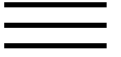


concerning the employment and employability of disabled people in UK accounting firms: An analysis of the views of human resource managers as employment gatekeepers.

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Issues concerning the employment and employability of disabled people in UK accounting firms: An analysis of the views of human resource managers as employment gatekeepers

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Abstract

In this paper we consider attitudes of human resource managers towards the employment and employability of disabled people in United Kingdom (UK) accounting firms. Only one study [Duff, A., Ferguson, R.J., in press. Disability and accounting firms: Evidence from the UK. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*] has considered the employment of disabled people in accounting firms, despite a growing number of studies considering gender, race and social class in accounting employment. This dearth of evidence is unexpected given the passing of disability rights legislation in the UK in 1995 and the United States of America in 1990. Our investigation utilizes nine semi-structured

interviews with human resource managers (or their equivalent) in large and medium-sized UK accounting firms. Three participants are from the Big Four firms, which dominate the market for accounting and auditing services. Views were elicited regarding: (i) drivers of disability awareness, (ii) the role of partners, (iii) how firms view disability, (iv) impairments firms view as a problem, and (v) job applications. Participants' responses indicate an awareness of existing legislation governing disability issues, in particular, the UK's Disability Discrimination Act, 1995. However, there is evidence that accounting firms restrict their understanding of disability to legal definitions. The study identifies specific impairments which firms see as impediments to employment and critically assesses firms' perceptions of the employability of disabled people.



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Keywords

Disability; Discrimination; Accounting firms; Disability Discrimination Act; Voluntary initiative; Medical model of disability; Social model of disability

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