

Press release: Disability Confident one year on: over 5,000 organisations now signed up

To celebrate this milestone Disability Confident companies, including major employer Sainsbury's, are highlighting the benefits that disabled employees bring to their business.

Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt, said:

Disability Confident status sends a powerful message to potential employees that they will get the support they need to thrive in the workplace. One year on from the launch of the scheme, we're already helping more than 5,000 companies to create a more inclusive workforce.

By demonstrating the benefits these employers have seen, simply by recognising disabled people for their skills and talents, we can help transform attitudes among businesses across the country.

Almost a fifth of the working age population is disabled, which represents a large proportion of the potential workforce.

Tim Fallowfield, Sainsbury's Corporate Services Director, said:

We are delighted that 5,000 businesses have signed up to the scheme so far, but this is just the first step. We will continue to encourage employers to sign up and work with the government to give them the tools they need to recruit and retain disabled people.

Andrew, who has a mental health condition, works for Sainsbury's in Ellesmere Port, Cheshire. Stories like Andrew's demonstrate the wide reaching benefits of having the right job.

Andrew said:

Sainsbury's are the first employer I have worked for where I have felt I could say anything. In my previous jobs it would be a case of get on with it; stress was considered a daily part of the job. As a Disability Confident employer, there is a clear signposted process, making it simple to reach out and simply start a conversation.

Sainsbury's is the largest of 170 businesses in the retail sector to become

Disability Confident. The voluntary, charity and social enterprise sector is leading the way with 1,233 Disability Confident organisations.

Twenty four FTSE 100 companies have already signed up to the scheme, including Diageo, ITV and BT. On the first anniversary, the minister has written to the remaining companies, reinforcing her [recent challenge](#) to them to sign up to the scheme and to encourage more influential businesses to set the standard on Disability Confident status.

As of today, all ministerial government departments have achieved Disability Confident Leader status.

Last week an expert led review into [mental health in the workplace](#), commissioned by the government, recommended that employers adopt 6 'mental health core standards' that lay the basic foundations for an approach to workplace mental health.

Disability Confident offers employers a simple first step to creating a more supportive workplace. The government's full response will be published this autumn as part of the next steps following the [Work, health and disability green paper](#).

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