

Public Service as an Employer of Choice Research Project

Improving the Effectiveness of Recruitment
and Retention for Policy Graduates with
Disability in the Public Service

Researched and Presented
by Grant Cleland



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Improving the Effectiveness of Recruitment and Retention for Policy Graduates with Disability in the Public Service

Introduction:

The aim of this project has been to:

- (1) Determine the depth of opinion of university students and graduates with significant disability interested in policy roles and targeted disability employment agencies, on their perceptions of the Public Service and as a potential employer of choice.
- (2) Recommend strategies for improving the effectiveness of recruitment and retention for policy graduates with disability in the Public Service.

A total of **26** students and graduates with disability have participated in this project. Feedback was obtained from **12** university students with disability, from Canterbury, Victoria and Lincoln Universities (Appendix 4). **8** of these students participated in four focus groups in Wellington and Christchurch, with two participants in each. A further **4** students were unable to attend these focus groups and provided information through email, consistent with the focus group question guide (Appendix 1).

A letter (Appendix 2) was emailed to **19** graduates with disability and **14** responded (Appendix 5). This information was sent to graduates who it was considered might have already had some experiences in the Public Service or who may be trying to get employment in the Public Service.

Both the student and graduate respondents were asked to answer questions divided into two sections:

- (1) Careers and Employment options, and
- (2) Information about Careers and Employers.

Phase three of this project was to provide a focus group with staff from the Christchurch office of Workbridge. Unfortunately this has not been possible to arrange due to a range of circumstances beyond my control.

I therefore adapted the graduate email questions and sent these to some Workbridge staff to respond to (Appendix Three). The aim of this email was to determine how much knowledge Workbridge staff had of the Public Service as an employment option.

Chapters 2-4 of this report provide background information that confirms and provides evidence for the feedback of the students and graduates with disability, involved with is project.

Process For Achieving These Objectives

I developed and presented a proposal for completing this project. This consisted of a five-stage process involving:

- (1) Canvassing *student opinion* by contacting the Inclusive Education or Disability Co-ordinators at Canterbury and Victoria University and arranging focus groups with current students through these staff.
- (2) Canvassing *graduate opinion* by contacting graduates with disability that may have already had some experiences in the Public Service or who are trying to get employment in the Public Service. I emailed a list of questions to graduates who I was aware of through my association with DPA and ACHIEVE. These questions were a guide for their feedback and respondents were asked to email their responses back to me by Monday 5 November 2001.
- (3) Obtaining feedback from a *targeted employment agency* that helps place and support graduates with disability in the Public Service. It was agreed that this could be achieved by having a focus group in Christchurch with staff from Workbridge.
- (4) Analysis of the Feedback.
- (5) Development of a Final Report and Recommendations.

Phase One: Provision of Focus Groups with Current University Students

(1) Objective

- (a) To provide focus groups with current students who receive support from University Inclusive Education or Disability Co-ordinators and have an interest in Public Service Policy roles.
- (b) To determine the:
 - Image that current students with disability have of the Public Service and the level of differentiation between the Public Service and the departments that comprise it.
 - Motivators for current students with disability to the Public Service as an employment option.
 - Barriers to the Public Service as an employment option, that current students with disability perceive that relate to their impairment.
 - Actions to overcome these perceived barriers to the Public Service as an employment option.

- Differences in barriers and actions between different disability, gender and cultural groups.
- Perceptions of current students with disability of employment conditions in the Public Service and possible career options.
- Information that current students with disability would want to receive from the Public Service in order to help them with employment decisions.
- Actions that would make the Public Service more attractive to current students with disability.

(2) Methodology

- (a) Contact Disability or Inclusive Education Co-ordinators at Canterbury and Victoria University to arrange focus groups.
- (b) Confirm dates, venue and times for each focus group.
- (c) Send out invitations with background information.
- (d) Resolve support issues that need consideration:
 - Sign Language Interpreter and other support staff.
 - Transcribing overheads/questions, simplifying questions.
 - Alternative formats for written information.
 - Cultural issues.
- (e) Create a format for the focus groups. This should include:
 - The agenda and proposed format.
 - Small group questions to be discussed by all focus groups.
- (f) Develop a process for recording feedback.
- (g) Complete the focus groups with students at Canterbury and Victoria University.

Phase Two: Canvassing Graduate Opinion

(1) Objective

- (a) To canvass *graduate opinion* by contacting people with disability associated with the DPA and Achieve who have either tried to obtain or been employed in policy roles within the Public Service.
- (b) To determine the:
 - Image that these people with disability have of the Public Service and the level of differentiation between the Public Service and the departments that comprise it.
 - Barriers to the Public Service as an employment option that these people with disability have experienced, that relate to their impairment.
 - Actions to overcome barriers that they have experienced.
 - Differences in barriers and actions between different disability, gender and cultural groups.
 - Perceptions of these people about employment conditions in the Public Service and possible career options for people with disability.

- Information that they feel people with disability would want to receive from the Public Service in order to help them with employment decisions.
- Actions that would make the Public Service more attractive to people with disability.

(2) Methodology

- (a) Contact graduates with disability associated with the DPA and Achieve, who may have already had some experiences in the Public Service or who are trying to get employment in the Public Service.
- (b) Develop a list of questions to be completed by graduates, in consultation with SSC staff.
- (c) Email these people with disability a list of questions to reply to and follow up any points of clarification.

Phase Three: Provision of Focus Groups with Workbridge Staff

(1) Objective

- (a) To provide a focus group with staff from the Christchurch office of Workbridge.
- (b) To determine the perceptions of these staff about the:
 - Image that people with disability have of the Public Service as an employment option.
 - Motivators for people with disability to the Public Service as an employment option.
 - Barriers for people with disability in the Public Service.
 - Actions to overcome these perceived barriers to the Public Service as an employment option.
 - Employment conditions in the Public Service and possible career options for people with disability.
 - Information that people with disability and employment agencies would want to receive from the Public Service in order to help them with employment decisions.
 - Actions that would make the Public Service more attractive to people with disability.
- (c) To determine how much knowledge Workbridge staff have of the Public Service as an employment option

(2) Methodology

- (a) Arrange a focus group with staff from the Christchurch office of Workbridge.
- (b) Confirm the date, venue and time for this focus group.
- (c) Send out invitations with background information. This should include a date to confirm attendance.

- (d) Create a format for the focus group. The should include:
 - The agenda and proposed format.
 - Small group questions to be discussed.
- (e) Develop a process for recording feedback.
- (f) Complete the focus group.

Phase Four: Development of a Report

Methodology

- (a) Determine the depth of opinion of some university students and graduates with significant disability and Workbridge staff, on their perceptions of the Public Service and as a potential employer.
- (b) Develop key strategies for analysing information.
- (c) Identify support/tools required for the analysis.
- (d) Complete analysis.
- (e) Recommend strategies for improving the effectiveness of recruitment and retention for policy graduates with disability in the Public Service.

This report provides a format that:

- (1) Allows comparisons to be made, and
- (2) Identifies key issues that need consideration when making decisions about strategies to improve the effectiveness of recruitment and retention for policy graduates with disability in the Public Service.

Chapter 2: A Review of Employment of People with Disability in the Public Service

The Situation

(a) Employment on Merit in the Public Service

In 1994 the State Services Commission published the report, Equal Employment Opportunities-Progress in the Public Service as at June 1993.

This report made the following points in relation to the employment of staff with disability in the Public Service, during this reporting period:

- (a) 15.6% of staff in the Public Service were reported to have a disability;
- (b) There was a slight increase (0.6%) in the number of people with disability employed, when comparing this report with the previous reporting period.
- (c) People with disability were leaving the Public Service at a higher rate than they are being appointed.
- (d) People with disability had experienced a downward movement in salary distribution.
- (e) Only 2.6% of staff with disability were in management positions.
- (f) On average, people with disability were appointed at a lower average salary rate, than other Public Service staff.
- (g) If current patterns continued it was predicted that there would be a decline in the number of people with disability employed in the Public Service, and that this would be the only EEO group where this is occurring (Equal Employment Opportunities-Progress in the Public Service as at June 1993, 1994, State Services Commission, p. 38).

The State Services Commission wrote a similar EEO progress report in 1996, for the period ending on 30 June 1995 (p. 15-21). This stated that:

- (a) 14.9% of staff in the Public Service were reported to have a disability. This was a decrease (0.7%) in the number of staff with disability employed in the Public Service, when comparing this report with the previous period ending on 30 June 1993.

"Table 2: Representation of EEO Groups in 1988, 1991-1995

EEO Group	1988%	1991%	1992%	1993%	1994%	1995%
Women	37	-	-	-	-	53
Maori	7.0	6.5	6.3	8.0	8.1	8.8
Pacific Island people	3.2	3.2	2.6	3.1	3.4	3.5
Ethnic minorities	2.7	2.4	2.0	2.5	2.5	2.6
People with disability	20.8	14.1	15.0	15.6	15.5	14.9

(Source: EEO-Progress in the Public Service as at June 1995, SSC, p. 15/ EEO: 1984 to 1994 and Beyond, SSC, p. 21).

- (b) Between 1992-95 there had been a significant decrease in the number of people with disability appointed in the Public Service - 14% in 1992 and 5.2% in 1995.
- (c) There were still more people with disability leaving the Public Service, than are being recruited. In 1995 5.2% people with disability were appointed and 10% left the Public Service.
- (d) When comparing the numbers leaving the Public Service with other EEO groups, in 1995 significantly more people with disability were leaving the Public Service than Maori, Pacific Island people and other ethnic minorities.

Table 8: Appointments

EEO Group	1992%	1993%	1994%	1995%
Women	55.0	62.0	61.0	63.0
Maori	9.0	6.5	9.0	5.5
Pacific Island people	5.4	2.3	3.8	2.0
Ethnic minorities	6.2	5.6	3.3	2.1
People with disability	14.0	6.4	4.8	5.2

Cessation

EEO Group	1992%	1993%	1994%	1995%
Women	59.0	55.0	64.0	62.0
Maori	12.0	6.0	6.3	6.8
Pacific Island people	2.6	1.3	2.9	2.7
Ethnic minorities	4.2	-	3.9	2.3
People with disability	11.7	8.7	11.1	10.1

(Source: EEO-Progress in the Public Service as at June 1995, SSC, p. 21)."

During 1995 the State Services Commission employed Robyn Hunt, an EEO Consultant. While employed by the Commission she wrote the report, EEO Disability in the New Zealand Public Service.

Robyn contacted 14 of 37 Departments and Ministries, to assess progress in this area. Her findings included the following key points:

- (a) There is a need for leadership with EEO disability, particularly in the areas of promotion and development.
- (b) Line managers are not generally well equipped to deal with staff with disability. Many people with disability lack qualifications and face issues to do with productivity and while there is goodwill, many line managers lack the tools to facilitate solutions to overcome these problems.
- (c) There are problems with data collection. In particular, Robyn Hunt reported problems with accuracy and collection and the reluctance of staff to identify disability because of concerns about confidentiality.

(d) The Public Service has not got to grips with the way that the constant change in the Public Service has impacted on staff with disability.

Robyn Hunt recommended that the State Services Commission:

- (a) Address training and development issues for staff working on development, promotion and monitoring of EEO in relation to disability.
- (b) Consider where the gaps are in resourcing the EEO disability policy development and monitoring role.
- (c) Identify a core group of senior managers and disability community representatives who can provide informal accountability, leadership and an inter-sectoral conduit for information, knowledge and skill in the area of EEO disability (EEO Disability in the New Zealand Public Service, State Services Commission, September 1995, p. 1-3).

In the years that followed it was decided that the data on staff with disability in the Public Service had suffered in the past from a lack of a standard definition of disability and that this may have affected the accuracy of this information. As a result of this, the State Services Commission completed a review in collaboration with the Public Sector Departments and disability advocacy groups. This resulted in the introduction of a functional definition of disability recommended by the World Health Organisation and used by Statistics New Zealand. The EEO progress report for the period ending 30 June 1998 identified that there had been a decrease of an estimated 500 in the number of people with disability in the Public Service. It was felt that a more accurate definition of disability may have contributed to this (Equal Employment Opportunities-Progress in the Public Service as at 30 June 1998, 1999, State Services Commission, p. 36).

Information provided by Stephanie Knight of the State Services Commission in 2000 indicates the following trends:

- (a) If you compare the representation of people with disability in the Public Service between 1994-1999 the percentage of those with disability in the Public Service has continued to decline over this period. This trend occurs using the old method of calculating the EEO statistics and a new method of recalculation used by Statistics New Zealand, which counts known responses only.

Calculation	1994%	1995%	1996%	1997%	1998%	1999%
<i>Old Method</i>	15.5	14.9	11.6	11.8	10.6	13.1
<i>New Method</i>	21.1	22.9	19.7	20.0	14.5	13.1

- (b) An estimated 3,147 people with disability were reported to be employed in the Public Service in 1999, of which 59% were women and 41% men. In 1998 3,416 staff with disability were reported to be in the Public Service.

- (c) If you compare the percentage of people with disability between 15-65 years of age in the labour force, 12.3% of the New Zealand labour force have a disability, compared 13.1% in the Public Service in 1999.
- (d) The majority of people with disability in the Public Service earn less than \$40,000.

Year	<30,000	30-39,999	40-49,999	50-59,999	60-69,999
1998	26.2	40.9	19.8	6.4	3.0
1999	19.9	47.1	20.0	6.9	3.1

If you compare women with men with disability in the Public Service in 1998 and 1999, an estimated 80% of women earned less than \$40,000 and 50% of men.

Source:

Public Service EEO Statistics 1994-99, SSC, 2000, p. 1-2.

Equal Employment Opportunities-Progress in the Public Service as at 30 June 1998, 1999, State Services Commission, p. 52.

(b) The Mainstream Supported Employment Programme

The Mainstream Supported Employment Programme is over 20 years old. As far back as the early 1950s, various disability sector agencies began to raise public awareness about the employment needs of people with disability. New Zealand compared unfavourably with trends in Britain and United States.

As a major employer, the State Services Commission began to make tentative responses towards finding positions within the Public Service for people with disability. In 1959, in response to a query from the then Prime Minister (the Right Honourable Walter Nash), the Commission reported that:

- (a) 854 people with disability were employed in the Public Service, out of a total of 59,339 staff.
- (b) People with disability represented just 1.4%.
- (c) Rates of pay for people with disability who, it was felt, may not be able to fully contribute proved to be a difficult issue. For many years pay was decided on a case by case basis.

In 1975 a case was made for a defined scheme within the Public Service for the employment of people with intellectual disability. The Scheme for the Employment of the Disabled in the Public Service was introduced in 1976. This was initially designed to provide for the employment of just 20 people with intellectual disability annually. An inherent expectation was that those in the scheme would be given training to assist them to progress to permanent employment.

Over the next few years the scheme was in considerable demand. It was decided in November 1980 to:

- (a) Widen both the number of positions and the criteria for acceptance.
- (b) Eligibility was broadened to include those with physical disability.

Another review in the mid 1980s led to a number of developments:

- (a) Funding for positions was increased and participants were accorded permanent employment status, after the usual probationary period.
- (b) A significant criteria change allowed for employment under the scheme of people with sensory disability or psychiatric illness who were also disadvantaged in obtaining employment on merit.
- (c) Another significant change was the provision of an employment subsidy to employing departments at 100% for 2 years, 50% for a third year and 25% for the fourth and final year of the scheme.
- (d) From the fourth year, it was expected that employing departments would absorb scheme participants.

(e) The scheme's name was changed to one that more accurately reflected the purpose of the programme. This finally became the Mainstream Supported Employment Programme in 1989.

A further review of the programme was undertaken in 1996:

- (a) Mainstream became a two-year programme of supported employment. The State Services Commission now provides a 100% subsidy of salary for the first 12 months of employment and 50% subsidy of salary for the second year.
- (b) Funding for training was increased to a maximum of \$1,500 for each Mainstream Programme Participant. This was also extended to Direct Supervisors.

A number of refinements and improvements have been made since the 1996 Mainstream Review:

- (a) Public Service departments and selected Crown Entities are now eligible for the Mainstream Programme.
- (b) Additional staff have been employed to administer the Mainstream Programme.
- (c) The introduction of a new database to enable regular and accurate billing, improved financial management and follow-up to track post placement progress.
- (d) The introduction of two monthly Induction Workshops for Mainstream participants and supervisors.
- (e) Networking with local and international providers of supported employment and benchmarking the Mainstream Programme against comparable schemes overseas.
- (f) The completion of an Analysis of the Programmes Costs and Benefits, which shows an impressive return on investment.

Today Mainstream exists to facilitate the employment of people with significant disability within New Zealand's Public Service by:

- providing supported, subsidised employment to enable participants to eventually compete on the open job market
- creating opportunities for participants to increase and develop their employment skills
- educating participants to be increasingly active in their own professional and personal development
- promoting equity for people with disability, through education and the use of successful examples.

To gain access to the Mainstream Programme, a candidate must have a disability which severely restricts their employment prospects. Factors other than disability, which result in further significant disadvantage, will also be taken into consideration.

Disability is defined as limitation resulting from impairment to vision, hearing, physical agility, intellect, psychological functioning and learning. The disability must have been present for at least six months and be expected to last at least four years or longer. A Mainstream candidate is not considered to have a disability if a corrective device, for example a hearing aid or glasses, completely eliminates the limitation.

The term "significantly disadvantaged" means people who:

- have a significant congenital or acquired disability;
- have significant barriers to employment; and/or
- would not gain a position within the State Sector on merit.

Other mitigating factors, in addition to the above, will also be taken into consideration when assessing candidate eligibility for the Mainstream Programme. These include but are not restricted to:

- limited access to education;
- late onset of disability requiring total re-training; and/or
- limited access to employment opportunities due to geographical isolation.

Entry to the Mainstream Programme is restricted to those people with disability who:

- are sixteen years of age or over;
- meet the eligibility criteria in respect of significant disability;
- are engaged in full or part-time employment for no payment, or which pays less than the minimum adult wage (in terms of provisions contained in the Disabled Persons Employment Promotion Act) where the work is for a Community Wage or part of another WINZ Scheme;
- are engaged in open employment for a total not exceeding 15 hours per week; and/or
- are unemployed.

Mainstream is a Supported Employment Programme. This means that people with significant disability are not expected to be "job ready" when they are placed into employment. Instead they are trained on the job and also have access to extra funding for training from the Mainstream Programme. Pay is comparable to the pay of others performing similar duties. Knowledge and skills are built up over time with the support and good will of co-workers.

After two years, it is expected that Mainstream participants will have gained the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to compete for employment on the open job market.

In recent years the Mainstream Supported Employment Programme has seen considerable growth. On an annual basis there are now over 130 people with significant disability with created positions in the Public Service, funded by Mainstream. Mainstream placements are arranged in collaboration with a variety of placement agencies for people with disability, who negotiate the creation of these positions.

Not all of these people live and work in large cities. Mainstream Programme participants also work in many rural areas. Although some of the created positions gained through the Mainstream Programme are basic clerical positions, a growing proportion are in such diverse areas as tertiary education tutoring, kitchen work, case management, project management, technical support and veterinary work.

Therefore Mainstream includes the breadth of people with disability in our community, including some graduates with significant barriers to employment. During the last three years, between **55-65%** of all people completing Mainstream placements have gained long term employment, either with their original employing department or with another employer.

Source:

- A New Look at Mainstream, Sue Edmonds, 1985.
- Review of Mainstream, Te Aratau and Pacific Island Programmes, Anne Jackson, 22 April 1996.
- Enhancing the Mainstream Supported Employment Programme: The Report, State Services Commission, April 1997.
- Mainstream Supported Employment Programme: Application for Placement, State Services Commission, March 2000, p. 1.
- Opportunities: A Guide for State Sector Employers to the Creation of Subsidised Mainstream Positions, State Services Commission, September 1999, p. 1-7.
- Employment: A Guide for People with Disabilities to the Mainstream Programme, State Services Commission, October 1999, p. 1-7.
- Placements: A Guide for Placement Specialists to the Creation of Mainstream Positions within the Public Sector, State Services Commission, October 1999, p. 1-7.
- Mainstream Supported Employment Programme: Fact Sheet, State Services Commission, 2001, p. 1.

Chapter 3: Statistical Information About People with Disability in New Zealand

The Situation

Historically, very few accurate statistics have been available about people with disability in New Zealand.

1991 Working Party on Employment & Training for People with Disability

It appears that fewer people with disability attain academic qualification, than the general population. This working party reported to the Minister of Employment that when it surveyed people on ACC, Sickness and Invalids Benefits; only 24% had school qualifications, against 49.7% for the general population (p. 56). Recent increases in people with disability attending polytechnics, university may eventually reverse this trend.

Statistics New Zealand

To improve statistical information available about the disability community, the 1996 Statistics New Zealand Census included two questions about disability, which were completed by every person in New Zealand on census night. This provided a sample frame for surveys completed after the 1996 Census, to provide more detailed information about the disability community. Surveys included the *1996 Household Disability Survey* and the *1997 Disability Survey of Residential Facilities*.

The 1996 Household Disability Survey involved the selection of 20,848 children, adults and seniors living in private households and was sponsored by a range of government and social service organisations. For the purposes of this survey, *children* were regarded as those under 15 years; *adults* were those aged between 15-64 years and seniors were those over 65 years of age.

The key objectives were to:

- Measure the prevalence of disability amongst non-institutional children, adults and older persons at national and regional levels.
- Provide information on the nature, duration, severity and cause of disability.
- Obtain data on the socio-demographic characteristics of the non-institutional population with disability; including age, sex, ethnicity, marital status, educational qualifications, labour force status, income and family responsibilities.

Because of the non-institutional nature of this survey, people living in hospitals, psychiatric institutions, rest homes, hotels, motels, boarding houses, schools and motor camps; were excluded from the survey. The

sample included people who answered yes or no to the census disability questions and included a balance across the country, ethnicity and age. This link with the 1996 Census allowed information from the survey to be correlated with census data such as age, sex, ethnicity and income.

Telephone and face-to face interviews were used for this survey. For children under the age of 15 years, parents were involved in the interview. The functional concept of disability was used to identify whether respondents had a disability. Therefore, a disability was defined as any limitation in activity resulting from a long-term condition or health problem. People were not considered as having a disability if they used an assistive device that completely eliminated the limitation (eg. Glasses or hearing aid). In addition, the limitation had to be for a minimum of six months duration. To help with analysis, disability information was divided into specific categories – adults/seniors and children with physical, sensory, intellectual or other disability or psychiatric/psychological illnesses. Of the 20,848 people selected for the sample, 4,100 were identified as having disability and the response rate to the survey, 86%.

Statistics New Zealand also completed another survey, known as the 1997 Disability Survey of Residential Facilities. This focused on people with disability over 15 years of age and included those in rest homes, other homes for the elderly, public and private hospitals, units for people with intellectual, physical disability or mental health conditions. This survey excluded staff and family members living in these facilities, occupants of Short-Stay Hospital Beds, Night Shelters, DSW, Education, Religious or Justice Facilities, Supported/Group Homes, Drug and Alcohol Recovery Centres, Marae, Communes, Hotels, Motels, Boarding and Guest Houses and Work-Related Quarters (eg. Nursing Homes). From a sample of 1200, 1,1016 were interviewed and the response rate for the survey was 91% of the people with disability involved.

As a number of non-private dwellings were excluded from the Disability Survey of Residential Facilities it is generally felt that the data presented may not provide a true picture for all people with disability in residential facilities.

However staff from the Ministry of Health and Health Funding Authority have completed a further analysis of this information and state that:

“...it is unlikely that the estimates derived from the surveys vary significantly from the true population disability rates. Primary psychiatric disability may be slightly underestimated by the surveys” (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 19).

Disability in New Zealand: Overview of the 1996/97 Surveys

In 1998 the Ministry of Health and Health Funding Authority published a further analysis of the 1996 Household Disability Survey and the 1997 Disability Survey of Residential Facilities.

This was written to provide data for “use in policy development and to inform funding decisions” (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 9). To maximise the usefulness of the Statistics New Zealand Surveys, the authors of this report tried to make survey definitions compatible with those used for disability support services eligibility. In this report the disability population was divided into three severity levels, with people in the third level being those with the greatest level of dependency.

Level Of Assistance

- (1) Those with disability who do not require any assistance at all.
- (2) Those people with disability who require assistance to live independently, but do not need this assistance on a daily basis.
- (3) People with disability who require intensive assistance on a daily basis (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 14).

2001 Disability Survey

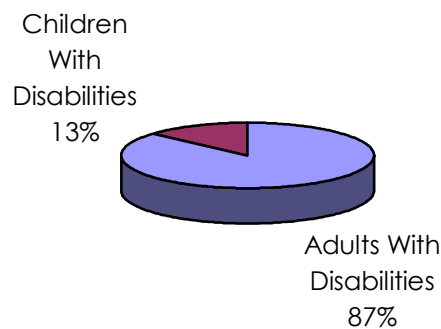
Following on from the 2001 Census, a second Disability Survey will be completed by Statistics New Zealand, which will include both people with disability in households and residential facilities. These surveys will allow analysis of the changes in the prevalence of disability and the experience of people with disability since 1996, a period in which there has been significant policy changes. Like the previous surveys this will include adults and children. It is hoped that the results of this survey will be published by April 2002 (Statistics New Zealand Disability Website, 2001).

General Disability Trends

By combining statistics from the 1996 Household and 1997 Residential Disability Surveys and Ministry of Health analysis the following picture is established. It is estimated that:

- (1) 20% (702,000) of the total population are people with disability. This includes those in households and residential facilities (Disability Counts, 1998, p. 11). Of this, 93,938 are children with disability under the age of 15 years. Therefore 13% of people with disability are children and 87% adults (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 55).

People With Disabilities In New Zealand

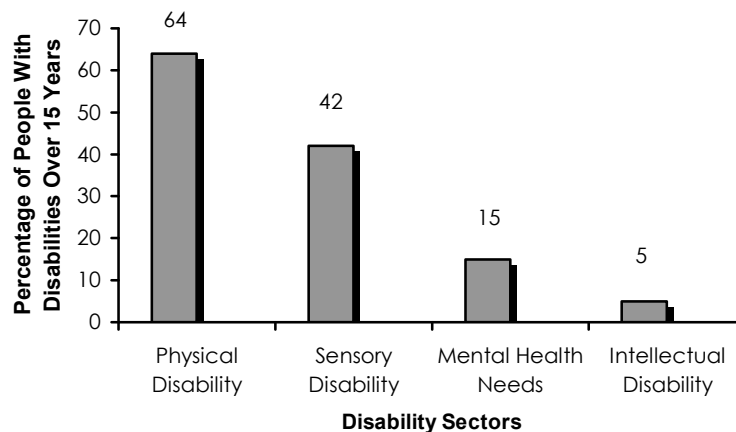


Source: Disability in New Zealand, Table 3.5 & 3.6, p. 54

- (2) The NZ disability community consists of the following percentages:

- 64% of people with disability have a physical disability.
- 42% of people with disability have a sensory disability.
- 15% of people with disability have a mental health need.
- 5% of people with disability have an intellectual disability.
- 39% of people with disability have an other disability.

New Zealand Disability Community

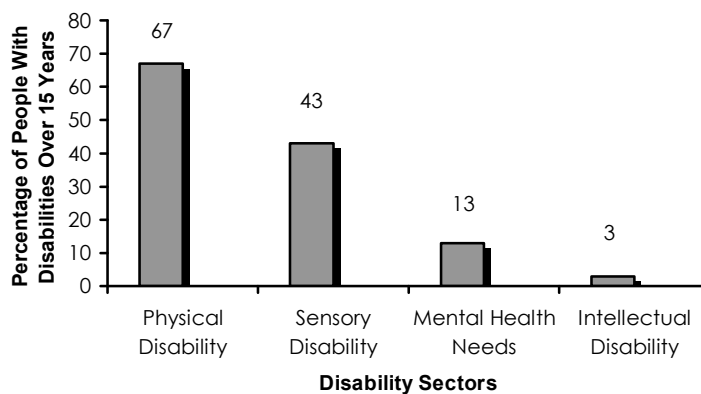


Source: Disability in New Zealand, Table 3.4, p. 54

(3) Of adult/seniors living in households:

- 67% have a physical disability.
- 43% have a sensory disability.
- 13% have a mental health need.
- 3% have an intellectual disability.
- 35% have an other disability.

Adults/Seniors With Disabilities Living In Households

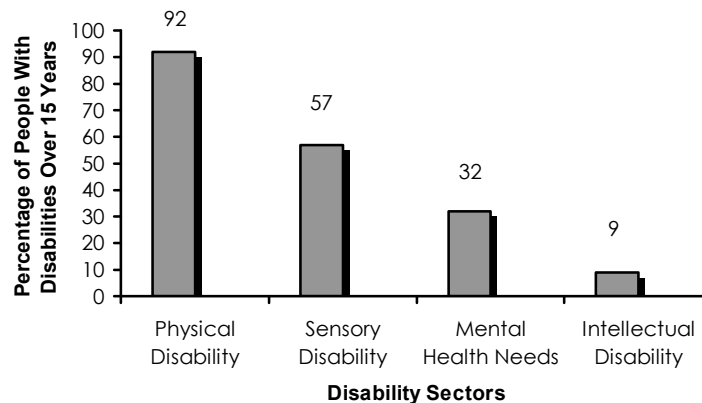


Source: Disability Counts, Table 2.2, p. 22

Of adult/seniors living in Residential Facilities:

- 92% have a physical disability.
- 57% have a sensory disability.
- 32% have a mental health need.
- 9% have an intellectual disability.
- 70% have an other disability.

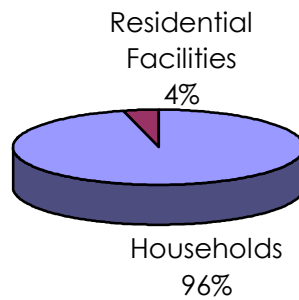
Adults/Seniors With Disabilities Living In Residential Facilities



Source: Disability Counts, Table 2.2, p. 22

(4) 96% (674,367) of people with disability live in households and only 4% (27,632) in residential facilities. Therefore the vast majority live in the community (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 39).

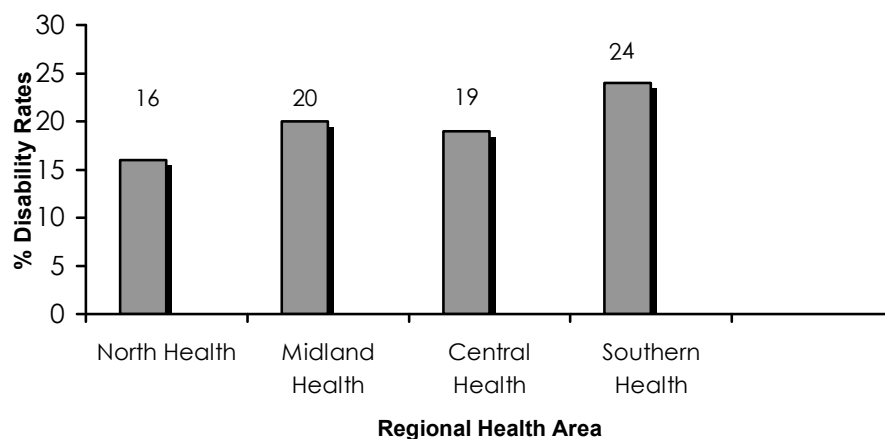
Location of People With Disabilities In New Zealand



Source: Disability in New Zealand, Table 3.1, p.39

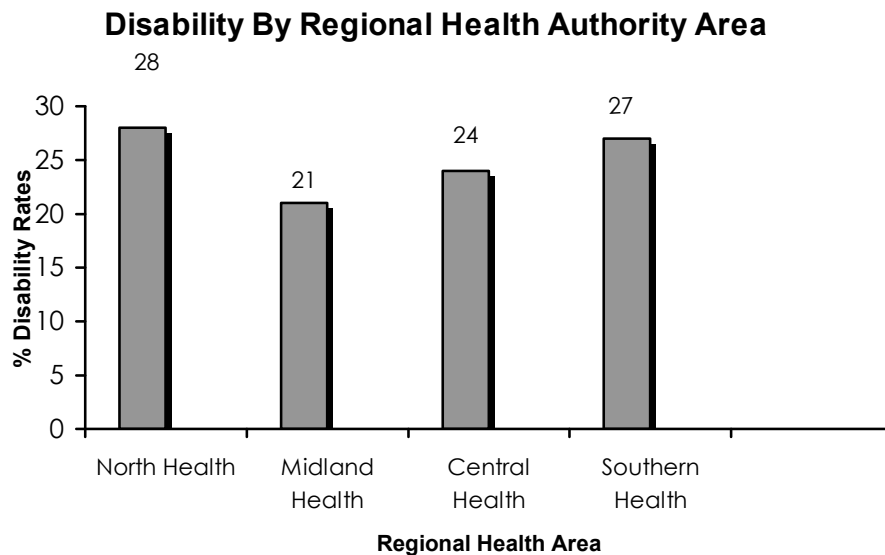
(5) According to Statistics NZ the Southern Health Funding Authority has the highest incidence of people with disability in New Zealand, living in households. 24% of the population in this geographical area have a disability, in contrast to the Northern Health Funding Authority that has the lowest at 16% (Disability Counts, 1998, p. 11)

Disability By Regional Health Authority Area Living In Households



Source: Disability Counts, Table 3.2, p. 25

However when the statistics for those living in residential facilities are combined and we compare the numbers in Health Funding Authority areas this creates a different picture.



Source: Disability in New Zealand, Table 3.1, p.39

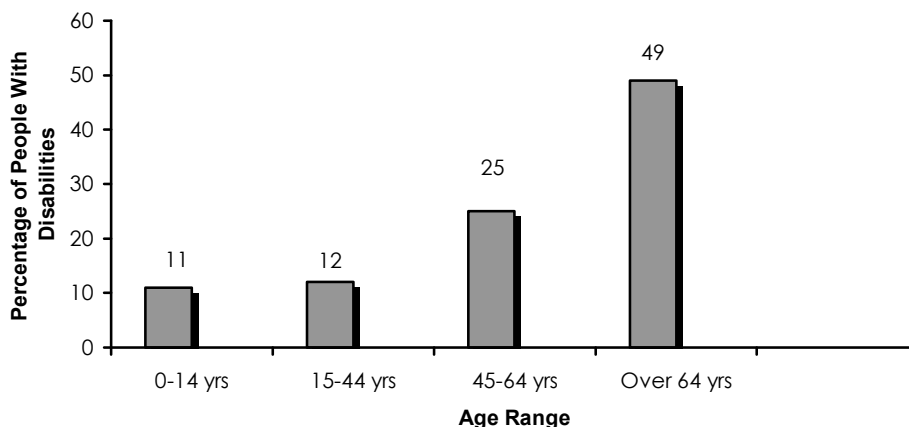
(6) *Multiple Disability:*

- According to the Ministry of Health analysis, 59% of people with disability have more than one disability and the likelihood of this increases with age. This differs slightly from the Statistics New Zealand figure of 62%, which the Ministry of Health considered included an over-estimate for children, due to the definition of disability and disability types used (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 55-56/Disability Counts, 1998, p. 11).
- Prevalence of multiple disability is greater in residential facilities. 94% compared to 58% for those in households (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 56).
- Multiple disability is likely to become a key issue in the future given our ageing population (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 90).

(7) *Age:*

- The likelihood of having a disability increases with age for both children under 15 years and adults/seniors living in households.
- Significant proportions of people with disability are under 65 years. An estimated 71% of people with disability living in households are under 65 years of age and 29% over 65 years of age (Report on the 1996 Household Disability Survey, 1997, Table 9a, p. 19).

Disability Rates By Age



Source: Disability Counts, Table 1.1, p.21

(8) Gender:

- Overall more women than men have disabilities over 15 years. One contributing factor is the longer life expectancy of women (Disability Counts, 1998, p. 11-12).

(9) Ethnicity:

- Maori with disabilities are concentrated in the younger age groups. 24% of children with disability aged 0-14 years are Maori, 15% of those aged 15-44 years, 9% of those 45-65 and 3% for those over 65 (Disability Counts, 1998, p. 13).
- Maori disability rates are higher than Non-Maori of all ages under 65, living in households.

Age Group	Maori	Non-Maori
0-4 Years	7%	2%
5-14 Years	26%	9%
15-64 Years	60%	57%
65+ Years	7%	32%

Source: Disability In New Zealand, Table 3.3, p. 43

- Maori comprise 12% of all people with disability, which is slightly lower than the percentage of Maori in the total population of 14%. However, Maori are over-represented in both the 0-4 and 5-14 age groups, consisting of almost 30% of children with a chronic disease or disability. (Disability in New Zealand, 1998, p.43).

(10) Assistance:

- 16% of people with disability have high support needs, requiring daily assistance with self-care and independent living tasks.
- 42% of people with disability require a lesser degree of assistance (Disability in New Zealand, 1998, p. 50).

(11) Educational Qualifications:

- 43% of people with disability leave school without qualifications.
- Only 25% of people with disability have a school qualification or 28% a post-secondary qualification.
- There are significantly more people with disability without qualifications and fewer with school or post-school qualifications, when compared to the general population (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 46/ Disability Counts, 1998, p. 39).

Educational Outcomes for People Over 15 years of age	People with disability Residing in Households	People <u>without</u> disability Residing in Households
Leave school without qualifications.	43%	28%
With school qualifications.	25%	36%
With post-secondary qualification.	28%	37%

- According to the Ministry of Health, people with disability who require intensive assistance on a daily basis were:
 - The most likely to have no qualifications (46%).
 - The least likely to have post-secondary qualifications (21%).
 - The difference in educational success between people with disability requiring intensive assistance compared to those not requiring assistance, was greatest in the 15-64 year age group (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 46).
- The percentage of those with multiple disability and without qualifications was 21% higher than adults with a single disability (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 46).
- In 1996 10,600 of people with disability, over 15 years and residing in a household, were reported to be at University, 12,200 at Polytechnic and another 4,600 at other private training establishments. Therefore an estimated 1.8% of these people with disability were at university. In comparison 2.9% of these people were attending Polytechnic or private training establishments. However, probably a more accurate figure would be the percentage of people between 15-65 years, of which an estimated 2.7% were at university and 4.3% at Polytechnic or private training establishments (Disability Counts, 1998, p. 28).
- In 1995 a New Zealand Study indicated that University students with disability only formed an estimated 1% of total enrolments (Tertiary Students with Disabilities: A Resource Guide for staff, 1995).

- In 1998 the Government allocated \$9,940 million over 3 years to Universities and Polytechnics, for supporting the needs of high cost tertiary students with disability. This was allocated using a flat subsidy of \$29.95 (incl. GST) per funded EFTS place at all tertiary education institutions. Anecdotal evidence from students, graduates and staff associated with Disability Support Services suggests that this grant has contributed to a significant increase in the level of support for these students and the numbers attending Polytechnic and University.

For example:

- The number of students with disability attending Lincoln University has increased from an estimated 28 in 1992 to 80 in 2000 and in 1998 27 of these had had high support needs compared to 48 in 2000 (Annual and MoE Reports, 1996-2000).
- In 2000, Waikato University reported that the number of students with disability enrolled increased from 210 in 1998 to 475 in 1999 and course completion rates of students with disability were over 70% (Statement of Objectives 1998-2000: Disability Support Services, 2001, p. 2-3).
- In 1998 Victoria University reported an increase of 28% compared to the previous year, of students with disability enrolled in the Disability Support Services (Does the Road Wind Uphill All the Way ?, 1999, p. 7).
- The 2001 MoE Report on the Special Supplementary Grant for Tertiary Students with Disabilities indicated that institutions, other than Lincoln University, had also seen an increase in students with disability with high support needs and costs. This also spoke of an increase in students with mental illnesses and the fact that there seemed to be particular urban areas where students with particular disabilities, for example deaf students, were concentrated (Report on the Special Supplementary Grants for 2000, 2001, p. 1-2).

In September 2000 the Ministry of Education reported that the most significant area of expenditure of this grant was in the provision of individualised support such as readers, writers, interpreters and note-takers (Report on the Special Supplementary Grants for 1999, 2000, p. 1-2).

More recently concerns have been raised about funding inequities with this grant formula, disadvantaging smaller institutions with good reputations for providing this support.

(12) *Employment:*

- Statistics NZ stated that of those over 15 years in households:
 - 37% of these people with disability were employed, compared to 66% for those without disability. Therefore people with disability are less likely to be employed.
 - Only 23% of people with disability who are employed require special equipment or services to be able to work in their present job. A guide to the types of support that may be required by these people includes:

Type of Special Equipment or Services	Percentage of People with disability
Modified Hours or Days.	56%
Changes to the Work Area.	31%
Modified or different duties.	23%
A Support Person.	15%
Modifications to the building.	14%
Technical Equipment.	9%

Source: Disability Counts, Table 4.10, p. 36

- 60% of these people with disability were not in the labour force or actively seeking work, compared to 25% of people without disability. 50% of these people with disability are under 65 years.
- 63% of these people with disability were either reported as not in the labour force or unemployed, compared to 29% of people without disability.
- Only 40% of these people with disability were in the Labour Force and therefore reported as employed or unemployed, compared to 70% of people without disability (Disability Counts, 1998, p. 14, 36, 37).
- The Ministry of Health readjusted these statistics to only include those between 15-64 years of age in households. They found that:
 - 53.4% of these people with disability were employed.
 - 42% were not in the labour force.
 - 46.6% of these people with disability were either reported as not in the labour force or unemployed.
 - The proportion in employment decreased with increasing disability. For example, only 35.1% of people with disability who require intensive assistance on a daily basis were employed, compared to 58.4% of people with disability who do not require any assistance at all.
 - These employment levels were much lower than those for people without disability (75%).
 - People with disability who require intensive assistance on a daily basis were more likely to be not in the labour force or

unemployed. For example, only 61.6% of these people, compared to 41.6% of those who do not require any assistance (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 47, 169).

- In the year ended June 1999, the largest category of Human Rights complaints were related to disability and half of these involved employment (The New Zealand Disability Strategy: Making a World of Difference Whakanui Oranga, 2001, p. 8).

(13) *Personal Income:*

- The total personal income for adult/seniors with disability is significantly lower than for those without disability.
- 60% have a gross personal income of less than \$15,000, compared to 45% of the general population.
- 71% of women with disability have a gross personal income of less than \$15,000.
- People with disability are three times as likely to be on a benefit.
- Overall adults with disability are almost twice as likely to earn a household income under \$30,000, than those without disability.
- 55% felt cost was a barrier to service and needs being met (Disability Counts, 1998, p. 14 -15).

Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework & Current Issues in the Employment of People with Disability

The Situation

(a) Associated Theory

Normalisation

- This concept has been the guiding principle for Human Service since the 1970s. It was the concept behind the relocation of people with disability from large institutions into the community, out of sheltered workshops and into open employment (Eggleton, Robertson, Ryan, 1998, p. 4).
- Normalisation challenges the view that the needs of people with disability can be best met in a sheltered environment. Instead this reinforces the stereotypes within society that people with disability are abnormal and consequently, they are devalued (p. 5).
- The concept of normalisation recommends providing people with disability with the opportunity to experience and participate normal daily routines, developmental experiences, express human rights, live, work and recreate in an integrated environment (p.5-6).

Social Role Valorisation

- This is central to normalisation. This assumes that the attainment of valued social roles in society by devalued people with disability helps them to re-establish themselves as valuable members of society and to enjoy a better quality of life.
- It is predicted that roles such as those obtained through work and community living ensure that people with disability are treated better by society and that they will have fewer restrictions. Employment for example gives the opportunity to contribute to society, gain independence, have autonomy, social interaction and goals (Eggleton, Robertson, Ryan, 1998, p.6).

Models of Service Provision in the Disability Community

Historically we have used the Medical Model for development of support services for people with disability. This model considers the disability, injury or illness as a personal problem to be fixed. As a result many support services have focused on 'clinical interests'.

More recently the Social Model of Disability has been developed. Instead of focusing on 'clinical interests, this model aims to remove barriers in the social and physical environment that prevent people with disability from participating and contributing fully to community life (The New Zealand Disability Strategy: Making a World of Difference Whakanui Oranga, 2000, p. 1).

The social model of disability has gained support from many parts of disability community. It is widely felt by people with disability that because the medical model has only focused on 'clinical interests, many of the barriers within our society, which prevent many people with disability from succeeding in education and employment, still exist. These barriers include negative attitudes, lack of funding for support and physical access.

The social model has a very practical application within organisations. Essentially staff should aim to identify and remove barriers that may prevent people with disability gaining equal access to services and other processes such as recruitment, training and career development.

NZ Disability Strategy: Making a World of Difference Whakanui Oranga

The New Zealand Disability Strategy presents a long-term plan for changing New Zealand from a disabling to an inclusive society. The aim of the strategy is to eliminate these barriers wherever they exist.

The strategy will guide government action to promote a more inclusive society. It is an enduring framework that will ensure that government departments and other government agencies consider people with disability before making decisions. It will sit alongside other government programmes such as the Positive Ageing Strategy and the New Zealand Health Strategy.

Underpinning the strategy is the philosophy that:

- (a) Disability is not something individuals have.
- (b) What individuals have are long-term impairments. They may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, intellectual or other impairments.
- (c) Disability is the process that happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have.
- (d) Disability relates to the interaction between the person with the impairment and the environment.

The strategy therefore refers to *disabled people* – people who are disabled by their environment. Like the social model of disability, this strategy considers that barriers are created when we build a society that takes no account of the impairments other people have. It is recognised that the government therefore needs to help open the way into community life for disabled people - by removing the barriers to their participation.

Supported Employment

- Supported Employment was born out of the philosophy of Normalisation and Instructional Techniques developed in the early 1970's. It originally appeared in America and was introduced into New Zealand just over 10 years ago. It is also used in Canada and Australia (NZ Journal of Disability Studies, 1996, No. 3, Taylor, p. 31).
- The models of Supported Employment that have developed include Work Crews, Enclaves and Individual Placement (Disabled Youth and Employment, OECD, 1994, p. 88).
- In the United States Supported Employment has been most effective for people with severe intellectual disability, physical disability, mental illness and brain injuries. While there is an initial high cost phase it is viewed as cheaper than Sheltered Workshops. There are also cost benefits from getting people off welfare entitlements and into paid employment where they become taxpayers (Employment and Training Policies for People With Disabilities: A Literature Review, 1991, Department of Labour, Johns, p. 24).
- International research shows that 90% of placements are the result of personal connections. (Supported Employment in New Zealand, 1996, Bennie, p. 8).
- The Association of Supported Employment in New Zealand (ASENZ) defines supported employment as the process of *placement, training and ongoing support* of people with disability aimed at their earning *financial remuneration* in integrated work settings.
- The 6 *defining characteristics* of Supported Employment are:

Placement First/Train/Support:

The traditional approach of assessment and training before placement is reversed. Rather than wait to see if the person is work ready, needs training or has the potential before placing them in employment, the person is placed in employment and then their training and support needs are established and implemented.

Ongoing Support:

Training and support are ongoing, not time limited and essential to the success of the placement. Natural supports such as family members and co-workers should also be increasingly involved as time goes by so that the person with disability feels part of a team.

Financial Remuneration:

The philosophy of supported employment assumes that real work is carried out for the same level of pay as anyone else completing the same tasks and with the same experience and skills. This principle makes the staff member feel valued in an equitable way.

Universal Eligibility

This assumes that all people with disability should have the right to be placed in employment. This includes people with significant developmental, physical, sensory, intellectual disability or mental health needs. This principle is very important because it prevents employers and others from assuming that people with disability who are more difficult to place, should not have the right to Supported Employment placement.

Integrated Settings:

Supported Employment assumes that people with disability should have the right to employment in integrated settings, alongside people without disability.

Career Development

People with disability should have same right to Career Planning, as all other employees. Like other employees, people with disability have the right to fulfil their aspirations through career development. They must always be included in the processes associated with this Career Planning and their colleagues need to look at their abilities, not their disability, when considering issues such as training and promotion.

(b) Current Issues in the Employment of People with Disability in NZ

In 1996 it was estimated that 2,500 people with disability had been placed in Supported Employment by around 12 agencies. It is projected that there are 14,000 people with disability who could benefit from these programmes (Supported Employment in New Zealand, 1996, Bennie, p. 2).

An estimated 3,147 people with disability were reported to be employed in the Public Service in 1999, of which 59% were women and 41% men. In 1998 3,416 staff with disability were reported to be in the Public Service. If you compare the representation of people with disability in the Public Service between 1994-1999, the percentage of those with disability in the Public Service has continued to decline over this period (Public Service EEO Statistics 1994-99, SSC, 2000, p. 1-2/EEO-Progress in the Public Service as at 30 June 1998, 1999, SSC, p. 52).

Some of the current employment issues are:

- (1) At the 18th World Congress of Rehabilitation International, Barbara Murray, a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist with the International Labour Organisation had this to say about people with disability:

"...people with disability in western countries count among the less qualified workers, therefore, they are increasingly vulnerable to unemployment, as a result of globalisation.

...automation has shifted labour market opportunities towards workers with higher, more adaptable, multiple skills...Given that many people with disability have low educational and skills levels, this form of technological change is likely to have a negative effect on employment opportunities for them(Pg. 3)...*While the potential of information technology and new assistive devices is recognised, their impact is not yet clear. High levels of cost, inaccessible environments, unanticipated barriers caused by technological progress and the lack of the essential communications structure prevent people with disability taking advantage of these developments.*" (Pg. 5)

- (2) In contrast the New Zealand Futures Trust has predicted that participation of people with disability in both education and employment will continue to increase. Impact 2000: How Information Technology Will Change New Zealand (1996) was a report commissioned by the Minister of Information Technology. This provided an overview of the likely impact Information Technology would have on New Zealand society. In essence this stated that:

"Future workers will be managed in more flatter participatory systems with considerable autonomy. There will be greater flexibility, mobility, larger numbers of teleworkers, self-employed and greater access to work for people with disability.

Improvements in information technology should make education and employment more accessible to rural communities and those people with disability who are less mobile. This could occur through technology such as teleconferencing and internet services.

In order to respond to these predicted changes; public and private sector organisations will need to develop strategies that ensure the needs of these groups are considered." (p. 50)

- (3) While Supported Employment is now recognised by Government agencies, there is a view by a number of Supported Employment specialists that there is a lack of government policy about Supported Employment. These people also feel that Supported Employment should be one part of a broad strategy to reduce segregated employment (Supported Employment in NZ, 1996, Bennie, p. 2, 9).
- (4) Compounding this problem is the lack of understanding of Supported Employment by staff in disability agencies. "Schemes take on the Supported Employment label, but not its philosophy and practice" (Bennie, 1997). This problem was one of the main reasons behind the establishment of a Diploma of Supported Employment.
- (5) Instead of measuring employment outcomes, it appears that government policies have measured employment outputs (eg. Service volumes, levels of service). These on their own don't measure

the quality or impact of services. Garth Bennie believes that we need to measure what happens to people because of their employment. Does their financial security improve, how long do they stay in jobs, are they learning new skills, do they have new friends, is there workplace discrimination, have people had promotions or career development? (Supported Employment in NZ, 1996, Bennie, p. 7).

- (6) A reclassification of the invalid and sickness benefits needs to occur. The current benefit abatement system works as a disincentive for people getting into open employment. Many people are worse off by obtaining paid work and are therefore reluctant to do this.
- (7) Internationally it is agreed that Supported Employment must particularly serve those with severe disability. At present the emphasis on outputs encourages placement into employment of those with disability who are 'easier to place'. It is therefore important the Government funders and employment agencies develop strategies and target funding at those with severe disability (NZ Journal of Disability Studies, 1996, No. 3, Taylor, p. 45).
- (8) Only 25% of people with disability have a school qualification and 28% a post-secondary qualification and there are significantly more people with disability without qualifications, when compared to the general population (Disability In New Zealand, 1998, p. 46). To promote choices, promotion and career development people with disability need continuing education, which allows individuals to gain skills and further their careers. It is therefore imperative that agencies such as Mainstream and Workbridge continue to provide funding programmes that allow this to occur. It is also essential that Public Service departments also offer these training opportunities.
- (9) All people with disability in employment should be able to gain access to Workbridge Job Support for 'on the job support solutions'. At the moment many people with disability employed in Public Service departments can't access this funding for workplace support strategies such as equipment and interpreters. Workplace support strategies are the tools that allow staff with disability to do the job to the best of their ability. Without these there is the potential to create a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure. It is therefore critical that this anomaly is resolved and that Public Service departments also allocate funding for workplace support for people with disability.
- (10) Wages should reflect people's contribution to work. Therefore the mechanisms for paying below the 'adult minimum wage' needs to be invoked for those with more severe disability and their needs to be a review of benefit abatement to create incentives. An alternative solution would be to develop a 'performance wage' for those working 15 hours or more. This wage 'top-up' would come from the person's base benefit. (NZ Journal of Disability Studies, 1996, No. 3, Taylor, p. 46-47).

- (11) Funding for support such as Job Coaches or training must not be time-limited. In the past one criticism of Workbridge has been that funding for support could only be for a short period, for example two weeks (Taylor, 1996, p. 14). These types of decisions make it difficult for some people with disability to succeed in employment. It is also important that at some point, co-workers to provide this support.
- (12) Many Government agencies view Supported Employment as a cheaper option and are therefore not developing strategies to employ people with disability on merit or allocating sufficient funding for support. This is hindering the ability of people with disability to get sufficient funding for 'on the job support', thus creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure (Supported Employment in NZ, 1996, Taylor, p. 14).
- (13) Social Isolation can occur for people with disability in employment. This can be overcome by providing staff (co-workers) with accurate information, resolving funding barriers and preparing the job seeker so that they understand the workplace culture and environment (Supported Employment in NZ, 1996, Walton & Gordon, p. 27-28).
- (14) There are 43 million people with disabilities in the United States. Studies have indicated that 51% require no expenditure for specialised equipment and of those that do, 30% need \$US500 or less and only 8% need more than \$US2000. The United States EEO Commission estimates that the first year equipment cost for all people with disabilities is \$16 million, with a productivity gain of \$164 million resulting from this investment (The American Mosaic: An In-depth Report on the Future of the Diversity at Work, 1995).
- (15) The US Dept. of Labour's Office of Disability Employment Policy has:
 - (a) Developed a national toll-free service (eg. Earn) for employers to locate people with disability for positions. This refers employers to agencies such as Workbridge, who have contact with appropriate candidates.
 - (b) This service also provides employers with technical assistance related to employment of people with disability.
 - (c) This office has also developed:
 - A recruitment programme which allows employers to request a database of pre-screened graduates to fill summer or permanent roles.
 - A Job Link website which takes prospective job applicants to job listings where employers seek people with disability to hire.
 - A service where employers are linked to University Disability Support Services. They are given the names of relevant staff.
 - Project Enable, a national resume bank for employers which contains an applicant pool of qualified people with disability currently on benefits (www.worksupport.com, 2001, p. 1-3).
 - A resume database for employers committed to hiring people with disability.

- (16) In the US a number of State Sector employers offer internships for people with disability. For example, the Central Intelligence Agency offers these to give people the opportunity to gain practical work experience to complement academic studies. These are offered to students doing a range of majors and involve mentoring with highly skilled professionals. They occur between semesters or in the summer months and include a 90 day programme (www.cia.gov).
- (17) In her recent article, *Employing Disabled Workers*, Karen Brake from the EEO Trust stated that:
- (a) Recent British research had found evidence of discrimination towards employing people with disability and that employers frequently overlooked people with disability for promotion.
 - (b) NZ research had found that this discrimination often occurs during the pre-employment, recruitment and selection stages.
 - (c) There are a number of myths that prevent people with disability getting into employment. For example:
 - *People with disability are less reliable and absent more.* Australian research found that 86% of employees with disability had an above average attendance record.
 - *People with disability cost more to employ.* US research has shown that 75% of US managers had found that the cost of employing people with disability, compared to those without disability, was about the same.
 - *People with disability will be less productive.* Swinburne University in Australia found that there was no significant difference in productivity levels for most people with disability and that people with disability had a lower rate of employment turnover, when compared to those without disability. This confirms the view the people with disability are often very loyal and hard working employees.
 - (d) When developing job descriptions, employers need to focus on the outcomes, rather than narrowly defining the task. This allows people with disability to present innovative ways of reaching the desired outcomes (Employer Today, 2001, Brake, p. 19-35).
- (18) The EEO Trust Diversity Index found that of the employers surveyed:
- (a) Only 3% of their staff had a disability.
 - (b) 70% of the employers had no people with disability in senior management positions and of those staff earning \$60,000 per annum, only 7.4% were people with disability (EEO Trust – *People with Disability and Work: Why employ people with disabilities*, 2000, p. 4-5).

(19) The EEO Trust has developed a series of booklets, People with Disability and Work. These recommend strategies to improve recruitment and retention of people with disability :

(a) Recruitment:

- Application forms or Interviewers should state the reason for asking disability-related questions.

(b) Job Analysis:

- Determine what is essential and what is desirable. This allows for flexibility when accommodating people with disability.

(c) Job Description:

- Focus on the outcome rather than the task. This will allow people with disability to present their method for reaching the desired outcome.

(d) Person Specification:

- Specify which skills, qualifications and attributes are essential and which are preferred.
- Remember formal qualifications and previous work experience are not the only indicators of ability.

(e) Advertising:

- Be aware of discriminatory language.
- Advertise in the disability community (eg. Workbridge).
- Make job descriptions and applications available on disk, large print and/or electronically.
- Include a fax number and/or email address.

(f) Selection:

- Only ask for information that is directly relevant to the job and the candidate's ability to do it.
- If recruitment requires a selection test people with disability may need an alternative format.
- Guaranteed interviews for people with disability who meet the basic job specifications.
- Application forms should not include questions about disability unless there are appropriate safeguards.

(g) Interview:

- Ask all who short-listed if they have any particular needs for the interview.
- Applicants should only be asked about their ability to perform tasks relating to the job.

(h) Induction:

- Discuss workplace support required before the employment commences.
- Arrange a pre-start visit to ensure a smooth process for workplace support and adaptations.
- Before the employee with disability starts ensure that the manager and supervisor understands the agreed workplace support and the workgroup is briefed on this support.

- Allow the person with disability to organise their work area.
 - Assign a colleague to help integration into the workplace.
 - Training and induction material in an appropriate format.
- (i) Training and Development:
- Assign a mentor when the person with disability starts.
 - Develop a process for creating career goals and a plan to implement these.
 - Carry out an ongoing training needs analysis.
 - Ensure training accommodates disability needs.
- (j) Workplace Support:
- Regular breaks.
 - Introduce a Disability Leave Policy.
 - The ability to bank overtime to compensate for disability-related absences.
 - People with disability can work at home or have flexible hours.
 - Apply to external funders for individualised technology and ensure that the organisations' technology framework considers the needs of staff with disability. For example – large print options on computer screens, large computer screens, braille computer packages, audio options for information, the use of email, interpreters, FM hearing systems, Bobby-approved websites which have been analysed for their accessibility for people with disability .
 - Use external expertise to identify technology options.
 - Part-time schedules, gradual hours or taking meetings via conference calls or video conferencing so people with disability can work from home and don't have to travel.
- (k) Retention:
- Focus on achievements and successes.
 - Encourage people with disability to assess their own performance and if there is any change establish why.
 - If changes are to do with the disability, investigate strategies to make current workplace support more effective.
 - Assess when external advice is needed from a health professional or the disability community support networks.
 - Ensure decisions reflect mutual agreement.
 - Develop networks for people with disability in the workplace.
 - Have a senior manager responsible for people with disability.
 - Include disability harassment in workplace harassment policy.
 - Present information and success stories to other staff about employment of people with disability, to overcome the negative stereotypes they may have.
- (20) At the 2001 DisAbility and Education Conference in Auckland, Robyn Hunt and Graham Oliver of AccEase Ltd recommended the following strategies for websites for people with disability:
- Adopt user-centred design.

- Adopt a consistent and structured page design.
 - Focus on ease of search and navigation.
 - Create accessible content.
 - Ensure adaptability for individual needs and preferences.
 - Test with technical accessibility tools.
 - Test using people with disability (p. 10).
- (21) The University of Waikato have developed a booklet called Access Employment: Career and Job Finding Information for Disabled Students. This states the following:
- (a) A study of graduate outcomes in Western Australia found:
- People with disability were more likely to work part-time or in self-employment.
 - People with disability do experience barriers in employment and the most common barrier is inflexible work routines.
 - People with disability did encounter discrimination from employers and took longer to find employment.
 - Fewer graduates with disability had worked in the final years of their degree and this had created barriers when applying for jobs. Students with disability tend to concentrate on getting their qualification and dealing with disability support, rather than getting work experience (p. 9).
- (b) Workbridge research of graduates with disability indicates that a lack of previous work experience is a significant barrier for people with disability getting into paid work (p. 4).
- (c) People with disability should consider volunteer work as a transition process into permanent employment, while completing their university degree (p. 4).
- (22) At the 2000 Pathways Conference in Perth, Mark Bagshaw from IBM essentially stated that:
- (a) Only 50% of graduates with disability in Australia find employment, compared to 74% of other graduates.
- (b) We need to market the value of graduates with disability to employers and get to the heart of employer concerns about hiring people with disability.
- (c) Otherwise:
- The investment of training people with disability will be wasted.
 - Instead of contributing to society, they will be on a benefit, and
 - The potential loss of income to the economy will be significant.
- (23) The NZ Disability Strategy: Making a World of Difference Whakanui Oranga contains some objectives and actions relevant Public Service departments.

They include:

Objective 1:

Encourage and educate for a non-disabling society.

Actions

- 1.1 Develop national and locally-based anti-discrimination programmes.

Objective 4:

Provide opportunities in employment and economic development for disabled people.

Actions

Planning and training for entering employment:

- 4.1 Provide education and training opportunities to increase the individual capacity of disabled people to move into employment.
- 4.2 Enable disabled people to lead the development of their own training and employment goals, and to participate in the development of support options to achieve those goals.
- 4.3 Educate employers about the abilities of disabled people.
- 4.4 Provide information about career options, ways to generate income, and assistance available for disabled people.
- 4.5 Investigate longer-term incentives to increase training, employment and development opportunities for disabled people.

Employment and economic development:

- 4.8 Encourage the development of a range of employment options recognising the diverse needs of disabled people.
- 4.9 Ensure disabled people have the same employment conditions, rights and entitlements as everyone else.
- 4.10 Make communication services, resources and flexible workplace options available.
- 4.11 Operate equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies in the public sector.
- 4.12 Investigate a legislative framework for equal employment opportunities across the public and private sectors.

Objective 5:

Foster leadership by disabled people.

Actions

- 5.3 Model the inclusion of disabled people in leadership roles within government departments, in order to encourage leadership by disabled people within all organisations.
- 5.4 Support the establishment of a leadership development and mentoring programme for disabled people.
- 5.5 Establish a register of disabled people for government appointments.

Objective 6:

Foster an aware and responsive Public Service.

Actions

- 6.1 Develop mechanisms to ensure that all government policy and legislation is consistent with the objectives of the New Zealand Disability Strategy.
- 6.2 Adapt public sector training to ensure that service development and service delivery are consistent with the New Zealand Disability Strategy.
- 6.3 Ensure that all government agencies treat disabled people with dignity and respect.
- 6.4 Improve the quality of information available, including where to go for more information, the services available and how to access them.
- 6.5 Make all information and communication methods offered to the general public available in formats appropriate to the different needs of disabled people.
- 6.6 Ensure the locations and buildings of all government agencies and public services are accessible.

It is important that all Public Service departments include strategies in their Implementation Plans, that ensure these objectives and their associated actions are implemented. Many of the actions would overcome barriers identified by students and graduates involved in this project.

Chapter 5:

Student and Graduate with Disability Perceptions of the Public Service and as a Potential Employer of Choice

The aim of this project has been to:

- Determine the depth of opinion of university students and graduates with significant disability interested in policy roles and targeted disability employment agencies, on their perceptions of the Public Service and as a potential employer of choice.
- Recommend strategies for improving the effectiveness of recruitment and retention for policy graduates with disability in the Public Service.

A total of **26** students and graduates with disability have participated in this project. Feedback was obtained from **12** university students with disability, from Canterbury, Victoria and Lincoln Universities (Appendix 4). **8** of these students participated in four focus groups in Wellington and Christchurch, with two participants in each. A further **4** students were unable to attend these focus groups and provided information through email, consistent with the focus group question guide (Appendix 1).

A letter (Appendix 2) was emailed to **19** graduates with disability and **14** responded (Appendix 5). This information was sent to graduates who it was considered might have already had some experiences in the Public Service or who may be trying to get employment in the Public Service.

Both the student and graduate respondents were asked to answer questions divided into two sections:

- Careers and Employment options, and
- Information about Careers and Employers.

The 26 students and graduates included:

- (1) Those with a range of disability:
 - (a) Vision and hearing impairment, deafness and blindness.
 - (b) Physical disability such as Cerebral Palsy, Head Injury, OOS, chronic pain, serious back injury or those requiring the use of crutches, a manual or power wheelchair.
 - (c) Mental illness and learning disability.
- (2) People located in Auckland, Wellington, Hamilton, Christchurch, Palmerston North, Dunedin and Invercargill.
- (3) Those who had studied or were studying at the following universities – Auckland, Victoria, Massey, Canterbury, Lincoln and Otago.
- (4) 19 women and 7 men and at least three people that identified as either Maori or Pacific Island.
- (5) Those who had completed or were completing a range of Bachelor and Masters courses in a range of areas.

Analysis of Some Students' & Graduates' with Disability Perceptions

An analysis of the feedback from students and graduates with disability involved in this project, indicates the following:

University Course

- (1) The majority of students and graduates were well qualified:
 - (a) In terms of the students:
 - 4 were doing a Masters and 8 an undergraduate degree.
 - 6 had already completed an undergraduate degree. With some having more than one of these.
 - At least 6 were completing or had completed honours.
 - 3 were doing Arts, 3 Commerce, and 5 Science.
 - 1 was doing Public Policy, Landscape Architecture, Law, Education, Maori Business and Tourism.
 - (b) In terms of the graduates:
 - 8 had completed a Masters and 14 an undergraduate degree.
 - 4 had completed honours, although another 4 had completed a Masters Degree, which indicates undergraduate honours.
 - 11 had more than one degree.
 - 4 had completed Arts, 4 Commerce, 4 Social Work or Social Science, 2 Science, 1 Law and 1 Education.
 - (c) Therefore:
 - One third of students were doing a Masters degree, over 50% already had a degree or honours.
 - 57% of graduates had a Masters degree and it can be assumed that at least 4 had completed honours, although given the number with a Masters Degree, it is likely that there are more who completed honours.
 - 79% of the graduates had more than one degree.
 - The common degree areas were Commerce, Arts, Science, Social Work and Social Sciences.
- (2) When the students were asked their reasons for taking the course, the common themes were:
 - (a) To get a job, so that they could break through the barriers of associated with disability (eg. Low income, limited choices, losing years, limited dreams, negative employers).
 - (b) To increase their employment opportunities and options, and
 - (c) To get a job where they could make a difference.
- (3) All of the students felt the course of study had met their expectations. The majority also felt that there had been positive changes in the support given to students with disability since 1998, when the Government allocated funding for supporting students with high cost support needs. The students were very impressed with the support given now, in comparison to prior to 1998.

The students made the following interesting comments:

- The support is very lecturer and resource dependent.
- They are using support such as a note-taker for lectures, special arrangements for tests/exams (eg. Extra or split time or a voice-activated computer at home for exams), carparks, learning support for mature students, scanners, CD writers, overheads in advance, individual assistance with labs and transcription service which put information into alternative formats (eg. Enlarged, disk).
- This support has seen improvements in their grades.
- What is really important is being aware of the support that you need, the range services that are available and being willing to ask for this support.
- The University needs to improve the infrastructure – there could be automatic opening doors, no steps and voice-activated lifts in new buildings.
- Invisible disability is not well catered for. University staff are less accommodating because they can't see it and they don't believe students are not coping because of this.

Next Step

- (1) The students were then asked, what was the next step and whether the course was an end or a beginning. All respondents saw their degree as a beginning, but many were concerned that time was against them. One student had this to say:

"I've seen many students associated with Disability Support Services who have great qualifications and can't get a job. They can't get their foot in anywhere. People with disability tend to lack self-confidence and need help to move through to the next step."

Another said:

"I am always working, but in jobs I am way over qualified for. For example, I am a Team Leader Waste Management – which means I am in charge of the rubbish bins. I am never going to get rich doing this and it doesn't utilise my qualifications...I end up working with people half my age, who earn the same money and don't have the same qualifications".

Potential employment fields the students identified included:

- (a) Lobbying, advocacy, public policy, health (eg. Health or industrial psychology) and management.
- (b) Project management, public and media relations, office administration, marketing, event management, community work/case management, teaching and self-employment.
- (c) Research.

More than one student felt university had raised their aspiration:

“When I first started my degree it was purely because I had to do something, I couldn’t lie here all day and stare at the ceiling. I thought university would be a great way to fill in time and it would be interesting. It was later as time went on that I started to think of the things that I could do with my degree. I think that because I started getting good grades, I realised that I could work and get a job! University has moved my aspirations on and now I fully anticipate getting off the benefit and having a good income.”

The majority also saw the Public Service as their preferred option:

“I would like to get a good job with good positioning. However I want to get work, get experience and then move into a job probably in the Public Sector. I like this environment – the stability and the long-term focus. Private enterprise is great, the money would be wonderfully awesome, but the hours would be exhausting. I would also like to have my own business, but that will come later. “

- (2) The next section asked the students and graduates to identify what they were looking for in terms of a career move. Many graduates ranked the careers in the following order - A Public Service role, a policy role, a Disability policy role.

They also wanted:

- A people orientated role focusing on their abilities and something they could get passionate about.
- Security, challenges, changes, guarantees of growth, job responsibility, career development, mentoring and a sense of involvement in society as a fully employed rate-payer.
- Part or full-time work.

Many of the students also identified a policy role in the Public Service as a career move and identified the following departments as potential employers. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Services Commission, National Library, Ministry of Social Policy, the Ministry of Education, MAF (Bio-security) or other departments with a science focus. Another option was a university career.

Many students and graduates had already tried to gain employment in the Public Service and despite many having excellent qualifications, they had found this very difficult. A common theme was not being able to get to the interview stage because of perceived barriers to people with disability, created by the departments. To overcome this some had started a portfolio career working as a consultant for departments on specific projects.

Others had gone elsewhere (eg. Disability support roles), given up or gone back to university to get more or better qualifications.

- (3) Both the students and graduates were asked what influence does your disability have on the type of job or career you are looking for. Most of the students tried not to let their disability limit their career opportunities, but admitted that it did have some influence.

Most of the students and graduates felt that:

- (a) The disability was in the background, with some saying it was a major influence.
- (b) It was less of an influence, if other people had an attitude that considered their disability needs and they were flexible.
- (c) It was often other people's perceptions that limited them – "You feel like your disability is a hassle to some employers!"

The Best Employers

- (1) All of the students and graduates were asked - What is your idea of the ideal employer?

The students ranked the following:

- (a) One who employs you on your skills, qualifications, work experience and pays you at the same rate as other people and doesn't penalise you because you can't work such long hours or have a disability.
- (b) Someone who has a good work environment and if you have a disability, makes sure that your disability needs are met.
- (c) One who is flexible:
 - Flexible hours to allow people with disability to complete tasks when they are at their best (eg. Part-time or full-time, in the morning or at night).
 - Uses different technology.
 - Adapts the task to the employee.
 - Willing to adapt when things turn to custard.
 - Creates an inclusive and accessible environment.
 - Ability and willingness to listen and learn.
 - Doesn't expect you to come up with all the answers at one point in time and realises that it is going to be an evolving process and ongoing.
- (d) A manager and colleagues who accept that people with disability may need to adapt tasks or need some flexibility, but their contribution is still important.
- (e) Walking the talk with EEO policies.
- (f) The ideal employer looks after all staff. They help to overcome workplace difficulties with the environment or colleagues.
- (g) Colleagues who don't make the disability an issue or patronise, who try different communication or information methods.

- (2) The graduates also felt the ideal employer would be:
- (a) One who is flexible:
- Provide practical support with tasks (eg. Specialised computer system, software and IT support).
 - Listens, takes risks and promotes outside the box.
 - Looks at different but effective ways of working.
 - Thinks outside the square.
 - Takes responsibility to adapt the work environment.
- (b) Supportive:
- Encourages people with disability to work to their full potential.
 - Encouraging and fair while providing a challenge and stimulating work environment.
 - Understands the issues of disability, prepared to be accommodating and supportive in career development.
 - Open and equitable standards.
- (3) In essence, the students and graduates involved with this project have identified the *ideal employer* as someone who is:
- Flexible towards disability, in a variety of different ways, and on an ongoing basis.
 - Willing to adapt tasks, but doesn't penalise people for this.
 - Employing and paying people with disability equitably on the basis of their skills, qualifications and work experience.
 - Encouraging people with disability to work to their full potential.
 - Walking the talk with EEO practices, and
 - Creating an inclusive, supportive and accessible environment.

As one student stated:

"Employers need to recognise that I am perfectly capable of fulfilling my obligations as set out in most job descriptions, however I may need some extra time or the ability to work unusual hours so that I can accommodate the work around my disability."

Information about Careers and Employers:

- (1) The key methods that students involved with this project used to find out about the best employers were:
- (a) Personal networks.
 - (b) University Career Services – although they tend to be for graduates and not equipped to help people with disability. The students spoke of needing specific help with finding jobs. Help from a placement agency so they could be proactive and get personalised support (eg. Individual help with CV writing, rather than a pamphlet, overcoming disability-related barriers).
 - (c) Reputation or trial and error.
 - (d) Workbridge to find employer with good EEO practices.

The graduates, on other hand, ranked the following:

- (a) Websites.
- (b) Personal Networks.
- (c) The newspaper.
- (d) Disability Networks - Workbridge, RNZFB Vocational Advisor, Mainstream.

- (2) These students and graduates were then asked what were the best information sources to hear about jobs or careers, including those in the Public Service?

The students ranked the following:

- (a) Personal networks first – relatives, friends, university people, disability networks, people who know their skills and see jobs.
- (b) Websites:
 - For example on computers at university Careers Services.
 - Students felt it would be good if there were websites advertising full and part-time work, contracts or consultation, if this information was on integrated and disability community list-servers and accessible individually from home.
 - A government website of all vacancies in the Public Sector, with the ability to have them emailed to you every week.
 - Websites for government jobs and then contacting them through my home email address. I would rather make a contact directly than go through an agency.
- (c) Careers Services or Disability Support Services at university.
- (d) Workbridge, although they often have low status jobs which are not a good match for graduates.
- (e) The newspaper.
- (f) The government Careers Services.
- (g) Employment agencies, although they tend to put up more barriers about my disability.

For the graduates their rankings were:

(a) Disability Networks:

- Through service providers in the disability community (eg. RNZFB telephone information service, email networks, newsletters, mental health service provider job clubs, Workbridge, Mainstream, DPA, ACHIEVE).
- Through Disability Coordinators at Universities and Polytechnics. These staff could be a contact point for recruitment programmes. They are able to reach most students with disability through email lists and support them through the process.
- Roadshows to students with disability and graduates by Public Sector employers at tertiary institutions.
- Promotional evenings through Workbridge.
- Creating disability job search database.

(b) Personal Networks.

(c) Websites, newspaper.

- (3) The students and graduates were also asked, what would make it easier for people with disability to access and use information about jobs or careers?

The students ranked:

(a) Information in alternative formats (eg. Electronic) and on websites, that could accommodate disability-related software and be accessed from home.

(b) A contact person, within departments, who people with disability could talk to about workplace support strategies, when applying for jobs. This should be included with the advertisement.

(c) To be able to ask questions about disability support that would be available in the workplace.

(d) A contact person specifically for people with disability at Career Services at university, who could provide individualised support.

(e) To talk with other people with disability to see what their experiences had been in the workplace.

(f) Disability Support Services could offer a specific career service for people with disability.

The students also felt that:

- Workbridge and Career Services need to find employers with good EEO practices to refer people with disability to.
- It is important that employers are using a range of options for advertising jobs, because people with disability require a range of formats to access information.

The graduates also ranked:

(a) Websites:

- Increased access to the Internet through Department of Work and Income offices or someplace else (eg. Workbridge).
- Stricter regulations and guidelines to web page designers to make information accessible for people with disability.
- Perhaps an Internet site for disability related jobs.
- Email networks (eg. Tertiary Students with Disability Network).

(b) Accessible information - increased access to alternative formats.

(c) The use of Disability Networks and raised similar ideas as outlined in 2(a) of the previous section for graduates.

(4) Students were then asked - What information would you want to receive from an Employer in order to help you decide whether to work for them or not? This included Public Service employers.

(a) The highest priority was how an employer would accommodate their disability. As one student stated:

“Usually they don't have that kind of stuff and I am reluctant to ring up and find out in case I disadvantage myself. “

Students wanted to know:

- How often they have meetings, to book an interpreter.
- How much they would need to use a phone.
- Information about accessible facilities within the workspace.
- Examples of employees with disability within the organisation.
- Is there a contact point to talk about your disability support?
- What would the job physically involve?
- What workplace support is provided people with disability?
- Can information be provided in alternative formats?
- Can communication processes be adapted for deaf staff?

(b) The second highest priority was a description of the job position and the conditions of employment – what the job requirements are, vacancy lists, information that allows you to determine whether you have the skills.

(c) How much workplace support the employer would pay for.

Most of the students felt that it would be good to get an idea of how much the employer would be able to accommodate their disability within the application pack and then to have the opportunity to discuss this at the interview.

As another student stated:

"Because they don't talk about the disability-related support they provide it is often quite hard to decide whether to apply for a job. If employers had a commitment to EEO they would outline what support they offered people with disability, ask you what disability-related support you required and this would be taken into consideration without disadvantaging you. Instead you are lucky if you get an interview if you disclose."

- (5) When the graduates were asked the same question, they ranked similar information. Their priorities were:
- (a) What disability-related support the employer can offer:
- Technology support, assistance with completing tasks, physical access, support networks, parking facilities, remuneration for catering to issues regarding ones disability.
 - Advocacy service for approaching the employer on any issue.
 - Funding for disability-related needs.
 - How flexible they are in adapting the job.
 - Special leave arrangements for disability related issues.
 - The size of the workspaces and toilet facilities.
 - Information which provides an insight of the attitude of staff towards disability, the level of computing required, and how important it is to drive.
- (b) Job Description and conditions of employment:
- EEO policies, career paths, ongoing professional development, training opportunities, promotional opportunities, remuneration, job challenges, staff infrastructure, other roles the employer/department can offer and opportunities for creativity and individualism.

Another priority for the graduates was a demonstration of EEO and New Zealand Disability Strategy practices. They wanted to know:

- The concrete ways an employer was implementing these policies such as accessible websites, providing information in alternative formats (eg. electronic).
 - What anti-discrimination programs were in place and how the department protected people with disability from discrimination.
 - If other staff had disability awareness training.
 - If they actively employed people with disability and/or if they had employed people with disability before and how this went.
- (6) Both students and graduates were asked two website questions - What are the features of the ideal website to hear about jobs or careers? What features would make it easier for people with disability to use this site?

For the students the features were:

- (a) You can access the website at any time, easy and user friendly.
- (b) The website can be accessed on campus through career services, Disability Support Services or Workbridge.
- (c) Information which is 'disability-friendly':
 - Fast running, very few pictures, and graphics.
 - Keep it totally functional and searchable with key words.
 - It is important that departments follow accessibility guidelines for people with disability, already developed - tab linked, no PDF files or graphics, tab links with names.
 - Fax and email addresses.
- (d) Job websites need more information – often they have a title and a contact point (eg. www.jobs.govt.nz). Information needs to be there at a switch of a button.
- (e) A person to contact to ask questions about this support.
- (f) The disability-related support that is offered.
- (g) Free access to websites – on campus, career services, WINZ or Workbridge. People with disability are on low incomes.

The graduate feedback was similar:

- (a) Good design, easy-to-navigate, clear and relevant information on websites, graphics not cluttered.
 - (b) Accessible-bobby approved.
 - (c) A "site map" on the side of your screen.
 - (d) Non-graphical and has good text links.
 - (e) A symbol to identify that the job can be filled by an appropriately skilled person with disability, if they chose to apply.
 - (f) A website specific for job seekers with disability.
 - (g) A section for disability orientated roles and a section on disability friendly employer policies.
- (7) The websites the students and graduates tended to use for job and career information were:
- www.jobs.govt.nz
 - www.nzjobs.co.nz
 - www.new-zealand-jobs.com
 - www.careers.govt.nz
 - www.careers.co.nz
 - www.monster.co.nz
- (8) The final part of this section looked at employer recruitment programmes for graduates at university.

This determined that:

- (a) None of the students involved with this project had attended a recruitment programme.
- (b) The students would prefer to attend mainstream recruitment programmes, but have the opportunity to receive information about disability-related support.
- (c) Ideally this should be provided as part of the presentation, but some may wish to meet with staff individually.
- (d) These programmes should be arranged in consultation with Disability Support Services on campus, so students with disability are notified through the service email listserver.
- (e) The following disability support should be provided with these programmes - a sign language interpreter, an accessible environment, good seating, alternatives for people with disability to meet staff, a copy of the information and in alternative formats (eg. Large print).

Public Service

- (1) The majority of students involved with this project saw the Public Service as their preferred employment option. Generally there was a view that disability-related needs would be accommodated better in the Public Service than in the private sector.

The key reasons for this were the Public Services' obligation to EEO practices. Because of these, students felt safer in the Public Service and thought there would be more stability. However, many also felt that this would be dependent on the manager and immediate team and how aware they were, their ability 'to walk the talk', and their political motivation at the time. One student said:

"A lot of people are told to be behind EEO practices, rather than wanting to be. The Departments may be into EEO Practices, but there is often not a commitment there by the people doing the implementing."

- (2) Despite the majority of students preferring the Public Service as an employment option, many had a negative image of the Public Service. When asked to describe their image of the Public Service only a few described positive images.

Many described:

- A planet tangled in red tape.
- An image of grey or black suits.
- A very formal area with staff disappearing into buildings closed off to the outside world – the faceless bureaucrat.
- That making decisions involved many levels.
- Continual restructuring.
- That most of the status jobs go to men.
- That the Public Service follows fads like EEO, that people implement just because it is part of their job or politically correct.
- That departments would have their own language - acronyms.
- Feeling unwelcome and invisible.
- That their disability would be viewed as a barrier to recruitment and career development.

Many of the students also described that the Public Service in an ideal world would be caring, putting employees first, paying a reasonable wage, offering secure employment, open-minded, flexible, resolving workplace problems, providing ongoing training, communication and input. Management structures would be flattened and people with disability would be well looked after.

- (3) The students were also asked to describe their image of the private sector. All felt it was less likely that their disability needs would be met. Many felt that this would depend on the organisation they were employed by and that if someone already had a disability or work experience and the employer liked your work, there would be more chance of their disability needs being met.

Many described that they would feel more pressured or at risk in the private sector, because there wouldn't be EEO obligations like the Public Service.

However many described a number of benefits in the private sector:

- Fewer judder bars to slow you down.
 - The barriers are more visible.
 - It is more creative – real things are happening.
 - It is more relaxed, informal and flexible.
 - Management are more aware of what employees want.
 - Efficient organisation, flow, structures, policies and management.
 - Very exciting and the latest technology.
 - If people with disability got a job in the private sector they would feel like they had got this on their skills and experience, the employer would want the person to do their best and give them disability-related support to make this happen.
 - There would be fewer layers for getting decisions about workplace support.
- (4) The students and graduates were then asked to describe how much they knew about the Public Service? Most of the students considered that they knew very little, while a few said they knew a lot. In contrast the majority of graduates said they knew a lot or a little bit. This was essentially because many had applied for work on merit in the Public Service or for Mainstream.
- (5) The students were also asked to identify; How they developed their opinion of the Public Service and Public Service careers? What they perceived as career options in the Public Service?

The common methods for developing their opinions were by looking, having family members or friends there and their own work experience. Teaching at university and articles in the media about the Public Service, also influence their opinion.

The common career options that the students ranked were - Management, policy, human resources, case management and administration.

- (6) In the next section the students and graduates were asked to provide feedback on, what are the *benefits* and *drawbacks* in working in the Public Service compared to other career options?

The students identified the following common benefits:

- (a) If you are in policy you are having an opportunity to influence or change things in society, within government parameters.
- (b) The Public Service is a safer place for people with disability, compared to private sector.

Other benefits listed by the students were:

- Guaranteed income so can have lifestyle choices, regular leave allowances, regular training, reviews, support and stability.
- Ability to change jobs within and have promotion.
- The realm of responsibility and it is a good start to a career.
- The Public Service are a little less profit orientated.

The common drawbacks identified by the students were:

- (a) Bureaucratic structures and management.
- (b) Different ideas may not be encouraged.
- (c) You may not share the same ideas of the government of the day.
- (d) Other staff may think you got the job because of your disability, rather than your skills.
- (e) The level of pay.

Other drawbacks listed by the students were:

- People are overworked and stressed at times.
- Some Public Sector employers actively discriminate against people with disability by excluding them (eg. Police).
- The perception of long-term safe employment has gone.
- The Public Service is highly structured and there is little flexibility. People with disability often need to do things that go against normal procedures.

- (7) The graduates identified the following common benefits:

- (a) The Public Service is an EEO employer who would hopefully value the diverse knowledge and skills that people with disability might bring to the role.
- (b) Public Service staff serve the wider public interest.
- (c) Provisions for people with disability (eg. Disability awareness training, accessible buildings, Mainstream).
- (d) Stability.
 - Potential to structure career, training, career development.
 - It may have more security of tenure.
 - Can really tune writing skills and be a safe place from which one can try something truly creative and change-making.

The common drawbacks identified by the graduates were:

- (a) EEO policies are not actively enforced for people with disability.
- (b) Lack of disability awareness and flexible working conditions.
- (c) There is a lack of true understanding of people with disability and little action to encourage people with disability into employment.
- (d) There is no job security for people with disability.
- (e) The Public Service can be extremely bureaucratic:
 - Many departments operate with a minimum number of administrative support staff. This can create barriers for some people with disability when they don't receive appropriate workplace support.
 - One can't speak out freely and having to implement policy which may be personally distasteful.
 - Change is small and very slow.
 - Discriminatory fellow employees and/or managers.
 - The lack of promotion prospects.

Other drawbacks listed by the graduates were:

- People with disability tend to be typecast, remaining in jobs they started out in and finding it impossible to get their career aspirations taken seriously.
- Working outside the Public Sector I could have a support person paid by Workbridge's "Job Support" funding and perhaps use this funding to pay for computer equipment. This is not available in the Public Service.
- Several people with disability are denied opportunities in employment besides being well skilled. One graduate stated:

"I had a scholarship with a Public Service department Head Office and I satisfied all the terms of the contract. When I graduated I was told they had no job for me, despite them advertising two weeks later for graduates. I had been told the Head Office was inaccessible and they didn't know how to meet my technology needs. I am sure we could have come up with a solution."

- (8) These next two sections are the most important areas in this report. Firstly, the students and graduates were asked to give feedback about the barriers in the Public Service they saw because of their disability.

The common barriers identified by the students in order of priority were:

(a) Negative attitudes. Some of the associated feedback included:

- The worst employers are often those who think they are the best.
- Because you have a disability they think you may not be able to do the job the way they want you to.
- People may not be willing to adapt the environment to meet disability-related needs.
- I have never got very far with policy jobs in the Public Service. I've had quite a few interviews, but there has been a lot of resistance – a real lack of understanding on disability issues. I have often had the question – How can you expect to do the job, you can't read the information. All I would expect is that information was enlarged or given to me electronically.
- In terms of interviews, I have heard of employers who weren't anticipating that people with disability would get that far...then feel that this will be an interesting exercise, but they are not seriously looking at the person.
- There is a reluctance to make the Public Service inclusive for people with disability. People need to assess their own value base.
- Knowledge of disability is threatening, rather than an asset.
- Many people still believe that a learning disability means that 'you are a bit slow' and people with mental illness should be 'locked away'. It creates an environment where it is easier to keep quiet and hide any disability from potential employers.
- I know some people with disability whose employment has been an absolute disaster and the just wanted to get out.

(b) Lack of flexibility.

(c) There is often a big difference between a Departments EEO policies and practice – “they are not walking the talk.” Some issues included:

- I request job information and like to send my application electronically via email, because of my vision impairment. I come up against a brick wall. Departments often say they can't send a job description out that way. They only have it in print.
- People are typecast in particular roles because of their disability – like a glass ceiling – progression is really difficult.
- Employers include a driver's license in the person specification of job descriptions. This may deter or even prevent some people with disability from applying for jobs, even though driving is only a small part of the job and there are other ways of travelling.
- Many employers just ask the question “Have you got a disability”, as part of the application process. Because they don't ask “what workplace support is required to manage the impact of a disability” and they don't say how this information will be used, people are reluctant to tick yes. People are afraid that if they tick yes, the employer won't look at them.

The common barriers identified by the graduates in order of priority were:

(a) Negative attitudes of staff. Some of the feedback included:

- People's perception of the abilities of a blind person.
- People are patronising and under-estimate my abilities. Employers see the barriers of communication as problems.
- People need to think outside the square and be flexible in the way that positions can be carried out. It comes down to attitude to people with disability. People are scared of having people with disability on staff because they think it will create extra work.

(b) Current recruitment and EEO practices. Some of the issues included:

- Lack of active programmes to encourage people with disability with the appropriate skills into positions on merit.
- Lack of commitment to equitable recruitment/retention practices.
- Performance appraisal neither recognises nor rewards disability expertise or skills (eg. Creative problem solving).
- Career development opportunities, financial recognition and training opportunities limited.
- Voluntary roles not recognised.
- Hiring skilled people with disability is not encouraged or promoted.
- Inflexible job descriptions, stringent job tasks, most jobs are full-time.
- Lack of disability awareness, mentoring and under-employment.

(c) Environmental Barriers:

- The shortage of qualified sign-language interpreters and the ambiguity of where responsibility for paying the interpreters lies.
- Many roles are computer based requiring spreadsheets and databases, inaccessible to some software (eg. Screen reader).
- Buildings that are not upgraded.
- Lack of technology.

In summary, the common barriers in the Public Service, identified by both the students and graduates, were *negative attitudes towards recruitment of people with disability, staff who were inflexible in accommodating disability and some departments 'not walking the talk' with EEO policy and practice*. Point (1) of the Best Employers section, lists a range of strategies recommended by the students and graduates, to make departments more flexible for people with disability.

- (9) So what actions need to occur to make the Public Service more attractive to people with disability and to overcome the barriers.

Common actions identified by the students in order of priority were:

(a) Development of policies to integrate people with disability into the workplace. Ideas recommended by the students were:

- Identifying potential barriers to people with disability when jobs are advertised and looking at alternative ways of doing tasks.
- Have a contact person, within departments, who people with disability can talk to about workplace support strategies, when they are applying for jobs. This should be in job advertisements.
- Including staff with disability in a review of recruitment within the Public Service and as part of the interview panels for jobs.
- Departments contacting universities and talking with students with disability, to inform them about the Public Service.
- Disability questions that only ask people support required to minimise the impact of the disability at work (eg. What support do you require?)
- Only ask disability-related questions at the interview stage, so that people with disability only have to show their skills, experience and qualifications at the application stage.
- Job information in alternative formats (eg. Electronic), which can accommodate disability-related software and that can be accessed from home. This should include the ability to use email to download job descriptions and to send applications.
- Information in advertisements about workplace support provided by the employer.
- Development of employment policies that encourage flexibility.
- Regular supervision of staff with disability to identify and resolve potential workplace barriers on an ongoing basis.
- Monitoring of policies to integrate people with disability into the workplace so people with disability and departments can see if they are 'walking the talk'.
- Exit interviews or surveys when people with disability have to leave because of workplace barriers. These should get meaningful feedback that will prevent similar issues occurring again. This information needs to be reviewed in a way that it is not buried and patterns are identified and resolved. A senior staff member or even an external agency should do this.

(b) Staff training about recruitment/retention of people with disability:

- General management and staff training.
- Be presented by people with disability.
- For staff recruiting or directly supervising people with disability.
- This needs to be a national programme like the 'Like-Minds Project', which is an anti-discrimination programme.

- Strategies that prevent other staff becoming defensive if people with disability get disability-related support.
- (c) Public Service employers actively recruiting people with disability (eg. Scholarships, internships, quotas for people with disability).
- (d) Mainstream needs to more flexible. Students suggested:
- Some graduates with a work history can't get on Mainstream even though their work may not be relevant to their degree.
 - Mainstream needs to be refined so that the resources can be used in a more flexible way. Instead of always offering the same salary subsidy, the level of subsidy should be dependent on the size of the employer or the level of disability of the employee.
 - The subsidy should also be available for workplace support costs such as interpreters or equipment – the first priority should be the workplace support, not the salary subsidy.
- (e) EEO needs to be redefined. It has created a competitive environment. It should be seen as a way of creating a diverse workforce that reflects the community, to get the best out of people and to encourage teamwork. If it is done right it should lead to good business practice.
- (10) Common actions identified by graduated in order of priority were:
- (a) Increased flexibility, improved EEO Practices and development of policies to integrate people with disability into Public Service departments. The students recommended the following:
- Public Service departments embracing technology to provide flexibility for individuals with disability.
 - Benefit packages need to be flexible so that part-time and/or short-term workers with disability can access them.
 - Public Service departments allocating in annual budgets, specific funding for 'workplace support' of staff with disability.
 - Greater physical access to buildings, flexibility in hours of work.
 - An increased level of flexibility in terms of providing both technical and administrative support and designing systems that are accessible to all (eg. Intranets, web pages).
 - Clear EEO policies or affirmative action from management.
 - Mentoring for new staff, interesting projects or professional development opportunities (eg. Secondment to other departments) and clear career development paths.
 - Interpreters and other support to access information.
 - When Public Service department advertise positions, illustrating their willingness to provide workplace support, training and promotional opportunities,
 - Targeting people with disability to fill certain positions (eg. Disability policy roles).

- (b) Public Service employers actively recruiting people with disability:
- Affirmative action programmes in place for people with disability with skills, until we have equitable access in employment.
 - Scholarships that require on completion of the scholarship the Public Service department to take that graduate on while considering issues around their individual disability.
 - Expanded holiday-time job placement and work experience programmes in the State Sector.
 - Targeted advertising and recruitment campaigns aimed at graduates with disability, as an extension of Mainstream.
 - Promotion about the accommodation of disability and roles that have a disability orientation in advertising campaigns.
 - Establishing effective liaison with Workbridge and other disability support agencies (eg. University) to identify graduates with disability interested in Public Service careers.
- (c) Training about recruitment and retention of people with disability:
- All staff including the Ministers and CEO's to be fully trained in disability awareness issues.
 - Internal disability awareness staff training should be mandatory, regular and given by an experienced trainer with disability.
- (d) Effective implementation of the New Zealand Disability Strategy:
- Financial backing towards the aims of the NZ Disability Strategy would improve the operation of the Public Sector.
 - Setting up a Ministry of Disability issues where graduates with disability could work on issues.
 - A policy department to oversee all policy and initiatives for people with disability in society, including in employment.
 - A NZ Disability Act to be introduced with the NZ Disability Strategy, to be the guideline for this.
- (11) When the actions recommended by the students and graduates are compared, the common threads include:
- (a) Public Service departments developing strategies to actively recruit people with disability.
 - (b) Staff training about recruitment and retention of people with disability.
 - (c) Development of policies to improve the integration of people with disability into Public Service departments.
 - (d) Reviewing Public Service EEO practices and enhancing these to improve recruitment and retention of people with disability. This review should focus on development of strategies to increase flexibility and workplace support for people with disability.

Chapter 6:

The Perceptions of Some Workbridge Staff about the Public Service and as a Potential Employer of Choice

(1) The Situation

Phase three of this project was to provide a focus group with staff from the Christchurch office of Workbridge. Unfortunately this has not been possible to arrange due to a range of circumstances beyond my control.

I therefore adapted the graduate email questions and sent these to some Workbridge staff to respond to (Appendix Three). The aim of this email was to determine how much knowledge Workbridge staff had of the Public Service as an employment option.

(2) Analysis of Workbridge Staff Perceptions

This generated feedback similar to the student and graduate feedback and appears to indicate the following:

- (a) Many Workbridge staff may have limited knowledge of the Public Service as an employment option for graduates with disability and limited experience working with graduates applying for jobs in the Public Service.
- (b) However, many Workbridge Placement Co-ordinators appear to have some knowledge of the Mainstream Supported Employment and experience arranging Mainstream Placements.
- (c) Some Workbridge offices find Public Service departments bureaucratic to deal with and this creates barriers for arranging work for people with disability in the Public Service.
- (d) Many Workbridge offices currently have little in the way of work for highly skilled people with disability and that needs to change.
- (e) Students and graduates with disability involved in this project felt that Workbridge should:
 - Liaise with Public Service departments to identify vacancies and graduates with disability interested in Public Service careers.
 - Screen Public Service vacancies.
 - Pass relevant vacancies onto students and graduates with disability.
 - Offer an Internet Service so students and graduates with disability can check Public Service vacancies on relevant websites.
 - Offer "Job Support" funding for Public Service workplace support.
 - Offer promotional events for Public Service departments to present job and career information to these students and graduates.

- (f) The benefits and drawbacks of the Public Service were similar for the Workbridge staff involved with the project. However they identified some additional barriers – it is difficult to get anyone to make a decision to employ people with disability in the Public Service and constant restructuring often closes out new applicants. Negative attitudes and prejudice were also mentioned.
- (g) Once again the Workbridge staff felt that students and graduates would need information about disability-related workplace support and conditions of employment, to decide whether to work for the Public Service.

Workbridge Staff Feedback about Career and Employment Options:

1. What are people with disability looking for in terms of a job or career move?
 - Fair, equal treatment from a supportive employer who understands that some special consideration may be required.
 - A career that provides good income, is challenging and gives job satisfaction.
2. What influence does the disability have on the type of job or career they are looking for?
 - Too many to answer this question effectively in this format.
 - The realities of their situation may impinge on their choice of career in terms of physical capabilities. Sometimes it is more the perceived realities, which limits people's aspirations.
3. What is your idea of the ideal employer for people with disability?
 - Inclusive and taking the job-seeker on board because they have the right skills to do the job, not because of the disability.
 - One who puts the individual first and is prepared to juggle things in the work place to accommodate someone's disability.
4. How much do you know about the Public Service?
 - Enough, sometime more than enough! Bureaucracy often a factor, red tape often a mission.
 - Probably a bit more than the average person and a lot less than someone working in it.
5. What would be the benefits for people with disability of working in the Public Service, compared to other career options?
 - Opportunity to get a foot in the door and prove their worth while on Mainstream; big enough organisations to allow the newcomer to have good opportunities to make suitable work friends; regular training and opportunities to apply for internal promotion or job changes.
 - Perhaps more security. Once they are in there, the backing of EEO policies which are more likely to be adhered to than perhaps in the private sector.

6. What would be the drawbacks for people with disability of working in the Public Service, compared to other career options?
 - Not as dynamic. Not as commercial in their attitude to work. Unsure.
 - Perhaps stagnation, although this can occur anywhere.
7. What barriers within the Public Service do you see for people with disability?
 - No one prepared to make the decision to employ and constant restructuring closing out new applicants.
 - The same as those in the private sector. Attitudes and prejudices.
8. What actions need to occur to make the Public Service more attractive to people with disability?
 - Unsure.
 - Seeing more people with disability employed and moving up in their careers.

Workbridge Staff Feedback on Careers and Employer Information:

1. What information do people with disability need to receive from an Employer in order to help them decide whether to work for them or not?
 - Information that allows them to determine that access to all required parts of the building is OK, if the department is an equal opportunity employer and that the Employment Relations Act process will be followed.
2. What information do you require from an Employer in order to help people with disability decide whether to work for them or not?
 - Information that shows pay-rate offered is equitable with others doing that job. Information about disability related access.
 - The opportunities for advancement within the department, salary range, further training opportunities, attitude to disability and how they would adapt the work place to suit them, some idea of the history of the department.
3. Where are people with disability looking to find out about jobs or careers?
 - Internet, newspapers, Workbridge and other employment agencies.
 - Approaches to individual employers, newspaper articles and advertisements, journals, company and department internal vacancy circulars, word of mouth, employment agencies and the internet...

4. What would be the best way for people with disability to find out about jobs or careers?
 - Use their personal networks to get the word out there that they are seeking work in a Public Service area.
 - Newspaper articles and advertisements, journals, company and department internal vacancy circulars, word of mouth, employment agencies and the Internet.
5. What would make it easier for people with disability to access and use information about jobs or careers?
 - Enrolment with an employment agency such as Workbridge.
 - The Internet is an excellent tool but is not within easy reach of everybody, as some don't have a computer. However there are other ways of accessing it and if they are motivated they will find them.
6. What are the features of the ideal website for people with disability to hear about jobs or careers? Please specify any examples of good websites that people with disability use to find out about jobs or careers.
 - NZ Jobs, Monster.com.
 - Websites need to be set out so there is no confusion about the type of job vacancy.
 - I have to say that very few of my clients use websites to seek jobs, but having said that, at the moment I don't have any recent graduates on my books looking for work. These are the most likely to use such a tool out of my client base. The majority of my client base are people who have much lower aspirations and skill levels. It is always refreshing to get to work with someone who has graduated from University and is ready to embark on a career, but in my experience they are far too few and far between.

Conclusion

"There are a number of students with disability at university who are having real trouble getting work experience or a foot in the door of employers. This is very sad and must be frustrating. This means they can't get jobs that they are trained to do or earn enough income to allow them to be independent or have the same choices as other people. It is ironic that there are now students with disability who are getting excellent university qualifications, but still can't get jobs or gain access to the technology that would help them get employment."

"The expression of 'valuing diversity' which the Public Service claims to do, is often only paid lip service to... Treat people on the basis of their skills and qualifications first, rather than their disability."

These statements reflect the views of many of the university students and graduates involved in this project. Despite this, many saw the Public Service as their employer of choice.

The aim of this project was to:

- Determine the depth of opinion of university students and graduates with significant disability interested in policy roles and targeted disability employment agencies, on their perceptions of the Public Service and as a potential employer of choice.
- Recommend strategies for improving the effectiveness of recruitment and retention for policy graduates with disability in the Public Service.

Feedback received from the 26 students and graduates indicated that:

- (a) The majority of students and graduates were well qualified.
- One third of students were completing a Masters degree and over 50% already had a degree or honours.
 - 57% of graduates had a Masters degree and at least another 4 had completed honours.
 - 79% of the graduates had more than one degree.
- (b) All students felt the course of study had met their expectations.
- (c) The majority also felt that there had been positive changes in support since the Government allocated funding for supporting students with high support costs at University or Polytechnic.
- (d) All students saw their degree as a beginning, but many were concerned that time was against them.

(1) The Student and Graduate with Disability Perceptions of the Public Service and as a Potential Employer of Choice

The feedback from the students and graduates indicated that:

- (a) Many graduates ranked their preferred careers in the following order - A Public Service role, a policy role, a disability policy role. Many of students also identified a Public Service policy role as a career move.

- (b) Many students and graduates had already tried to gain employment in the Public Service and despite them having excellent qualifications, they had found this very difficult.

Associated Discussion

The percentage of those with disability in the Public Service continued to decline between 1994-1999. Information from Statistics NZ and the Ministry of Health, summarised in Chapter 3, also indicates people with disability are less likely to be employed than those without disability.

Research presented by Mark Bagshaw at the 2000 Pathways Conference, showed that only 50% of graduates with disability in Australia had found employment, compared to 74% of other graduates. A study of graduate outcomes in Western Australia also found that people with disability experience barriers in employment. The most common barriers were inflexible work routines, discrimination from employers and taking longer to find jobs.

This research and evidence from Workbridge also suggests fewer graduates with disability work in the final years of their degree and this creates barriers when applying for jobs. It appears that people with disability need a transition process into permanent employment, while at university.

- (c) The majority of students saw the Public Service as their preferred employment option. There was a view that disability-related needs would be accommodated better than in the private sector.
- (d) Common Public Service career options that students ranked were - Management, policy, human resources, case management and administration.
- (e) The majority were very supportive of Mainstream and asked that it be continued. However, many felt that the salary subsidy should be used more flexibly. They also felt that Mainstream should be available to those graduates already in employment, facing barriers to gaining employment in the areas they were trained for.
- (f) The Public Service benefits were; *the opportunity to influence or change things in society, the Public Service is a safer place compared to private sector, workplace support provisions* and EEO obligations.
- (g) The Public Service drawbacks were:
- The bureaucratic structures and management, the level of pay, and different ideas are not encouraged.
 - EEO policies are not actively enforced, lack of understanding of people with disability and disability awareness for staff.
 - Lack of security for people with disability, flexible working conditions, and action to encourage people with disability into employment.

- (h) Despite the majority of students preferring the Public Service as an employment option, many had negative images of the Public Service.
- (i) The common barriers in the Public Service were *negative attitudes towards recruitment of people with disability, staff who were inflexible in accommodating disability and some departments 'not walking the talk' with EEO policy and practice.*

Associated Discussion

In her 1995 report, *EEO Disability in the New Zealand Public Service*, Robyn Hunt stated that many line managers were not well equipped to deal with staff with disability and lacked the tools to facilitate solutions to overcome problems with workplace support.

Evidence also suggests that many employers are reluctant to employ people with disability. In her article, *Employing Disabled Workers*, Karen Brake of the EEO Trust spoke of British research that found evidence of discrimination towards employing people with disability. She also cited New Zealand research that had found discrimination often occurs during the pre-employment, recruitment and selection stages.

It appears that many of the reasons why employers are reluctant to recruit and retain people with disability can be disputed. For example:

- *People with disability are less reliable, productive and absent more.* Australian research found that 86% of people with disability had an above average attendance record, there was no significant difference in productivity levels for most people with disability and they had a lower rate of employment turnover, compared to those without disability.
- *People with disability cost more to employ.*
 - Statistics New Zealand found that only 23% of people with disability who are employed required special equipment or services to be able to work in their present job.
 - Many students and graduates felt that Public Service employers were reluctant to employ them because of workplace support. We therefore need to question why this is such a barrier to employers when the majority only require *modified hours/days, modified or different duties or changes to the work area.*
 - In *The American Mosaic: An In-depth Report on the Future of the Diversity at Work*, United States research was quoted which indicated that 51% of people with disability required no expenditure annually, 30% required \$US500 or less and only 8% more than \$US2000. This book also stated that the United States EEO Commission had estimated that the first year equipment cost for all people with disabilities was \$16 million, with a productivity gain of \$164 million resulting from this investment.

- (j) The *ideal employer* was someone who was:
- Flexible towards disability on an ongoing basis.
 - Willing to adapt tasks and wouldn't penalise people for this.
 - Employing and paying people with disability equitably based on their skills, qualifications and work experience.
 - Encouraging people with disability to work to their full potential.
 - Walking the talk with EEO practices, and
 - Creating an inclusive, supportive and accessible environment.

(2) Information about Careers and Employers:

The feedback from the students and graduates indicated that:

- (a) Most students knew very little about the Public Service. In contrast the majority of graduates said they knew a lot or a little bit.
- (b) Students and graduates used personal networks, websites, University career services and disability networks to hear about jobs and careers.
- (c) The information the students and graduates would want to receive from an employer, in order of priority, was:
- How an employer would accommodate their disability.
 - A job description and the conditions of employment.
 - How much workplace support the employer would pay for.
- (d) Departments should follow website accessibility guidelines for people with disability - No PDF files or graphics, tab links with names.
- (e) The websites the students and graduates tended to use were: www.jobs.govt.nz, www.nzjobs.co.nz, www.n-z-jobs.com, www.careers.co.nz, www.careers.govt.nz and www.monster.co.nz.
- (f) Students wanted to attend regular recruitment programmes at University, arranged in consultation with Disability Support Services on campus, with disability support provided (eg. Interpreters, copies of the information in alternative formats, good seating). They also wanted to hear about the disability support offered by the employer or the opportunity to meet with them individually to discuss this.
- (g) The following would make it easier for students and graduates to access and use information about Public Service jobs or careers:
- Information in alternative formats that could accommodate disability-related software and be accessed from home via email.
 - A contact person, within departments, who people with disability could talk to about workplace support strategies, when applying for jobs. This should be included with the advertisement.
 - A contact person at Career Services or Disability Support Services at University, who could provide individualised employment support.
 - Talking with staff with disability about their workplace experiences.
 - Increased and free access to Internet through WINZ or Workbridge.
 - An Internet site for disability related jobs.
 - Distributing job and career information through University Disability Support Services and other disability community email networks.

(3) Strategies to Improve Recruitment and Retention of Policy Graduates with Disability in the Public Service

The students and graduates recommended the following strategies:

- (a) Public Service departments develop strategies to actively recruit people with disability.
- (b) Staff training about employment of people with disability.
- (c) Development of policies to improve the integration of people with disability into Public Service departments.
- (d) Reviewing Public Service EEO practices and enhancing these to improve recruitment and retention of people with disability. This review should focus on development of strategies to increase flexibility and workplace support for people with disability.
- (e) The Public Service establishes a partnership with University Disability Support Services, Workbridge and other disability employment agencies to improve recruitment of graduates with disability.
- (f) Mainstream should be more flexible to cater for those graduates with disability who require workplace support funding and/or are having difficulty gaining work that they are trained for.
- (g) Workbridge should:
 - Liaise with Public Service departments to identify vacancies and graduates interested in Public Service careers.
 - Screen Public Service vacancies and pass relevant vacancies onto students and graduates with disability.
 - Offer an Internet Service so students and graduates with disability can check vacancies on relevant websites.
 - Offer "Job Support" funding for the Public Service.
 - Offer promotional events for Public Service departments to present job and career information.

Associated Discussion

The New Zealand Disability Strategy contains some specific objectives and actions relevant to Public Service departments (Appendix 6). If these specific objectives and actions were implemented, many of the barriers and strategies identified by the students and graduates would be overcome and implemented.

The key barriers to employment in the Public Service that the students and graduates identified were factors in the social and physical environment, rather than clinical interests. The Social Model of Disability has a very practical application for Public Service Departments. Essentially staff should identify and remove social and environmental barriers that may prevent people with disability gaining equal access to recruitment, training and career development.

Many of the students and graduates felt a lack of funding for workplace support was a barrier to employment and a key reason for

employer reluctance to recruit and retain them. People with disability employed in the Public Service can't access Workbridge 'Job Support funding' for workplace support and there is no other specific Public Service fund available for this support. This funding provides the tools that allow staff with disability to do the job and without this funding, there is the risk of failure. This anomaly therefore needs to be resolved. Public Service departments also need to allocate funding for workplace support for people with disability that they employ or who access their services.

Much of the background evidence in chapter 4 indicates that people with disability in other countries are also facing barriers to recruitment and retention. Many of the strategies developed by the United States Department of Labour's Office of Disability Employment Policy to overcome these barriers could be adapted to the New Zealand environment. Employers in Australia and the United States have also developed programmes to help graduates with disability transition into permanent employment, while at university. This includes internships and other work experience options. Many of these strategies would help improve recruitment and retention of graduates with disability in the Public Service.

To conclude, this statement from one of the students provides a summary of how those involved with this project viewed the Public Service:

"The Public Service needs to become more accessible to people with disability. Ironically the Public Service is more attractive for people with disability, but we just can't get in. They set up barriers we can't get around."

It doesn't make economic sense to allow these barriers to recruitment and retention to continue. If they are not resolved the investment of training and supporting people with disability will be wasted. Instead of contributing to society, many graduates with disability will continue to live on a benefit and the potential loss of income and the cost to the economy will be significant.

At this point I would like to thank all of the 26 students and graduates and Workbridge staff who provided their personal information for this project. It is this feedback that has made this report so valuable.

Recommendations

There are a number of strategies that the State Services Commission could implement to improve the effectiveness of recruitment and retention for policy graduates with disability in the Public Service.

I recommend that the State Services Commission consider the following:

- (1) Asking all Public Service departments to include strategies in their New Zealand Disability Strategy Implementation Plans, that ensure that the following objectives and their associated actions are implemented:
 - (a) Objective 1, Action 1.1.
 - (b) Objective 4, Actions 4.1-4.5 and Action 4.8-4.12.
 - (c) Objective 5, Actions 5.3-5.5.
 - (d) Objective 6, Actions 6.1-6.6.

If Public Service departments implemented these objectives and actions, many of the barriers identified by the students and graduates involved with this project, would be overcome.

The specific details associated with these objectives and actions are outlined in Appendix 6. They include the following areas:

- Development of anti-discrimination programmes.
- Providing education and training opportunities to increase the capacity of people with disability to move into employment.
- Enabling people with disability to lead the development of their own training and employment goals.
- Allowing people with disability to participate in the development of support options to achieve those goals.
- Providing information about career options and assistance available for people with disability.
- Investigating incentives to increase training, employment and development opportunities for people with disability.
- Encouraging the development of a range of employment options recognising the diverse needs of people with disability.
- Ensuring people with disability have the same employment conditions, rights and entitlements as everyone else.
- Making communication services, resources and flexible workplace options available for people with disability.
- Operating equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies in the public sector.
- Modelling the inclusion of people with disability in leadership roles within government departments.
- Supporting the establishment of a leadership development and mentoring programme for people with disability.

- Establishing a register of people with disability for appointments.
 - Adapting public sector training to ensure service development and service delivery is consistent with the strategy.
 - Ensuring that all government agencies treat people with disability with dignity and respect.
 - Improving the quality of information for people with disability.
 - Making all information and communication methods available in formats appropriate to different people with disability.
 - Ensuring the locations and buildings of all government agencies and public services are accessible to people with disability.
- (2) Investigating strategies for allocating specific funds for workplace support for people with disability in the Public Service. People with disability employed in Public Service departments can't access Workbridge 'Job Support' funding for workplace support strategies such as equipment and interpreters.

These support strategies are the tools that people with disability use to do the job to the best of their ability. It appears that this is creating a significant barrier to recruitment and retention of people with disability within the Public Service.

As one student stated:

"Working outside the Public Sector I could have a support person paid for by Workbridge's 'Job Support funding' and perhaps use this funding to pay for computer equipment. This is not available in the Public Service."

Three options are recommended to overcome this barrier:

- (a) State Services Commission develops a specific fund for workplace support. This would be similar to Workbridge's Job Support fund and each department would apply to the Commission for workplace support funds for specific people with disability, and/or
- (b) All departments are asked by the State Services Commission to allocate specific funds for workplace support for people with disability, in their budgets. One could argue that this should already be occurring and could also be used to fund the support costs of customers with disability (eg. For interpreter costs when a Deaf person visits WINZ), and/or
- (c) State Services Commission advocates to Government for an increase in the Workbridge Job Support fund, to cover workplace support costs of people with disability in the Public Service.

- (3) Developing a Public Service training programme for staff about recruitment and retention of people with disability.

One suggestion was a national anti-discrimination programme like the 'Like-Minds Project'. One of the benefits of a national programme would be consistency across Public Service departments.

It is essential that this training programme includes:

- (a) Management and other staff involved with recruitment and those directly supervising people with disability.
 - (b) People with disability as presenters.
 - (c) Training about the barriers for recruitment and retention of people with disability in the Public Service, identified in this report.
 - (d) Actions to overcome these barriers.
- (4) Encouraging all Public Service departments to develop specific strategies to actively recruit people with disability, including:
 - (a) Affirmative action programmes for people with disability with skills, until they have equitable access in employment (eg. Quotas).
 - (b) Scholarships that require on completion of the scholarship the Public Service department to take that graduate on.
 - (c) Expanded internships, holiday-time job placements and work experience programmes in the State Sector.
 - (d) Targeted advertising and recruitment campaigns aimed at graduates with disability, as an extension of Mainstream.
 - (e) Promotion about workplace support for people with disability and roles that have a disability orientation, in advertising campaigns.
 - (f) Establishing effective liaison with disability support networks to identify graduates with disability interested in Public Service careers.
 - (g) Developing strategies to circulate relevant information about Public Service jobs and careers, to these networks.
 - (5) Asking all Public Service departments to review their current recruitment practices for people with disability and to develop policies to improve the integration of people with disability into their workplace.

Possible policies could include:

- (a) Identifying potential barriers to people with disability when jobs are advertised and looking at alternative ways of doing tasks. It is essential that the key barriers identified in this report are resolved. They include *negative attitudes towards recruitment of people with disability, staff who were inflexible in accommodating disability and some departments 'not walking the talk' with EEO policy and practice.*

- (b) Having a contact person, who people with disability can talk to about workplace support strategies, when they are applying for jobs. This should be included with the advertisement.
 - (c) Including staff with disability in a review of recruitment within the department and as part of the interview panels for jobs.
 - (d) Contacting universities and talking with students with disability, so they are more informed about Public Service jobs and careers.
 - (e) Job information in alternative formats (eg. Electronic), which can accommodate disability-related software and that can be accessed from home. This should include the ability to use email to download job descriptions and to send applications.
 - (f) Information in advertisements about workplace support provided.
 - (g) Illustrating a willingness to provide workplace support, training and promotional opportunities for people with disability, in advertisements.
 - (h) Development of employment policies that encourage flexibility.
 - (i) Monitoring of policies to recruit and integrate people with disability into the workplace, so people with disability and departments can see if they are 'walking the talk'.
- (6) Reviewing Public Service EEO practices and enhancing these to improve recruitment and retention of people with disability. This review should focus on development of strategies to reduce negative attitudes, increase flexibility and workplace support for people with disability.

A summary of some EEO strategies for improving recruitment and retention of graduates with disability in the Public Service is outlined in [Appendix 7](#).

These strategies incorporate ideas from the students and graduates involved with this project, the EEO Trust 'People with Disability and Work' booklets and the 'EEO Disability in the NZ Public Service report' written by Robyn Hunt for the State Services Commission.

- (7) Presenting the key findings of this project and in particular the feedback from the students and graduates, to all key staff within Public Service departments.
- (8) Reviewing the feedback from students and graduates about the Mainstream Supported Employment Programme and consider developing specific strategies to improve access for graduates with disability.

Feedback indicated that:

- (a) Mainstream needs to be more flexible to cater for graduates with skills and tertiary qualifications, but having difficulty getting work.
 - (b) Some graduates with work history are not able to use Mainstream even though their work may not be relevant to their degree.
 - (c) For some graduates the subsidy should be used more flexibly. Some of the students and graduates recommended that:
 - The level of subsidy should be dependent on the size of the employer or the level of disability of the employee.
 - The subsidy should also be available for workplace support costs such as interpreters or equipment.
 - The first priority should be on funding workplace support, rather than a salary subsidy.
- (9) Encouraging Public Service departments to use the following methods to distribute Public Service job and career information to students and graduates with disability:
- (a) Websites, email list-servers, Career and Disability Support Services at the universities and wider disability networks (eg. Workbridge, Mainstream), to distribute job information.
 - (b) www.jobs.govt.nz, www.nzjobs.co.nz, www.n-z-jobs.com, www.careers.govt.nz, www.careers.co.nz, www.monster.co.nz.
 - (c) Regular recruitment programmes with the opportunity to receive information about disability support or to meet with employers individually. These programmes should be arranged in consultation with Disability Support Services on campus and disability support should be provided.
- (10) Developing a partnership with University Disability Support Services, Workbridge and other disability employment agencies, to improve access to Public Service departments for graduates with disability.

This partnership should focus on strategies for:

- (a) Passing on job and career information recommended by the students and graduates to at least Workbridge, University Disability Support and Career Services. However, many other disability employment agencies would also find this information useful.
- (b) Identifying the names of relevant staff employed by these services that could be given to Public Service Departments.
- (c) Encouraging Public Service departments to use these services.
- (d) Improving access for people with disability to job websites, Public Service department recruitment programmes and disability-related information to make informed decisions about jobs.
- (e) Improving Public Service access to graduates with disability.

- (11) That all Public Service job and career material includes:
- (a) Information in alternative formats that could accommodate disability-related software and be accessed via email from home.
 - (b) The disability-related workplace support that the employer could provide and fund.
 - (c) A contact person, within departments, who people with disability could talk to about workplace support strategies, when applying for jobs. This should be included with the advertisement.
 - (d) The job description and the conditions of employment.
- (12) Recommending to Public Service departments that they use the following website features for people with disability:
- (a) Information which is 'disability-friendly' - fast running, very few graphics, searchable with key words, fax and email, accessible-bobby approved, 'site map' on the side of your screen, good text links and a contact person to ask questions about support offered.
 - (b) Already established accessibility guidelines for people with disability - No PDF files or graphics, tab links with names.
 - (c) Those features suggested by Robyn Hunt and Graham Oliver of AccEase Ltd, which are mentioned earlier in this report.
- (13) Implementing for Public Service departments some of the strategies developed by the United States Department of Labour's Office of Disability Employment Policy. For example:
- (a) A national toll-free service for departments:
 - To locate graduates with disability for positions. This should refer staff to agencies (eg. Workbridge, University Disability Support Services, Mainstream), to contact appropriate candidates.
 - Offering departments technical assistance related to workplace support of people with disability.
 - (b) A database or website which allows departments to identify:
 - Pre-screened university graduates to contact.
 - University Disability Support Services and the names of relevant staff within these services to contact.
 - A national resume bank for departments which contains a pool of qualified people with disability currently on benefits.
 - (c) A Job Link website, which takes prospective job applicants to job listings where employers seek people with disability to hire.
- (14) Distributing at least the Conclusion, Recommendations, Appendix 6 and 7 of this report to students and graduates involved in this project, Public Service departments, Workbridge, University and Polytechnic Disability Support Services and other disability networks.

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Creative Solutions

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Appendix One:

Public Service as an Employer of Choice Research Project: Discussion Guide for Focus Groups for People with Disability

I have tried to make the content of this discussion guide consistent with that used for the earlier focus groups, while at the same time providing the opportunity to identify whether there are differences for the university students and graduates with disability. This discussion guide is intended to illustrate the flow and content of focus group discussion. It is not a questionnaire. There is considerable freedom to add or remove lines of questioning as the discussion evolves.

Introduction

1. Assurance of confidentiality.
2. Qualitative research – trying to get a snapshot of some views, ideas and opinions of a few students and graduates with disability about careers and potential employers.
3. Purpose of the interview:
 - To look at careers and potential employers.
 - To provide the opportunity to identify whether university students and graduates with disability have particular needs, not identified in earlier focus groups.
4. No right or wrong answers, approximately 1-2 hrs, use of audio equipment.

Current Course and Future Career

1. Just to get to know each other a little let's spend 5 minutes each telling each other:
 - Our name, What courses we're taking
 - Reasons for taking the course - What were/are our expectations of it.
 - What has it been like - How have expectations have been met or not met? How come?
 - What support have we received at university in relation to our disability?

Next Step

1. What about the next step?
2. Is the course an end or a beginning?
3. What are we looking for in terms of a career move?

Probe

1. What types of things are we looking for (motivators)
 - Future prospects – wider opportunities for development (diversification?)
 - A 'beginners' job or something more – (a stepping stone to something more?)
2. Where are we looking (organisations/industries)
 - Who with specifically? How does it relate to our course?
3. Which industries/sectors are:
 - Most desirable – how come
 - Easier /harder to get into as graduates
4. What influence does your disability have on the type of job or career you are looking for?

The Best Employers

1. What is your idea of the ideal employer?
2. What do the best employers offer?

Probe

- Package
 - Benefits
 - Stability
 - Experience
 - Training
 - Philosophy
 - Ethical considerations
 - Types of workplace support for your disability
 - Areas of opportunity
3. How do these contribute to 'best employer' status?
 4. How do we find who are the best employers?
 - (a) Where are we looking?
 - (b) Who are we talking to:
 - Key influencers (Teachers/lecturers, friends, parents, Workbridge, Disability Coordinator at University, other people with disability, support agency)
 - (c) What other information sources do we use - check university careers centre, website(s), any others?
 - (d) Which information sources do we find easier because of our disability?
 - (e) What information would you want to receive from an Employer in order to help you decide whether to work for them or not?
 - (f) Where are you looking to find out about jobs or careers?
 - (g) What would be the best way to find out about jobs or careers?

- (h) What would make it easier for people with disability to access and use information about jobs or careers?

Visualisation

Let's imagine that we are in a space ship travelling through the galaxy. We pass planets that are completely populated by different types of employment sectors.

1. We land on the Planet Public Service. The doors open and we step out.
2. What is it like?

Probe

- The atmosphere, The colours, The smells, The sounds, The sights, The people – what are they wearing, how old, gender.
3. What's going on here? How do you feel in this place? Are our disability related support needs met on this planet?
 - A representative of the planet comes up to us. Describe them.
 - What do they say to us?
 - Are they Friendly? Formal? Funny? Stuffy?

Discuss impressions and what they mean to participants

Record the participant's impressions on an A3 sheet.

Note: The interviewer will use an A3 sheet, rather than a whiteboard, because it is easier to manage from a wheelchair.

4. We now land on the Planet Private Sector. The doors open and we step out.

What is it like?

What's going on here?

How do you feel in this place?

Are our disability related support needs met on this planet?

Public Service

1. OK we're going to talk specifically about the public service now.
2. How much do you know about the Public Service?
3. If you had to brief someone who knew nothing about the public service and public service careers and what it's all about, what would you tell them?
4. How have you developed your own opinion of the public service and public service careers? Give definition of public service as supplied by SSC (what it is and isn't)
5. What do we perceive to be the career options available in this sector?
6. What are the different roles/types of work available?

7. What would be the benefits in working in the public service compared to other career options – Short-term/Long-term?
8. What would be the drawbacks of working in the public service compared to other career options – Short-term/Long-term?
9. What would the Public Service have to offer you to get you interested in working for them?
10. What barriers within the Public Service do you see because of your disability?
11. What actions need to occur to make the Public Service more attractive to people with disability?
12. What actions need to occur to overcome these perceived barriers to the Public Service as an employment option?

Probe

- Packages
- Pay
- Training
- Types of workplace support for your disability
- Benefits
- Positions

Information about the Public Service

1. What information would you want to receive from the Public Service in order to help you decide whether to work for them or not?
2. What do you need to know?
3. What information would we need to know in relation our disability?
4. What would be the best ways/sources to hear about careers in the Public Service?
5. What way would best for them to communicate with you?

Probe (if not previously discussed)

- School (teachers), Lecturers, University Careers Centre, Peers, Email, Disability Community Support Agency, Workbridge, University Disability Office, Website, Pamphlets, Print in alternative formats – standard and large print, easy to read or pictorial versions, tape, Braille, Roadshows/seminars, Site visits

Websites

The Internet is an increasingly popular way of finding information about careers and job vacancies.

1. What are the features of the ideal website to find out about jobs or careers? Please specify any examples of good websites that you use to find out about jobs or careers. For example check usefulness of profiles of people following different career paths within the service “day in the life of”.

2. What features would make it easier for people with disability to use this site?
3. Which sites are we currently going into for job/career information?
4. What are the strengths, weaknesses or gaps of these sites?

Recruitment Programmes

1. What recruitment programmes have you been on – tell us about the process?
2. What were they like ? What were the best aspects? What were the worst aspects?
3. What would make it easier for people with disability to participate in recruitment programmes?
4. How could they have been better?
5. If they have chosen an employer:
 - What did you choose between?
 - Why did you make the choice you did?
6. Is there anything else you would like to say?

Thank and Close

Appendix Two:

Email to University Graduates with Disability

Dear

Public Service as an Employer of Choice Research Project

The State Services Commission is currently undertaking a research project that is exploring the opinions and views of university students and graduates about their perceptions of employment options and careers in the Public Service.

I have been asked to get feedback from some students and recent graduates with disability. I aim to get a snapshot of the views, ideas and opinions of some students and graduates with disability, about careers and potential employers.

I am contacting some graduates with disability who may have already had some experiences in the Public Service or who are trying to get employment in the Public Service.

Below is a list of questions I am emailing to people who I am aware of through my association with DPA and ACHIEVE. These are a guide for your feedback. If you are willing to offer feedback, please email your responses back to me by Monday 5 November 2001.

This feedback will be used to identify some of the key issues for graduates with disability. Your responses will be confidential and I will not name or identify individuals in my report.

Please respond to those areas that you feel are applicable to your situation. These have been divided into two sections:

1. Careers and Employment options, and
2. Information about Careers and Employers.

Career and Employment options:

1. What tertiary qualification do you have?
2. What are you looking for in terms of a job or career move?
3. What influence does your disability have on the type of job or career you are looking for?
4. What is your idea of the ideal employer?
5. How much do you know about the Public Service?
6. What would be the benefits of working in the Public Service compared to other career options?
7. What would be the drawbacks of working in the Public Service compared to other career options?

8. What barriers within the Public Service do you see because of your disability?
9. What actions need to occur to make the Public Service more attractive to people with disability?

Information about Careers and Employers:

1. What information would you want to receive from an Employer in order to help you decide whether to work for them or not?
2. Where are you looking to find out about jobs or careers?
3. What would be the best way to hear about jobs or careers?
4. What would make it easier for people with disability to access and use information about jobs or careers?
5. What are the features of the ideal website to hear about jobs or careers? Please specify any examples of good websites that you use to hear about jobs or careers.

Is there anything else you would like to say?

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries. I can be contacted on either grant@creativesolutions.co.nz, (03)3321898, or (03)3321892 (fax).

I look forward to receiving email responses to the questions, from those of you willing to participate, by Monday 5 November 2001.

Thanks

Grant Cleland
Creative Solutions

Appendix Three: Email to Workbridge Staff

Dear

Public Service as an Employer of Choice Research Project

The State Services Commission is currently undertaking a research project that is exploring the opinions and views of university students and graduates about their perceptions of employment options and careers in the Public Service.

I have been asked to get feedback from some students and recent graduates with disability. I aim to get a snapshot of the views, ideas and opinions of some students and graduates with disability, about careers and potential employers.

I am also contacting some people who may have supported university graduates with disability. These graduates may have already had some experiences in the Public Service or may be trying to get employment in the Public Service.

Below is a list of questions. These are a guide for your feedback. If you are willing to offer feedback, please email your responses back to me by Monday 5 November 2001. If this is not possible can you please let me know. These questions take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete.

This feedback will be used to identify some of the key issues for graduates with disability. Your responses will be confidential and I will not name or identify individuals in my report.

Please respond to those areas that you feel are applicable to your situation. These have been divided into two sections:

- (1) Careers and Employment options, and
- (2) Information about Careers and Employers.

Career and Employment options:

- (1) What are people with disability looking for in terms of a job or career move?
- (2) What influence does the disability have on the type of job or career they are looking for?
- (3) What is your idea of the ideal employer for people with disability?
- (4) How much do you know about the Public Service?
- (5) What would be the benefits for people with disability of working in the Public Service, compared to other career options?
- (6) What would be the drawbacks for people with disability of working in the Public Service, compared to other career options?
- (7) What barriers within the Public Service do you see for people with disability?

- (8) What actions need to occur to make the Public Service more attractive to people with disability?

Information about Careers and Employers:

- (1) What information do people with disability need to receive from an Employer in order to help them decide whether to work for them or not?
- (2) What information do you require from an Employer in order to help people with disability decide whether to work for them or not?
- (3) Where are people with disability looking to find out about jobs or careers?
- (4) What would be the best way for people with disability to find out about jobs or careers?
- (5) What would make it easier for people with disability to access and use information about jobs or careers?
- (6) What are the features of the ideal website for people with disability to hear about jobs or careers? Please specify any examples of good websites that people with disability use to find out about jobs or careers.

Is there anything else you would like to say ?

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries. I can be contacted on either grant@creativesolutions.co.nz, (03)3321898, or (03)3321892 (fax).

I look forward to receiving an email response to the questions, if you willing to participate, by Monday 5 November 2001.

Thanks

Grant Cleland
Creative Solutions

Appendix Four:

University Students' with Disability Perceptions of the Public Service and as a Potential Employer of Choice

Feedback was obtained from **12** university students with disability, from Canterbury, Victoria and Lincoln University. Initially Disability Co-ordinators at Canterbury and Victoria University were contacted and they sent an invitation out to students with disability on the Disability Support Service email list. This asked those students who were interested in participating in the project to contact me.

8 of these students participated in four focus groups in Wellington and Christchurch, with two participants in each. Each focus group covered a list of questions as a guide for their feedback (Appendix One). Each focus group was held between the 29th of October and the 2nd of November and was for a duration of approximately two hours.

A further **4** students were unable to attend these focus groups and provided information through email, consistent with the focus group question guide. Some of these students were contacted to get feedback from those with mental illness and learning disability, which was not included in the focus groups and graduate feedback.

Feedback was divided into two sections:

- (1) Careers and Employment options, and
- (2) Information about Careers and Employers.

Students included:

- (1) Those with a range of disability – vision and hearing impairment, deafness, physical disability such as OOS, Head Injury, chronic pain, serious back injury or using power wheelchairs, mental illness and learning disability.
- (2) People located in Wellington and Christchurch.
- (3) 9 women and 3 men and at least 2 students identified as either Maori or Pacific Island.
- (4) Those completing a range of Bachelor and Masters courses in a range of areas. Some had already completed a university degree.
- (5) 10 nearing the end of their degree or completed their final exams

To help with the analysis of the student feedback, a numbering system (eg. ⁴) has been used to highlight common themes that were identified by the students. This also provides a ranking system for themes. The highest number in each question indicates the highest number of students who mentioned that issue. Those issues of equal value have been given the same number.

(2) Some Students' with Disability Perceptions

Current Course and Future Career:

1. What course/s are we taking?

- I am a graduate several times over in history, journalism, recreation.
- I am doing a:
 - Degree in Maori Business and Tourism
 - Commerce and Science Degree.
 - Bachelor of Arts in Sociology. I am just doing two papers a semester.
 - Bachelor of Commerce in Marketing and Commercial Law. This is my fourth year.
 - Masters degree in Education. I did a Bachelor of Education (Hons) first. I am currently doing my thesis.
 - Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Political Science. I have go two stage papers to go.
 - Masters of Public Policy – I have one research paper to go. I have also completed a Degree in Physics.
 - Bachelor of Bio-Medical Science. I already have a Science Degree.
 - Bachelor of Science, Masters of Applied Science.
 - I am completing a Master of Science. I have already finished a Bachelor of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management and a Bachelor of Science.
 - Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (Honours).
 - Bachelor of Arts and Law (Hons).

2. Reasons for taking the course.

- I have done a university course in every year since I left school. Ultimately I hoped to get a job within the Public Service or the Council, but it hasn't worked out so I have stayed at university.
- I had a disability and had been off work for some years – we're talking five years - I came to the point where I decided I had to do something. I had a choice of having a disability and plenty of money or no money and doing something constructive and having good health. I was losing years and time. I am here to push forward and to move beyond my disability.

Not that I've got a disability and I can't do this – sometimes we are a bit blinded and we tend to sit – I've got this disability and I can't do nothing, I am no good to society, I am no good to myself. I might have a disability, but I am also a person who might want to do things with my life and get out there and get some qualifications. I have work experience and skill, but because I lost a few years I lost touch with the information technology changes and the business environment. I have just applied for a Ministry of Health Scholarship because this is the field I hope to get into.

- I have come to university to get a job in any area. I had been to Polytechnic first, but felt that I needed a degree to have any chance of getting a job with my disability. Prior to coming to university I had done some hospitality and reception work, retail and art work. I had trouble seeing the small print on cash registers, so my options were limited by my visual impairment.
 - I went straight from school to university. I chose the course because I had done a summer school course in Marketing and really enjoyed that. I chose Commercial Law because I was interested in law, but didn't want to do a full law degree. I'm not really thinking about what the end career will be. At this stage I am focusing on my study – one part at a time!
 - I came to university having already worked. I don't want to be a teacher, I want to get into community work. I am already working in a call centre and doing community work in the disability community. I want to work with marginalised people – working with people in a way that benefits them and society.
 - I would like to work with people, to help people. I would like to earn enough money so that I can get off the benefit.
 - I would like to get into something associated with Medicine or Veterinary Science.
3. Have the courses met your expectations?
- Yes the course has been very good – I have passed some courses and failed because of the impact of my disability.
 - It's been really good – its been quite difficult learning to write essays to a university standard, but I enjoy coming here.
 - Sometimes the workload is pretty heavy, but I have enjoyed it.
 - When I started in 1996 it was extremely difficult. A friend came along with me to take notes. I also had no experience of university. People were very helpful, but I really didn't know what I needed. I managed to scrape through. With Disability Support Services there now everything is wonderful! The only things that could be improved are the infrastructure – there could be automatic opening doors, no steps and voice activated lifts in new buildings.
 - Yes, but it is very lecturer and resource dependent. The area of Public Policy has lacked a disability component.
4. What support have we received at university in relation to our disability?
- ¹There have been a lot of positive changes in the support that is given to people with disability at university. Students are really impressed with the support that is given now, in comparison to 5-10 years ago.

- I am not aware of big gaps in terms of Disability Support Services at Victoria University. I've needed help with coping with essays because my OOS has got worse and I also have a middle ear problem that sometimes plays up. I have disability where I have a period that is really bad and other times when I'm well.
- I came to university with a hidden disability... The initial setting up of my support was quite challenging even before I got into university. But once I got in and realised the services available it was quite good.

I am registered with Disability Support Services and get a note-taker for lectures, special arrangements for tests/exams and a carpark. When I first came here I used most of the range of services available through DSS such as student learning support for mature students. The support has been very good. What is really important is being aware of the support that you need, the range services that are available like scanners and CD writers and being willing to ask for this support.

- I have received a lot of support – extra time and a writer for exams, a note-taker for lectures.
- This semester has probably been the best time for me – I have had full-time sign language interpreters and a note-taker in lectures.
- With Disability Support Services there now everything is wonderful! Any help I need, its there, and this support has seen my grades go from C to A. I am getting the use of a note-taker for lectures, extra time and the use of my voice activated computer at home for tests/exams. My exams can also be split over two days to manage my fatigue. I am finding Disability Support Services very, very helpful.
- I have an invisible disability. I have not found the university very helpful at all. I feel invisible disability are not catered to. At the end of my first year I had a serious accident which increased the impact of my hidden disability and created new ones. Generally I found that people were less accommodating because they couldn't see my disability. So they lacked understanding about my fatigue. Some people didn't believe that I had a disability and that I wasn't coping because of this. I have therefore had to develop my own support strategies.
- I am partially sighted. When I first came to university in 1991 I was well supported by lecturers who were prepared to give me overheads well in advance and in a format that I could read them. I also had support from a Visual Resource Centre attached to a primary school who did some enlarging and putting information into alternative formats. My second year at varsity I came up against some barriers – lecturers who didn't want to be co-operative. They tended to be those lecturers who had a reputation for not being flexible to all students. It was a stark contrast to my first year, when I got lucky. Overall there weren't a lot of resources and I was getting pressure to drop physics. It was apparent to a lot of people that a lot more resources needed to be put into supporting students with disability.

In terms of support, I needed information in advance that was enlarged and individual assistance with labs. I now use the RNZFB transcription services to get text translated onto disk or enlarged. This has been very dependent upon lecturers providing information in advance and at times there has still been barriers, even with lecturers teaching social equity which is quite ironic. Overall support has improved with the development of Disability Support Services on campus.

Next Step

1. What about the next step?

- I am interested in getting into the Health field – health or industrial psychology – or possibly a business area. I am here to attain a qualification. I would like to get a good job with good positioning. I am lucky that I have been able to get some work while studying. However I've seen many students associated with Disability Support Services who have great qualifications and can't get a job. They can't get their foot in anywhere. People with disability tend to lack self-confidence and need help to move through to the next step. I want to get work, get experience and then move into a job probably in the Public Sector. I like this environment – the stability and the long-term focus. Private enterprise is great, the money would be wonderfully awesome, but the hours would be exhausting. I would also like to have my own business, but that will come later.
- I am always working, but I am always working in jobs I am way over qualified for. For example, I am a Team Leader Waste Management – which means I am in charge of the rubbish bins. I am never going to rich doing this and it doesn't utilise my qualifications. Ideally I would like a job using my Maori. I would like to work as a Communication Officer or in Project Management with my Tribe. This would pay reasonable money and utilise my skills. \$30,000–40,000 would be very nice! Another job I have is as Chief Market Researcher for a company – I earned \$7,000 last year, this was my highest paid job and once again didn't utilise my skills. I end up working with people half my age, who earn the same money and don't have the same qualifications.
- I'm really interested in working in office administration or events management. I don't want to be the head of a company, I just want a normal job working with people, doing normal hours, having an input. I think it is difficult to be too specific - when you have a disability you have to take what you can get!
- I am keeping my options open, looking for a role in Marketing.
- My aim was to get a degree so that I could work in the community and to then get a job.

- When I first started my degree it was purely because I had to do something, I couldn't lie here all day and stare at the ceiling. I thought university would be a great way to fill in time and it would be interesting. It was later as time went on that I started to think of the things that I could do with my degree. I think that because I started getting good grades, I realised that I could work and get a job! University has moved my aspirations on and now I fully anticipate getting off the benefit and having a good income.
 - I was looking for a lobbying, advocacy or public policy role. I started looking for work in government departments focusing on education or broader policy, rather than focusing disability issues.
2. Is the course an end or a beginning?
- ¹This is a beginning, but time is against us.
3. What are we looking for in terms of a career move?
- A job in the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Services Commission, Workbridge.
 - Communication Officer or in Project Management.
 - Marketing, Office Administration or Events Management.
 - Self-employment, teaching, a social welfare role working with people with disability, writing social policy. I would quite like to do a MA or PhD if I get the opportunity.
 - Medical policy.
 - Social policy, advocacy or an education role with marginalised people, writing a book, self-employment.
 - Because of the difficulties getting a Public Policy role in the Public Service, I can see myself having a portfolio career working as a consultant for departments doing specific projects.
 - Research programmes primarily in immunology and or animal nutrition with a view to completing a PhD in the future.
 - Research or teaching career in either museums, landcare research at a university or as a private consultant.
 - Work as a Landscape Architect focussing on Heritage Landscape.
 - Something to do with Intellectual Property. Generally, a stimulating position, with opportunity for advancement.
4. What influence does your disability have on the type of job or career you are looking for?
- I am also trying to focus on the positive rather than the negative. However if my ears play up this can affect me for weeks and you've just got to cope with what you have got. My disability is constantly in the background, but I don't see it as a major problem.

- In my case I am working away at my disability – having surgery and stuff. I hope that I can move forward, but there is always a risk that it will come back. With studying I now have visions and goals and I am trying not to focus on my disability. I hope my career and disability will be able to stand side by side, rather than my disability controlling my vision.
- I don't think that my disability limits me at all, as long as other people have the attitude that they will consider my disability needs (eg. Enlarging information). It is often other people's perceptions of what a blind people is that limits me. They often fear that I will do something wrong and this holds me back.
- In some ways yes it does. Because of my communication issues I couldn't answer the phone and some employers would see this as a hassle. However there are some areas or employers where this wouldn't be a problem and people would be willing to work through these communication issues, using email or interpreters.
- Because of my disability a job can't be anything practical. It must be something that I can do through my voice and technology such as my voice activated computer. So for example, if I was writing policy I could do it on the computer and email it off to whoever it is going to. I am also limited by the fact that I can't stay in my wheelchair for too long – I get very uncomfortable and tired and I also can't use my computer. The ideal job would need to be a role that I could do from home. This may limit me doing some things face to face.
- The only limitation I would have is using the telephone a lot.
- Some Public Service employers see lobbyists in the disability community as having a conflict of interest for policy roles in for example, Ministry of Health. However according to one participant, international research indicates that analysts with broad mix of experiences produce the best outcomes.
- I started out wanting a Public Policy role in a department. However, because of rejections in the Public Service, I sort work on disability issues because I felt my disability needs would be less of a barrier. This has directed my career and I now see myself having a portfolio career working as a consultant for departments.
- I would always be very wary of applying for jobs where my disability would be obvious, such as spelling in a teaching position.
- Huge, my inability to do large amounts of computing in short periods of time is prohibitive to many jobs, as computers are becoming more and more essential to everyday work; (eg. Email is now probably the number one inter-office method of communication). Also the effect of my disability on fine finger movement, (eg. Manipulation of small stuff means I can't do large amounts of that particular type of work). So I am looking for work that keeps me away from computer.

- My work will involve a lot of public consultations. I will need support with communication. I will need to be flexible in what I do and not be restricted just because there is not enough funds to support me.
- The culture of the organisation is the key issue, and it's ability to be flexible to accommodate my disability.
- You feel like your disability is a hassle to some employers!

The Best Employers

1. What is your idea of the ideal employer?

- ⁵One who employs you on your skills, qualifications, work experience and pays you at the same rate as other people and doesn't penalise you because you can't work such long hours or have a disability.
- ⁴Someone who has a good work environment and if you have a disability, makes sure that your needs are met in terms of your disability.
- ⁴One who is flexible:
 - An employer who allows people with disability to use different technology, to complete tasks when they are at their best (eg. Part-time or full-time, in the morning or at night). Often employers expect a task to be done one way only and they are not willing to adapt the task to the employee.
 - Allows flexible hours that allow you to work to your optimum and at the times that best suit your disability.
 - One who is willing to create an inclusive environment, who knows they have more to learn, is prepared to listen, doesn't expect you to come up with all the answers at one point in time and realises that it is going to be an evolving process and ongoing. Over time my technical needs have changed.
 - An employer who offers an accessible environment – accessible websites, everyone uses email, information is enlarged or electronic, there is support for overcoming barriers and this isn't an arduous process.
 - Employers need to recognise that I am perfectly capable of fulfilling my obligations as set out in most job descriptions, however I may need some extra time or the ability to work unusual hours so that I can accommodate the work around my disability.
 - One who is willing to adapt when things turn to custard.
- ³A manager and colleagues who accept that people with disability may need to adapt tasks or need some flexibility, but their contribution is still important.
- ³Ability and willingness to listen and learn.
- ³Walking the talk – EEO policies.
- ²The money should match your qualifications:
 - I wouldn't accept anything less just because I'm deaf. I want to have the same benefits that other people get.
- ²The ideal employer looks after their staff. They help to overcome workplace difficulties with the environment or colleagues.

- ¹Colleagues who don't make your disability an issue, patronise you or try different communication or information methods.
 - Ongoing training relevant to career development, medical insurance, superannuation, goals for personal improvement, good financial package.
 - Colleagues who accept one another for their strengths and weaknesses.
 - A workplace where there is a positive atmosphere – camaraderie and team support.
 - An employer who allows autonomy and doesn't look over my shoulder.
 - Too often people with disability are afraid to come forward or to disclose disability-related information to employers, which is bad for the employer and employee.
 - Someone who treats everyone the same, who knows sign language, has an open mind and doesn't see my communication issues as a barrier – just makes it work. It would be great to have an interpreter on call for meetings or whatever.
 - An employer who treats you as an equal, rather than being on a power trip.
 - I would like to have a workplace which is totally wheelchair accessible with voice-activated lifts and computers, accessible toilets and workstations.
2. How do we find who are the best employers?
- ²Personal networks.
 - ¹University Career Services – although they tend to be for graduates and not equipped to help people with disability. We need specific help with finding jobs. They are no longer job placement experts. We need help from a placement agency so that we can be proactive and get the personalised support we need (eg. Individual help with writing a CV, rather than being given a pamphlet to use, overcoming disability-related barriers).
 - ¹Reputation, trial and error, learning by our mistakes.
 - ¹Workbridge to find employer with good EEO practices.
 - ¹Having a disability makes it harder to get a job on merit:
 - I've had an employer say if you had 100 people apply for a job would you employ a blind person or someone without that hassle.
 - Through the Career Advisors associated with Disability Support Services at University.

3. Where are we looking?

Which information sources do we find easier because of our disability?

- ⁴I would use my personal networks first – relatives, friends, people associated with the university, disability networks, people I know who see my skills and see jobs.
- ⁴Websites:
 - Those on the computers at Careers Services on campus (eg. Government Job Search). They have a good selection of websites on the computers. My concern is that they are not able to provide an individualised service to people with disability, which considers their specific needs.
 - It would be good if there were websites advertising full and part-time work, contracts and even consultation. More and more people with disability are looking for portfolio or part-time careers, rather than a single career. It would be good if this information was on wider and disability community list-servers. It also needs to be accessible individually from home, so that people with disability who have specific software can access information.
 - A government website of all vacancies in the public sector, possibly with a method of having them all emailed to you every week.
- ³Newspaper,
- ³The government and university Careers Services.
 - They try to match your qualifications with the job.
- ²Workbridge:
 - Some students go there, but they don't offer the personalised service they use to because of staffing levels. I don't use certain mainstream employment agencies because they are not equipped to deal with people with disability and ask inappropriate questions, which are not relevant to the job.
 - However they often have low status jobs which are not a good match for graduates.
- ²Disability Support Services at university.
- ¹Employment agencies, although they tend to put up more barriers about my disability:
 - How are you going to communicate with other workers?
 - I now don't disclose disability information to these agencies.
- Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind.
- I ring up the Human Resources section of targeted departments.
- WINZ – although they feel that because you have a disability you should be going to Workbridge.
- Television and the radio.
- Professional Associations.

4. What information would you want to receive from an Employer in order to help you decide whether to work for them or not?
 - ²I would like to know how they would accommodate my disability:
 - Usually they don't have that kind of stuff and I am reluctant to ring up and find out in case I disadvantage myself. Sometimes they ask if there is any furniture that you might need.
 - How often they have meetings, so I know when I would need to book an interpreter. How much I would need to use a phone.
 - Information about the culture and employment policies.
 - Information about facilities within the workspace.
 - Examples of other employees with disability within the organisation.
 - ¹A description of the job position and the conditions of employment – what the job requirements are, vacancy lists, information that allows you to determine whether you have the skills.
 - ¹How much support they would be prepared to pay for.
 - ¹It would be good to get an idea of how much the employer would be able to accommodate my disability with the application pack and then to have the opportunity to discuss this at the interview.
 - Because they don't talk about the disability-related support they provide it is often quite hard to decide whether to apply for a job. If employers had a commitment to EEO they would outline what support they offered people with disability, ask you what disability-related support you required and this would be taken into consideration without disadvantaging you. Instead you are lucky if you get an interview if you disclose.

5. What would make it easier for people with disability to access and use information about jobs or careers?
 - ³Information in alternative formats (eg. Electronic) and on websites, which can accommodate disability-related software and that can be accessed from home.
 - ²Have a contact person, within departments, who people with disability can talk to about workplace support strategies, when they are applying for jobs. This should be included with the advertisement.
 - ²We also need to be able to ask questions about disability support that would be available in the workplace.
 - ¹To have a contact person specifically for people with disability at Career Services at Victoria University, who can provide individualised support. Instead they give you some information or a computer and say go to it and there is no follow through. Some people with disability need individualised help. The mainstream career services or employment agencies often have standard processes that don't fit people with disability and adult students.
 - ¹I would really like to talk with other people with disability to see what their experiences are in the workplace.

- ¹Alternatively, Disability Support Services could offer a specific career service for people with disability.
- There are a number of students with disability at Victoria University who are having real trouble getting work experience or a foot in the door of employers. This is very sad and must be frustrating for them. This means they can't get jobs that they are trained to do or earn enough income to purchase a house or do other things, which allow them to be independent or have the same choices as other people. It is ironic that there are now students with disability who are now getting excellent university qualifications, but still can't get jobs or gain access to the technology that would help them get employment.
- Workbridge and Career Services need to find employers with good EEO practices to refer people with disability to. They need to have jobs which match our skills and staff need to have an understanding of our support needs and the ability to bring employers onboard, in a way that doesn't disadvantage people with disability.
- It is important that employers are using a range of options for advertising jobs, because people with disability require a range of formats to access information.
- If the employer provides EEO statistics it is important that they provide information about which disability groups are employed so that you can get a picture of who is being employed and what they are doing.
- It would depend on the disability. Posting all information online so that you can access the "type" of company before applying.

Visualisation

1. We land on the Planet Public Service. The doors open and we step out.
What is it like?
 - ¹Disability-related needs would be accommodated better in the Public Service than in the Private Sector. This is because of the Public Services obligation to EEO practices. People with disability would feel safer working in the Public Service. However this would be dependent on the manager and immediate team and how aware they were. It would also depend on their ability 'to walk the talk' and their political motivation at the time. A lot of people are told to be behind EEO practices, rather than wanting to be. The Departments may be into EEO Practices, but there is often not a commitment there by the people doing the implementing.
 - I have an image of grey or black men in suits who are mostly in their forties. There are very few women and they are mostly cleaners. Most of the status jobs go to men. In recent times the balance between men and women has been slightly improved.

- A planet tangled in red tape. It is a grey drab planet that is not very exciting at all, the pay is ok but it doesn't match the private sector for most employees, but seniors managers are paid high wages like the private sector. This planet tends to follow fads like EEO, that people implement just because it is part of their job. Managers have a permanent job anywhere – they don't need knowledge or experience, they can just switch jobs between departments and they are considered to be an expert. I feel slightly unwelcome and invisible on this planet because of the structure of the organisation and the fact that my disability would be viewed as a social handicap.
- In an ideal world I see a planet that is very caring, putting employees first, paying a reasonable wage, offering secure employment, a nice place to work for life and which is not very stressful. However, I see a planet that is very cut-throat, always being restructured, with never any pay increases and very stressful. People at the coal-face are getting it from both sides - the people above them want them to save money and staff are getting pressured to provide a better service with less resources. I would get off this spaceship not knowing what I was going to find – the galaxy of the unknown.
- Very formal area, high status and people disappearing into buildings that are closed off to the outside world – the faceless bureaucrat. There is less interaction between staff and the outside world, people may be isolated, but people are accepting of different needs.
- Before stepping out you would have to sign bureaucratic forms and their wouldn't be an electronic version for people with disability. The people are very serious and they are concerned that they should be doing the right thing, but the right thing is dictated by something above which they haven't bought into yet. Everyone is wearing black suits, there is an attempt to be managerial and corporate, when everyone else has casual. There is an appearance that money is important and the departments have a language of their own filled with acronyms. You spend the first few days on this planet understanding the language. To make a decision you have to go around 5 different buildings and 50 different levels getting signatures. Your own knowledge and experience isn't valued and you are assimilated into the machine. Anything that goes wrong is the fault of someone else – government - there is not much individual responsibility.
- Well meaning, but quite bumbling – they would go and blow their own planet up and then help find other planets. Mismanagement - they would not be very efficient, buy things on the cheap because they couldn't buy the newest tool and they would not be very progressive. Despite all this, this planet would be open-minded, flexible and have good intentions. There would be a lot people who thought they knew what they were doing and no one to tell them they didn't. They would have a lot of acronyms and pick on the theme of the day and be very

pragmatic. People with disability would be well looked after on this planet, although there is a lack of awareness.

- Big organised environment, spacious, lots of people, everyone busy and working – but not working too hard. Management structures are flattened so you don't feel intimidated by your managers. Just a good environment where everyone is getting results and work done, if they're not or they are having problems these are sorted out, ongoing training, communication and input. People are dressed in what they feel comfortable in – shorts, T-shirts, and suits. I can see lots of people with disability and they are ambling along, pretty happy, but anxious.
- I have got mates who have got really good jobs in the Public Service and others who after extensive attempts, just haven't got in. I see just ordinary people who at times can be power mongers. Ideally I would see that my disability needs are being met, but realistically I don't think they would be. I have heard so many cases where people on Mainstream were seen as a symbol, but not given opportunity to grow.
- The Public Service is politically correct – you couldn't compare gaps for people with disability with other groups such as Maori, even though they might be greater. The Public Service can be two faced – we want to hear about your needs, but there is a political agenda that drives everything. Sometimes Public Servants don't want to present the facts.

2. We now land on the Planet Private Sector. The doors open and we step out. What is it like?

- ³ There would be fewer opportunities for my disability needs to be met:
 - ²It would depend on what area or country you were in – if someone already had a disability or you had work experience and they liked your work, there would be more chance of your needs being met. A lot depends on the management – if you're with Dick Hubbard you will be fine.
 - I would feel more pressured or at risk in Planet Private Sector, because they don't have EEO obligations like the Public Service.
 - There are less judder bars to slow you down, but more solid tangible physical barriers that are more visible, which you can either get through or you can't. It's a bit like the wild west!
- ¹I see bright colours on this planet – orange, green. It is more creative – real things happening and striving.
- This is more relaxed, informal and flexible (eg. Drinks on Friday).
- Really different. I see totally full-on organised people around me with diverse natures just going for it. They are much more aware of things – aware of what employees or staff want – I see people with disability just right in there amongst it. I see better organisation, better flow, better structures, policies and management. People are still dressed the same as those in the Public Service, but I just see a better environment and staff running things properly like businesses – financially and in the way that they accommodate peoples needs.

- There are lots of slick people zooming everywhere in fast spaceships, but if you get in the road they will run you over. It is very exciting, they have the latest spaceships and technology, they are moving as efficiently as possible and they don't want to make stops along the way and there is no slow lane. It looks very exciting, very vibrant and efficient, but it looks a little impatient and not welcoming to people with disability.
- In terms of my disability, I feel really happy going there because I have got the job on my skills and experience, I haven't been discriminated against and there is flexibility for my disability. They want me to do my best and to give my utmost on the job. If I am not well, they will give me time off without feeling guilty, because things keep running and someone picks up on my work because we are a knowledge based planet and we share knowledge and everyone is there to help one another. It is like the business of Social Responsibility, which is stronger than EEO in practice, and sees that teamwork is really important.
- Planet Private Sector can also be very negative. Sheltered Workshops for example. Some people just don't understand the diversity of the workplace. I see good and bad things on Planet Private Sector. With some employers the emphasis is on the bottom line and making money and this can have a real negative influence on the staff. I would expect that my disability-related needs would be considered if the employer had some social responsibility, but not if this wasn't there.
- There are more countries on this planet – some are really good places to be and some are not. There are fewer layers for getting decisions about workplace support. Money would be terribly important so there would be more stress on you. How I would feel would be dependent upon the country I was in – some would be great and others would be terrible. I would feel uncomfortable because there would be more likelihood of change affecting my disability-related support. Planet Public Service would be more stable.

Public Service

1. How much do you know about the Public Service?

- ²Very little:
 - It is those areas that work for the government
 - They don't exactly advertise that much, mind you in my particular field (entomology) there are few positions and generally these are filled through an informal network even if the position is advertised.
- ¹I know a lot about the Public Service. Staff are there for 20-40 years and it is still seen as one of the best employers for people with disability, if you can get into those narrowing doors for getting in.
- The Public Service is government run, operated and funded, related to politics and decisions are usually made through government. These are the rules, implement them. If there are problems, feedback them back and if we can try and fix them we will and if you can't, tough luck.

Structures are top to bottom. If you get a job in the Public Service it is pretty cruisy. You work together and get things done. You are working, earning good money, meeting friends, having social outlets and you are feeling like you are helping society. You are generally happy being there for 20 years.

- I have heard quite a lot through the media, but what it is like as a workplace, I just don't know. I would probably tell people that it is fairly high risk and that your job may not be there in 6 months.
 - Just what I have learnt from part-time employment within Parliament.
2. How have you developed your own opinion of the Public Service and Public Service careers?
- ¹By looking over the years, having family members there and ²working there myself. It looks like a secure place to work.
 - ¹Knowing people and understanding the structures and systems and learning about the Public Service at university.
 - ¹What you see on television and other media (eg. Newspapers).
 - Through your own dealings with departments such as WINZ.
 - Websites - www.jobs.govt.nz.
 - People in Wellington have a different perception of the Public Service. Those in other regions see it as something distant, whereas in Wellington it is the business of the city.
 - Dealing with politicians and seeing the machinery of government.
3. What do we perceive to be the career options available in this sector?
- ³Management, ³policy jobs, ²human resources, ²case management, ¹Administration, payroll, politics, networking roles supporting community – hands on or policy, public relations, marketing, research.
 - For many people with disability it is quite limiting.
 - There is not that much information about the types of roles available.
4. What would be the benefits in working in the Public Service compared to other career options?
- ²If you are in policy you are having an opportunity to directly influence or change things in society, within the parameters of the government.
 - ¹A safer place for people with disability, compared to private sector.
 - Guaranteed income so can have lifestyle choices, regular leave allowances, regular training, reviews, support and stability. Ability to change jobs within and have promotion, because it is large enough.
 - The type of work they do – the realm of responsibility.
 - Motivation, as government rather than industry funding would allow more freedom to invest time in things of benefit to people.
 - I suppose the Public Service are a little less profit orientated. However, they are rapidly following that particular path. In fact I don't think they have many benefits, and if they do they really need to get out there and advertise them to students.

- It is a good start to a career with other companies.
5. What would be the drawbacks of working in the Public Service compared to other career options?
- ³Bureaucratic structures and management, you are a number in a long line of people and you would have to comply with the way of thinking of the department.
 - ²Different ideas may not be encouraged, you may not share the same ideas of the government of the day and you may become frustrated if you wanted to make a difference.
 - ²People may think you got the job because of your disability, rather than your skills.
 - ¹The level of pay.
 - People are overworked and stressed at times. The private sector is often more flexible with family issues.
 - If you are ambitious and want big money the Public Sector is not the place to be. People also have to be able to fit in with government policy and if you don't this can be very difficult.
 - For the Public Service to attract people with disability they need to offer them something the private sector cannot. At the moment many Public Sector employers actively discriminate against people with disability by excluding them from some careers, such as the police force.
 - In the past you may have thought that work in the Public Service was more secure, however following all the restructuring since the mid-1980s I think this perception of long-term safe employment has gone out the window.
 - I know through my dealings with government departments that there is a very entrenched management structure which is quite often difficult to work with. They are so highly structured that there is little flexibility for people with disability, as quite often you need to do things that go against normal procedure.
6. What would the Public Service have to offer you to get you interested in working for them?
- ³The same pay that other people get who have the same level of skills and qualifications - a good salary!
 - ³Support for my disability-related needs.
 - ³Flexibility with my hours,
 - ²A job!
 - ²Good working conditions, environment, support and hours.
 - ¹The ability to chose how and where I do a tasks if I'm having difficulties with my disability
 - ¹The ability to work from home if required.

- ¹Something along the lines of what you wanted – a good salary package, savings or retirement plan, training, family friendly policies.
 - Personal autonomy.
 - In terms of my disability, ergonomic furniture, a rest room, a support person in the workplace who I can go to for arranging equipment and other support. This needs to be someone who is not your boss – an internal advocate or support person – like EAP.
 - I would jump at the opportunity to work in disability-related policy.
7. What barriers in the Public Service do you see because of your disability ?
- “Often the worst employers are those who think they are the best.”
 - ²Negative attitudes are the biggest barrier:
 - Because you have a disability they think you may not be able to do the job the way we want you to.
 - People may not be willing to adapt the environment to meet disability-related needs.
 - I have never got very far with policy jobs in the Public Service. I've had quite a few interviews, but there has been a lot of resistance – a real lack of understanding on disability issues. I have tried to layout very clearly my expectations for support, but this seems to get backs up. I have often had the question – How can you expect to do the job, you can't read the information. All I would expect is that information was enlarged or given to me electronically and that there was dialogue to get it right.
 - Employers don't seem to realise that they have a broader responsibility to create an inclusive environment in the workplace and to reflect the diversity in our community. Employers shouldn't be assimilating people with disability and expecting them to participate on someone else's terms. Inclusion should be occurring where employers are using other pools of collective knowledge and resources for the disability community.
 - In terms of interviews, I have heard of employers who weren't anticipating that people with disability would get that far and expected that they would get chucked out before that and then feel that this will be an interesting exercise, but they are not seriously looking at the person.
 - There is a perceived need to employ a diverse workforce in the Public Service, but then there is a hierarchy and disability is right down the bottom. There is a reluctance to make the Public Service inclusive for people with disability, even though there is a preparedness to employ someone who is Maori. With Maori, staff will go the extra distance to see if this is the right person for the job. People don't realise or understand the value of a diverse workforce. People need to assess their own value base during recruitment.
 - Knowledge of disability is threatening, rather than an asset.

- Unfortunately many people still believe that a learning disability means that “your a bit slow” and people with mental illness should be locked away. It creates an environment where it is easier to keep quiet and hide any disability from potential employers.
- ¹Lack of flexibility.
- ¹There is often a big difference between a Departments EEO policies and practice – “they are not walking the talk.”
 - Even though a person was Maori, Pacific Island, well qualified and also had a disability, he could not get an interview with Public Service Departments and it appeared that less qualified people had got the jobs he was applying for.
 - I request job information and like to send my application and CV electronically via email, because of my vision impairment, and I come up against a brick wall. Public Service departments often say they can't send a job description out that way, because they only have it in print. Instead of being accommodating they ask what am I going to do about it. Even when you ask for a response my email this comes in the mail in print, for which I can't read.
 - People are typecast in particular roles because of their disability – like a glass ceiling – progression is really difficult.
 - Some employers also include skills such as a driver's license in the person specification of some job descriptions. This may deter or even prevent some people with disability from applying for jobs, even though driving may only be a small part of the job and there are other ways of travelling.
 - Many employers just ask the question “Have you got a disability”, as part of the application process. Because they don't ask “what workplace support is required to manage the impact of a disability” and they don't say how this information will be used, people are reluctant to tick yes. People are afraid that if they tick yes that the employer wont look at them. There is an assumption made that employers will lack understanding or have a negative attitude towards them having a disability - “You feel disadvantaged even before you start.” Participants also felt applicants should only need to disclose disability-related information relevant to the workplace.
- The Public Service expects people to fly to Wellington at short notice and complete projects in short timeframes. This would not be possible for me and I would also need support if I was travelling – a special bed and personal carer. I also need to plan my day at least a day ahead.
- Communication barriers – they would have an old fashioned view of deaf people. There would be people who saw my communication issues as a barrier to employment and promotion.
- A lot of the students with disability don't get to the interview stage, so that they can show their skills.

- I know some people with disability whose employment in the Public Service has been an absolute disaster and they just wanted to get out.
- 8. What actions need to occur to make the Public Service more attractive to people with disability and to overcome these perceived barriers to the Public Service as an employment option?
 - Treat people on the basis of their skills and qualifications first, rather than their disability.
 - ⁴Development of policies to integrate people with disability into the workplace, so people with disability can ask what flexibility is available with job descriptions and doing tasks.
 - ³Staff training about recruitment and retention of people with disability:
 - This needs to include general management and staff training.
 - Be presented by people with disability.
 - It is particularly important for those staff recruiting or directly supervising people with disability.
 - This needs to be a national programme like the 'Like-Minds Project', which is an anti-discrimination programme which recognises the value of diversity and people with disability.
 - ²Identifying potential barriers to people with disability when jobs are advertised and looking at alternative ways of doing tasks (eg. Does a person need to drive and are there alternative ways this could be done).
 - ²Monitoring of policies to integrate people with disability into the workplace so people with disability and departments can see if they are 'walking the talk'. EEO and/or Human Resources staff, those with disability and management, should be involved.
 - ²Have a contact person, within departments, who people with disability can talk to about workplace support strategies, when they are applying for jobs. This should be included with the advertisement. These people also need to be actively involved and supported by disability networks and management.
 - Make sure application forms don't exclude people with disability:
 - ²The format for disability-related questions should only ask people to disclose disability-related information relevant to the workplace and the support required to minimise the impact of the disability at work (eg. Do you have a disability and what support do you require ?)
 - Don't make a driver's license compulsory when other forms of transport can be used.
 - ²Job information in alternative formats (eg. Electronic), which can accommodate disability-related software and that can be accessed from home. This should include the ability to use email to download job descriptions and to send applications.

- ²Information in advertisements about workplace support provided for people with disability:
 - Whether information can be provided in alternative formats.
 - If there are rest rooms.
 - If there is an ability to work from home if a person becomes unwell or to do task differently to accommodate a particular disability.
- ²Regular supervision of staff with disability to identify and resolve potential workplace barriers on an ongoing basis.
- ²Exit interviews or surveys when people with disability have to leave because of workplace barriers. This should get meaningful feedback that will prevent similar issues occurring again. This information needs to be reviewed in a way that it is not buried and patterns are identified and resolved. A senior staff member or even an external agency should do this or it could be linked to departmental Disability Strategy plans.
- ²Public Service employers actively recruiting people with disability (eg. Public Service scholarships, internships, quotas for people with disability). In other areas like teaching this is happening for Maori, Pacific Island people and males. They are recognising that these groups are under-represented, there needs to be diversity, role models and mentors.
- ¹Include staff with disability in a review of recruitment within the Public Service and as part of the interview panels for jobs.
- ¹Strategies that ensure that other staff don't become defensive, threatened or jealous if people with disability get disability-related support. Flexibility should be offered to all staff and the employer should encourage camaraderie and team work.
- ¹All information is enlarged or given electronically and there is dialogue to get it right.
- ¹Only ask disability-related questions at the interview stage, so that people with disability only have to show their skills, experience and qualifications at the application stage.
- ¹The Mainstream Programme needs to be more flexible:
 - At the moment some people with a work history are not able to get a Mainstream placement even though their work may not be relevant to their degree (eg. Team Leader-Rubbish Bins versus degrees in history, journalism, recreation, Maori business and tourism). Graduates often don't qualify, even though there are barriers to getting work they are trained for.
 - I think the Mainstream Programme is great, needs to stay and is key to getting more people with disability into the Public Service. However it needs to be refined so that the resources can be used in a more flexible way. Instead of always offering the 100% and 50% salary subsidy, the level of subsidy should be dependent on the size of the employer or the level of disability of the employee. Someone

employing a person with really high support needs should get more of a subsidy.

- The subsidy should also be available for workplace support costs such as interpreters or equipment – the first priority should be the workplace support, not the salary subsidy.
- The salary subsidy should be targeted even more to those people with disability, seen to be less productive.
- More care should also be taken to ensure that the people with disability have the skills and/or potential to do the job.
- ¹The Public Service needs to become more proactive – they need to go the universities and talk with people, so we are more informed about the Public Service. People with disability are often reluctant to apply for Public Service jobs because they are not sure what is involved and what support they will get.
- ¹EEO needs to be redefined – it has created an environment where people feel like they are competing against one another. It should be seen as a way of creating a diverse workforce that reflects the community, to get the best out of people and to encourage teamwork. If it is done right it should be seen as social responsibility leading to good business practice.
- Employment policies that include flexibility, which enable people with disability to work in a rewarding position.
- People with disability need reassurance that one is not being employed as a Public Relations exercise.
- In summary, the Public Service needs to become more accessible to people with disability. Ironically the Public Service is more attractive for people with disability, but we just can't get in. They have set up barriers we can't get around.
- All staff in the Public Service, including people with disability, need to be treated as individuals, who have these abilities and needs. The Public Service then needs to identify what is required to allow someone to be employed to their maximum potential and satisfaction. It is encouraging people to do their best!

Information about the Public Service

1. What information would you want to receive from the Public Service in order to help you decide whether to work for them or not?
 - ⁵Job description, ⁵what support is offered people with disability, relevant disability-related questions (eg. Do you need workplace support?).
 - ⁴Conditions – salary, hours, training, support.
 - ³What support systems are available for people with disability.
 - ²Is there a contact point to talk about your support.
 - ²What sort of jobs are available and what skills do you need.
 - ¹What would the job physically involve.

- ¹Information can be provided in alternative formats.
 - ¹The communication process can be adapted to meet deaf needs (eg. Seating plan).
 - ¹What support fund is available.
 - What is the complaints process.
 - What the physical and social environment in the workplace is like.
 - Are there people with disability already employed in the department and are they in positions of responsibility.
2. What would be the best ways/sources to hear about careers in the Public Service ?
- ²Websites for government jobs and then contacting them through my home email address. I would rather make a contact directly than go through an agency.
 - ¹Careers Services or Disability Support Services at university.
 - ¹Free outlets to check websites individually – Career Services, WINZ, Workbridge.
 - ¹A centralised way for information about government departments.
 - ¹Newspapers and online jobsites/company websites.
 - Information to Workbridge.
 - Create relationships with professionals during training if possible.
 - Personal networks.

Websites

1. What are the features of the ideal website to hear about jobs or careers?
- ¹You can access the website at any time.
 - ¹The website can be accessed on campus through career services, Disability Support Services or Workbridge.
 - ¹Just the same normal information, plus information which indicates whether the employer is 'disability-friendly.'
 - ¹Fast running, forget putting lots of pictures, and other silly advertising rubbish and flashing things with sound.
 - ¹Keep it totally functional and searchable with key words, not just categories because not every job fits neatly into categories.
 - The information is current.
 - Easy names for finding information and accessible.
 - Maybe a specific website that advertises jobs appropriate for people with disability.
 - Needs to be clear and linked to business information.
 - Easy printing formats.
2. What features would make it easier for people with disability to use this site?
- ²The job websites need more information – often they have a title and a contact point (eg. www.jobs.govt.nz). Information needs to be there at a switch of a button.
 - ²It is really important that departments follow the accessibility guidelines for people with disability, that are already developed:

- If they are not tab linked you have to use a mouse, which makes it difficult for some people with disability.
 - PDF files are inaccessible for people who are vision impaired.
 - If the website has a lot of graphics this can be difficult.
 - If the tab links are not names this creates confusion.
 - ²A person to contact to ask questions about this support.
 - ²Contact details of the company including fax and email addresses.
 - ¹The disability-related support that is offered.
 - ¹Easy and user friendly.
 - ¹The websites need to be free to access – on campus, career services, WINZ or Workbridge. People with disability are often on low incomes.
 - ¹Communication on the computer, whether it is email or the Internet, makes it easier for the deaf and other people.
 - You need to know about the role, workplace environment, the job description, what is required from a possible employee and possible contact details of some professionals for further information on a specific career.
 - Consideration needs to be made for those people who are Blind, vision impaired or for whom English is a second language (eg. Deaf community).
3. Which sites are we currently going into for job/career information?
- ¹www.jobs.govt.nz
 - ¹www.nzjobs.co.nz
 - ¹www.new-zealand-jobs.com
 - ¹www.careers.govt.nz
 - ¹www.monster.co.nz
 - www.rnzfb.co.nz
 - www.community.net.
 - www.agresearch.co.nz, www.esr.cri.co.nz, www.dexcel.co.nz.
 - Google - Entomological Vacancies.

Recruitment Programmes

1. What recruitment programmes have you been on?
 - ²None.
 - ¹I have heard about them – seen the advertisement – but I have never been to one.
2. What would make it easier for people with disability to participate in recruitment programmes?
 - ²Programmes that are arranged in consultation with Disability Support Services on campus, so students with disability know (eg. Advertising on the Disability Support Services email listserver).

- ²It would be better if we could attend mainstream recruitment programmes, but have the opportunity to receive information about disability-related support. Ideally this should be provided as part of the presentation. However some may wish to meet with staff individually.
- ¹A sign language interpreter, an accessible environment, good seating or alternatives for people with disability to meet staff.
- ¹A copy of the information and in alternative formats (eg. Large print).
- Some Public Service programmes tend to say if you don't turn up you can't be included in some recruitment programmes. This is not very inclusive for some people with disability, particular if the venue is inaccessible.
- Career services on campus should also be encouraging the employment of people with disability by showing employers the Curriculum Vitae of students with disability nearing the end of their degree. It would also be great if Public Service employers specifically asked to see the Curriculum Vitae of students with disability.
- It would also be helpful if Career Services on campus or Workbridge could find out who are the Public Service employers with good EEO programmes and workplace support for people with disability. This would enable them to know who are the best employers to refer students with disability to. Students want to know the good and bad employers and without this they find it hard to make decisions.
- We would also like to know more about the Mainstream Programme.

Appendix Five:

Graduates' with Disability Perceptions of the Public Service and as a Potential Employer of Choice

(1) The Situation

A letter was emailed to **19** graduates with disability, who I was aware of through my association with DPA and ACHIEVE. This letter was sent to graduates who it was considered might have already had some experiences in the Public Service or who may be trying to get employment in the Public Service. Refer to Appendix Two for a copy of the letter emailed to graduates.

Each graduate was sent a list of questions as a guide for their feedback. They were also told that this feedback would be used to identify some of the key issues for graduates with disability and that I would not name or identify individuals in my report.

Respondents were asked to answer those areas that they felt were applicable to their situation. These had been divided into two sections:

- (1) Careers and Employment options, and
- (2) Information about Careers and Employers.

Respondents who were willing to provide feedback were asked to email their responses back to me by Monday 5 November 2001. A second email was sent to the graduates a few days after the initial email, to check whether they had received the first email and had any questions.

When a response was received, a third email was sent to the respondent. This thanked them for taking the time to provide this feedback and asked for permission to contact them if I had any specific questions in relation to their feedback, when doing the analysis.

14 graduates responded to the request for feedback. This included:

- (1) Graduates with a range of disability – vision and hearing impairment, deafness, blindness, physical disability such as Cerebral Palsy, Head Injury or those requiring the use of crutches, a manual or power wheelchair. Two sectors not covered were mental illness and learning disability. Student feedback includes these areas.
- (2) People located in Auckland, Wellington, Hamilton, Christchurch, Palmerston North, Dunedin and Invercargill.
- (3) Graduates who had studied at the following universities – Auckland, Victoria, Massey, Canterbury, Lincoln and Otago.
- (4) 10 women and 4 men and at least one person who identified as Maori.

(2) Some Graduate with Disability Perceptions

To help with the analysis of the graduate feedback, a numbering system (eg. ⁴) has been used to highlight common themes that were identified by the graduates. This also provides a ranking system for themes. The highest number in each question indicates the highest number of graduates who mentioned that issue. Those issues of equal value have been given the same number.

(a) Career and Employment Options:

1. What tertiary qualification do you have?
 - Bachelor of Commerce and Administration majoring in management and marketing, Bachelor of Science majoring in psychology.
 - Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Social Sciences majoring in Law, Psychology and Women's studies, Masters of Laws (Distinction).
 - Bachelor of Science and a Masters degree.
 - Bachelor of Social Work (Hons), Masters of Social Work.
 - Masters of Arts (Hons) Sociology. Currently completing a Graduate Diploma in 'Not For Profit Management'.
 - Master of Social Work.
 - Certificate/Diploma in Social Work, Diploma in Rehabilitation Studies. Currently commencing a Masters of Philosophy.
 - Bachelor of Arts and Postgraduate Diploma of Arts.
 - Masters in Business Studies, majoring in Communications.
 - Masters of Education majoring in Counselling (Hons). Currently completing a Doctorate in Education with a focus on disability.
 - Bachelor and two Postgraduate Diplomas in Commerce.
 - Bachelor of Arts majoring in sociology and education.
 - Bachelor of Arts.
 - Bachelor of Commerce, Masters of Business Administration (MBA).
2. What are you looking for in terms of a job or career move?
 - ³A Public Service role.
 - ²I would like to move into a policy role.
 - ¹'Disability policy':
 - I realise this is a very narrow field but it is one that also needs a lot of development. Ideally, I would like to work at the government level and with a national framework.
 - The Ministry of Social Development's Disability Unit.
 - To be able to use the policy skills I'd obtained while doing a social work degree. I was particularly interested in contributing to the growth of a just and fairer society, one that recognised disability concerns.
 - A people orientated role focusing on my abilities - good communicator, high level of interpersonal skills, proven writing ability, good organisational skills.

- Interested in a role that I could get passionate about.
 - Security, challenges, changes, guarantees of growth within the industry and a sense of involvement in society as a fully employed rate-payer.
 - At present I would like a part time job in the community sector.
 - A job move.
 - Media in the Public Sector - I have previously worked in public relations and communications.
 - Counselling and teaching.
 - Self-employment in the Agriculture, Forestry and Finance sectors or if not that, something related in the Public Service.
 - A Public Service role for 4 days or 30 hours per week or setting up myself as career consultant.
 - Legal work preferred but not essential. I would like to return to university and complete my LLB.
 - Job responsibility, challenges, travel, career development, mentoring - all in terms of career move.
3. What influence does your disability have on the type of job or career you are looking for?
- Looking for a role which does not require manipulation of numbers or databases. Looking at roles with smaller amount of paperwork.
 - A big influence, in that my health is affected by my environment and my physical ability to be included in society. This is dependent on how accessible society is.
 - I feel the influence my disability has on my chosen career can be both a positive and a negative thing. It is positive in terms of my disabled identity and my identification with and understanding of the work. I believe this is as significant as having Maori people working on Maori policy.

My disability can (and has) negatively influence my career in that it is more cumbersome for an employer to employ me than a person without disability - communication and cultural barriers in the work environment and in the job itself need to be addressed. Another example of the kind of negative influence my disability can have is if an employer and/or colleagues are patronising towards me and or underestimate my abilities.

- It's important to me to have as good a level of auditory access as possible. It makes one very tired and stressed to work in an environment with open plan workspaces.
- My speech is impaired and I have minor co-ordination problems and I am slow at word processing.
- Predominantly mobility issues – I need an accessible workspace.
- It's a chicken and egg situation really! I think one tends to adapt one's preference to one's disability, almost without realising it. I am most interested in making a difference in the lives of people with disability

and so do not believe this career path holds any great difficulties for me, in terms of my disability.

- Mobility impairment, I would need to have office-based employment.
- My disability is physical and I get quite tired. This means that I can not work long hours. I also have a hearing impairment and do not like taking calls in noisy environments.
- Pretty big. I chose something that brings my interests together but is also physically possible for me.
- The difficulties associated with transportation are the biggest disability-related factors.
- Unable to drive, wheelchair dependent and excessive computing difficult. I need an employer located close to where I live. Because I don't drive Workbridge or the employer would need to meet my taxi costs, if I was travelling during work time.
- I require an accessible workspace and toilet facilities and software on my computer, which considers my disability.
- Because of my disability there is a risk of underemployment and communication barriers!

4. What is your idea of the ideal employer?

- ²Flexible:
 - Able to provide practical support in terms of a support person for proof reading, and other tasks, able to provide specialised computer system such as screen reader and IT support people who understand or are will to learn about using this technology.
 - Someone who will listen to me about how I cope with my speech impairment and recognises all the voluntary work I have successfully carried out.
 - One who is flexible and values diversity. One which recognises that people bring much more to a work-place than mere ability to do the job—such things as new perspectives and skills in areas not strictly associated with a particular job, but which are nevertheless valuable. An employer who is prepared to take a risk and promote outside the box. People with disability often find themselves trapped beneath a glass ceiling!
 - Flexible, thinks outside the square, able to look at different but effective ways of working.
 - Someone who does not create barriers for people with disability, and someone who sees the potential in the skill and looks outside the square to find ways of encouraging that potential to be used for the work environment towards positive healthy change.

- ¹Supportive:
 - Someone who recognises that I need to do the job differently and who sees this as something that can be worked out and reassessed from time-to-time. Essentially, this means an employer who takes responsibility for the adaptation of their work environment to be conducive of everyone's cultural, social and communication needs.
 - An employer that encourages me to work at my full potential and is not put off by my speech impairment.
 - Encouraging, supportive, fair while providing challenge - a stimulating work environment.
 - One who understands the issues of disability and is prepared to be accommodating and supportive of me in my career development.
 - One with open and equitable standards, a sense of justice, a responsive attitude to disability, uncontaminated (or in the process of actively decontaminating) by stereotypes about disability that lead to bad judgements on both an individual and policy level. Willing to listen, not a control freak or a primadonna, not into blaming, creative and enables people to take risks.
 - My ideal employer is someone who communicates frequently about what their expectations are and that is supportive of you. Also someone who is open to other ways of doing a job.
 - Fair, understanding of minority group politics, appreciative of ability, supportive when a problem arises, salary increases considered as appropriate.
 - Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.
 - Non judgmental and with a sense of humour!
 - I would love to work for a multi-national company such as IBM. They have clear EEO policies, support for disability staff and a career development path.
5. How much do you know about the Public Service?
- ³Quite a lot:
 - I have applied for a number of positions and I had some interviews but I only got a very temporary position and it didn't particularly suit me. There wasn't a lot of support for somebody who was new to the Public Service.
 - I know about "Mainstream" but haven't been able to access it. "Mainstream" needs to be more flexible to cater for people who have skills and tertiary qualifications, yet have difficulty getting work.
 - I have over 3 years experience which has exposed me to the processes and framework of the Public Sector. I also worked for the Public Service at the time of the release of the Disability Strategy. This gave me a good picture of the Public Service from the inside.

- I know how it operated prior to structural adjustment in the late 1980's as I had worked in the area and my father was in the Public Service since I can remember. He also acquired a disability and they assisted him into his amended role under the old practices of the public service. I have doubts that would happen today. The security of work for people with disability in the public service is gone. It has changed a lot since the old days.
 - More than I want to. I'm fascinated by it's continuous evolution, I'm disappointed that it's got so little understanding of the word 'service'.
 - My experiences in the Public Service have taught me much about the way in which it operates.
 - Quite a bit. Being politically active and interested, I have a good knowledge about the various government departments, what their roles are and in some instances, their structures.
 - I have worked for a Public Service department. They had a good EEO policy and a supportive EEO unit but I left the department, as I did not feel that I was even going to get anywhere having a disability and being female, so I went and did my Masters degree.
 - ²Very little! - I am confused about what is a government department and what's not, I have little information about Public Service employment prospects.
 - ¹A bit:
 - Aware of the major departments and that many national offices are located in Wellington. Not aware of the recruitment practices of these departments other than that they are obliged to advertise positions under the State Sector Act. Not aware of any graduate recruitment practices. Have knowledge of the Mainstream program as an entry into a career in the Public Service.
 - I know the range of departments, and a little about conditions of employment.
6. What would be the benefits of working in the Public Service compared to other career options?
- ⁵EEO employer who would hopefully value the diverse knowledge and skills that people with disability might bring to the role. There are many career opportunities within the public service.
 - ⁴I would be able to serve the wider public interest:
 - Our presence in the Public Service makes it likely that more of us will get there, and more easily with less of a hard time from our fellow employees.
 - I think now is a good time to be employed in the Public Service, especially since the New Zealand Disability Strategy has meant that disability issues are being taken seriously for once!
 - I would be able to apply my political knowledge and media skills (at a personal level).

- I could be more effective by working with the government rather than lobbying them.
 - The possibility of doing something beneficial for people with disability, may be good possibilities of training, an infrastructure that may be supportive, excellent training ground for patience, can really sharpen/tune writing skills and be a safe place from which one can try something truly creative and change-making.
- ³Provisions for people with disability:
 - Hopefully disability awareness.
 - Wheelchair accessible buildings.
 - I could be employed under Mainstream supported employment.
 - Provision of NZSL interpreters and access to communications technologies.
 - There are good support networks.
- ²Stability.
 - There is potential to structure your career, training and career development is often built in and it may have more security of tenure.
 - A clear career path, slightly more job security.
 - Although no one can expect the Public Service to enable them to have “a job for life”, this area of employment is stable...provided one does one's work well and tries to continuously improve one's performance and isn't caught by redundancy, long term employment is highly likely.
- ¹I am uncertain about other benefits of the public service:
 - I am not sure that in today's environment there is any benefit today. I can quote from experience pre Rogernomics ... if you had a job and acquired a disability they use to look after you (depending on the disability and your role within the organisation though). The benefits as it use to be was job security, promotion opportunities and a base development of skills that could carry you into any employment opportunity you chose to enter into. There was also the certainty of a good wage and the PSIS was a strong support union for public servants.
 - It seems that while the salaries in the public sector tend to be lower these are somewhat compensated by other attractive benefits. However, many of these benefits are dependant on long-term service in the public sector which is discriminatory to people who are unable to remain in full-time and long-term work for disability or health related reasons.
 - Disability policy needs to be developed at the national level and the government must take more responsibility for people with disability in NZ.
- No idea!

7. What would be the drawbacks of working in the Public Service compared to other career options?

- ³EEO policies are not actively enforced for people with disability.
- ³Lack of disability awareness and flexible working conditions.
- ²There is a lack of true understanding of people with disability and little action to encourage people with disability into employment.
- ²There is no job security for people with disability.
- ¹The Public Service can be extremely bureaucratic:
 - Roles are largely paper based. After the restructuring through the nineties many departments now operate with a minimum number of administrative support staff. This can create barriers for some people with disability when they don't receive appropriate workplace support.
 - One can't speak out freely, bigger organisations have their own distinctive culture which may not be yours, one needs to conform, having to implement policy which may be personally distasteful, endless ethical dilemmas, change is small and very slow, more chances of dealing with some unpleasant/discriminatory fellow employees and/or managers.
 - The lack of promotion prospects. People with disability tend to be typecast, remaining in jobs they started out in and finding it almost impossible to get their career aspirations taken seriously.
- Several people with disability are denied opportunities in employment besides being well skilled for the role.
- Departments employ based on the identity of disability, not skill.
- Little career development
- Staff attitudes, and office politics.
- I had a scholarship with a Public Service department Head Office and I satisfied all the terms of the contract. When I graduated I was told they had no job for me, despite them advertising two weeks later for graduates. I had been told the Head Office was inaccessible and they didn't know how to meet my technology needs, although if they had communicated these things with me I am sure we could have come up with a solution.

I find every government job I apply for where there are graduate positions, I am short-listed but not taken on because of some excuse. The problem I have is these excuses are becoming tiresome and repetitive...I believe there is a lot of discrimination as to what disability are acceptable to the Public Service managers and administrators and what disability are not.

- Working outside the Public Sector I could have a support person paid for by Workbridge's "Job Support" funding and perhaps use this funding to pay for computer equipment. This is not available in the Public Service.

8. What barriers within the Public Service do you see because of your disability?
- ³Negative attitudes of staff:
 - People's perception of the abilities of a blind person - although there are some good positive role models working within the Public Sector in Wellington.
 - Attitude of staff is a big barrier.
 - People are patronising and under-estimate my abilities. Employers see the barriers of communication as problems.
 - Poor understanding and recognition of disability, discriminatory policies and practices.
 - People need to think outside the square and be flexible in the way that positions can be carried out. It comes down to attitude to people with disability. People are scared of having people with disability on staff because they think it will create extra work.
 - ²Current recruitment and EEO practices:
 - Lack of active positive programs to encourage people with disability with the appropriate skills into these positions.
 - Lack of compliance to the Disability Strategy and a NZ Disability Act to ensure we have protection in employment.
 - Human resource management inconsistent and contradictory, there is a lack of commitment to employment equitable recruitment and retention practices and the halo effect in performance appraisal.
 - Performance appraisal neither recognises nor rewards disability expertise or skills (eg. Creative problem solving).
 - Career development opportunities, financial recognition and training opportunities limited.
 - People with disability have difficulty showing experience in previous voluntary roles and this is not recognised.
 - Hiring practises are not based on affirmative action - hiring relevantly skilled people with disability is not encouraged or promoted.
 - Inflexible job descriptions, stringent job tasks, most jobs are full-time.
 - Lack of disability awareness, mentoring, under-employment.
 - ¹Environmental Barriers:
 - The shortage of qualified sign-language interpreters and the ambiguity of where responsibility for paying the interpreters lies.
 - Many roles are largely computer based requiring the use of spreadsheets and databases that are largely inaccessible to some software (eg. Screen reader).
 - Buildings that are not upgraded.
 - Lack of technology as a way of employing people with disability.
 - Physical Barriers (eg. Parking near and getting around the building).
 - Communication barriers (internal) within the workplace and across divisional lines.

- Lack of understanding that Maori with disability can represent themselves ... Maori with disability with skills are increasingly being overlooked and the decisions involving their disability and health issues are made by able bodied Maori who often have no basic understanding or acceptance of disability.
9. What actions need to occur to make the Public Service more attractive to people with disability?
- ³Increased flexibility, improved EEO Practices and development of policies to integrate people with disability into Public Service departments:
 - Public Service departments to become fully accessible in physical, psychological, spiritual and emotional areas for the full well being of the individual with disability.
 - Public Service departments to embrace technology to allow for the flexibility needs of different individuals with disability.
 - Benefit packages need to be flexible so that part-time and/or short-term workers with disability can access them.
 - Funding tagged for the 'workplace support' of staff with disability must be set aside in their annual budgets.
 - Ask people themselves how they would do the job.
 - Greater physical access to buildings, flexibility in hours of work, seeing that having someone with disability in their area as being positive.
 - An increased level of flexibility in terms of providing both technical and administrative support and designing systems that are accessible to all (eg. Intranets, web pages).
 - Respect (not tokenism), clear EEO policies or affirmative action from management.
 - Mentoring for new staff, interesting projects or work opportunities (eg. Secondment to other departments), travel, professional development opportunities, clear career development paths.
 - Provision of interpreters and other support to access information (eg. Staff or public meetings, communications technologies).
 - It's not enough for Public Service departments to merely advertise themselves as EEO employers. They need to illustrate their willingness to provide training and promotional opportunities and, ensure that, where a job involves the disability sector, people with disability are particularly targeted to fill such positions. You wouldn't dream of hiring pakeha to run Maori programmes or projects! Nothing should be done for or to us, without our direct involvement and management of these projects!

- ²Public Service employers actively recruiting people with disability:
 - Affirmative action programs in place for people with disability with skills until we have equitable access in employment. This should target under-represented groups such as Maori with disability women and men.
 - Scholarships that require on completion of the scholarship the Public Service department to take that graduate on while considering issues around their individual disability.
 - Specifically targeted recruitment campaigns aimed at graduates with disability which are an extension of Mainstream.
 - Expanded holiday-time job placement and work experience programmes in both State Sector and Local Authority Agencies.
 - Establishing good liaison with Workbridge and other support agencies to identify graduates with disability who maybe interested in Public Service careers.
 - Promotion about the accommodation of disability, roles that have a disability orientation, targeted advertising, attractive remuneration for people with disability.
 - An awareness campaign targeting people with disability.
- ¹Training about recruitment and retention of people with disability:
 - All staff including the Ministers and CEO's to be fully trained in disability awareness issues.
 - Internal disability awareness staff training should be mandatory, regular and given by an experienced trainer with disability.
- ¹Effective implementation of the New Zealand Disability Strategy:
 - An increased profile of disability with the release of the NZ Disability Strategy. Financial backing towards the aims of the NZ Disability Strategy would improve the operation of the Public Sector.
 - Moving away from the medicalization of disability - separating it from health and setting up a Ministry of Disability issues where people with disability could work on issues which they are interested and passionate about.
 - The Minister for Disability Issues to be a person with disability and her team of policy makers to be people with the appropriate skills and also to identify as people with disability. You don't see the Ministry of Maori Affairs run by a Pakeha.
 - In place a policy department to oversee all policy and initiatives for people with disability in society, including in employment such as the public service.
 - For a NZ Disability Act to be introduced with the NZ Disability Strategy to be the guideline for this.
- The expression of "valuing diversity" which the Public Service claims to do, but is often only paid lip service to.
- The Public Service should be setting themselves up as model employers of people with disability and helping private sector in this endeavour.

- Workbridge currently have little in the way of work for highly skilled people with disability and that needs to change. If Workbridge could be the main link then they would need to be adequately funded and supported by government and the Public Service.

(b) Information about Careers and Employers:

1. What information would you want to receive from an Employer in order to help you decide whether to work for them or not?
 - ³What disability-related support the employer can offer:
 - Technology support, support of a research assistant, the physical access availability, support networks, parking facilities, good transport access, remuneration for extra costs involved in catering to issues regarding ones disability.
 - The security of ones employment and the ability for flexibility based on the individuals ability to do the job in a manner different to what is usual but doing the job to the employer's satisfaction.
 - Where an issue arises there is an advocacy service available similar to networks available for Maori should I need to approach the employer on any issue.
 - If they have funding for the needs of employees with disability, and how much - Interpreters are expensive and quickly absorb funds.
 - How flexible they are in adapting the job, benefits for people with disability.
 - Information about special leave arrangements for disability related issues, a willingness to discuss disability related issues which may arise for which solutions might be found.
 - Information which provides an insight of the attitude of staff towards people with disability, the level of computing required, and how important is being able to drive.
 - The size of the workspaces and toilet facilities.
 - ²Job Description and conditions of employment:
 - Descriptions of the types of roles that a particular employer/department can offer.
 - Promotional opportunities and the ability to grow in the industry and not have the disability be a barrier.
 - EEO policies, career paths, ongoing professional development, conditions of employment.
 - Advice on training opportunities.
 - Recruitment material about the agency and career options.
 - Information about the match of the role to my expertise, remuneration, opportunities for creativity and individualism.
 - Job challenges and staff infrastructure (eg. On site visits, organisational chart, support for communication).

- ¹Demonstration of EEO and NZ Disability Strategy practices:
 - I'd want to get a feel for their ethics and values.
 - Explanation of this in terms of their core business and in more concrete ways such as accessible websites, providing information in alternative formats (eg. electronic).
 - What anti-discrimination programs are in place and how can I have my safety from discrimination protected.
 - Whether they are actively employ people with disability and/or if they have employed people with disability before, and, honestly, how that went.
 - If they give their staff disability awareness training or if they plan to do this.

- 2. Where are you looking to find out about jobs or careers?
 - ²Websites:
 - NZ Jobs on line, Online at the Government jobs site, the government web page, Jobs Online website, Kiwi Careers, Career Point, NZ Herald online.
 - ²Personal Networks:
 - My contacts are most helpful in directing me to the few jobs in this field, informal networking, word of mouth via friends or colleagues.
 - ²The newspaper.
 - ¹Disability Networks-Workbridge, RNZFB Vocational Advisor, Mainstream.
 - Victoria University Careers Service, in all the Public Service advertising journals, a recruitment agency and organisational newsletters.

- 3. What would be the best way to hear about jobs or careers?
 - ²Disability Networks:
 - Through services provided by service providers such as RNZFB telephone information service and email network.
 - Many mental health service providers operate job clubs now too.
 - Using services like Workbridge to screen vacancies and pass relevant ones to their clients.
 - Via disability related email list servers.
 - Most large disability sector organisations have email groups. Some also have Telephone Information Services and most organisations circulate newsletters.
 - Through Disability Coordinators at Universities and Polytechnics, roadshows to students with disability and graduates by Public Sector employers at tertiary institutions, promotional evenings, through Workbridge.
 - Do a recruitment program through the universities, after all there are disability support services who can reach and support us through the process.
 - Mainstream.
 - DPA newsletter and a disability job search database.

- ¹Personal Networks:
 - My contacts are most helpful in directing me to the few jobs in this field, informal networking, word of mouth via friends or colleagues.
 - ¹Websites, newspaper.
 - Approaching employers.
 - Regular radio spots looking at new or innovative jobs or careers. Giving examples of where people with disability are working in "non-stereotypical" situations.
 - Public Service bulletin.
4. What would make it easier for people with disability to access and use information about jobs or careers?
- ¹Websites:
 - Increased access to the Internet through Department of Work and Income offices or someplace else (eg. Workbridge).
 - Stricter regulations and guidelines to web page designers to make information accessible for people with disability.
 - Perhaps an Internet site for disability related jobs.
 - Use websites that are user friendly.
 - Email networks (such as Tertiary Students with Disability Network).
 - Company specific websites, not just career websites.
 - ¹Accessible information:
 - Increased access to alternative formats.
 - Have it available in a variety of accessible formats, and ask as a matter of course if this is desired.
 - Regular accessible information sources such as radio spots.
 - ¹Use of Disability Networks:
 - Increased use by the Public Service of Workbridge, taking advantage of the fact that Workbridge is a national organization.
 - Bring it to us and provide us with the information through such services as DPA, ACHIEVE and Workbridge. We need to be made aware of jobs where employers will consider us for positions, will employ us based on our skills and because we are ideal for that job and the disability is not a barrier.
 - Targeted promotional initiatives.
 - Send to service providers - Mainstream, Workbridge.
 - DPA newsletter and a disability job search database
 - Open days and career days where we visit selected employers.
5. What are the features of the ideal website to hear about jobs or careers? Please specify any examples of good websites that you use.
- ¹www.jobs.govt.nz, www.nzjobs.co.nz, www.new-zealand-jobs.com, www.careers.govt.nz, www.careers.co.nz, www.monster.co.nz.
 - www.rnzfb.co.nz, deaf-uk-group@yahoogroups.com.
 - www.nzherald.co.nz (difficult to go through job searches).
 - Career Point 0800 Number.

- The ideal website:
 - Good design, easy-to-navigate, clear and relevant information on websites, graphics not cluttered (eg. www.monster.com.au, deaf-uk-group@yahoogroups.com).
 - Accessible-bobby approved.
 - Websites can be overwhelming and it is easy to get lost in them. I like websites that have a "site map" on the side of your screen.
 - Something that is non-graphical and has good text links. Unfortunately there aren't too many good examples out there. Kiwi Careers is almost useless for someone without sight that is using screen-reading software. Hence the accessing and using of Career Point 0800 Number.
 - A website with a symbol to identify that the job can be filled by an appropriately skilled person with disability, if they chose to apply.
 - A website specific for job seekers with disability would be a good idea. It is difficult to know if I can apply for a job and not get rejected because I use a wheelchair. It is exhausting and demoralising being constantly rejected.
 - Perhaps a section for disability orientated roles and a section on disability friendly employer policies.
- Most government websites are fully accessible now! This applies both to accessibility in terms of people with vision impairments or who use head pointers, and also those with old equipment.
- I can use most websites but I doubt many blind or visually impaired people or those with learning disability would be able to navigate or understand most job websites.

Is there anything else you would like to say?

- There is little in the way of funding for technology for people with disability except through Workbridge, which has been unable to support many highly skilled people with disability into adequate employment. Workbridge Job Support funding is not available in the Public Service and departments don't budget for workplace support for people with disability.
- Yes. The Public Sector should be taking more responsibility for becoming disability-friendly employer. A person, or small team of people, should be employed to expand on this project across all public service departments.
- I think the thing few people really are prepared for is just what hard work it is to be in the Public Service.
- A couple of years ago some people tried to set up a Mainstream position for me in the Ministry of Social Policy and it was turned down flat as being too much trouble. I know when I applied for some positions in this agency in mid 1990s there were quite a lot of discussion whether they should appoint me - they didn't.

...When I investigated going onto “Mainstream” one of the barriers was that I was “self-employed”, therefore deemed to be able to get employment. “Mainstream” needs to be more flexible ... This all or nothing approach mean some people miss out.

- *Nothing about us without us!* It is great that people with disability have not only been included in this study but that it is us who are being asked these questions.

Appendix Six:

The New Zealand Disability Strategy - Objectives & Actions **Relevant to Public Service Departments**

This strategy contains the following objectives and actions that are relevant to Public Service departments. Many of these actions would overcome the barriers identified by the students and graduates involved with this project. They would also improve recruitment and retention of people with disability in the Public Service. It is therefore important that all Public Service departments include strategies in their plans, that ensure these objectives and their associated actions are implemented.

Objective 1:

Encourage and educate for a non-disabling society.

Actions

1.1 Develop national and locally-based anti-discrimination programmes.

Objective 4:

Provide opportunities in employment and economic development for disabled people.

Actions

Planning and training for entering employment:

- 4.1 Provide education and training opportunities to increase the individual capacity of disabled people to move into employment.
- 4.2 Enable disabled people to lead the development of their own training and employment goals, and to participate in the development of support options to achieve those goals.
- 4.3 Educate employers about the abilities of disabled people.
- 4.4 Provide information about career options, ways to generate income, and assistance available for disabled people.
- 4.5 Investigate longer-term incentives to increase training, employment and development opportunities for disabled people.

Employment and economic development:

- 4.8 Encourage the development of a range of employment options recognising the diverse needs of disabled people.
- 4.9 Ensure disabled people have the same employment conditions, rights and entitlements as everyone else.
- 4.10 Make communication services, resources and flexible workplace options available.
- 4.11 Operate equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies in the public sector.
- 4.12 Investigate a legislative framework for equal employment opportunities across the public and private sectors.

Objective 5:

Foster leadership by disabled people.

Actions

- 5.3 Model the inclusion of disabled people in leadership roles within government departments, in order to encourage leadership by disabled people within all organisations.
- 5.4 Support the establishment of a leadership development and mentoring programme for disabled people.
- 5.5 Establish a register of disabled people for government appointments.

Objective 6:

Foster an aware and responsive Public Service.

Actions

- Develop mechanisms to ensure that all government policy and legislation is consistent with the objectives of the New Zealand Disability Strategy.
- Adapt public sector training to ensure that service development and service delivery are consistent with the New Zealand Disability Strategy.
- Ensure that all government agencies treat disabled people with dignity and respect.
- Improve the quality of information available, including where to go for more information, the services available and how to access them.
- Make all information and communication methods offered to the general public available in formats appropriate to the different needs of disabled people.
- Ensure the locations and buildings of all government agencies and public services are accessible.

Appendix Seven:

EEO Strategies to Improve Recruitment and Retention of Graduates with Disability in the Public Service

Below is a summary of EEO strategies for improving recruitment and retention of graduates with disability in the Public Service. These strategies incorporate ideas from the:

- Students and graduates involved with this project
- EEO Trust 'People with Disability and Work' booklets, and
- EEO Disability in the NZ Public Service report written by Robyn Hunt.

(a) Recruitment:

- Application forms or Interviewers should state the reason for asking disability-related questions. Otherwise people with disability will be afraid to disclose this information.
- Only asking disability-related questions at the interview stage, so that people with disability only have to show their skills, experience and qualifications at the application stage.
- Targeting graduates with disability to fill positions - disability policy.

(b) Job Analysis:

- Determine what is essential and what is desirable. This allows for flexibility when accommodating people with disability.
- Allow people with disability to adapt the task to their needs, rather than having a predetermined method for how different task should be completed.

(c) Job Description:

- Focus on the outcome, rather than the task. This will allow people with disability to present their method for reaching outcomes.

(d) Person Specification:

- Specify which skills, qualifications and attributes are essential and which are preferred.
- Remember formal qualifications and previous work experience are not the only indicators of ability.

(e) Advertising:

- Be aware of discriminatory language.
- Advertise in the disability community (eg. Workbridge, other Disability Networks, through Disability Support Offices and Career Services at Polytech and University).
- Make job descriptions and applications available on disk, large print and electronically.
- Allow people with disability to apply via email.
- Include a fax number and/or email address.

(f) Selection:

- Only ask for information that is directly relevant to the job and the candidate's ability to do it.
- If recruitment requires a selection test people with disability may need an alternative format.
- Guarantee interviews for people with disability who meet the basic job specifications.
- Application forms should not include questions about disability unless there are appropriate safeguards for people with disability. For example employers should:
 - Only ask questions about the support required, rather than just asking about the disability (eg. Asking all candidates, What support do you require to do the job?).
 - State the reason for asking disability-related questions.
 - Develop policies that ensure people with disability are not discriminated against if they disclose at application stage.
 - Consider why these questions can't be asked at the interview.

(g) Interview:

- Ask all candidates who are short-listed if they have any particular needs for the interview.
- Applicants should only be asked about their ability to perform tasks relating to the job.
- Disability questions that only ask support required to minimise the impact of a disability at work (eg. What support do you require to do the job?).

(h) Induction:

- Discuss and implement workplace support required before employment commences.
- Arrange a pre-start visit to ensure a smooth process for workplace support and adaptations.
- Before the employee with disability starts ensure that the manager and supervisor understands the agreed workplace support and the workgroup is briefed on this support.
- Allow the person with disability to organise their work area.
- Assign a colleague to help integration into the workplace.
- Provide training and induction material in an appropriate format.

(i) Training and Development:

- Assign a mentor when the person with disability starts.
- Develop a process for creating career goals and a plan to implement these.
- Carry out an ongoing training needs analysis.
- Develop a training plan and review this at least every 6 months.
- Ensure training accommodates disability needs.

(j) Workplace Support:

- Provide line managers with the tools to facilitate solutions to overcome workplace barriers for people with disability.
- Public Service departments allocating in annual budgets, specific funding for 'workplace support' of staff with disability.
- Create an inclusive and accessible environment where disability needs are met:
 - Audits of physical access for people with disability.
 - Public Service departments embracing inclusive technology to provide flexibility for individuals with disability.
 - Regular rest-breaks for all staff.
 - Apply to external funders for individualised technology.
 - Ensure that the organisations' technology framework considers the needs of staff with disability. For example – large print options on computer screens, large computer screens, braille computer packages, audio options for information, the use of email, interpreters, FM hearing systems, Bobby-approved websites.
 - Use external expertise to identify technology options.
 - All information available in alternative formats.
 - Providing both technical and administrative support.
- Create a flexible workplace:
 - Flexible hours to allow people with disability to complete tasks when they are at their best (eg. Part-time or full-time, in the morning or at night).
 - Part-time schedules, gradual hours or taking meetings via conference calls or video conferencing so people with disability can work from home and don't have to travel.
 - People with disability can work at home or have flexible hours.
 - Flexible benefits for part-time and/or short-term workers.
- Introduce a Disability Leave Policy.
- The ability to bank overtime to compensate for disability-related absences.

(k) Retention:

- Training all staff that EEO practices are about creating a diverse workforce that reflects the community, getting the best out of people, encouraging teamwork and should lead to good business practice.
- Regular supervision of staff with disability to identify and resolve potential workplace barriers on an ongoing basis.
- Assess when external advice is needed from a health professional or disability community support networks.

- Employers who:
 - Employ people with disability for their skills, qualifications, work experience.
 - Focus on achievements and successes.
 - Pay people with disability at the same rate as other staff and don't penalise them because they can't work long hours or have a disability.
 - Accept that people with disability may need to adapt tasks or need some flexibility, but their contribution is still important.
 - Are willing to listen and learn.
 - Encourage people with disability to assess their own performance and if there is any change establish why.
 - Are willing to adapt when things turn to custard.
 - Investigate strategies to make the current workplace support more effective, when changes need to occur because of the disability.
 - Ensure decisions reflect mutual agreement.
 - Take responsibility to adapt the work environment.
 - Think outside the square - look at different but effective ways of working, take risks, promote outside the box and provide practical support with tasks (eg. Specialised computer system, software and IT support).
 - Don't expect people with disability to come up with all the answers at one point in time and realise that it is going to be an evolving process and ongoing.
 - Encourage people with disability to work to their full potential by providing them with a fair environment that offers challenges and stimulating work.
- Mentoring for new staff with disability, interesting projects or professional development opportunities (eg. Secondment to other departments) and clear career development paths.
- Develop networks for people with disability in the workplace.
- Have a senior manager responsible for people with disability.
- Include disability harassment in workplace harassment policy.
- Present information and success stories to other staff about employment of people with disability, to overcome the negative stereotypes they may have.
- Exit interviews or surveys when people with disability have to leave because of workplace barriers. This should get meaningful feedback that will prevent similar issues occurring again. This information needs to be reviewed in a way that it is not buried and patterns are identified and resolved. A senior staff member or even an external agency should do this or it could be linked to departmental Disability Strategy Implementation Plans.
- Walk the talk with EEO policies.