Employment- Preparing to Work

# Where can I get some advice?

You can get advice and guidance from a Careers Adviser. Before you start a job search, getting some specialist advice to help point you in the right direction can save you time and effort.

There are many providers of career services that can assist you to identify your current position and your employment objectives.

## Jobcentre Plus

Jobcentre Plus is a government agency supporting people of working age from welfare into work. Your local Jobcentre Plus office can give you a wide range of information on jobs, training and self-employment options.

Every Jobcentre has a specialist Disability Employment Adviser (DEA). They can provide a range of information and advice on your work options, financial assistance and what to do next. They will also be able to provide details on the services and programmes Jobcentre Plus and local organisations provide to help assist you to find work. You will need to be registered as on benefits before they can help you.

## National Careers Service

The National Careers Service provides information, advice and guidance to help you make decisions on learning, training and work opportunities. The service offers confidential, helpful and impartial advice, supported by qualified careers advisers.

# What training courses and programs are available?

## Work Choice

Work Choice is the most common programme for people with disabilities. It helps people whose needs cannot be met through other work programmes, Access to Work or workplace adjustments. This might be because you need more specialised support to find employment or keep a job once you have started work.

If Work Choice is for you it will be tailored to meet your individual needs. It will focus on helping you achieve your full potential and moving towards being more independent.

## Residential Training Courses

Residential training courses can help people with sight loss get a job, gain more experience to keep a job or become self-employed. Blind and partially sighted people who are unemployed can apply for residential training if there aren’t any suitable training courses available locally. You can apply for residential training and find out what courses are available by contacting your Disability Employment Adviser at your local Jobcentre.

## Pluss

There employment operations help jobseekers who need the most specialist support to find work. There enterprise operations run alongside to create direct employment opportunities in a wide range of job roles.They deliver a range of nationally and locally procured employment programmes on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), European Social Fund (ESF), National Lottery Community Fund, Local Authorities and the NHS

## Trainee Grade Scheme (RNIB)

TGS offers unemployed blind and partially sighted people paid work experience for a period of up to 50 weeks. Successful applicants have the opportunity to gain new skills and experience in a real work environment. In addition, trainees are offered training, job-search support and a full up-to-date reference.

TGS vacancies are advertised in the RNIB vacancy list, which is updated fortnightly.

The scheme offers full time or part time (as advertised) opportunities in a range of work areas in different departments within RNIB such as:

* Marketing
* Information Technology
* Research
* Administration
* Events co-ordination

# Where do I look for work?

## Job Search Websites

Using job search websites is the easiest and a convenient way to find out what’s out there. In most cases you will need to register to make an application.

There are thousands of roles advertised on most websites, so it is important to narrow down your search. So, consider the below as you start to look for your next job:

* If you are not sure what exact role you want but know what sector you want to work in, you can just search that term, for example: for finance related roles just search “finance.”
* If you want to search multiple roles at once, you can use quotation marks along with and/or. For example, “finance assistant” and “administrative assistant”. Always remember to put each role in quotes, there is also no limit to the roles you can search for using this method.
* Using filters can narrow the search even more. Filters allow you to specify what jobs you see. For example, filtering by salary will only list the roles which fall within the pay bracket you have set.
* Choose a location and how far you are willing to travel. Put in your town or city and/or postcode to ensure you only see the jobs which are within travelling distance.
* Make sure your results are up to date. To avoid seeing posts that are months old, ensure you set the results to only show the “most recent”.
* Setting up job alerts / email alerts is a fantastic way of finding out about roles as soon as they go live. Set up the alert for the jobs you are interested in using the tips above then decide how often you want to receive updates.

## Job Search Apps

Another option is using job search apps. These offer a good way to job search on the go. These can be downloaded on app store on iOS and Play store on Android. What makes apps great is you can do everything that you can on the website plus more.

You can register on the apps, upload a CV, job search without a lot of hassle. All the apps have a similar layout, so once you familiarise yourself with one, the others are easier to use. One great feature is you have the capability to save a job / put a job in the basket, which you can look at again on the website and complete.

## Approaching Employers Directly

If you can identify a specific employer that you would like to work for then you should approach them directly as only a very small proportion of jobs are advertised on job boards. Hopefully they will be able to keep your details on file and consider you for any opportunities in the future.

## Newspapers

Publications offer a good range of job vacancies, especially at a local level. It may not be possible for you to access printed newspaper vacancies, either through a vision aid or the support of a friend or relative. If this is the case, then you should seek advice from your local Jobcentre Plus or the employment agencies in your local area.

## Employment Agencies

Agencies are intermediary services that match jobseekers to vacancies. Once registered with an agency they will match your skills and experience to vacancies that may be appropriate for you.

## Trade Publications and Websites

If you are interested in a career in a specific sector of employment, then trade publications and websites can be an excellent resource. For example, if you are interested in pursuing a career in marketing there are numerous publications and websites that specifically list marketing vacancies.

## Careers Fairs

Careers fairs are an excellent way of seeing lots of employers in one day. Careers fairs provide information about job vacancies and how companies plan to recruit for those vacancies.

# Resources

## Jobseeker Direct

Jobseeker Direct is a phone service operated by Jobcentre Plus. It aims to keep you in touch with the latest job vacancies. This service is available to anyone who is looking for work, and the lines are open weekdays 8:00am – 6:00pm, and Saturdays 9:00am – 1:00pm. All calls are charged at local rates.

Telephone 0845 606 0234

[Government Website](https://www.gov.uk/)

## The Royal National College for the Blind (RNC)

The RNC offers a Specialist Employment Support programme for adult learners.

Telephone: 01432 265725

[The Royal National College for the Blind (RNC) Website](https://www.rnc.ac.uk/)

Email: info@rnc.ac.uk

## Review - Work Choice

The Department for Work and Pensions runs this specialist disability employment programme. The programme helps disabled people find employment and develop their career.

Telephone: 0845 33 06 573

Email: workchoice@seetec.co.uk

Website: GOV.UK website

## Review - Pluss

Plus is a Social Enterprise that supports thousands of people with disabilities and other disadvantages into employment each year. They do this through a range of specialist employment services and through direct employment within our own Commercial Enterprises.

Telephone: 0800 334 5525

Email: employment.bureau@pluss.org.uk

Web link: https://www.pluss.org.uk/welcome-pluss

## Review - Trainee Grade Scheme (RNIB)

The Trainee Grade Scheme (TGS) offers paid work experience to unemployed blind and partially sighted people.

TGS vacancies are advertised in the RNIB vacancy list, which is updated fortnightly.

Telephone: 0303 123 9999

Email: helpline@rnib.org.uk

Website: www.rnib.org.uk/who-we-are/jobs-rnib.

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Tel: 0117 322 4885 Email: info@sightsupportwest.org.uk

As a partnership we provide local services for people living with sight loss across Bristol, Bath & North-East Somerset and South Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire.

Sight Support West of England is a registered charity: 1178384.

Wiltshire Sight is a registered charity: 1119462.

Insight Gloucestershire is a registered charity 204279.

Registered Office: St Lucy’s Sight Centre, The Beeches, Browfort, Bath Road, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 2AT.