**Q: Kate/Natalie re disclosing a disability in a positive light. If it’s possible in finding an employer who actually wants disability knowledge or considering disability knowledge as a strength? what’s panel think in this approach.?**

***Kates response:*** *In terms of Graduate Recruitment**<https://au.gradconnection.com/> highlights companies/organisations that are inclusive. I would also suggest jumping on to specific organisations/business websites and browsing to see if they have an open policy or programs around inclusion. Generally, if they promote their policies etc and are open in identifying this they are confident employees and some organisations go through training with Australian Network on Disability (AND) to achieve Disability Confident Recruiter status.*

***Natalie's response:*** *The employment sphere is evolving where organisations have developed and implemented inclusion programs or are taking steps to develop policy around inclusion. Organisations who promote inclusion and diversity on their websites embrace diversity therefore are open to diversity conversations. Employers/organisations who do not have inclusive/diversity policy I have different approaches, again case by case. An example, if I approach an I.T. company and I am reverse marketing a graduate with autism, I discuss with employers widening the talent pool to include neurodivergent graduates as opposed to generalist. I discuss the unique strengths the graduate can bring to the team, for example, problem solving and analytical thinking, exceptional ability to retain detailed information.*

***David supplement:*** *We as a society do need to continue to work toward breaking down some of the myths and stereotypes about disability so all employers are disability confident. See recent DSS research - employers would like to, but don’t show an equal level of practical commitment to, hiring people with disability:* [*https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/07\_2018/building\_employer\_demand\_research\_report.pdf*](https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/07_2018/building_employer_demand_research_report.pdf)

**Q: I am new to DES providers, do you recommend joining a DES provider in later years of uni or wait till graduation?**

***Kate:*** *In my opinion I would suggest earlier the better. You then have time to navigate the processes and build a relationship with the consultant. However, you may not be eligible to receive their formal ‘service’ eg: study commitment (full time or part time) etc. This may be something to begin researching.*

***Natalie:*** *Depending on eligibility, my perspective would be to join a DES after the first year of university. However, I would encourage students to engage with the Disability Support Office (DSO) team at the university team in the first year of university. The DSO team provide support and can discuss challenges the students may face with university and can assist with adjustments required for future exams etc.*

***David:*** *The NDCO’s recognise this as a barrier and are trialing what happens when earlier access to DES is provided to university students with disability in collaboration with some universities and DES providers. For more information, visit:* [*www.usep.com.au*](http://www.usep.com.au)*. Depending on your university, you may have access to this trial service.*

Q: I am the parent of a young man on the autistic spectrum studying robotic engineering. He can programme a robotic arm and do other such tasks, but is unable to negotiate the recruiting and interview process for an internship. He doesn't know how to search, ask, search, communicate with a potential employer. How much should I do for him, and doesn't it look bad if your mother is doing it for you? How do I negotiate this with him respectfully? Also the "EQ" questions on some application forms discriminate against people of the autistic spectrum.

*During the webinar we advocated for engaging with the university support services and discussing the need for additional career support.*

***David supplementary answer:*** *One of the important points I feel is that it is perfectly O.K. to ask on applications to be assessed in a more practical way for job fit. Job interviews are anxiety inducing, but for some people on the autism spectrum, they can be an excruciating process. Below are some resources, projects, ideas to keep track of.*

1. *Look for opportunities through and stay connected with* [*http://au.specialisterne.com/*](http://au.specialisterne.com/)
2. *An article written by an autistic graduate on why the job interview isn’t fair with some proposals:* [*https://www.usep.com.au/job-interviews-people-autism-spectrum/*](https://www.usep.com.au/job-interviews-people-autism-spectrum/)
3. *This as an example of what this looks like:* [*https://www.cbsnews.com/news/companies-open-doors-to-talent-with-autism/?ftag=CNM-00-10aab8c&linkId=56333663*](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/companies-open-doors-to-talent-with-autism/?ftag=CNM-00-10aab8c&linkId=56333663)

**Q: Do any other universities have a specific internship/ graduate employment or earn while you learn program focusing on undergrads with disability in penultimate year of study?**

*None came up in discussion. If a reader is aware, please write to us and we will provide the detail here, email* *admin@adcet.edu.au*

**Q: Given the spread of mental health within the community, we are starting to see/ hear comments from employers about not wanting anyone who has any sort of mental health issue - any suggestions on how we try to tackle this as an 'invisible' disability? How do we open minds and get it seen that the numbers would suggest that their current workforce is already made up of a high number of people living with mental health issues.**

*An example of something that was highly regarded is the Barclay’s “this is me” campaign, which could be duplicated at other organisations:* [*https://www.home.barclays/about-barclays/diversity-and-inclusion/disability/this-is-me.html*](https://www.home.barclays/about-barclays/diversity-and-inclusion/disability/this-is-me.html)

*Influencing change about how mental health conditions are perceived and how mental wellness is promoted in the workplace is everybody’s work to do. In this example, change was lead from within and has gone beyond the walls of the organisation.*

***Natalie:*** *Beyond Blue initiatives such as Heads Up in partnership with the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance (MHWA) encourages all people in workplaces to take action on mental health. Heads Up provides free online tools and resources to help manage mental health issues in the workplace. Beyond Blue’s Mental health workplace toolbox training package equips line managers with tools to engage in mental health conversations in the workplace. When engaging with employers I discuss the tools available online to provide employers with information and skills to support current and potential new employees* [*www.beyondblue.org.au*](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

Q: Would it be possible for the article (Disclosing Disability on a resume) to be sent to participants, or added onto the recording on the ADCET website?

Here is the researchgate link: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/289351232_To_Tell_or_Not_to_Tell_Disability_Disclosure_and_Job_Application_Outcomes>*.*

Q: Could Kate talk a little further about the way that the Internship subject at UOW works? Is this supported by the Equity/Wellbeing staff or a part of a particular college? Or is this supported pending the college/ topic of study the study has?

***Kate****: It is a subject listed on the General Electives for eligible students (excludes some Social Science and Education degrees) and is promoted to all students, however a targeted approach to equity students has been devised. The subject focuses on theoretical components of careers, changing world of work and is combined with practical tasks and experiences. One experience includes an internship placement. The students in the subject are supported by an array of specialised Career Central staff from academia, industry specific and myself as the Career Consultant for Equity. My role is to support students in their individualised needs in the internship process and also within the subject if required.*

**Q: How underestimated do panelists think the number of students with disability at university actually is? I thought I saw a slide of 6% yet in the wider community ABS stats show that people with a disability are more like 1 in 5 (20%)**

*A.Students with disability in Australia are identified by disclosing this to the University, usually to receive a specific adjustment or support. This means that it is possible that there are many students who meet the Disability Discrimination Act’s definition of Disability who are not counted. In the U.K, there is a financial supplement for verified disability while studying at University and the percentage of students with disability there is above 10%. Students with mental health conditions - this is an identified priority area in higher education.*

*In March 2018 a report, Enhancing Self-Disclosure of Equity Group Membership was released that’s purpose was to inform future policy development by government and future equity practice by higher education providers.* [*https://www.adcet.edu.au/resource/9921/enhancing-self-disclosure-of-equity-group-membership-report/*](https://www.adcet.edu.au/resource/9921/enhancing-self-disclosure-of-equity-group-membership-report/)

Q: Are any of your panelists aware of Internship programs specific for students with a disability?

*Answers in session:*

[*https://www.and.org.au/pages/stepping-into...-programs.html*](https://www.and.org.au/pages/stepping-into...-programs.html)

[*https://www.apsc.gov.au/gradaccess*](https://www.apsc.gov.au/gradaccess)

[*http://au.specialisterne.com/*](http://au.specialisterne.com/)

*Equitydiversity@brisbane.qld.gov.au* *- e-mail the Brisbane City Council and request to be placed on this mailing list. The DAAW program (Disability Action at Work Program) is a 16 week work experience program – paid*

[*www.dandelionprogram.com/*](http://www.dandelionprogram.com/)

*The Dandelion Program HP/DXCTechnology Australia – autism program*

*Supplementary (Look for state action plans and approach, examples):*

*QLD State Government has a target of 8% PwD in the state workforce by 2022*

*NSW State Government, See the possibilities campaign:* [*https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/disability/jobs/chapters/what-can-you-do*](https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/disability/jobs/chapters/what-can-you-do) *Target is 5.6%, 2027*

*Victoria - Every Opportunity plan, target is 6% by 2020:* [*http://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/every-opportunity*](http://www.statedisabilityplan.vic.gov.au/every-opportunity)

**Q) Disability disclosure training – how do we get a more generic employer education happening within the wider community to bring in more employers to be disability confident?**

***Natalie****: I think it is important to keep having conversations with employers, local members, chambers of commerce and to network in the local and wider communities.*

**Q) Disability expos are great, however how many employers/ groups etc. who aren’t already disability confident and aware; actually, attend these expos?**

*Not sure - it really depends on how many the organisers invite! There is more to this of course about disability information not being hidden away at special events and expo’s but being available everywhere: community expo’s, generalist careers events, etc.*

**Q) Do you think it would be easier to find a job with practical-on the job training rather than a degree/qualification?**

*Natalie: Case by case*

**Q) In the past how much time was spent on campus and in what regularity (From a DES provider prospective)**

***Natalie:*** *It has been building up over a bit more than a year now - currently allocating 2 days per week on site.*

**Audience member comment:** Just to note that Curtin has employed a Staff Disability Advisor for 6 years to support PwD to give that support Jeremy was talking about in the workplace once they're employed, arrange Job Access applications, explore reasonable adjustment with managers etc ) Our recruitment ads include following statement At Curtin: “we are committed to Indigenous reconciliation, diversity and social justice and aim to create an inclusive environment where our staff and students are valued and inspired. This includes a supportive recruitment process should you require any access/ ability assistance.”