

Inclusive and Accessible Events: Good Practice Guidance



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1. Introduction

This good practice checklist has been developed to ensure that all university or departmental events (meetings, training sessions, conferences, information fairs, open days and other activities) could be planned and organised in a way that are inclusive and accessible to people with a range of different circumstances and needs.

The information below should act as a reminder of the things that should be taken into account at the different stages of organising and delivering an event and help to ensure that events are inclusive and accessible to as many people as possible.

The suggestions within this guidance are not exhaustive and individual event organisers may have to respond to other requirements, which are dependent on the requests made by participants.

This guidance sets out key considerations before, during and after the administration of events.

For further information or advice on examples of good practice of accessible and inclusive events on campus, please contact equality@york.ac.uk.

2. Planning the event

2.1. Consider the date

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
2.1.1	Has consideration been given to the date the event will be scheduled? (avoiding any clash with school holidays, religious festivals or where staff work part time). See the Equality and Diversity Office Events Calendar .		
2.1.2	For internal staff events or conferences on campus , has a later start time or early finish time for the event been considered, for example, between period 09:30-16:30 to allow for participants with caring responsibilities to attend?		

2.2. Scoping the event

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
2.2.1	When inviting speakers have, you considered how you might establish a balanced representation of the topic being presented/discussed (for example, gender, ethnicity and other protected characteristics)?		
2.2.2	Do you need to complete a University event management form for your event?		

3. Pre-event administration

3.1. Choosing a venue

The venue for an event needs to be accessible for people who may have a range of access needs. In addition, information on the range of inclusive facilities available on campus should be considered and made available to anyone requesting this for example, wheelchair access, hearing loops, all gender toilets and prayer or contemplation facilities. See further information on [inclusive campus facilities](#).

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
3.1.1	<p>Has the accessibility of the venue been checked?</p> <p>This may include wheelchair users but also people with other mobility impairments, with a visual or hearing impairment.</p> <p>Is there an accessible entrance and is it the same as the one for other participants?</p>		
3.1.2	<p>Is there disabled parking near to the venue?</p> <p>Can this be reserved if requested?</p>		
3.1.3	<p>Is the route from the venue to the nearest car park easily accessible?</p>		
3.1.4	<p>Have directions to the venue been provided on the event invitation and confirmation correspondence?</p> <p>Have contact details been provided for further information or instructions?</p> <p>Note: Directions to individual rooms on campus are available via Planon.</p>		
3.1.5	<p>If the event is not on the ground floor of the venue, is there a lift that is wide enough to accommodate a motorised wheelchair and/or a wheelchair user with a personal assistant?</p>		

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
3.1.6	<p>Is the speaker's area accessible?</p> <p>Things to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is it at floor level or is there a step(s)? ▪ If the lectern is being used, is it height adjustable? If not, discuss with the presenter what equipment/furniture they would need to support them. ▪ Provision of a height adjustable chair/stool for the presenter to sit down 		
3.1.7	<p>Is the lighting in the venue adjustable?</p> <p>If the content of the event includes flashing, flickering and strobe lighting that may cause a problem for some participant, are you planning to issue a warning to participants?</p>		
3.1.8	<p>Are microphones provided in the venue?</p> <p>The use of microphones is recommended for the benefit of both the speaker and participants. You may need to order hand held microphones if the event has a question and answer session.</p> <p>See the Audio Visual pages on room information and on pa systems and microphones.</p>		
3.1.9	<p>Does the room incorporate a hearing loop and are those who will be running the event aware of how it works?</p> <p>Please see approved meeting rooms on campus with hearing loops or contact the Audio Visual Team for advice and/or book a technical briefing at the beginning of an event.</p>		
3.1.10	<p>Does the venue have recording equipment such as replay lecture capture to record and publish events for people who are unable to attend?</p>		

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
	<p>See the University’s guidance Replay Lecture Capture.</p> <p>If you decide to use replay lecture capture, speakers and participants should be notified about what is being recorded and who will be able to access the recording after the event.</p>		
3.1.11	<p>Is the venue suitable for the use of assistive technology such as speech to text captions?</p> <p>This is something that may be requested by participants with a hearing impairment.</p> <p>Participants will need to be notified how to access the captions. This could be either on a screen at the front of the venue or via a URL on an individual device (laptop, tablet, smartphone). Depending on the provider, there may also be a transcript of the event that could be circulated to participants or added to the event web page at a later date.</p> <p>Please contact the Audio Visual Team for advice about using this facility.</p>		
3.1.12	<p>Will the event be filmed?</p> <p>This would be seen as good practice and to allow those participants who are unable to attend, the opportunity to view the event at a later date.</p> <p>Things to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the venue suitable? Please contact the Audio Visual Team for advice and if there are any additional costs. ▪ Have you asked in advance, for participants’ permission to be filmed? ▪ You may need to decide which elements to film, for example, only the presentations. 		

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If filming questions and answer sessions, personal information about participants may need to be edited out. 		
3.1.13	<p>Can appropriate seating be reserved for participants with mobility impairment, a visual impairment, a wheelchair user or a hearing impaired person who lip reads or needs to be near a BSL interpreter or can easily read captions on screen?</p> <p>Note: you may want to include seating for a personal assistant next to the participant, if you have been notified.</p>		
3.1.14	<p>Are there toilets (male, female or all gender and fully accessible) within easy reach or located close to the venue?</p> <p>Note: you may wish to search the campus map for the nearest location of ‘all gender’ and accessible toilets on campus.</p>		
3.1.15	<p>Is there a private or designated space near to the venue for people to use for short periods, for example, for religious observance, to administer medication or to take a break?</p> <p>Note: You may wish to search the campus map for the nearest location of prayer and contemplation facilities on campus.</p>		
3.1.16	<p>Are there breastfeeding or baby changing facilities in the building or close to the venue?</p> <p>Note: you may wish to search the campus map for the nearest location of baby changing and breastfeeding facilities on campus.</p>		
3.1.17	<p>Are there emergency evacuation arrangements and places of safety for people who may not be able to use stairs in the event of a fire or other emergency?</p>		

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
	Please contact the Health and Safety Services and see their information about Fire Safety (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan – PEEP)		
3.1.18	<p>Does the venue have provision for assistance animals, for example, guide or hearing dogs, for example toilet or feeding facilities?</p> <p>Please contact Estates and Campus Services for information on the locations of dog toilet areas on campus.</p>		

3.2. Publicising the event

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
3.2.1	<p>How are you planning to publicise your event to attract a more diverse audience?</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>Are you using social media and other accessible forms of electronic forms of communication?</p> <p>Are you using printed leaflets other materials, which are accessible?</p> <p>Are you approaching organisations or representative groups to engage and encourage participation?</p> <p>Are you promoting accessible and inclusive facilities available on campus that will be available?</p>		

3.3. The booking process

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
3.3.1	<p>Has an alternative event booking system been offered? For example, telephone booking for those who are unable to use on line systems.</p> <p>Does the event booking system include options for participants to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ indicate their preferred pronouns ▪ add access requirements ▪ any special dietary information ▪ any other special requirements 		
3.3.2	<p>Will an accessibility statement be included in the invitation and/or confirmation to participants?</p> <p>For example:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">We will do our best to fulfil your requirements to allow you to fully participate in this event. Please let us know in advance of the event if you have any special requirements such as dietary needs based on religious or medical grounds, require handouts in advance and/or in alternative formats such as Braille or large print, or access needs such as, wheelchair access or the provision of hearing loops.</p> <p>Have you provided contact details such as an email address for participants to make requests for accessibility, reasonable adjustments and any other special requirements?</p>		
3.3.3	<p>Does the event invitation and confirmation provide information about public transport links?</p> <p>See the University's maps and directions page.</p>		
3.3.4	<p>If the event is residential, do you offer flexible options for participants to attend all or part of the event? (This</p>		

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
	may be a chance to be inclusive to participants with caring responsibilities)		
3.3.5	<p>Will there be ambassadors/helpers at the conference to assist participants?</p> <p>The ambassadors/helpers will need to be clearly identifiable and have all the relevant information about the venue, facilities and programme of the event.</p>		
3.3.6	If photographs are going to be taken at the event, have participants' been asked to provide their permissions in advance?		
3.3.7	<p>Has a statement been included in the invitation and confirmation for the event about GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)? This should be clear about how personal information, for example, access, pronouns, disability, will be stored, used and deleted.</p> <p>See the University's GDPR Guidance pages</p>		

3.4. Organising the timings of events

In order to ensure that as many people as possible can participate, it is important to consider the date/time of events.

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
3.4.1	<p>Have you scheduled one or more short breaks for events that are longer than 2 hours?</p> <p>(In timing the breaks, thought should be given to scheduling them, for example, for people who may need regular food intake relating to a health condition, those using services such interpreting or accessibility software.)</p>		
3.4.2	Have sufficient changeover times been allowed for events that involves a number of sessions in different		

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
	venues for participants with mobility impairments to move between them?		

3.5. Planning for food / refreshments

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
3.5.1	<p>Have participants been asked via the booking system to notify you about any special dietary requirements, including allergies, vegetarian / vegan, Halal or Kosher meals (if your catering menu is able to provide such options)?</p> <p>Note: please clearly indicate to participants where special diets will be located at meal times.</p>		
3.5.2	<p>Does the venue for refreshments or lunch have seating for participants?</p> <p>Note: If buffet refreshments are to be provided, where all participants may not be seated, consider food options that can be eaten without the need for cutlery.</p>		
3.5.3	<p>Will there be ambassadors/helpers at a conference, where this likely to be a large number of participants, to assist anyone who may encounter difficulties queuing for food or carry it to a table?</p> <p>Note: ambassadors/helpers should be clearly visible, for example, wearing a particular colour t-shirt.</p>		
3.5.4	<p>Will there be alcohol free refreshments for those participants who do not/are not drinking alcohol?</p>		

3.6. Preparing handouts and materials

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
3.6.1	<p>Are all presentations, handouts and materials in accessible formats with a heading structure?</p> <p>Note: See University guidance on using heading styles to structure documents</p>		
3.6.2	<p>Can electronic copies of presentations be obtained in advance of the event, so they can be sent to participants on request?</p>		
3.6.3	<p>Do you have access to facilities and software to convert presentations, handouts and materials into alternative formats, for example, large print or printed onto different colour paper, if requested by participants?</p> <p>Please contact the University's Design and Print Department for advice.</p>		

4. During the event

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
4.1	<p>At the beginning of the event, will information about general housekeeping be provided? For example, the evacuation procedure in the event of the fire alarms sounding, the location of nearest toilet facilities, rest rooms, prayer and contemplation facilities and the agenda of the day (including timings of breaks).</p> <p>You may want to bear in mind the audience when making announcements, for example, Welcome to York and thank you for joining us, avoiding gendered language such as welcome ladies and gentlemen.</p>		
4.2	<p>Will participants be provided with name badges that have the option to include preferred pronouns?</p> <p>Pronouns are words used to refer to people's gender in conversation - for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender neutral language and use pronouns such as they/their and ze/zir.</p>		
4.3	<p>Consider having at least one large print copy of all handouts available on the day, even if not requested.</p>		
4.4	<p>Have you made participants aware that they can raise issues with a designated person if something happens during the event?</p> <p>Note: you may want to think about ways of highlighting the principles within the University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy to ensure your event is safe, inclusive and welcoming to all participants.</p>		
4.5	<p>Have you asked participants to use social media to post information about the event, for the benefit of participants who are not available to attend?</p>		
4.6	<p>Have you considered the effect(s) that the content of the session or presentation may have on some</p>		

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
	participants, for example emotionally challenging content that you may want to give prior warning about at the beginning of the event?		
4.7	<p>Will you notify participants that flashing, flickering or strobe lighting is going to be part of the event?</p> <p>Note - this type of lighting may cause problems for some participants and a warning should be issued before it is used.</p>		

5. Post event administration

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
5.1	Have you asked participants if they would like to provide feedback on the accessibility of the event as a guide for future reference?		
5.2	<p>Are you prepared to provide follow up communications to participants that may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to handouts/presentations ▪ Access to event photographs and recordings ▪ A summary of feedback to date ▪ Encouraging further feedback post event 		

6. Social events

Social interactions at work or study are also important; and these encompass events such as leaving events, end of year events, or just a general social get together. In order to ensure that all members of a team can attend these events it can be helpful to vary the timing and choice of venue.

Number	Actions/considerations	Yes	No
6.1	Has consideration been given to the planned date(s) to allow as many participants as possible to attend and consideration given to whether they clash with school holidays, key religious festivals (add link to new events calendar)?		
6.2	Has consideration been given to scheduling a lunchtime or daytime event, as this may be easier than an evening event for participants with caring responsibilities?		
6.3	If going to a restaurant outside of the University campus, does this cater for everyone's dietary requirements?		
6.4	Is the venue accessible to all participants?		
6.5	Is the accessible entrance the same as the entrance for other participants?		
6.6	Has consideration been given to participants who do not/are not drinking alcohol? If the event is taking place in a bar/restaurant, will there be alcohol free alternatives?		

Contact Us

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