

Sarah (EmployAbility):

Hey I'm Sarah and I work for EmployAbility.

We work with talented neurodiverse and disabled university students and graduates, providing you with support into employment.

We are so proud to be partnering with the FCA for the 13th year running. The FCA partners with us to ensure that disabled applicants are provided with the highest level of individualised and free support for their internship and graduate programmes. This is part of the FCA's commitment to being a Next Generation Inclusive Employer, with genuine barrier-free access to roles. It means that your disability - whatever form it takes - will not have any detrimental impact on your chances of success through the recruitment process. And, as part of this commitment, it means that we will support you throughout. We are here, to discuss and advise you on any adjustments you may need. We will then advocate these, on your behalf to the FCA, so that you can focus on the tasks involved. I, along with my colleagues will be here to help you throughout the process.

There are four different steps to the FCA application process.

You need to get through each stage before you progress to the next one.

I will go through each of these steps now and explain how we can support you at each stage, and the sorts of adjustments that can be made.

So, the 4 steps are:

Step 1

This is the Online application form: This includes personal, education and employment information. It's important all the information is correct - your grades, dates, email address, contact number, university information, course, etc.

My advice is that you double check everything before submitting.

Usually, there are no adjustments required for this stage of the process, unless you have mitigating circumstances which may have impacted your profile compared to other candidates. For example, your disability has had an impact on the grades you were expecting, how long you've taken to complete your degree, or your ability to gain work experience. If so, you should add this on the application form.

You can contact EmployAbility to get advice on how best to word this type of statement.

Step 2

Online test: this is the Verify G+ General Ability Test, a suite of cognitive ability tests from SHL. The test measures three types of ability: Numerical, Deductive Reasoning and Inductive Reasoning. We recommend that you practice these tests in advance - you can find practice tests on the SHL website.

IMPORTANT: if you require extra time or the test in a different format, you need to contact EmployAbility/ the recruitment team at the FCA before you start the test.

Once you have started the test we are unable to adjust the timer or re-set the test, and you won't be able to take the test again. So, if you think you might need any adjustments, it is super important you contact us before you start the test.

Examples of adjustments; extra time which could be 25, 50, 100% depending on the impact of your disability.

Usually, you will be given 3 days to complete the test, but this can also be extended to provide you with more time.

Step 3

Motivational questions: You will be asked to provide written responses to 4 questions. The FCA will assess your motivation, drive, commercial acumen and written communication. There is a 250 word limit on each question. It is important that you read, review and spell check your answers before submitting. A tip I would recommend is that you use the full word count (250 words) to provide your answers. Word counts are often a really good gauge for the level of depth and detail needed to properly answer the question.

Adjustments: you can be provided with an extension to the time you have to complete the questions.

So, although you would ordinarily be given 5 days, this can be extended if you need this.

Of course, you still need to make sure that you submit your answers before the overall deadline.

If you need any other support for this stage, please talk to us at EmployAbility, and we will advise you.

Step 4

Telephone interview: during the interview, the FCA will assess your drive, motivation, judgement and engagement skills.

Interviews will last up to 30 minutes for graduates and 20 minutes for interns.

The interview style will be a mix of motivational and competency questions.

An important piece of advice is: Don't be afraid to repeat anything you've already said in the written motivational questions section - each stage of the process is being evaluated separately, possibly by a different recruiter.

It is important that you speak to EmployAbility as soon as you know you have reached the tel interview stage so that there is plenty of time for us to discuss your adjustments with you, and ensure that these can be put in place.

Examples of adjustments at this stage may be an alternative format - such as a face to face or video conference interview, if a telephone interview isn't appropriate for you. Or, extending the time of the interview to allow for additional thinking time should you need this, so that you have enough time to process information and formulate your answers. If your communication skills are negatively impacted by your disability, we'll advise the interviewer and this will not go against you. For those with a hearing impairment, we can for example recommend an alternative format, such as a face to face interview with support from a sign language

interpreter or notetaker, or you may wish to be interviewed through an instant messaging service.

Once you successfully complete these 4 stages, you will be considered for the assessment centre stage.

There are a limited number of spaces at the assessment centres and therefore not everyone can be invited.

Some programmes, such as the Economics, Actuarial, HR are particularly competitive, where usually there is only 1 assessment centre held each year.

Whether or not you are selected for the assessment centre will depend on your overall performance across the 3 main stages in the process: online tests, motivational questions and telephone interview, so it's important you put effort into each one.

You should not feel discouraged if you're not invited to an early assessment centre.

For interns, there are typically around 5-6 assessment centre days each year, so there is plenty of opportunity to be chosen.

If you are selected for an assessment centre, EmployAbility will work with you to discuss your adjustments for the exercises involved.

So again, we ask that you contact us as soon as you are invited to the assessment centre stage.

Well, that's all from me for now, please do apply, and get in touch with us here at EmployAbility for any support we can provide. If you aren't sure of what this is or wish to have a confidential discussion with us before you apply or at any point during the recruitment process, you can also get in touch. We will not speak to the FCA about any information you share with us, without your express permission.

So, I wish you the very best of luck with your application to the FCA, and look forward to hearing from you.