



Press release for December 2016 **Westminster AchieveAbility Commission (WAC)**

The Westminster AchieveAbility Commission is user-led and focuses on adults with dyslexia and neurodivergence in the UK, Barry Sheerman MP is President and Lord Addington is Adviser. The Commission is now investigating the barriers to employment to identify recruitment processes that disadvantage neurodivergent people (those with ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, autism and Asperger Syndrome). Since dyslexic people and those who are neurodivergent represent the highest percentage of adults who are disabled this Commission is vital in order to represent the issues for this community, as well as revealing their value and strengths within the workplace. The work will provide much needed evidence and build on the research of the recent ACAS report 'Neurodiversity at Work'.

Experts have already provided evidence to the Commission, namely: Nasser Siabi OBE, Microlink; Chris Rossiter, British Psychological Society; Margaret Malpas MBE from the British Dyslexia Association and Andrew Sutherland lead on the ACAS report. More witness sessions will be arranged for early 2017 to include: 'Policy and Practice' and the 'Neurodivergent Voice'. With the surveys now in place, this evidence will feed into the government goal of 'Halving the Disability Employment Gap' by 2020; <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AchieveAbility01>. The result is to find out how recruitment and probation processes might be improved and to highlight good practice in these areas.

The Commission has been formed from a collaboration of AchieveAbility, the Autism Commission, the Dyslexia Adult Network and the Dyspraxia Foundation to bring about positive change by bringing people together to publish and promote this evidence. The ensuing report will outline a series of recommendations to be launched during Dyslexia Awareness Week, October 2017. This work will provide other campaigning groups with a platform from which to push this agenda further, aligned with the government's stated aim of 'Halving the Disability Employment Gap'. With a Green Paper on employment now published, there could be no better time to highlight the employment needs of this large population and point to better recruitment practices for the global economy.

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