

Building Inclusive Work Places

Celebrating 12+ years
of collaboration
between the Irish Civil
Service and AHEAD



 **ahead**
Association for Higher Education Access & Disability



An Roinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta
agus Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Employment Affairs
and Social Protection

 **publicjobs.ie**



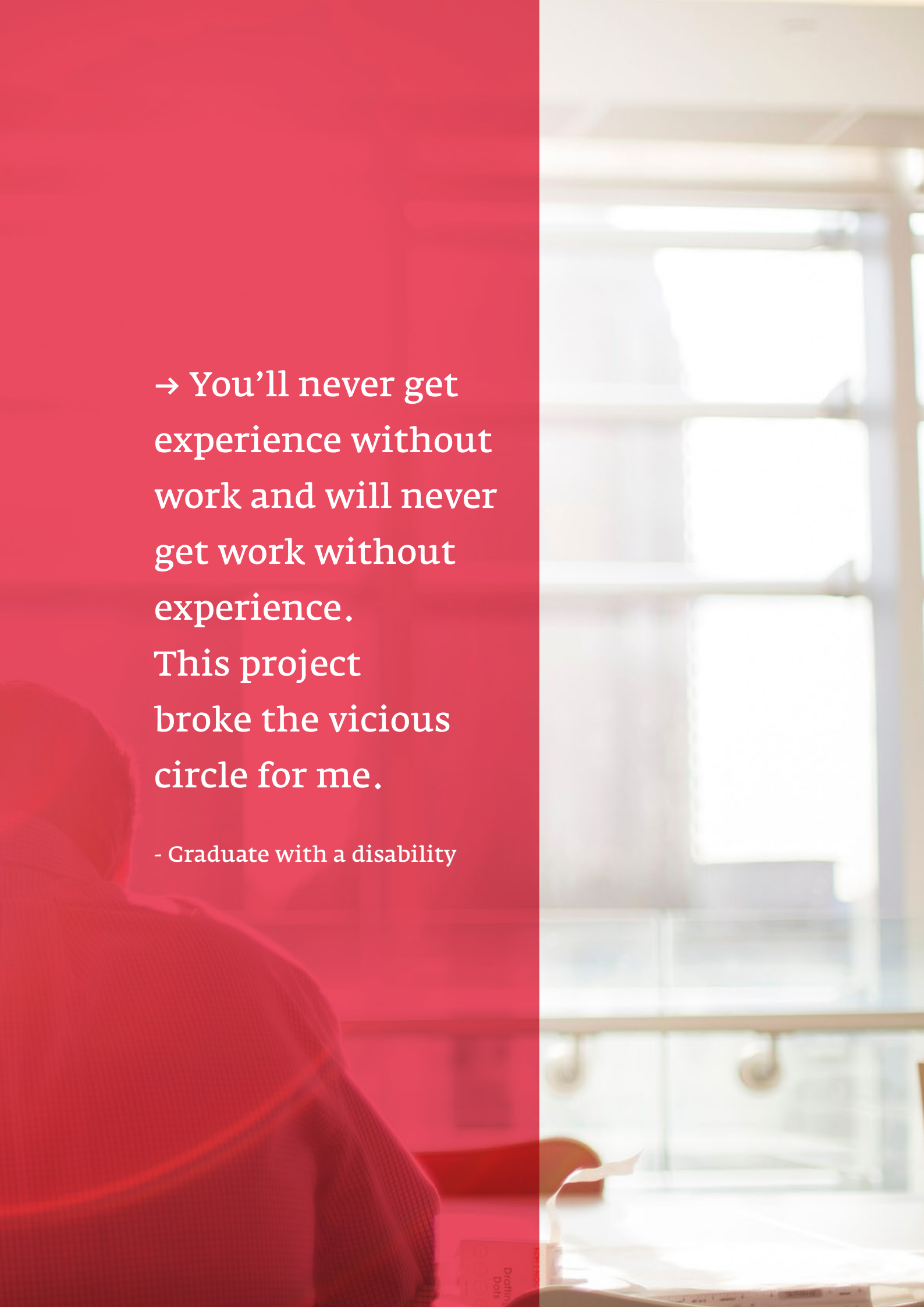
An Roinn Caiteachais
Phoiblí agus Athchóirithe
Department of Public
Expenditure and Reform



→ You'll never get
experience without
work and will never
get work without
experience.

This project
broke the vicious
circle for me.

- Graduate with a disability



AHEAD wishes to thank all those who participated in the AHEAD WAM initiative and without whose collective open engagement, contributions and inputs this publication would not have been possible to produce.

Published by

AHEAD

East Hall

UCD

Carysfort Avenue

Blackrock

Co. Dublin

T. 01 7164396

www.ahead.ie

Written by Mary Quirke and Pauline Ryder

Quantitative data collated by Caroline McGrotty

Design by Daring: www.hellodarling.ie

AHEAD 2018

ISBN 978-0-9954772-9-2



Contents

01	Welcome by Civil Service	1
02	Foreword by Louis Watters	4
03	Background	7
04	Why this publication, and why now?	10
05	Setting the scene – where we have come from	13
06	Early 2000 – a spotlight on disability	15
07	The origins of AHEAD and WAM	17
08	Engagement with the Civil Service	27
09	Templates – some practical tools	37
10	The WAM story – the numbers	41
11	Leading the way – Civil Service departments celebrate WAM	49
12	Graduates, managers and mentors’ voices – my Civil Service WAM internship	54
13	Connecting the dots	79
14	Building blocks for developing inclusion in the workplace	81
15	Going forward	93
16	Bibliography	98

Welcome by Civil Service

- Message from the Chief Human Resources
Officer for the Civil Service



Leveraging strategic partnerships for transformative action

It is with great pleasure that I welcome this publication which celebrates over 12 years of collaboration between AHEAD and the Civil Service on the **Willing and Able Mentoring** programme (WAM).

The Civil Service is very proud of its engagement with the WAM Programme. Over the 12+ years, 170 graduates have gained valuable work experience in the Civil Service, and in turn, the Civil Service has gained much from the graduates' contribution to and participation in our workforce.

Last year we launched the People Strategy for the Civil Service. Priorities of the strategy include being an employer of choice and building the

workforce for the future while at the same time ensuring that the Civil Service has a diverse workforce more reflective of Irish society. The WAM Programme is one of the initiatives that help to enrich the diversity of the Civil Service workforce and our aspiration to be an employer of choice. Lessons learned from participation in the WAM Programme will inform our approach to the development of a more diverse workforce in the future. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, in conjunction with the Public Appointments Service, is examining current recruitment processes and other measures to promote the employment of people with disabilities in the Civil Service. A range of initiatives, including internships, are being considered as alternative pathways for recruiting people with disabilities into the Civil Service.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work done down through the years by the Disability Liaison Officers (DLOs) and the DLO Network. The DLO works with HR units to assist and support staff with disabilities and their managers. The Civil Service WAM journey would not be the successful story demonstrated by this publication without them.

Finally, I would like to encourage other employers in the wider public sector to learn from the Civil Service experience and to engage with AHEAD and the WAM Programme. We are more than happy to share our experience with them.

David Cagney

Chief Human Resources Officer for the Civil Service



— Louis Watters

Foreword by Louis Watters

Recently, I had occasion to be in the Rotunda maternity hospital. I was asked for some personal details: details that would eventually be included on my child's birth certificate. One of the details requested was my profession. For many years I described myself as a journalist. I am also a qualified barrister, and could have legitimately used that title. However, my reply in response to that question was that I was an officer in the Civil Service. I am proud of being a Civil Servant. The Civil Service is a vast organisation with many different facets to its makeup. We are at the very heart of Irish society: serving our people and serving their public representatives.

However, if it hadn't been for the WAM initiative, I may never have become a Civil Servant. In 2005, having watched my fellow graduates secure employment, and like so many graduates with a disability, frustrated with my own employment prospects, I happened to attend a career fair in the Mansion House where AHEAD had a stand. It was there that I learned of the inaugural Willing Able Mentoring (WAM) initiative. I submitted an application and subsequently was offered a 6 month mentored placement with the Department of Agriculture. On completion of my placement, I applied for a permanent role with the Civil Service and returned to Agriculture as a Clerical Officer. Over the following years, I gradually gained promotion to the role of Assistant Principal where I am today.

Looking back, I have to say that we have come a long way since those early days of the WAM initiative. I welcome the publication of this document. It highlights some of the successes that the WAM project has achieved over the past 13 years, 13 years that included the most severe downturn that the state has experienced. A decade of contraction within the Civil Service. Yet, in that time, the WAM initiative has placed 170 graduates with disabilities throughout the Civil Service.

That is 170 graduates who have had their confidence bolstered; 170 graduates who have had their experience expanded and 170 graduates who have had their horizons raised. Their insightful accounts of their experiences can be found within the folds of this publication.

We can also read the accounts of those managers and mentors from within the Civil Service who worked closely with the WAM graduates in order to give each one of them a successful placement and attempt to provide a lasting influence on the graduate's future career. The mentors and managers also speak of the benefits that they, themselves, gained from the experience.

But perhaps the most significant change that this publication chronicles is the paradigm shift from the medical model of disability to the business model where ability is valued and recompensed. This change dovetails with the greater drive within the Civil Service towards greater diversity and a Civil Service that more substantially reflects the community as a whole. It is only through such diversity that we can value the different experiences and perspectives of the people we serve.

Having read this publication, I believe that a Civil Service shaped by officers that have come through the WAM experience, whether as mentor, manager or graduate, is a better organisation. I look forward to the next 13 years of cooperation between our two complementary organisations as we face the challenges that still lie ahead.

Louis Watters,

Assistant Principal, Legal Services,
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

03

Background

In 2005 graduates with disabilities approached the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD) to report that despite having first and second class degree qualifications they were failing to secure employment. This was at a time when the Irish economy was buoyant, the envy of Europe and skilled workers were in high demand. Progressive equality legislation was introduced and the number of students with disabilities entering third level education was at an all-time high. In response AHEAD introduced the Willing Able Mentoring (WAM) initiative designed to promote access to the mainstream Irish labour market for graduates with disabilities/specific learning difficulties. Through the method of a structured mentored work placement programme opportunities were created for this cohort of graduates to gain work experience relative to their qualifications and, at the same time, give employers the chance to assess their recruitment and employment policies in relation to people with disabilities. At this time AHEAD approached the Civil Service to seek their participation in the WAM initiative.

Funding for the roll out of the first phase of the WAM initiative was secured from the European Social Fund (ESF) EQUAL strand, which covered a three year period from 2005-2007. Based on the commitment by participating employers to embrace diversity in the workplace, FÁS funded the second phase and currently the WAM initiative is funded by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. The fact that WAM is still alive and thriving thirteen years on is testament to its success.

Featured in this review are selected individual accounts of graduates who participated in the WAM Programme in the Civil Service. They give insight into what these opportunities have done for them in building their career paths. Such positive outcomes are not confined to the Civil Service. According to McGrotty (2018) approximately **77%** of participants over the last five years have secured employment having engaged with WAM. Without the above funding and the commitment from employers and organisations like the Civil Service their stories could not be told.

The engagement of the Irish Civil Service with the WAM initiative is unique across the EU and the innovations and learnings from this partnership have been shared nationally across the higher education sector and also across the EU through the LINK European Network. The LINK network, which is co-ordinated by AHEAD, is comprised of similar network organisations from across Europe (Belgium, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, Norway, Italy and the U.K.)

The commitment to embracing inclusive work practices for graduates with disabilities across the Civil Service has been hugely positive. However, every new initiative needs a leader and, in the context of the Civil Service, the AHEAD WAM team must acknowledge and pay tribute to the ground-breaking work undertaken by the late Lorna Mulvihill, the then Disability Advisory Officer in the Department of Finance, to get the programme up and running, and whose relentless enthusiasm managed to bring everyone on board.

Why this publication, and why now?

- AHEAD, founded in 1988, is an independent non-profit organisation which operates as the national centre of expertise on inclusion and diversity across disability, education and employment.

AHEAD, through its work with employer networks in the Irish labour market, has noticed a shift in thinking when discussing disability in the workplace. In the late 1990s, the remit of disability within companies and organisations was generally viewed as part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). This viewpoint, we would argue, was influenced by the then prevailing charity model which regarded people with disabilities as victims of their circumstances, deserving of our sympathy. Actions and/or projects undertaken by CSR offered organisations and businesses the opportunity to demonstrate to the public that they had a corporate social conscience, a desire to make a contribution above and beyond their legal requirements. Such CSR initiatives, while limited in their scope, did offer people with disabilities opportunities to experience the workplace and, as such, were to act as a springboard and pave the way for future progress regarding access to mainstream employment for people with disabilities.

Today, the remit of disability has shifted from CSR to HR, largely due to disability being now viewed as part of the diversity programme of organisations for which HR is responsible. This change in remit means that in-house discussions on disability are no longer viewed as 'special' but instead are now part and parcel of the planning of organisational mainstream aims and objectives. It is expected that the ratification of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by Ireland this year will strengthen the rights of people with disabilities to pursue full participation and inclusion in society, including access to employment.

The work of AHEAD has always been governed by principles that are firmly rooted in a rights philosophy recognising the rights of people with disabilities. Through its WAM work placement initiative, AHEAD is promoting awareness of the barriers that graduates with disabilities have to overcome in their efforts to access mainstream employment.

The aim of this publication is:

- to document the experiences of the engagement between AHEAD and the Civil Service over the thirteen years of the WAM initiative.
- to learn from the experiences of staff from within the Civil Service who played an active role and were directly involved in making the AHEAD WAM initiative a reality, while also listening to the experiences of those graduates who benefited from the opportunities created within this initiative.
- to provide a template of the key pillars of the WAM initiative that going forward can be disseminated to a wider audience of employers in both the public and private sectors.

05 Setting the scene

The 70's, 80's and the 1990's – prior to WAM

History of disability in Ireland – key points & the Irish Civil Service

→ Government's target for the employment of people with a disability in the Civil Service announced.

Departments were required to allocate **3%** of posts to people with disabilities.

→ No government, institutional supports or funding mechanisms for students with disabilities in 3rd level education in Ireland.

1977

The 1980s

The 1990s

AHEAD

→ Majority of people with disabilities could not access 3rd level education.

→ Medical Model of Disability puts the focus on the person's disability rather than on their strengths and abilities.

Children with disabilities were generally segregated into special schools and progression to university or skilled employment was rare.

→ 1988 - AHEAD was officially set up as a national organisation to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education.

→ 1990s saw the rise of the Social Model of Disability - Removing barriers which exclude people with disabilities from many normal, everyday activities such as education, work and recreation making for a much more equitable society.

→ The Irish Government set up the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities. The job of the Commission was to find out what life was like for people with disabilities.

The Commission met with people with disabilities, their families and support groups throughout the country, to hear directly from them about the changes that would make a difference in their lives.

1993/
1994

→ Publication of 'A Strategy for Equality: Summary of the Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities' (1996).

Recommendations include 3% quota of public service jobs within 3 years.

1996

→ Government of Ireland. (1997) Universities Act. Dublin: Stationary Office.

Government of Ireland. Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2016. Dublin: Stationery office.

Government of Ireland. (1998). Education Act. Dublin: Stationery Office.

1997/
1998

→ AHEAD had representation on the committee on Access and Participation of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education.

Key Committee Recommendation: **"There should be full integration of people with disabilities in the higher education system and appropriate funding provisions should be put in place to support this policy".**

Funding mechanism to support students with disabilities in Higher Education.

AHEAD conducts first ever national research into numbers of students with disabilities in higher education. 990 students with disabilities - just 0.7% of the total student population.

Minister's Fund for Students with Disabilities was introduced.

→ The first supplementary entry schemes were introduced on a college by college basis (pre-cursor to the DARE scheme).

→ AHEAD research indicates that there are 1,410 undergraduate students with disabilities - just 1.1% of the undergraduate population.

06 Early 2000

– a spotlight on disability

Key Points in early 2000's

→ Government of Ireland. (2000). Equal Status Act. Dublin: Stationery Office.

→ Census 2002 asks a question about disability for the first time. Over 320,000 people (8.3% of the Irish population) self-declare.

As part of the Modernisation programme for the Civil Service, the Department of Finance commissioned 'Employment & Career Progression of People with a Disability in the Irish Civil Service (2002) Goodbody Economic Consultants, IPA Publication'. Recommendations resulted in the Code of Practice being revised.

2000

2002

→ National Disability Authority (NDA), established under the National Disability Authority Act, 1999, (NDA Act, 1999), as an independent statutory body.

→ Government of Ireland. (2004b). Equality Act 2004. Dublin: Stationery office. Circular 18/2004 - Career Progression of People with a Disability in the Irish Civil Service (2004) Dublin, The Stationery Office.

2004

→ Government of Ireland (2004). Education of Persons with Special Education Needs Act. Dublin: Stationery office.

→ The post of Disability Advisory Officer was established in the Equality Unit of the Department of Finance in October 2005 with responsibility for developing, monitoring and implementing Disability Policy within the Civil Service.

The existing part-time Departmental Disability Liaison Officers also appointed. The Equality Unit now forms part of the Civil Service HR Policy Unit in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

2005

→ Code of Practice on accessibility of public services and information provided by public bodies, prepared by the NDA, at the request of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, under the provisions of the Disability Act 2005 (the Act) (Part 3, Section 30).

→ Government of Ireland. (2005). Disability Act. Dublin: Stationery Office.

→ AHEAD receives EQUAL funding for a mentored work placement program for graduates with disabilities as a consequence to a National Conference lead by students and graduates with disabilities (WAM).

The origins of AHEAD and WAM

The AHEAD/WAM Programme is a graduate work placement programme which aims to promote access to the Irish labour market for graduates with disabilities while building the capacity of employers to integrate disability into the mainstream workplace. Its origins go back to 2005 with the granting of funding from the EU Equal Initiative to pilot a paid internship programme for graduates with disabilities for the two year period 2006-2007.

AHEAD, through its own research, was aware of the year on year increase in the number of students with disabilities making the transition from second level to third level education. Equally, AHEAD, through its direct engagement with students while in third level, was also well aware of their expressed failure, upon graduation, to make the transition into the mainstream world of work.

In 2006 AHEAD rolled out the Willing Able Mentoring (WAM) Initiative initially to identify the major barriers to the recruitment of graduates

with disabilities in the Irish mainstream workforce. WAM was designed to offer graduates the benefits of availing of much needed work experience in real jobs while simultaneously offering employers the chance to trial and review their policies and procedures with an equality/diversity hat on. Through the mechanism of paid internships and acting as a conduit, WAM worked with both employer and graduate, to address arising issues from interview to completion of placement.

Thirteen years on WAM has broadened its remit from a focus on 'inclusive work' to a focus on full integration in employment across all levels. The unique WAM approach continues to simultaneously work directly with both on-the-ground staff and graduate participants to provide a safe space for learning. Against the backdrop of growing diversity in the graduate population AHEAD is guided in its work and WAM is informed by the concept of Universal Design for Learning and what it has to offer in the development of inclusive learning systems.

WAM and its 4 key pillars

From its inception WAM recognised that if it was going to be an inclusive process it would need to take a multi-faceted approach to be sustainable and bring about long term positive change. From the get go it established itself as more than just a placement programme for people with disabilities influenced by a traditional medical model approach. Employers and their employees were expected to professionally engage with the programme as opposed to taking a charitable approach and graduates with disabilities were remunerated in line with their peers. This meant that the programme shifted from a CSR approach to a business model where HR and the wider organisation had to play their part in a professional manner. To meet this challenge four key components were developed and continue up to today.

Recruitment – an inclusive approach

The AHEAD WAM initiative offers participating employers a supportive space to learn about disability-proofing their recruitment practices and workplace and thereby open up to them the diverse pool of talent that is currently graduating from the higher education system in Ireland. Training and support is provided from the initial engagement with the programme, through the selection process and throughout the placement period. Training is tailored and is also designed to include the voices of graduates with disabilities themselves. As a concept WAM offers

graduates an opportunity to experience the workplace, and an employer to recognise ability. Therefore a WAM placement can of itself be used as a method of recruitment and while this was not the case in the Civil Service, it has been for other employers.

**Needs
Assessment**
– a graduate
centred process

A comprehensive Needs Assessment is carried out on all WAM graduate participants who are successfully placed in the internship programme. The WAM Needs Assessment is a consultative process with the graduate at the centre and involves liaison between a designated WAM assessor and usually the participating manager/supervisor. The purpose of the Needs Assessment is to identify what accommodations the candidate may require, if any, to satisfactorily complete the work placement they are about to undertake.

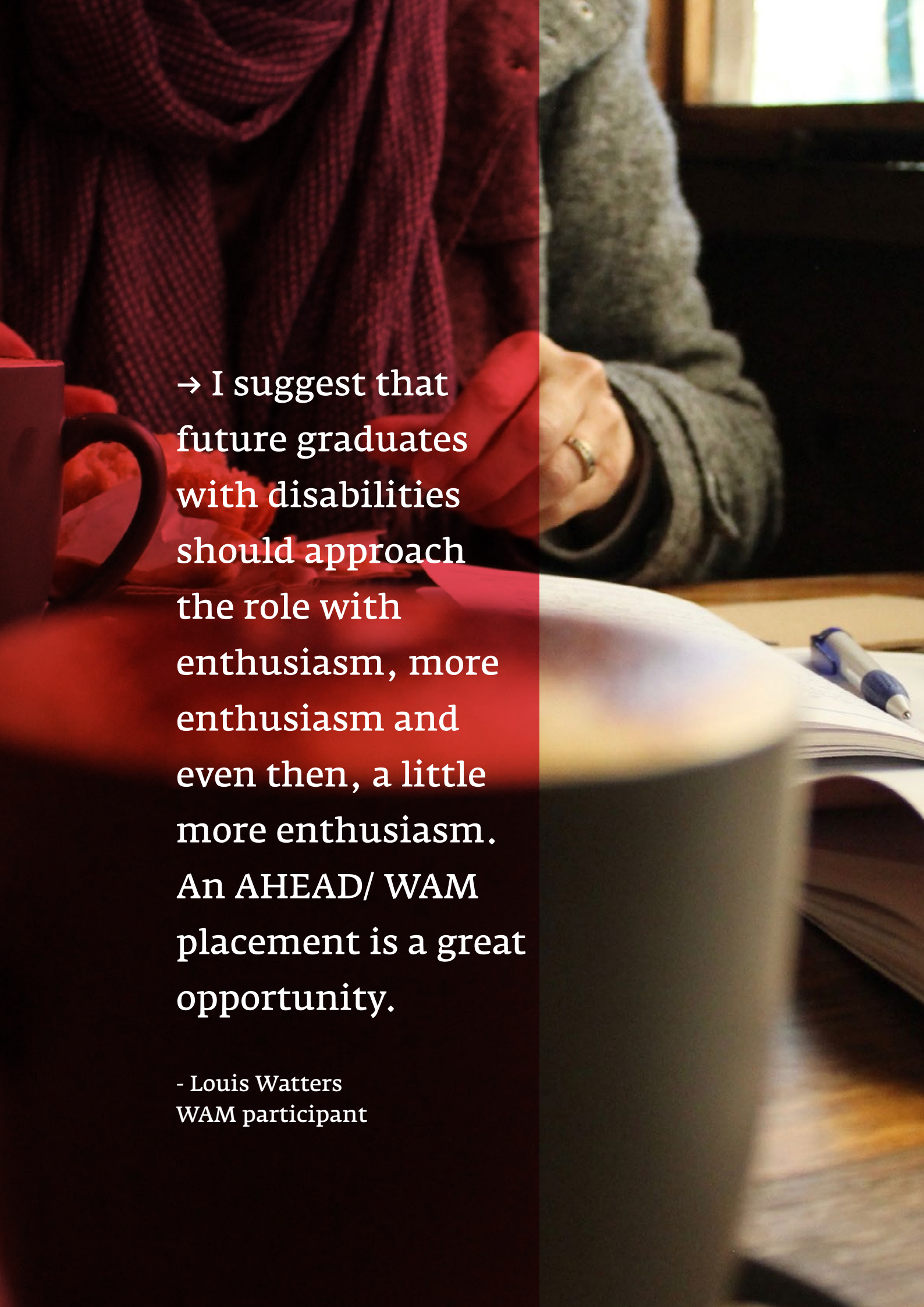
Mentoring
– a two way
learning process

Mentoring is a people-focused development process aimed at assisting the participant with the transition into the organisation. Every placed candidate on the WAM initiative is assigned a mentor within the workplace; someone who works in the same organisation but is not the mentee's direct line manager or supervisor. The mentor fundamentally acts as a sounding board for the mentee and also helps with social integration into the workplace. WAM is also managed as a learning process and reflection

on all learning is captured and shared with a wider network with a view to influencing positive change for graduates with disabilities and the workplace itself.

Relationships
– social
inclusion from
the bottom up

The essence of WAM is that all involved - employers, managers, mentors and graduates with disabilities - trust the process and, most especially, if by chance the placement does not work out, WAM has developed a process which allows either party to exit the placement with respect and dignity. It acknowledges that sometimes a placement may not work out for a variety of reasons but nonetheless enables re-engagement further down the line.

A person wearing a red, textured sweater is sitting at a desk. They are looking down at a laptop screen. On the desk, there are several sheets of paper, a blue pen, and a white mug. The background is slightly blurred, showing a window with light coming through. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

→ I suggest that future graduates with disabilities should approach the role with enthusiasm, more enthusiasm and even then, a little more enthusiasm. An AHEAD/ WAM placement is a great opportunity.

- Louis Watters
WAM participant

07

WAM and the Civil Service engagement – a snapshot

	Key Government initiatives	Action at Civil Service
2006	Census shows people with disabilities now make up 9.3% of the Irish population.	Mentoring and Disability Awareness Training delivered.
2007		Code of Practice for the Employment of People with a Disability in the Irish Civil Service (2007) Dublin, Department of Finance, Equality Unit.
2008		
2009		
2010		
2011	Census reports a 51% rise in the number of people having a disability. People with disabilities now make up 13% of the Irish population.	
2012		

AHEAD/WAM

First WAM placements in the Irish Civil Service.

Graduate's voice

Louis Watters

"While the journey has been tough at times..."

Steve Daunt

"Something happened, I grew into myself – I say that as someone who was turning 40."

AHEAD research indicates that students with disabilities are more likely to be studying humanities and arts than other students.

Bernard King

"Growing up on a farm I was never afraid to take the bull by the horns – WAM allowed me to enter the ring."

As the recession bites, AHEAD research indicates that the impact of cuts in funding is most definitely being felt by disability/access staff on the ground.

Anon

"I am a team player – I have to be."

AHEAD research highlights a decrease in the number of students with disabilities that have a sensory disability.

Kevin Stanley

"Ask people with disabilities themselves – they have something to add."

AHEAD research indicates that students with disabilities in full time courses (**4.7%**) is more than 5 times the rate in part time courses (**0.9%**). Only **3.7%** of students with disabilities study part time courses.

AHEAD research highlights clustering of certain categories of students with disabilities in certain subject areas e.g. students in the Asperger's/Autism category are 3 times as likely to study in the computing field as the average student.

Maeve Dermody

"I now know anyone can make mistakes."



07



Key Government initiatives

Action at Civil Service

2013

2014

2015

Higher Education Authority (HEA) (2015) National Plan for **Equity of Access** to Higher Education 2015-2019 HEA, Dublin.

The National Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024 - increase the quota for **3%** to **6%**.

Circular 12/2015 – S.I. No. 384 of 2015 - Public Service Management (Sick Leave) (Amendment) Regulations (2015) Dublin, The Stationery Office.

2016

Census - an **8%** rise in the number of people with disabilities in Ireland, now at over 640,000. People with disabilities now make up **13.5%** of the Irish population.

2017

Civil Service People Strategy -developed in line with the commitment in the Civil Service Renewal Plan to build strategic HR capability in the Civil Service. It sets the overarching strategic HR agenda for the Civil Service to 2020.

AHEAD/WAM

Graduate's voice

Brona Kearney

"The fact that I got a job in spite of my disability has made me more confident."

AHEAD statistics show that there are now over 10,000 students with disabilities in higher education representing over **5%** of the student population.

John Naughton

"The experience was a privilege."

Lisa Sheedy

Assistant Principal Officer Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

"There was support every step of the way and the demands were not overly onerous."

Review of the best practices and learning from the AHEAD WAM project in the Civil Service.

Rachel Naughton

"I realize I am one of the few."

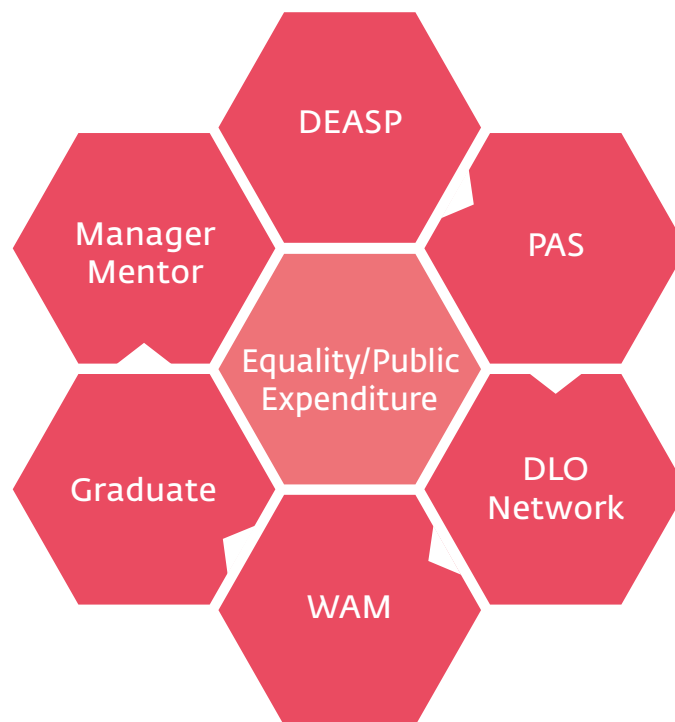
Linda Walsh

Linda Assistant Principal Officer - Revenue Commissioners "Taking part was hugely positive for myself, the graduate that worked with me and our colleagues."

Engagement with the Civil Service

The Civil Service signed up to participate in the AHEAD/WAM initiative from the start in 2005 and remains an enthusiastic partner. At that time there was a government target of a **3%** allocation of public service posts for people with disabilities. In 2002 a report commissioned on 'Employment & Career Progression of People with a Disability in the Irish Civil Service' resulted in a revision of the Civil Service Code of Practice. Shortly after followed the introduction of equality legislation, the Equality Act (2004) and the Disability Act (2005). This was around the time the Civil Service linked up to the AHEAD/WAM initiative and AHEAD then, as now, set out to assist the Civil Service to meet the challenges it faced in achieving its related aims and objectives. The government target will be increased from **3%** to **6%** as part of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for people with disabilities 2015-2024.

From the onset of the AHEAD/WAM initiative there was a concerted effort to engage with HR in each of the Civil Service organisations. A model of work evolved that broadened WAM's engagement beyond the Equality Unit in the Department of Finance to include working directly with HR staff, Disability Liaison Officers, managers and mentors. Although an informal practice, this was a step in the right direction that reinforced the foundation of a shared philosophy and a working relationship whereby building inclusion was a shared responsibility. The opportunity to formally identify this shared responsibility at this time is useful – it is timely that everyone understands they have a part to play and inclusion cannot be confined to HR or a selected few.



Above is a visual of the groundwork that established the philosophy of shared responsibility:

- Diversity training for managers & HR staff
- In-company awareness raising exercises
- Vetting of job specifications by the WAM team
- Management of all aspects of the recruitment process
- Matching job skills to graduate skills
- Intense 1-to-1 engagement with employer and graduate
- Conduct a Needs Assessment (NA) on every placed candidates
- Assign an in-company mentor and dedicated manager

Development of key relationships between AHEAD/WAM and the Civil Service

The WAM Programme quickly established itself as a practical approach that was well positioned to effect government and Civil Service policy on improving the employment prospects for people with disabilities. This approach could not have been achieved without the support from key departments and from participating managers, mentors and graduates themselves. In particular the buy-in from the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform, Public Appointments Services and HR managers were critical to the promotion of the WAM initiative Civil Service wide. The development of the Civil Service Disability Liaison Network in tandem with the implementation of the WAM initiative was to prove pivotal in building the Civil Service's capacity to create a culture of inclusion around WAM participants.

1. Department of Public Expenditure & Reform (DPER)

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has a central role in the development and roll out of HR policies for the Civil Service. The Civil Service People Strategy was launched in October 2017. The strategy was developed in line with the commitment in the Civil Service Renewal Plan to build strategic HR capability in the Civil Service. It sets the overarching strategic HR agenda for the Civil Service up to the year 2020.

One of the actions is to develop a new Diversity and Inclusion Policy that will help (A) address the public sector's duty to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and protect the human rights of Civil Servants, (B) build a Civil Service whose composition is reflective of Irish society and (C) ensure the value of a diverse workforce is recognised internally and externally.

DPER is part of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy Implementation Group. The Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities was launched in October, 2015 and the Minister for Justice and Equality has overall responsibility for the strategy. It sets out a ten year approach that, amongst other things, will ensure that people with disabilities, who could and want to work, are supported and enabled to do so. As part of the strategy, the public service employment target for people with disabilities will be increased incrementally from **3%** to **6%** by 2024.

The current **3%** target is set out in Section 47 of the Disability Act 2005. It requires that, unless there is a good reason for not doing so, more than **3%** of staff employed in public bodies, for which the relevant Minister is responsible, are people with a disability. The policy with regard to numbers of employees with a disability in the Civil Service comes within the remit of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. However each department and office is responsible for ensuring it meets the target.

The National Disability Authority (NDA) has a statutory role in monitoring employment of people with disabilities in the public sector, arising from Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005. In its latest Report on Compliance, the NDA reported that **4.5%** of staff employed in government departments reported a disability.

2. Public Appointments Services (PAS)

The Public Appointments Service (PAS) is the independent centralised recruitment, assessment and selection body for the Civil Service, Health Service, Local Authorities, the Garda Síochána, Prison Service and other public sector bodies. The work of PAS ranges from traditional large volume recruitment and selection competitions, administrative, technical and professional positions to tailored selection processes for senior professional and management positions. In addition PAS plays an important role in the implementation of Government policy on appointments to State Boards.

The Public Appointments Service and previously the Office of the Civil Service and Local Appointments Commission have a long history of recruiting people with disabilities. PAS has run specific recruitment campaigns targeting people with disabilities as well as integrating recruitment of people with disabilities into mainstream generalist campaigns for the Civil Service.

The Public Appointments Service offers a wide range of reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities. PAS has carried out extensive national and international benchmarking and has commissioned research to inform the allocation of accommodations. PAS has a Charter on Positive Supports for Candidates with Disabilities and has also developed a process with respect to reasonable accommodations.

The Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024 sets a target for the employment of people with disabilities in the Civil Service of **6%** so the PAS will actively support the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in achieving this strategic objective. The Department of Public Expenditure sets out HR policy for the Civil Service including recruitment policy. The Public Appointments Service is an independent body that carries out recruitment in line with the policy set out by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has set up the Disability Liaison Officers Network and manages the network on an ongoing basis.

The engagement between the Public Appointments Service and the DLO network occurs when individual candidates with disabilities require workplace accommodations. In addition, from time to time, PAS run workshops and presentations with the DLO network to share experience and to facilitate learning and development.

PAS has been engaged with WAM since the start of the relationship with the Civil Service. The Public Appointments Service worked with AHEAD in the design of a collaborative recruitment process. Specifically the Public Appointments Service carries out the interview process to identify candidates for the WAM Programme. To this end, PAS identify suitable interview board members, provides them with training to carry out the interview process and the interview board identifies suitable candidates for the WAM placements.

'I think the best advice I could give somebody is to talk to their potential employer or their employer if they are in employment. Our experience is that people will be very supportive if they can be. If they don't know they can't help'.

- Áine Gray, head of Assessment Services, PAS

3. The Disability Liaison Officers Network

The Civil Service proactively engaged with the AHEAD WAM initiative from the outset. The Civil Service recognised, from an early stage, that to support the inclusion of graduates with disabilities into the organisation would require expertise, knowledge and time. The role of Disability Liaison Officer (DLO), which evolved in parallel with the WAM Programme, was developed and was and continues to be a key contributor to its success. Having a network of DLOs working across all Civil Service organisations, as part of an organisational designated

work structure, is unique by Irish standards. The Disability Liaison Officers Network was established in April 2005 to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and best practice in relation to the employment of people with disabilities.

The DLO network are key players in the WAM graduates experience. Aside from welcoming the graduate and ensuring that they are orientated to the work place, they also ensure that work accommodations advised in the comprehensive Needs Assessment process carried out by AHEAD/WAM, are in place. Very often a DLO acts as a mentor to the WAM graduate unless they are located in another office.

Membership of the Network is made up of Disability Liaison Officers from each Government department and office. The Network meets to discuss and highlight activity in relation to the employment of persons with disabilities in the Civil Service which includes:

- arranging placements for AHEAD's WAM Programme
- the provision of reasonable accommodations in the workplace
- reporting on the **3%** target for the employment of people with disabilities in the Irish Civil Service
- participating in the National Job Shadow Day
- raising disability awareness in each department or office

The Network also produces an Annual Report that is submitted to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER).

→ I think the best advice I could give somebody is to talk to their potential employer, or their employer if they are in employment.

Our experience is that people will be very supportive if they can be. If they don't know they can't help.

- Áine Gray, Head of Assessment Services, PAS

09

Templates & practical tools

– Tools developed through WAM
engagement with the Civil Service

Example 1: Timeline & framework for WAM placements in the Civil Service

Action	Date for Completion	Revised Date	Actual Date
1 Create an Expression of Interest template (EOI) form.			
2 EOI form circulated to HR Managers and DLO Network by CSHR Policy.			
3 EOI forms returned directly to AHEAD (and cc to CSHR Policy).			
4 AHEAD will create a summary of individual job specifications and send to Public Appointments Service (PAS).			
5 AHEAD advertises Civil Service placements online following meeting with PAS and CSHR Policy re interview time-slot.			
6 Applications received & processed by AHEAD.			
7 Applications sent to Civil Service. Candidates selected and called to interview (Shortlisting may occur at this stage).			
8 Interviews held & results sent back to AHEAD.			
9 AHEAD creates panel for each job. Panel list & relevant applications will be sent to Dept. DLO who submitted the EOI. Unsuccessful at interview candidates notified by AHEAD.			
10 Dept., if desired, hold second round interviews and select candidate. Unsuccessful candidates notified by AHEAD.			
11 Mentors to be selected by each department.			
12 AHEAD to be informed of successful candidate and supplied with relevant line manager and mentor details.			
13 Needs Assessment for successful candidates carried out by AHEAD.			
14 Pre-placement training.			
15 Contracts signed between Civil Service & graduate.			
16 Placement begins & supports put in place.			
17 Ongoing Support.			
18 Evaluations.			

Example 2: Sample of accommodations provided

The following list is but an example of the variety of accommodations made - in itself is not conclusive. Accommodations continue to change as work demands and people change.

Communication facilitation examples

Irish Sign Language interpretation for any work related activities including performance reviews, interviews and training, IRIS is also facilitated, Speech-to-text STT translation, personal pagers for fire alarm, amplified telephone.

Assistive Technology examples

Assistive Technology for telephone, head set/hands free system for the telephone, iPhone with larger screen requested to text and view work e-mails, tablet/laptop, large monitor, desktop printer, ergonomic keyboard + cordless mouse, mini keyboard, central pointer, Assistive Technology licenses for JAWS, Kurzweil, Dragon, KNFB scanner/reader app for scanning and reading documents, scanner.

Training and awareness activity examples

General Disability Awareness Training for staff, Deaf awareness training for staff, training for staff for Evac Chair.

Office equipment examples

Ergonomic assessment of workplace by Occupational Therapist, modified office equipment, seating and furniture, foot adjustable footrest, desk-high pedestal, tambour unit converted, microdesk copyholder/writing slope - document holder over the keyboard, storage cupboard lowered in kitchen/canteen facilities, microwave lowered, kettle as the water boiler tap difficult to access for employee with manual dexterity problems.

Other accommodations examples

Accessible car-parking, accommodations to access the building independently, automated doors - push button to open doors, wheelchair accessible lift installed to allow access between floors, chair with arms to promote independent sit to stand transfers, door into accessible toilet made easier to open, weight of door reduced for wheelchair user, wall mounted mirror and wall mounted coat hook height accessible for a wheelchair user's bathroom, 1,500mm clear turning space for a wheelchair user in bathroom, special bin for medical waste disposal in bathroom, Evac Chair.

Work modification examples

Change to lighter duties, review of workplace duties with manager, single occupancy office, flexible working hours and work-sharing patterns, phased return to work, relocation.

Procedure examples

Personal Emergency Egress Plan (PEEP).

The WAM story

- The numbers

While the AHEAD WAM initiative started up in 2005 work placements did not commence till 2006. To date 528 graduates with disabilities have applied for a WAM internship with the Civil Service. Of this total 170 graduates succeeded in securing a WAM work placement up to the close of 2017.

The Civil Service WAM work placements for 2018 have been identified and the process of recruitment and selection is underway.

Yearly breakdown

Total of 170 WAM candidates successfully placed in the Civil Service since commencement of the WAM Civil Service Relationship

2005-2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
78 placements							16	17	17	24	18

17 early completions due to a combination of role mismatch, became ill during placement or not job ready. Two of this group went on to successfully complete a WAM placement at a later stage.

Cumulative total = 170 WAM candidates placed between 2006-2017

The above total of 170 WAM candidates are inclusive of all disabilities – the only criteria was that the applicant was a graduate at level 8.


Profile of the 170 placed

Mental Health	42	Multiple Disabilities	9
Physical	35	Significant Ongoing Illness	6
Specific Learning Difficulty	34	ADD/ADHD	5
Blind/Visually Impaired	22	Neurological/Speech	3
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	12	Asperger's/Autism	2

10

Profile of WAM placements by Civil Service department:

Department of Agriculture Food & the Marine		19
Department of Transport Sport & Tourism		7
Department of Children and Youth Affairs		5
Department of Defence		1
Department of Education & Skills	(4)	6
– Higher Education Authority	(2)	
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade		10
Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government		2
Department of Finance	(5)	38
– Office of the Revenue Commissioners	(33)	
Department of Health		5
Department of Justice & Equality	(8)	27
– JLER	(2)	
– Garda Síochána	(10)	
– Property Registration Authority	(3)	
– Irish Prison Service	(2)	
– ORAC	(2)	
Department of Public Expenditure & Reform		5
– OPW	(3)	
– State Laboratories	(2)	
Department of Rural and Community Development		1
Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection	(21)	23
– Pensions Ombudsman (was under aegis of this department at the time)	(2)	
Department of the Taoiseach	(5)	10
– CSO	(5)	
Houses of the Oireachtas	(2)	3
– Áras an Uachtaráin	(1)	
Office of the Ombudsman		4
Public Appointments Service		4
TOTAL		170



→ People, whether students or employees, need to feel they belong if their potential is to be realised

What happened next?

Where to after completion of WAM Civil Service Placement?

It is difficult to follow the career progression of graduates once they have completed a WAM placement and moved on. However the results of a survey of the graduates who participated in the WAM Programme from 2012-2016 (McGrotty, 2018), demonstrate the positive impact a WAM internship had on their career endeavours.

In the case of the Civil Service 49 graduates were contacted of which 38 responded. This response rate of **78%** approximately forms the sample survey on which the following information is based.

Breakdown of the responses from the Civil Service cohort of WAM graduate participants:

In employment as a direct result of WAM	79%
Seeking employment	10%
Returned to education	8%
Other	3%

Breakdown of the responses from the Civil Service cohort by type of options put to survey participants:

Breakdown	No. of respondents	Value
Still working in Civil Service – permanent role	8	21%
Extension of contract	7	18%
Employment in another company	15	40%
Still seeking career opportunities	4	10%
Returned to education	3	8%
Other (travelling, parenting etc.)	1	3%

The survey was carried out across the entire network of employers that engaged with the WAM Programme during that same five year period. 106 WAM graduates in total were contacted of which 82 responded giving an overall response rate of **77%** and on which the following information is based.

10

The following is a breakdown of the responses from the overall WAM graduates survey including the Civil Service cohort:

Breakdown	No. of respondents	Value
In employment as a direct result of WAM	63	77%
Returned to education	8	10%
Seeking employment	9	11%
Other	2	2%

→ 170 graduates succeeded in securing a WAM work placement in the Civil Service up to the close of 2017.

Leading the way

- Civil Service departments celebrate WAM



The Annual WAM Leader Awards are to celebrate and award companies & organisations who have supported the WAM initiative, hosted events and facilitated WAM placements over the previous funding year. Pictured below are the Civil Service DLOs receiving their WAM Leaders Award in 2017, 2016 and 2015. The Civil Service departments have won 78 awards from 2011 to 2017.

2017

- An Garda Síochána
- Central Statistics Office
- Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine
- Department of Rural & Community Affairs
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection
- Department of Transport, Tourism, Sport
- Office of the Revenue Commissioners
- Public Appointments Service

11

2016

- Agriculture, Food & the Marine
- Children & Youth Affairs
- Department of Justice & Equality
- Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection
- An Garda Síochána
- Higher Education Authority
- Office of the Revenue Commissioners

2015

- Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine
- Department of Children & Youth Affairs
- Department of Justice & Equality
- Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
- An Garda Síochána
- Central Statistics Office
- Irish Prison Service
- Office of Pensions Ombudsman
- Office of the Revenue Commissioners
- The Houses of the Oireachtas
- The Office of the Ombudsman



→ The fact that I got a job in spite of my disability has made me more confident

- Brona Kearney, WAM participant

The WAM story

- My Civil Service WAM Internship

A key component of this review was taking on board the views from everyone who was involved, but most importantly including the graduates who had experienced a WAM placement in the Civil Service and their managers.

Graduates and managers were invited to contribute and to lead the conversations at focus groups together with staff from across the Civil Service. Their thoughts and ambitions were found to be as relevant, as their experience.

To leverage the greatest learning and in order to provide context to the publication a selection of the stories have been presented.

The Graduates

→ Louis Watters (2006, 2011, 2017...)

Placement in: Food Division in the Department of Agriculture

Where am I now? I now work as an AP in the Legislative Drafting Unit of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's Legal Service.

I am responsible for ensuring that the legislation emanating from our department is legally sound.

I am originally from Dundalk, but have lived in Dublin for the past 18 years. I have a guide dog called Clover and am interested in oral history and song. In addition, I have a BA Degree in Journalism, Masters in Management, LLB in Irish Law and a Barrister at Law Degree.

Back in 2006, my WAM placement landed me in the Food Division of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. I had very little knowledge of what went on in government departments, and even less on agriculture. However, within weeks of the commencement of my WAM placement, I was gaining valuable information on both.

Personally, **I love a challenge and feel that it helps me rise to the occasion.** Having said that, looking back over the past ten years or so, I surprised myself how I managed to endure the long hours studying, the four evenings a week in lectures and giving up my weekends to attend the Kings Inns. Nevertheless, if I were to start over again, I would do the exact same thing. I loved the experience gained, and although **the journey was tough at times**, I wouldn't change a single thing. I met some fantastic people and made lifelong friends along the way. I suggest that future graduates with disabilities should approach the role with **enthusiasm**, more enthusiasm and even then, a little more enthusiasm. An AHEAD/WAM placement is a great **opportunity**. You can make some great contacts and should always remain open to the advice offered by those with years of experience in the Civil Service.



— Steve Daunt

→ Steve Daunt (2007)

BA MLitt in English from TCD

Placement: Executive officer in the Department of Justice & Equality

Where am I now? Newstalk FM as researcher/producer

I completed my masters in 1996. For the ten years after I completed small scale research projects within the voluntary sector but it wasn't enough. Then I saw the WAM job fair advertised and while **I thought the boat may have sailed**, I applied and was accepted. On August 2nd 2006 I walked into the Department of Justice not knowing what to expect. Then...

‘Something happened. I grew into myself... I say that as somebody who was turning 40 during the placement’.

If I knew then what I know now I would have laughed. This was the **first time** I worked in an office as part of a structured team. I loved it. I may only have been there for 6 months but I made the most of it.

I was impressed by the way they placed me within an area which **suited my strengths and yet challenged me**. It showed imagination. Yes, it was frustrating that I was only there for six months and yes, I would have loved to have applied for some of the jobs which were advertised internally but then who knows what would have happened if I had. It was still a great **opportunity** and it really did set me up for the last 10 years.

Fate played a very large role towards the end of the six months. Our section acted as a secretariat for the National Action Plan against Racism led by the Chair of Communicorp. My Principal Officer recommended me and I was a Newstalk employee 3 weeks after my placement ended! I can still remember the call offering me a job while I was shopping in Arnotts. How could I look calm taking that news... I don't think I screamed.

Fate? Was I in the right place at the right time? You just never know. My advice for future graduates with disabilities seeking a career in the Civil Service? Enjoy. Work hard. **Grasp any opportunity** that comes your way.



— Bernard King

→ Bernard King (2008)

BA Hons Business Studies from DCU

Placement in: Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport

Where am I now? Clerical Officer Department of Transport

I am a country Cavan lad. I achieved a BA Hons Business Studies. I'm an avid fan of independent travel and have trekked to 6 out of 7 continents.

'Growing up on a farm I was never afraid to take the bull by the horns. When it came to my career WAM allowed me to enter the ring.'

I went back to college to further my education when I realised that more qualified individuals have a **better opportunity**. I had also learned that a career in farming was not best suited to me due to my lack of sight.

I would like to see the Civil Service actively target graduates with disabilities from college. They can continue to lead the way in their development of **a diverse work force that reflects our society** as a whole. This in turn will **encourage** school goers with a disability that college is in fact **a viable option** and that they can gain **meaningful employment** from obtaining a degree. Something I did not realise at the time.

The Civil Service could also sell the positive opportunities a placement can provide – it is about providing meaningful duties for a candidate with a disability allowing them to prove their full potential. It is not just scanning and tea making! A placement encourages graduates with disabilities to develop experiences in a way they never would have – in areas outside of their graduate qualification - this is of **benefit** to all parties.

College life for me was a wonderful way to broaden my experiences, social, sporting and cultural. Opportunities that otherwise would not have been as widely available. The Civil Service has offered me opportunities to advance my career, to become a part of society and to develop independence in more than monetary terms.

What I'm trying to say is the Civil Service can be an influencer – for people with disabilities all the way back to school. They can be a positive influencer in the work market. And when results start to show (as I believe they already are) other people will take note. Private sector will take note and that can only be good for society, one in which we are all a part.

→ Anonymous (2009)

Placement in: Dublin

Where am I now? Full time Civil Servant

'The Civil Service has inspired me to adapt successfully to changing situations and environments'

My AHEAD/ WAM placement pointed me in the right direction and the **support & mentoring** that was provided encouraged me to work confidently within a group. I then excelled in my career development. Armoured with my education and experience I was able to apply my interpersonal and technical skills. My **confidence** increased during my WAM placement to demonstrate my achievements, abilities, values and to be aware of my weaknesses too. Discretion and support were the key factors to my success – it meant that I was both **supported** while I also felt part of the team and participated effectively as a member of the team which inspired my confidence. I was provided with the support I needed to complete my working duties and assigned a mentor who I met on a fortnightly basis. I am a team player – I have to be able to express my ideas clearly and confidently and gather information systematically to establish facts and principles. If I needed anything I had my mentor to organise or acquire it for me. This building rapport leads to a better working environment.

In my current job role, I continue to be exposed to a wide variety of **interesting challenges**. I still receive support which focuses me on my day to day work activities. The combination of my working relationship with my manager and work colleagues, the continuous personal & professional development that is part of the Civil Service culture means that I find the Civil Service to be an organisation with talented people that work effectively and efficiently together. My work performance is measured on a continual basis through the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) which keeps me on track! Hence, I know I am contributing in a meaningful way. The advice I would give to the Civil Service is to **keep an open mind**, everyone has a talent, but each of us learn in different ways. It is this **individualism that can add value** within the team environment bringing the team closer together, increasing morale and productivity.

In order for me to achieve my potential, I need to be a team player. I, like others, offer a different range of skill sets and this is what equips me in my working life within the Civil Service. Each day is both exciting, rewarding and challenging. I am forever grateful to the WAM Programme as WAM was my stepping stones (first steps) into my professional career.



— Kevin Stanley

→ Kevin Stanley (2010)

BA in Community Studies and MLitt Applied Social Studies

Placement in: Property Registration Authority Ireland

Where am I now? I am now working in the HSE National Human Resources Division as a member of the core Diversity, Equality and Inclusion group

My passion includes sports, walking, history and genealogy. I completed an 'introduction to genealogy', and am working towards being an amateur genealogist. I am also a community activist for over 30 years, mainly advocating for the deaf community. I am born-deaf and grew up with real life experience facing marginalisation and exclusion - that is not just confined to deaf people but also to other socially excluded disadvantageous groups.

'Ask the people with disabilities themselves – they also have something to add'

There is no doubt that people with disabilities **have the ability** to perform in any workplace, providing they have the qualifications, experience and/or skills and meet the work criteria. Employers need to look beyond disability. They need to see that disabilities are **not always barriers**. They are people first and should **not** always **be defined** by their disability. People with disabilities can **go beyond** their work and become **a force** to be reckoned with.

On the other hand people with disabilities need to be true to themselves. They do not have to try to disguise or mask their disability.

Focus on who you are. Demonstrate what you can do. **Do not be afraid** of challenges. Most importantly make sure you are included in the workplace and advise employers what you need and want. Do not let anyone tell you your disability is an issue.

The Civil Service need to see graduates with disabilities as some of **their most valuable employees**. There should be **career pathways** towards full time and permanent options after successful placements. It is a shame that graduates leave with their skills and talents after 6 months - it is a wasted and missed opportunity. Not just for themselves but also for the Civil Service.

In addition, people with disabilities should be **asked** to provide their **own ideas** on how to improve the Civil Service workplace and be supportive in developing future ideas.

→ Maeve Dermody (2012)

BA in Accounting & Finance

Placement: Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine

Where am I now? Office of the Revenue Commissioners

'I now know not to worry so much - that anyone can make mistakes, even after 20 years of service!.'

Starting my career with WAM had given me the **confidence** to seek further work opportunities – and I have had many. I worked in a variety of places over 5 years before my employment in the Civil Service. But I always knew I wanted to return and work in the same section. I enjoyed my **experiences** with the Department of Agriculture so much!

The most difficult thing I find at work is communicating with internal and external people using the telephone – communicating by email is easier for me. And yet I receive so many calls requesting to speak to me! With the support and understanding of my colleagues, email communication is encouraged and this has shown me that **people can adapt** to my needs.

I now know that it is more important to relax, learn and enjoy the experience of working while building relationships with colleagues. I would advise other graduates to consider working with the Civil Service. It is such a positive experience, you make memories and friends - it was my best workplace.



— Maeve Dermody



→ Brona Kearney (2013)

BA (Hons) in Accounting & Masters in Accounting Msc.

Placement in: Office of the Revenue Commissioners

Where am I now? Full time Civil Servant,
Office of the Revenue Commissioners

'The fact that I got a job in spite of my disability has made me more confident'

Before joining the Civil Service I had my degree and Masters. I have since completed a Diploma in Applied Taxation with the University of Limerick and my professional accountancy exams (Association of Certified Chartered Accountants – ACCA). I hope to continue to work with Revenue for the foreseeable future and to do my professional tax exams (AITI).

I have completed some professional exams and while they assist me greatly in my work, I also know that it means I could work for myself in the future – **I now have a career plan**. This plan only came about as a result of my placement with the WAM program. I now have the **knowledge, focus and confidence** to believe I can achieve this.

When I say **confidence** I mean that this placement was the first real job I got on my own, and from dealings in work with colleagues, mentors, tax payers and tax agents I have learned hugely. I also learned that if I found work difficult sometimes there was nothing wrong with asking for help.

Now that I am a full time Civil Servant I can do a 4 day week for health reasons. This has made my life much easier. I would recommend that graduates know they can **ask** for this **flexibility of work**.

The Civil Service might also **reconsider** the current **recruitment** process - it is not always fair for those of us with disabilities. Due to coordination and speed difficulties the online aptitude tests can be almost impossible – could there be an alternative for the few of us that need it?

→ John Naughton (2014)

Computer Science Graduate

Placement: Executive Officer in the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine

Where am I now? A&L Goodbody solicitors

The experience of working in a large and busy department with a variety of knowledgeable staff **opened up so many doors to me**. I gained very valuable experience, **it now means** that employers look on me in an extremely **positive** light.

Many, many people with disabilities want opportunities but few get them. I learned **no one cares about your weaknesses**; they only care about what you can do, what you can bring, what you can learn. Future graduates with disabilities **need to believe** that they are equal and they are as good if not better than anyone else.





→ The experience
was a privilege.

- John Naughton

→ Rachel Naughton (2016) (Front Cover)

Law (BCL), UCD

Placement in: Legal Services, An Garda Síochána

Where am I now? Legal Services, An Garda Síochána

‘While I realise I am one of the very few, I should not feel any different.’

I now realise I should have relaxed more, **worried less** and enjoyed the experience. I should not see myself as any different to anyone else, even in an organisation where the number of disabled employees is minimal. Until the overall recruitment process is more suitably adapted for those with disabilities and made more job specific, the WAM Programme should be used more as an entry route for graduates with disabilities. It offers the **opportunity** to graduates with disabilities to prove they have the ability to do the job – and do it well. The numbers of successful candidates with disabilities achieving successful recruitment is unacceptably low. The dream would be that the right people would get through organically and there would be no need for the AHEAD/WAM route – but this is not realistic. The alternative is to have a mechanism in place for people to be kept – it is illogical and unfair on those with disabilities who have proved their ability to do the job that they have to go.

The **recruitment** process at all stages of the Civil Service could be more **flexible** (while still fair) to suit not just **individual needs** of people with

disabilities, but everyone. The current appointment process focuses more on interview and aptitude testing. I think **a more flexible approach** to assess 'ability on the job' would increase the numbers of people with disabilities entering and progressing through the Civil Service - this could only make it easier for everybody. There would be better work matching and for some of us - you would **no longer be the odd one out**.

The Managers - What they have to say

→ Lisa Sheedy (2015)

Assistant Principal Officer with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

'There was support every step of the way and the demands were not overly onerous.'

I currently work in an Internal Control role specifically in the area of CE Schemes Compliance.

We first became involved in WAM in 2014. Our first WAM participant completed a very **successful** innovation project. It was something that we had long intended to accomplish and which had the potential to generate good outcomes for the department but which was just not possible to undertake with the regular staffing allocation. We were so pleased with the outcome of our first placement that we found it easy to continue from there.

There were challenges. The key to overcoming them was not to be afraid to identify them early and to look for support in dealing with them. **Nobody benefits if nothing is done** when issues need to be addressed. In my case, I found AHEAD to be open to accepting that challenges can and do occur and I found them faultless when it came to supporting us in dealing with the unforeseen challenges that arose. While it was immediately worth it for us in that we were able to assign project work to a competent, willing, extra pair of hands, there was also the satisfaction when our WAM placements progressed into full time employment after they left us. The WAM participants benefited from the on the job mentoring and support and it was great to have the opportunity to support and encourage a newcomer/returner to the world of work in this way.

The AHEAD/WAM Programme has given us real benefits. It has contributed to the development of our existing staff in mentoring and support roles and has produced quantifiable results in the work that we do. AHEAD is available to provide advice and support if challenges arise and also to provide Disability Awareness and Mentoring training for staff if required. Support is available and the benefits of the programme far outweigh any accommodations that need to be made. AHEAD/WAM and its participants have been **a marvellous asset** to our office over the past number of years.

→ Linda Walsh

Assistant Principal Officer in the Revenue Commissioners, with responsibility for Customs legislation

‘Taking part was hugely positive for myself, the graduate that worked with me and our colleagues.’

I first heard about the WAM program in early 2016 and applied to take part for the 2016 - 2017 cycle as a manager. I was informed that there was a suitable graduate for my work area on the PAS panel in the summer of 2016 and he started work that August. The graduate that was assigned to me was excellent and a huge asset to our branch – we were very sorry to see him go at the end of his contract.

The team that run the program provide invaluable support and any time I had a query or needed assistance with something I got a response immediately. There are **benefits** to your immediate work area, in terms of getting a graduate with a relevant skill set, but there are also **benefits** beyond your own unit/branch in terms of challenging perceptions and bias and promoting equality which is important for any manager in the Civil Service. My overall experience with AHEAD/WAM was hugely positive.

As with any recruitment process, there were challenges but nothing that could not be managed. **Good communication** and **negotiation** skills were required and this was with a third party organisation responsible for some aspects of building management and accessibility.

The WAM graduate was a wheelchair user and I believe that his placement **raised awareness** around accessibility in a historical building, while there is still room for improvement.

I am very proud of the graduates that were placed with me in Revenue. I am just waiting on the call to say that one has got a permanent job in the Civil Service, which I am very optimistic will happen soon. I was also very proud to feature a former WAM graduate who secured permanent employment in Revenue in the 2016 Annual Report both highlighting the program and her achievements personally and professionally.

I wish you all congratulations on reaching this milestone in terms of working with the Civil Service and am sure that it will continue and get even better in years to come.

The mentors

As afore mentioned an integral part of the WAM program are the relationships WAM develops – and the mentors are the brokers for many of these relationships in the workplace.

Mentoring is structured and involves the graduate, the mentor and the manager in that they support the relationship. The majority of those involved in previous rounds of WAM found the mentoring process not only to be beneficial but worthy of wider application.

In 2016/2017 of the mentors surveyed:

- **100%** of mentors agreed they would become a mentor again
- **93%** said mentoring had benefited themselves
- **75%** said it benefited the company
- **100%** saying it benefited the mentee

Furthermore they stated:

In 2016/2017

“This particular programme complements other mentoring programmes in which I am involved. The **key personal learning** point was in respect of the challenges some people have to overcome in regard to disabilities and how they think people see them”. - *Office of the Revenue Commissioners*

“The notion of dealing with a person with a disability is **not as daunting** as I would have thought beforehand.” - *Office of the Revenue Commissioners*

→ It showed me how someone with a serious disability could adapt to circumstances, do an excellent job and live an almost normal, fulfilling life

- Mentor statement

In 2015/2016

“While I believe that I have informally been a mentor (and mentee) to colleagues throughout my career in the Civil Service, my participation in the programme placed **more structure around my idea of mentoring, and this is now the model that I will follow in future** informal mentoring of colleagues.” - *Department of Justice & Equality*

“**Small adjustments** to a working environment can make a huge difference to a person’s working life (e.g. turning off a light/providing a lamp). Everyone needs a mentor regardless of ability or disability. We can all learn from each other and we all need help at times. When you get to know a person, you forget that they have a ‘disability’. People make comments (often unintentional) and prejudge people who they perceive as being different.” - *Higher Education Authority*

In 2014/2015

“I learned that everyone deserves a chance at employment; disabilities are not always obvious and need not impact on a person’s ability to do a good job.” - *Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine*

“Everyone brings new things with them and the mentee who was assigned to me had a lot of experience in other workplaces and we both benefited for our experiences.” - *Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection*

Connecting the dots...

- Make the 'informal' the 'formal' to leverage Best Practice

The Comprehensive **Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities** 2015-2024 simply states its strategic vision as - people with disabilities can get a job and enjoy a rewarding career. Listed as key values underpinning the strategy are the provision of appropriate supports to maximise potential, the need for a cross departmental support system and the building of inclusion into mainstream employment practices. Listed as key priorities are the building of skills and capacity and the provision of co-ordinated and seamless supports.

The AHEAD WAM initiative, which was up and running in 2006, predates the implementation of this Comprehensive Employment Strategy but it set out to achieve, albeit on a much smaller scale, the same vision. The approach WAM adopted to achieve this vision was to design a programme based on direct engagement with participating graduates and staff representatives alike. Through the mechanism of a mentored internship, participating managers and mentors are facilitated by the AHEAD WAM team to address arising issues on a solution basis from recruitment to completion of placement. Key to the AHEAD WAM approach is collaboration and shared learning. All of the key components of the AHEAD WAM approach are reflected in the Comprehensive Employment Strategy as important attributes to develop for the inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace. The Civil Service, through its consistent buy-in to the WAM initiative over the years, has made a significant contribution to assisting graduates with disabilities make the transition from education to employment. The experiences of participating graduates recorded here are proof of this. AHEAD congratulates whole heartedly the Civil Service on the strides it has made within the WAM initiative. Looking to the future AHEAD believes that the innovative practices that have developed from the collaboration with AHEAD can support the development of an inclusive culture across the whole of the Civil Service and strengthen the capacity of the Civil Service to support the realisation of the vision of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy.

What are the building blocks for developing inclusion in the workplace?

The AHEAD WAM initiative takes a grass roots solution based approach to issues arising from the direct engagement of the key stakeholders (DPER, PAS, HR, DLO, managers, mentors, participating WAM graduates) and the AHEAD WAM team. The results from this consultative process generates a first-hand understanding of the barriers that people with disabilities encounter in the work environs of the Civil Service.

The key learning components from the AHEAD Civil Service partnership

1. Disability knowledge has its place (and time)

The Disability Liaison Officers Network – a key part of the inclusive framework

Disability Liaison Officers (DLOs) are the first point of contact for the AHEAD WAM team, participating Civil Service managers and mentors. DLOs contact departments across the Civil Service regarding participating in the AHEAD WAM initiative. Interested departments complete an 'Expression of Interest' (EOI) form and return them to the DLOs who then liaise with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform regarding the processing of these EOIs. It is through the mechanism of EOIs that DLOs source WAM internships. Once internships are identified and agreed they are advertised and circulated to the AHEAD WAM graduate database.

The introduction of the Disability Liaison Officers Network by the Civil Service in the early days of the AHEAD WAM initiative was and continues to be key to supporting the integration of staff with disabilities. The many inclusive practices that were implemented at departmental level were driven by the DLO Network. Many of the WAM participants taking part in this review specifically acknowledged the quality of accommodations/support they received from the Civil Service. The Civil Service, in creating the DLO Network, began the process of exploring how best to integrate staff with disabilities into the Civil Service organisation and over the years the Network has built up a body of expertise and a deeper understanding of 'inclusion' in the Civil Service environment. AHEAD acknowledges the role of the DLO Network as unique and essential to the development of organisational inclusive practices, and as such, recognises their role as 'drivers of change' key to the success of the WAM initiative in the Civil Service and a valuable source to inform future development of inclusive practices across the organisation.

Listed below are just some of the activities that the DLO Network routinely carry out while engaging in the WAM initiative in their role as Disability Liaison Officers that give insight into the significance of the their role in building a body of knowledge and practical know-how.

Through their participation in WAM the DLO:

- collaborates with Public Appointments Service (PAS), participating

managers, mentors and WAM graduates.

- supports the induction and orientation of WAM graduates participants from day 1.
- deals with everyday concerns and issues that arise in the course of integrating WAM participants into mainstream work placements and from the search for practical everyday responses and solutions.
- shares expertise and the development of knowledge through the DLO Network forum which meets on a regular basis.
- collaborates on the development of policies and procedures for the inclusion of staff with disabilities Civil Service wide.
- collaborates and liaises with the AHEAD WAM team.
- participates in AHEAD equality awareness training.
- participates in creating inclusive work place training.

2. Take an inclusive approach from the beginning – be open and willing to adapt

As outlined in this review the Public Appointments Services (PAS) is the centralised recruitment, assessment and selection body for the Civil Service. Applications received by AHEAD WAM in response to the promotion of Civil Service WAM internships are forwarded to PAS along with interview accommodations, if required. PAS conducts the screening and interviewing of WAM candidates and facilitates the provision of requested accommodations. Successful applicants are placed on a panel from where they are matched to placements when they become available. Every WAM graduate placed must undertake a WAM Needs Assessment.

At this stage two themes emerging consistently over the years were the management of disclosure of disability and the identification of accommodation by way of the NA process.

Disclosure of disability – What is the point in telling? What is the point in knowing?

Disclosure of disability is a recurring theme for employers and graduates alike when discussing access to employment. From AHEAD's experience it is not as contentious an issue as it was at the start of the WAM project but it remains a complex issue. Disclosure is embedded in almost all aspects of the WAM process from first point of contact through to interview accommodations, selection process, conducting a WAM Needs Assessment and through to the place of work. The following is an overview of some of the central tenets at the heart of disclosure of disability in the workplace.

From a graduate's perspectives it raises questions like:

Why should
I tell?

What should
I say?

When should
I say it?

From an employer's perspective it begs questions like:

Why not tell?
– I need to
know

What do I
need to know?

Why do I need
to know?

Do I need to
know at all?

Disclosure is also covered in Irish equality legislation. The parameters therein are broad. They refer to the responsibility on the person with a disability to disclose should they need an accommodation, but equally make clear the employer's responsibility to foster disclosure by creating the space that make it possible to disclose. AHEAD's experience informs us that disclosure is not straightforward. AHEAD is aware of graduates with disabilities who make the decision not to disclose either in education or in the workplace. There are students who decide to disclose to disability support services in education but take the decision not to disclose in the employment setting or decide to disclose only on occasions. Yet without disclosure a person with a disability cannot expect to be provided with an accommodation, if required. Disclosure is covered through the WAM Needs Assessment process as detailed below. What has become very clear to AHEAD over the years is that disclosure of disability is not straightforward and continues to be personal and complex.

14

In the Civil Service disclosure of disability is invited by Public Appointments Service (PAS).

- In recent years PAS has changed its approach to disclosure and as a result welcomes and invites disclosure from people with disabilities as they engage with them.
- PAS invites disclosure, providing interview accommodations and assessment along with the provision of accessible information to applicants at all stages of the recruitment process.
- Many of the practices and policies adopted by the PAS in relation to accommodating the recruitment of people with disabilities at the initial stages of recruitment are in line with best practices.



Take note

- A significant number of WAM graduates that engaged with the Civil Service had multiple disabilities and it became apparent that in many cases they adopted the practice of disclosing their 'primary disability', as is the norm in the education system when seeking an accommodation.
- In education it is the diagnosis that prompts resources and accommodations.
- In the workplace a simple and open conversation can enable the provision of accommodations.
- This difference in approach between the education and work environs should be considered as policies and practices around disclosure are developed and/or made effective in the workplace.
- WAM found that the secondary disability was the conversation that needed to be had to ensure a successful placement. A graduate's self-assessment of what they need in the work environment may be at odds with what worked for them in the education environment.

Needs Assessment (NA) - what is the process?

Employment equality legislation, namely the Employment Equality Acts 1998 - 2015, means that employers have a legal obligation to ensure that a potential employee or staff member is given the same opportunities as any other person in the workplace, which includes putting in place reasonable accommodations where necessary to give equality of access and opportunity. However, these accommodations must not impose a “disproportionate burden” on the employer. This can mean either monetary cost or time.

The identification of what is needed is, of itself, an expertise. A Needs Assessment (NA) is a structured process which identifies any accommodations or adjustments an employee may require in order to undertake all/some core aspects of a job.

- A NA is a systematic procedure for the collection of information upon which to base an accurate description of the support requirements of an individual.
- A NA is NOT part of the recruitment process. Ideally it should be utilized after the recruitment and selection process.
- A NA is not designed to ‘prepare’ an employer/company to take on a person with a disability – its purpose is to identify what reasonable accommodations, (adjustments/supports/equipment), if any, a staff member with a disability may require in order to undertake the core tasks of their role.
- The NA process is aimed at supporting the HR and management functions in addressing the support and accommodation needs of employees and new recruits.
- The NA is a ‘snapshot in time’ and can be revisited as and when required.

14

Every graduate placed with an employer on The WAM Programme undertakes an assessment of need, preferably prior to the starting of their placement or within the first month of undertaking their role. The WAM Programme NA terms and conditions states:

“The offer of a WAM work placement is subject to the satisfactory completion of the WAM Needs Assessment process and equally to the capacity of the participating employer to reasonably provide the accommodation(s) or support(s) identified by the NA process – so that the implementation of these supports does not represent a ‘disproportionate burden’ for the employer under the terms of the Employment Equality Acts 1998 – 2015.”



Take Note

- Not all WAM participants will seek or require an accommodation.
- Many accommodations recommended are simple adjustments to work or the immediate work environment that are easily implemented and cost effective.
- Assistive Technology is making its presence felt and what may once have been a costly ‘add-on’ can now be a personal device that engages with the work environment in a professional and non-intrusive manner.
- Assistive Technology is not fixed and is ever evolving. Keeping apace is essential.
- Flexibility in the workplace is gaining traction and is viewed as of benefit to all employees. However, where flexibility is a disability related accommodation it must be understood that this is different, as its provision will be absolutely necessary to the person’s ability to undertake their role.
- Graduates progressing to the workplace are more often experts in what works for them. All that is needed at times is to consult.
- Remember the NA is a ‘snapshot in time’ and can be revisited as and when required.

3. Think mentoring – it benefits the ORGANISATION, MENTORS, & MENTEES

Mentoring systems are often applied when a person is transitioning from one space to another, such as when someone is moving from a college campus environment to the workplace. It can be a difficult challenge for many and in the case of graduates with a disability, they face a greater number of barriers in accessing the mainstream workplace than most. A good mentor can play a big part in helping a graduate with a disability to successfully adapt and thrive in a new work environment.

The AHEAD WAM initiative is a paid mentored work placement programme for graduates with disabilities. Every participating graduate is allocated an in-house mentor which is not their line manager. It is a key component of the WAM initiative and it has proven to be highly appreciated by both participating graduates and employers. The WAM mentoring model has developed over the years and is now a five section E-Learning course which can be accessed by signed up mentors with ease from the own work stations. It is a comprehensive course covering every aspect of their engagement in mentoring from first greeting with the mentee to closure and moving on.

A WAM mentor:

- undergoes training.
- supports and acts as a role model.
- uses their communications skills to advocate on behalf of their mentee.
- fosters goal setting and individual development.
- helps their mentee to settle in and understand the organisational culture.

Having a mentoring system in place in an organisation provides the opportunity to:

- improve communications throughout the organisation.
- develop management skills and build capacity.
- disability proof policies and practices.
- better integrate new employees.
- improve job satisfaction, morale and commitment.
- access a broader pool of talent.
- avail of equality training for staff.



Take Note

- The WAM mentoring relationship exists within the confines of the AHEAD WAM initiative and covers the duration of the placement.
- The WAM mentoring relationship compliments the role of the participating manager and does not interfere with that role in any way nor compromises the Manager/WAM internship work relationship.

Full details are available at www.AHEAD.ie/wam



→ All employees need to have an understanding of how the organisation embraces diversity; an understanding of its core values and how employees are expected to behave.

15

Going forward

As the Civil Service focuses on increasing participation rates from **3%** to **6%** and higher there is a chance to explore opportunities that would support the Civil Service in this mission. The following are ideas, thoughts, suggestions that arose from the discussion with the review focus group and are put forward here for consideration.

- Capture the overall figures and experiences at recruitment – from application to placement on an ongoing basis – and compare them to national trends.
- Review the Civil Service disability policy with regard to progression of people with disabilities in the Civil Service system.
- Review the part-time nature of the Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) role giving the growing diversity in the graduate and employee populations.
- Recognise the DLO Network as a valuable tool in influencing cultural change as it facilitates the sharing of expertise in an informal way and encourages peer-to-peer learning.
- Encourage the allocation of time and space for discussion and encourage the promotion of events that will energise and raise awareness.
- Examples - Organise:
 - Team Talks' style get-togethers on recurring issues
 - Meet & Eat events (over lunch)
 - Walk and Talk in small groups
- Continue to develop and maintain links and partnerships with external agencies.

- Consider work placement opportunities at all levels of the Civil Service.
- Consider work placement as an alternative recruitment process for people with disabilities.
- Continue the WAM initiative with the Civil Service, with the objective of building its knowledge base on inclusive workplaces.
- Support the 'inclusion agenda'; working with all who engage in the development of inclusive practices.

In conclusion

AHEAD is proud of its long-standing relationship with the Civil Service and will continue, as part of its vision of a future where 'Graduates with a Disability can Succeed', to engage with the Civil Service.

AHEAD is well aware that 'diversity in the workplace' is a hot topic and that the term 'diversity' is widely applied to cover all staff employed, irrespective of their gender, race, religious beliefs and/or disability. There are many reasons why diversity is a burning issue; the constant change in the make-up of Irish society in recent years, the growing diversity in the student population and the introduction of related equality legislation and globalisation. Such persistent and rapid change is, by its nature, demanding and challenging.

The development of inclusive cultures across organisations is a mighty undertaking for any institution or employer, big or small. Over the last 30 years AHEAD has built up expertise and know how around the inclusion

of students/graduates with disabilities in education and employment. AHEAD has learned from its experience that diversity without inclusion may prove counter-productive. The real challenge in succeeding to the development of inclusion, is to recognise that sustainable outcomes are not, nor can they be, the sole responsibility of any one person or unit such as the Disability Liaison Officers Network. All employees need to have an understanding of how the organisation embraces diversity; an understanding of its core values and how employees are expected to behave. The inclusive workplace requires that each and every one of us must play our part and this cannot be left to chance. For some it may simply mean the adoption of some new practices. For others it may be about an increased awareness of communication practices and work behaviours. And for the few 'Managing Disability' it will be a key component to their roles.

An integral add-on to the above listed ideas for consideration and an essential building block for the development of an inclusive framework is the concept of 'shared responsibility'. In the context of the WAM Programme the concept of 'shared responsibility' refers to the requirement that all employees need to have an understanding of how the organisation embraces disability. AHEAD would contend that if organisations want to incorporate disability as part of the diversity agenda, if they genuinely seek to value the different considerations and be inclusive, they need to appreciate that 'disability' needs its own space and expertise.

A person is sitting on a concrete ledge. They are wearing a yellow knitted sweater, black leggings, and white sneakers. A red backpack with a yellow strap is slung over their shoulder. The background is a grey concrete wall with circular patterns. The foreground is a red surface.

→ AHEAD /WAM
can continue to
build on their
knowledge base
and together with
graduates with
disabilities and the
Civil Service deliver
practical advice
and training.

16 Bibliography

AHEAD. (1994). Survey on the Participation Rates of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education for the Academic Year 1993/94. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

AHEAD. (2004). Survey on Participation Rates of and Provision for Students with Disabilities in Higher Education for the Academic Year 1998/99. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

AHEAD. (2007). Survey on the Participation Rates of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education for the Academic Year 2005/2006. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

AHEAD. (2007). WAM Employer Toolkit: Tips, Tools and Guidelines. Retrieved on 2 Oct 2018 from <https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/shop/pay/WAMEmployerToolkit.pdf>

AHEAD & TNS MRBI (2008) Employing Graduates with Disabilities: A Survey of 300 Businesses in Ireland. Retrieved on 2 Oct 2018 <https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/shop/free/EmployingGraduateswithDisabilities.pdf>

AHEAD, (2008) Workplace Attitudes to Graduates with Disabilities: Findings and Recommendations Dublin: AHEAD.

AHEAD. (2009). Survey on the Participation Rates of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education for the Academic Year 2008/2009. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

AHEAD. (2010). Survey on the Participation Rates of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education for the Academic Year 2009/2010. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

AHEAD. (2011). Survey on the Participation Rates of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education for the Academic Year 2010/2011. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

AHEAD. (2012). Number of Students with Disabilities Studying in Higher Education in Ireland 2011/12. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

AHEAD. (2013). Number of Students with Disabilities Studying in Higher Education in Ireland 2012/13. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

AHEAD. (2014). Number of Students with Disabilities Studying in Higher Education in Ireland 2013/14. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

AHEAD (2015). Number of Students with Disabilities Studying in Higher Education in Ireland 2014/15. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

AHEAD. (2016). Number of Students with Disabilities Studying in Higher Education in Ireland 2015/16. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

AHEAD. (2018). The Link Network. Retrieved 2 Oct 2018 <https://www.ahead.ie/link>

- Byrne, J.P. & Ring, F. (2009). *Demystifying Disability In The Workplace*. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.
- Byrne, J.P. (2007). *Workplace Attitudes to Graduates with Disabilities: Findings + Recommendations*. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press. Retrieved on 2 Oct 2018 from https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/shop/pay/EQUALWAM_0507WorkplaceAttitudesToGraduatesWithDisabilities.pdf
- Bourke, N. (2007) *Disability Liaison Officer Annual Report*. Retrieved 2 October 2018 from per.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/DLORep.pdf
- Central Statistics Office, Ireland <https://www.cso.ie/>
- Civil Service Equality Unit (2004). *Circular 18/2004:- Career Progression of People with a Disability in the Irish Civil Service* Retrieved 2 October 2018 from <https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/finance/2004/18.pdf>
- Department of Finance. (2007). *Code of Practice for the Employment of People with a Disability in the Irish Civil Service*. Dublin: Stationery Office.
- Department of Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform. (2017). *People Strategy for the Civil Service 2017-2020*. Dublin: Civil Service HR Division, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. Retrieved 2 Oct 2018 from <https://hr.per.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/People-Strategy-for-the-Civil-Service-2017-2020.pdf>
- Government of Ireland. (1997). *Universities Act*. Dublin: Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland. (1998). *Education Act*. Dublin: Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland. (2000). *Equal Status Act*. Dublin: Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland. (2004a). *Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act*. Dublin: Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland. (2004b). *Equality Act 2004*. Dublin: Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland. (2005). *Disability Act 2005*. Dublin: Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland. (2015). *Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024*. Dublin: Stationery Office.
- Higher Education Authority (HEA) (2015) *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019*. Dublin: Higher Education Authority.
- Murphy, C. (2002). *Employment and Career Progression of people with a disability in the Irish Civil Service*. Institute of Public Administration. Retrieved 2 Oct 2018 at <https://per.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/codepractdisability2007.pdf>
- McGrotty, C. (2018). *The WAM Programme - Key Facts & Figures from AHEAD*. *The Ahead Journal*, 7, pp.65-

69. Retrieved 2 Oct 2018 from <https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/Journal/AHEAD-Journal7.pdf>

National Disability Authority (NDA). (2006). A Strategy of Engagement - Towards a Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities. Dublin: NDA.

National Disability Authority (NDA). (2006) Code of Practice on Accessibility of Public Services and Information Provided by Public Bodies. Dublin: National Disability Authority. Retrieved 2 Oct 2018 from <http://nda.ie/Good-practice/Codes-of-Practice/Code-of-Practice-on-Accessibility-of-Public-Services-and-Information-Provided-by-Public-Bodies-/Code-of-Practice-on-Accessibility-of-Public-Services-and-Information-Provided-by-Public-Bodies.pdf>

National Disability Authority (NDA). (2008). Effective Leadership and Organisational Culture for the Recruitment and Retention of People with Disabilities in the Irish Public Sector. Dublin: NDA.

National Disability Authority (NDA). (2009) Disclosing Disability in the Workplace a Review of Literature and Practice in the Irish Public Sector. Dublin: National Disability Authority. Retrieved 2 Oct 2018 from <http://nda.ie/nda-files/Disclosing-Disability-in-the-Workplace1.pdf>

Public Appointments Service (2017). Charter on Positive Supports for Candidates with Disabilities.

Dublin: The Commission for Public Service Appointments. Retrieved 2 October 2018 from <http://www.cpsa.ie/en/About-Us/What-we-do/Setting-Recruitment-Standards/Code-of-Practice-for-Appointment-of-Persons-with-Disabilities-to-Positions-in-the-Civil-Service-and-Certain-Public-Bodies-.pdf>

Public Appointments Service (2018). The process of applying for reasonable accommodations. Dublin: The Commission for Public Service Appointments. Retrieved 2 October 2018 from <https://www.publicjobs.ie/documents/Process-Flowchart-Reasonable-Accommodations.pdf>

Quirke, M. & Byrne, JP. (2012). WAMBASSADORS. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

Quirke, M & Ó Murchadha, S. (2013). Advice for Employers on Recruitment of Graduates with Disabilities. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

Quirke, M & Ó Murchadha, S. (2016). Including Graduates with a Disability In Your Workplace. Dublin: AHEAD Educational Press.

Waters, B. (2017) 'How can apprenticeships offer an inclusive opportunity to people with disabilities?' The Ahead Journal, 5, pp.21-30. Retrieved 2 Oct 2018 from https://www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/Journal/AHEAD_Journal_5.pdf

Published by:

AHEAD Educational Press

East Hall

UCD

Carysfort Avenue

Blackrock

Co. Dublin

Tel: (01) 716 4396

Email: ahead@ahead.ie

October 2018

ISBN 978-0-9954772-9-2



→ Thank you
Go raibh maith agat

Cover: Rachel Naughton



Association for Higher Education Access & Disability

Association for Higher Education Access & Disability
East Hall, UCD, Carysfort Avenue, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

+353 (0)1 716 4396
www.ahead.ie
facebook.com/ahead.ie
[@aheadireland](https://twitter.com/aheadireland)