

## **AHEAD and TNS mrbi Research (2008) Employing Graduates with Disabilities: A Survey of 300 Businesses in Ireland**

In early 2008, AHEAD (the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability) commissioned TNS mrbi, an independent market research company, to conduct research on their behalf. The objective of this research was to establish a broad overview of the employment situation of (and employer attitudes towards) graduates with disabilities through a telephone survey of 300 businesses nationwide who have more than 20 employees. In order to assess attitudes towards the recruitment of graduates with disabilities, the survey responses came from recruitment managers or those directly responsible for recruitment in their organisation. The quantitative field work was carried out by TNS mrbi between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2008. The following represent some of the primary statistics emanating from this piece of research;

- **25% of the businesses surveyed were currently employing a graduate with a disability – 71% were not.**
- **52% of the recruitment managers surveyed had at some point interviewed a graduate with a disability. [69% of these came from companies who had 100+ employees].**
- **73% stated that graduates with disabilities should disclose their disabilities – only 24% said that they should not have to.**
- **When asked at what stage graduates with disabilities should disclose, the majority of responses identified the interview stage (57% of responses to the question).**
- **When asked what are the benefits of disclosure for the employer the following were the top 3 responses;**
  - 1) Better able to accommodate (49%)**
  - 2) Able to deal with any issues that may arise (particularly in relation to health and safety) (35%)**
  - 3) More aware of the person's needs (22%)**
- **Only 26% had ever taken part in any form of disability equality training – 74% had never taken part. [94% of those who had taken part found it to be effective].**
- **42% of those who had taken part in some form of disability equality training were currently employing a graduate with a disability. When compared to the first stat which identifies the overall figure of 25% of all the businesses surveyed – we can see that there quite possibly is**

**a direct correlation between taking part in disability equality training and employing graduates with disabilities.**

- **66% of responses stated that they did understand what the term 'reasonable accommodation' meant in relation to the employment of people with disabilities. 34% did not fully understand the term. [Just under half (45%) of the responses from businesses with 20-49 employees stated that they did not understand the term].**