

# Recent initiative to promote anti- discriminatory practice essay sample



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The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) made it unlawful to discriminate against those with disabilities in terms of employment and provisions of goods, services and facilities. It is obvious that the most successful area that this act has worked in has been employment as the percentage of disabled people in work rose to 47.8% in 2012, which may not seem great when compared to 75.9% of non-disabled people but since the act has been in place, the difference between the two percentages decreased by around 10%(1). Looking at the percentage difference it could be argued that maybe less disabled people are in jobs because certain jobs require certain physiological aspects, for example, an electrician would have to have no visual impairment such as blindness or colour-blindness as they would pose a threat to themselves and others due to the nature of the work.

Education has also seen notable improvements when the act came into fruition as the percentage of those with special educational needs achieving 5 or more A\*-C grades rose by a total of 56% between 2005 and 2011(2). Whilst the grades of those with disabilities have improved, it appears that the experience in education hasn't had a great effect due to the act as 26% of disabled people in education reported having a negative experience largely due to the attitudes of others and lack of correct facilities(3). The poor attitudes and lack of facilities may come from the fact that 83% of disabled students are in mainstream education (4) which cannot necessarily cater for their needs to the same standard of a special needs school. The main area that still needs to be further reviewed is the provision of goods, services and facilities because accessibility in terms of public services could be improved.

One example of how it needs improvement would be train stations as not all of them can be accessed by wheelchair users, Grove Park station would be an example of a place that doesn't offer access to wheelchair users as platform 1 is completely inaccessible and platforms 2, 3, 4 and 5 have steep ramps to get to and from them so are not ideal for those in wheelchairs. This means that getting into central London would be difficult for those in a wheelchair without going to another local station. A more recent example of poor provision of services and facilities is a law case against Thomas Cook after they had failed to provide a wheelchair to a disabled woman at an airport in Tunisia. Legal action was taken after Mrs Campbell- who suffers from arthritis in her neck, back and hip- was told by staff that she would have to stand in the same queue otherwise she would lose her place and be left behind.

She was in fact not flown back to the UK until the day after her original flight was supposed to be. Whilst this situation shows how there are ways in which the legislation hasn't been implemented by companies in establishments outside of the UK, the case resulted in the judge stating that UK companies can make additional provisions for disabled customers travelling outside of the EU (5). Whilst it is clear that some parts of the Act can be altered in order to attempt to close any loopholes found by companies, it is undeniable that as a whole the act has enabled the treatment of disabled people to be moved forwards in great strides. This is shown by the highest ever percentage of disabled people in employment and higher education as well as the fact that most major services e. g. public transport will cater to the needs of disabled individuals. With that being said there is still room for

improvement which may come about as a result of the act continuing to be tweaked to make sure that the mistreatment of disabled individuals is gone from society.

## References

1. [http://www.efds.co.uk/resources/facts\\_and\\_statistics](http://www.efds.co.uk/resources/facts_and_statistics) 05/11/2014
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-facts-and-figures/disability-facts-and-figures> 05/11/14
3. Department for Work and Pension's report into attitudes toward disability in Britain (Grewal, Joy, Lewis, Swales and Woodfield, 2002)
4. DfES, 2005
5. <http://www.travelweekly.co.uk/Articles/Details/50936> 06/11/14