that there is not a simple solution as to whether separate events should be run or not.



Recommendations

- 5.2.1.** Since 58% of respondents wanted an inclusive approach to running careers events it is crucial that any events that LBG participate in or run are accessible to all students.
LBG must provide students with the opportunity to request any adjustments they may require and must be able to implement these appropriately.

6. CHOOSING AN EMPLOYER

6.1. Employer websites

49% of disabled respondents said that they were either more likely or much more likely to apply to employers that explicitly talk about disability or have disabled staff profiles.

Recommendations

6.1.1. Information about disability much clearly be visible and accessible on the graduate careers site. This should include the support available to applicants and employees, examples of adjustments that have been made or can be made both during the recruitment process and on joining, information on the disability network, etc

Providing this information would also help applicants feel more comfortable declaring their disability rather than fearing discrimination.

6.1.2. LBG should also include profiles of graduates and employees with disabilities or long term health conditions on the careers site. This again gives the message that LBG is a disability confident organisation.

7. RECRUITMENT MARKETING MESSAGES

During the focus groups the participants spoke a lot about the information and messages provided on employer's websites.

The two key areas they spoke about were:

- Diversity messages
- Adjustments and support

7.1. Diversity messages

It came across very strongly that it was a company's reputation as a whole that affected how they were viewed as an employer, rather than specific messages about being inclusive of disabled people. They said that the messages needed to be more subtle and less obvious.

However, participants also wanted to be able to easily access information on the different diversity programmes. Having them readily accessible acted as proof that they were issues that the company took seriously.

"Everyone is acutely aware of tokenism; if you push the networks too far you can over do it... it needs to smell real".

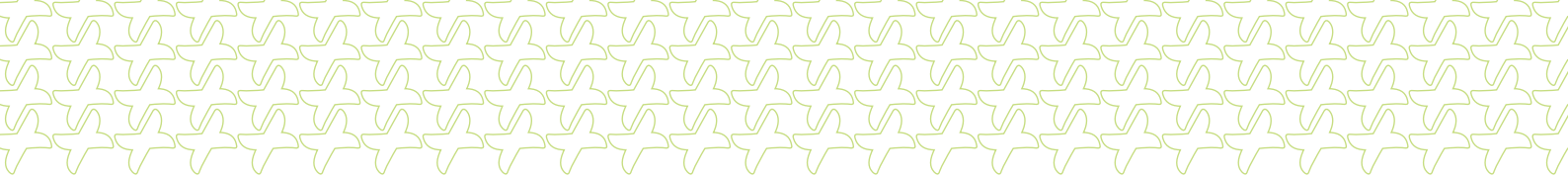
Recommendations

7.1.1. There is the opportunity for LBG to provide more information on its website about diversity, and in particular disability, and how this is considered and approached across the organisation. However what information is available must be 'balanced', 'real' and steer clear of tokenism.

7.2. Adjustments and support

During the focus groups it became increasingly apparent how concerned the participants were about declaring their disability and asking for the support that they required. Some individuals fundamentally believed that an employer wouldn't be interested in employing them if they could just as easily employ someone with out a disability.

"It is really important to feel that the organisation will be receptive to your requests for support or adjustments"



The participants spoke at length that employer's need to provide information about adjustments and support that was available to disabled graduates. They said that organisations must actively promote that they are aware of the different types of support that an applicant may require and are able to provide this. They said such messages would stop them having to worry about whether they would be supported or waiting until they found the people within the organisation that they could trust to speak about their requirement.

The participants spoke of the need for the messages to be 'real'; this included providing information about what is considered to be reasonable, examples of adjustments that have been made in the past, and also testimonials from previous applicants.

“(Employers) need to move away from standard statements and instead use case studies of what they have done in the past. (They need to) make it meaningful and also relevant to interviews and assessments”.

Recommendations

- 7.2.1.** To ensure that graduates are not deterred from applying because they need an adjustment or support, LBG must be more explicit and open in the information they provide.
- 7.2.2.** LBG must provide someone for graduates to contact, at any stage of the application process, to talk through their requirements.
- 7.2.3.** LBG should provide examples of past adjustments and support that have been provided during the recruitment process; as well as testimonials from those who have benefited from such adjustments.

8. APPLYING FOR GRADUATE ROLES

8.1. Academics

Whilst only 25% said they would be deterred from applying to a company if the company asks for specific UCAS points or class of degree, 40% said they would be encouraged to apply if there was the opportunity to explain lower examination grades.

During the focus groups participants stated that they were “turned off” by companies who were overly strict about the academic qualifications that were required to be considered for a role; they viewed the company as ‘rigid’ and ‘cold’.

Recommendations

8.1.1. To encourage disabled applicants to apply, LBG must provide space on the application form to detail mitigating circumstances concerning academics.

8.1.2. The screening process must be reviewed to ensure that disabled applicants who detail mitigating circumstances are considered and the application reviewed in light of the information provided.

8.2. Work experience

27% of respondents stated that they would be deterred from applying to a company if the company requested that they had to have work experience. Of this 27%, 86% said that they could demonstrate the required skills by drawing upon other experiences.

Recommendations

8.2.1. Some disabled individuals will find it harder to obtain work experience than their non-disabled peers. LBG must therefore take this into account in the weighting of work experience in the application form.

LBG should also allow disabled applicants to draw upon their other experiences to demonstrate any skill gaps as a result of not having work experience.



8.3. Skills and other experiences

57% of respondents stated that they would be encouraged to apply to a company if they were able to explain other mitigating circumstances about their application.

During the focus groups it was evident that the participants were very concerned that if they disclosed their disability that assumptions would be made about their ability. They expressed how important it was to be able to state that their disability did not have a negative impact on their ability to do the job.

“(I) would like to be able to make it clear that it doesn’t hold me back; I have developed strategies and have ways of coping with tight deadlines and pressure.”

Recommendations

- 8.3.1.** To encourage more disabled students to apply to LBG and to ensure that applicants are not unfairly screened out of the process due to their disability, it is important that LBG provide the opportunity for them to explain any mitigating circumstances about their application.

8.4. Disclosure

71% of respondents stated that they were either concerned about declaring their disability or would prefer not to disclose it at all. Reasons for being concerned include:

- Being discriminated against
- Being given preferential treatment
- Having to request costly adjustments
- Having to request time off to manage their disability

57% said that they would be more likely or much more likely to apply to a company if they had the opportunity to speak to someone about their disability or health requirements. During the focus groups, the participants said ideally the person would be external to the company in order to guarantee confidentiality at this stage in the recruitment process.

54% stated that they would be more likely or much more likely to disclose if the employer provided details of someone they could speak to or email. Again, the participants in the focus groups said that a person external to the company would be preferential at this stage in the process.

“If you tick the box they there must be follow up with an email or phone call. You’ve done your bit, now they need to do theirs.”

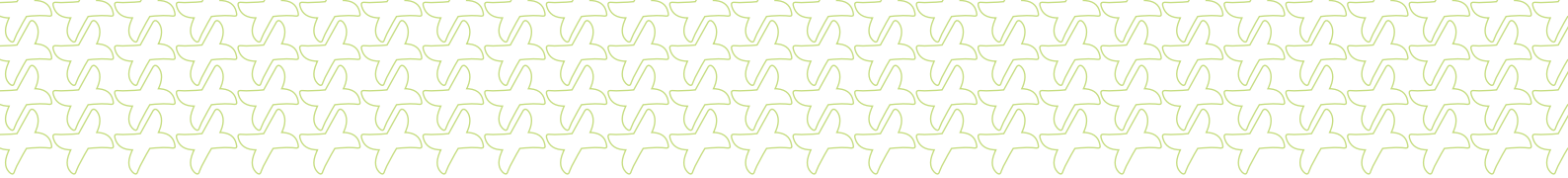
The decision of whether to disclose their disability or not and at what stage was discussed at length during the focus groups. Some participants were adamant that they would not disclose for fear of being negatively judged whilst other felt that they should disclose if for no other reason that they did not want to be seen as being untruthful. Some participants said that it was easier to disclose in the answers they gave to the competency based questions; this gave them the opportunity to demonstrate some of the qualities they had developed as a result of their disability. They said by not disclosing they were hiding some of their positive attributes.

Participants also said that if the organisation wasn’t accommodating that they would want to work for them anyway.

“I wouldn’t disclose because I don’t want a judgment to be made”.

“I’m not sure that I will disclose because of the stigma”.

Participants also said that they did not know what was “reasonable” to ask for; this again made them anxious as to if and when they would disclose their disability and their requirements. They also said that if the organisation was not accommodating that they would not want to work for them anyway.



Recommendations

8.4.1. It is absolutely crucial that applicants disclose their disability in order to obtain the support they require during the recruitment process.

Failure to do so may result in applicants unfairly being taken out of the process.

LBG must therefore ensure that all of their communications actively encourage applicants to disclose and to feel they will be supported if they do so. This includes information on the website, in all marketing materials, on the application form, and in correspondence about interviews and assessment centres.

8.4.2. LBG should provide someone for applicants to contact regards their disability and what their requirements are. During the early stages there should be the option to contact an external expert rather than a LBG person as students are concerned about confidentiality. Pre-application in particular the applicants are seeking confidential advice and support.

8.4.3. The graduate team must obviously ensure they are capable of implementing the required adjustments effectively and efficiently.

9. BUILDING THE CONFIDENCE OF DISABLED GRADUATES

The overriding message that came across during the focus groups was the lack of confidence that disabled graduates have in applying for roles because of their disability and the support they may require.

Many participants felt that employers wouldn't bother with them when they could just as easily recruit someone without a disability.

"Why would they be interested in me when they can have their pick (of graduates)"

Undergraduate, Oxford University.

"When you know how many people are applying for each job it seems like there isn't any point; not with a disability'.

Undergraduate, Oxford University

There was a fear that they would be negatively judged on their disability rather than interviewers seeing past this. Participants wanted the chance to have an interview during which they felt they would be able to 'prove' how good they were and that their disability wasn't a barrier to success.

"I would withhold (disclosing); I would show my ability first and show them how good I am".

"(I am) unhappy that they might be prejudiced when they haven't seen or met me".

Recommendations

- 9.1.1. LBG must address the concerns that disabled students have in the information available to students.
- 9.1.2. There is also the opportunity to run skills sessions to address these issues and to build the confidence of students around disclosure and asking for the support they require without fear of being discriminated against, or indeed favoured.

10. LLOYDS BANKING GROUP

The respondents were asked questions specifically about Lloyds Banking Group as a graduate employer. 44% of the disabled respondents said that they would consider applying to them for a graduate role.

10.1. Building LBG as an employer of choice for disabled graduates

Respondents were asked what would encourage them to apply to LBG. The area that came most strongly are as follows:

- Having a named person to contact before making an application
- Information about support they have previously provided / currently provide to disabled graduates.
- Profiles of employees who have disabilities
- Information about the Disability Network for Employees.

Recommendations

10.1.1. LBG should provide someone for applicants to contact regards their disability and what their requirements are. (see 7.4.2)

10.1.2. The graduate careers site must include information about the support available to disabled applicants and employees, including what they have previously provided for people.

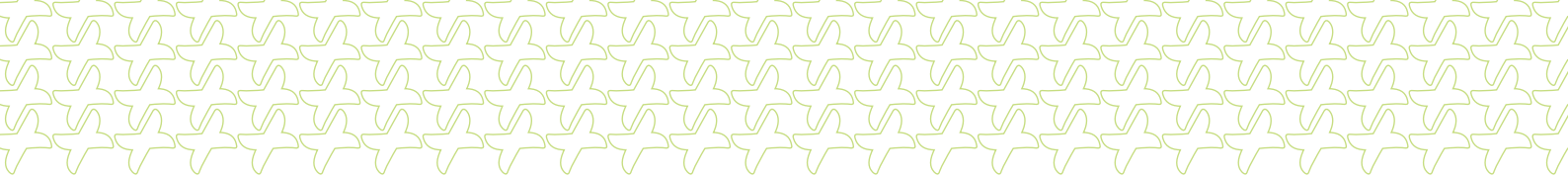
This information should also be included in any hard copy marketing materials.

10.1.3. The graduate careers site already has profiles of current graduates working at LBG; this should be updated to include profiles of graduates who have a disability of long-term health issue.

10.1.4. A link through to the Disability Network should be easily identifiable on the careers website. The Disability Network should also be referenced in other marketing communications.

10.2. Direct Marketing

40% of respondents said that they would be interested in attending a general careers event if LBG invited them to attend. 44% said that LBG would appear a more attractive employer if they were to email them about their graduate opportunities.



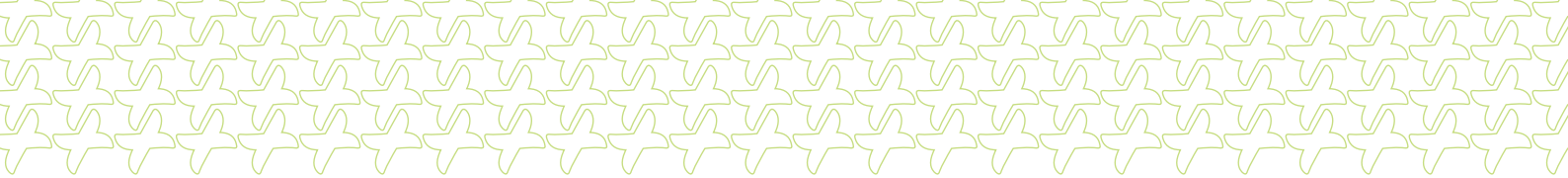
Recommendations

10.2.1. LBG need to identify the most effective method of communicating directly with disabled students in order to inform them about the events and opportunities. Options to consider include using the Welfare officers, the Careers Advisers, and establishing links through students societies and faculties.

Quotes

The focus groups included students from some of the top universities in this country, including Oxford and Manchester. Despite their academic achievements these quotes collated from the discussions show the very real concerns that students with disabilities and long term health issues have around applying for a graduate job.

- “(Disclosure) is very much in the forefront of my mind; particularly because of travel and the need to access to medications”.
- “(My disability) comes into play from a psychological angle; being able to cope with being different – being the one who can’t travel”.
- “My priorities are still what they were (in choosing a career) before I had other issues to consider”.
- “I would compromise salary if I knew they were flexible and could support my health issue”.
- “(It is) most impressive when it is direct recruitment as it shows they are making a real effort”.
- “Everyone is acutely aware of tokenism; if you push the networks too far you can over do it... it needs to smell real”.
- “It is really important to feel that the organisation will be receptive to your requests for support or adjustments”.
- “(Employers) need to move away from standard statements and instead use case studies of what they have done in the past. (They need to) make it meaningful and also relevant to interviews and assessments”.
- “(I) would like to be able to make it clear that it doesn’t hold me back; I have developed strategies and have ways of coping with tight deadlines and pressure.”
- “If you tick the box they there must be follow up with an email or phone call. You’ve done your bit, now they need to do theirs.”
- “I wouldn’t disclose because I don’t want a judgment to be made”.

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- “I’m not sure that I will disclose because of the stigma”.
 - “Why would they be interested in me when they can have their pick (of graduates)?”
 - “When you know how many people are applying for each job it seems like there isn’t any point; not with a disability’.
 - “I would with hold (disclosing); I would show my ability first and show them how good I am”.
 - “(I am) unhappy that they might be prejudiced when they haven’t seen or met me”.
 - “At the presentations you can’t ask what you really want to because it is too formal; (there needs to be) a more informal setting to ask the real questions.”
 - “I don’t want to be singled out; just recruit me for who I am.”
 - “I don’t want attention brought to my race / disability; maybe that is because I am not comfortable with it.”
 - “I don’t’ want to class it as a disability; I am just me”
 - “Do they look down on my further along the process if I haven’t brought (my disability) up”
 - “I don’t want them to offer me things I don’t’ need”
 - “I don’t’ want to be invited to an interview just because of the two tick symbol.”