



IADT Code of Practice for the Employment of Staff with a Disability

Document Reference and Version Number	Version 1
Purpose	<p>This Code of Practice is to assist all IADT staff with a disability and prospective staff with a disability.</p> <p>It supports the Institute’s commitment to Inclusivity and Disability.</p>
Commencement Date	February 2022
Date of Next Review	February 2024
Who needs to know about this document	All Staff
Revision History	<p>This is a new Code of Practice that sets out formally the Institute’s obligations under the Disability Act 2005 and the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015.</p>
Policy Author	HR Manager & EDI Manager
Policy Owner	HR Manager & EDI Manager
Approved	

Purpose

IADT recognises that we are a community of staff and students who have differing abilities and strengths. It is IADT's intent to ensure that those differing abilities, do not hamper the opportunity of any of us to teach, learn or contribute to the organisation.

We are committed to fostering an inclusive culture, which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected.

We want to go beyond the legislative duties to create a culture where our entire staff feel included and supported.

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure there are no barriers facing staff with a disability in the workplace. The Code of Practice also ensures IADT complies with the legislation.

Our expectations

The Institute seeks to create a positive environment in which all staff feel like they can be their authentic self in work. All staff will be informed of how to declare a disability, if they wish to do so, and feel safe to make a declaration.

All staff in IADT are required to take personal and individual responsibility to ensure that their actions are not discriminatory. Not all disabilities are visible and as such, care should be taken not to inadvertently cause upset. Every member of IADT staff is expected, and encouraged, to show consideration towards colleagues and visitors, and is required to be aware of and sensitive to this Code of Practice.

Discrimination on the grounds of disability will not be tolerated and could result in disciplinary action being taken against anyone who is in breach of this policy.

Our commitment

As an employer, IADT will take reasonable steps to ensure:

- Recruitment processes and terms of employment do not discriminate for reasons related to disability.
- Opportunities offered for promotion, transfer, training, or other benefits are the same for all employees.
- A person with a disability is not put at a disadvantage because of their disability when reasonable accommodation can be provided to support them.

The term '*reasonable accommodation*' is used as an umbrella term for any additional disability-related support that is required, for example, installing wheelchair ramps, accessing assistive technology, adapting patterns of work time, adjusting training materials, buying a piece of

equipment, and so on. This Code of Practice is central to helping staff with a disability to get the support needed in the workplace.

Scope

This Code of Practice is a guide for all staff at IADT and includes employees, stakeholders (e.g. external trainers, visitors, etc.) and all other people involved in any aspect of the Institute. Issues pertaining to students is referenced through the Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities and can be found on the website.

Policy

IADT is committed to ensuring that any barriers for people with a disability are removed so they are supported to perform effectively in the jobs they hold or aspire to.

All reasonable efforts will be made to meet any specific requirements which maximise access to employment, promotion, and advancement in IADT and which minimise the effects of disability so that staff can make the maximum contribution possible to their job role.

Reasonable accommodation can be an action that helps alleviate a substantial disadvantage. Many types of reasonable accommodation can be implemented without a financial impact.

In cases where a cost may be involved to ensure that a person with a disability receives the support required to assist them (e.g. to take part in a recruitment process or to undertake employment), the costs provided will be reasonable and will only be provided if such payment is not prohibitive.

What is a Disability?

The Disability Act 2005 defines disability in relation to a person as:

A substantial restriction in the capacity of the person to carry on a profession, business, or occupation in the Irish State or to participate in social or cultural life in the Irish State by reason of an enduring, physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment.

The Institute acknowledges the equal rights of people with hidden disabilities, and that the same disability can vary in its impact and affect people differently.

The Employment and Equality Acts and the Equal Status Acts prohibit discrimination on the grounds of disability.

Disability means:

- The total or partial absence of a person's bodily or mental functions,
- Chronic disease or illness,
- The malfunction, malformation, or disfigurement of a part of a person's body,

- A condition that results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition,
- A condition, disease or illness which affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions, or judgments, or which results in disturbed behaviour.

The law also covers people who have long-term conditions which are disabling and may get worse over time, together with people who used to have a disability but no longer have one.

While some impairments are visible (e.g., wheelchair users), others are hidden (e.g., dyslexia, hearing impairment, autism, epilepsy, or a mental health issue).

The same disability can impact people differently and so while some disabled people may require personal assistance or equipment to realise their full potential, many people with a disability may not require any form of reasonable accommodation..

Generalised statements or assumptions should not be made about the capabilities or limitations of a staff member with a disability. A conversation should always take place between the employee, the manager and HR to discuss impact of the disability and to agree the reasonable accommodation required. Records should be kept of all conversations. Reasonable Accommodation will be put in place after consultation and agreement with HR.

Declaration of a Disability

IADT is working to create an environment where staff feel comfortable enough to inform the Institute about their disability with the confidence of a supportive response. Declaration of personal and medical information is confidential, and any information disclosed will not be provided to a third party without prior consent from the individual concerned.

In instances where an individual wishes to declare details of their disability, they are encouraged to contact the HR Manager in the first instance.

Code of Practice

This code of practice covers the following areas:

1. Recruitment & Selection
2. Integration into the Workplace
3. Sickness Absence
4. Retention in Employment
5. Training
6. Progression
7. Health & Safety at Work
8. Grievances
9. Disability Audit
10. Where to go for support and advice

Procedure

1. Recruitment and selection

People with a disability are encouraged and entitled, by law, to apply for any post in IADT for which they are qualified and to have their applications considered fairly and based on their abilities, qualifications, and suitability for the work in question. IADT will not create unnecessary barriers to prevent people with a disability applying for posts.

We are committed to consulting with job candidates with a disability, and to providing reasonable accommodation and support as necessary so that candidates may fully participate in the recruitment and selection process. A person with a disability may require reasonable accommodation to apply for a role before interview, and where possible this will be provided.

All shortlisted applicants are written to in advance of the interview. They are asked if they have any additional requirements, and are given the opportunity to declare any disability at that stage.

Where a disability is declared or additional requirements are identified, HR briefs the interview board and will adapt the interview to suit the candidate needs e.g. in the autism we may adapt the question bank for the candidate to include only direct questions, assistive technology may be offered to the candidate if required, etc.

All interview boards are briefed on the relevant policies and practices as they relate to inclusivity and equal opportunities. Training will be provided to panel members by the HR and EDI Office.

Any queries or requests for advice should be directed to the HR Department.

2. Integration into the workplace

It is the policy of IADT to ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the working environment will minimise the barriers facing staff with a disability to give opportunities for all staff to develop a full and rewarding career.

Where the HR Department has been informed of a disability by a new member of staff,, they will consult with the employee to find out about any reasonable accommodation that is required. Where it is appropriate and with the agreement of the staff member, the Institute will seek medical advice from Occupational Health about any reasonable accommodation that may be appropriate. Declaration of a disability does not necessarily imply the need for reasonable accommodation. New and existing staff have a responsibility to make a request for reasonable accommodation. Such requests can be made in the strictest of confidence to the HR Manager, email: niamh.clifford@iadt.ie

If IADT are aware of the disability of new staff members, the induction process will be tailored to meet their requirements with reasonable accommodation being provided to enable their full participation.

The requirements of staff members with a disability should also be discussed with managers and HR to ensure that the workplace is safe and accessible, and that any support required has been provided.

3. Retention in Employment

Any staff member can acquire a disability at any stage during their working life or may have a disability, which is progressive in nature. In these circumstances, IADT will support the member of staff and every reasonable effort will be made to retain that person in employment.

Based on the advice of Occupational Health, health care professionals such as occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists or psychology services might need to be consulted on ways to support a staff member with a disability, particularly if the disability is an acquired disability. Managers should consider and address any issues for employees who have acquired a disability. Discussion with the employee should identify any reasonable accommodation that could be provided, and this should be recorded and put into place as soon as possible. HR can assist with advice if required.

4. Training

All staff with a disability will be offered the same access to learning and development opportunities as other colleagues.

Where a staff member with a disability is attending a training session and requests reasonable accommodation, we ask that they please notify the staff, training and development officer (Maryanne.ocarroll@iadt.ie). Mary Anne will inform the facilitator of any accommodations needed prior to the training session taking place, and where possible training will be adapted to facilitate. Where it cannot be facilitated every measure will be taken to try to find an alternative e.g. in the case of a person with a hearing impairment and where a signer is not available we will seek to have the session captioned.

5. Progression

Staff with a disability will be supported with any applications for promotion. All applications will be assessed fairly, and candidates will be offered promotion in relation to suitability for the role.

6. Safety, Health and Welfare at Work

IADT is committed to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all its employees. Where staff with a disability have reduced mobility, hearing, or sight, it is important that they are able to make a rapid and safe exit in the instance of fire or another emergency.

All staff that require assistance in the event of an evacuation are required to make themselves aware of IADT's Emergency Evacuation Procedure.

The HR Department and the Estates and Facilities Manager will consult with each individual and design an individual PEEP (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan).

PEEP statements should be checked on a regular basis with individuals to ensure that relevant provision is made to cater for all requirements in the course of their work and in any emergency situations, which should include evacuation procedures.

7. Grievances relating to the Code of Practice

IADT is committed to fairness and transparency in its adherence to this Code of Practice. However, should a complaint arise, the complainant should follow the appropriate procedure to have their concern addressed by the Institute.

Applicants for positions or promotions within IADT who feel that the Code has been violated should, in the first instance, informally raise their complaint to the EDI Manager (equality@iadt.ie) or the HR Manager (niamh.clifford@iadt.ie). Failing satisfactory outcome, internal applicants may wish to invoke the Institute's Grievance Procedure. External candidates should contact the HR Manager.

Employees with or without disabilities who feel aspects of the Code other than those in relation to recruitment and selection have been violated should, in the first instance, address their complaint to the department or office directly responsible for the alleged breach of the Code, alternatively they may contact the EDI Manager or the HR Manager. Failing satisfactory outcome, employees may wish to invoke the Institute's Grievance Procedure.

Shortcomings, improvements or oversights in the Code of Practice should be addressed to the EDI Committee of the IADT Governing Body, which has responsibility for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the Code of Practice.

This Code of Practice should be read in conjunction with the following IADT policies:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Mutual Respect Policy

8. Disability Audit

IADT has a legislative requirement to conduct disability audits every two years, reporting on the number of staff with a disability on an annual basis. The National Disability Authority sets targets at National Level; the Institute aspires to exceed these targets where possible. All audits are strictly anonymised.

9. Where to go for support and advice

The HR department will be able to advise on reasonable accommodation and advice should be sought if this is required.

Disability organisations may also be a source of help and advice, for example the following sample list.

ADHD Ireland (<https://adhdireland.ie/>)

AsIAm (<https://asiam.ie/>)

Association for Higher Education Access and Disability - AHEAD (www.ahead.ie)

Aware (<https://www.aware.ie/>)

Disability Federation of Ireland (<https://www.disability-federation.ie/>)

Dyslexia Association of Ireland (www.dyslexia.ie)

Enable Ireland (www.enableireland.ie)

Epilepsy Ireland (<https://www.epilepsy.ie/>)

Headway – Brain Injury Services and Support (<https://headway.ie>)

Inclusion Ireland (www.inclusionireland.ie)

Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission – IHREC (<https://www.ihrec.ie/>)

National Disability Services (www.nda.ie)