

Clubs Accessibility Guidelines

What is meant by the term 'disability'?

Who is counted under this term?

- Disability is a really broad umbrella and encompasses more people than you'd probably think. Generally, best practice is to use the term 'disabled person' which is identity-first language - although some people will prefer to use the term 'person with a disability' (person-first language). Regardless, the use of euphemisms such as 'handicapable' or 'differently-abled' or 'special needs' or 'living with disability', should not be used.
- 'Disabled' includes anyone who may experience greater difficulty with any aspect of their university experience (social, academic, accessing buildings etc.) due to health reasons, even if they do not have a diagnosis. This includes, but is not limited to, physical, sensory, psychiatric, neurological, cognitive and intellectual. Many people with disability have multiple disabilities, such as people who develop anxiety and/or depression due to the difficulty of managing uni/a job/social life alongside their other disability. This may particularly be the case if they belong to another autonomous group such as being a person of colour or are gender diverse - the experience of disability is intersectional!

What is accessibility?

- The design of products, devices, services or environments for people with a disability.
- Accessibility is not to be confused with usability, which is the extent to which said things can be used by specified users to achieve specific goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use.
- This *could* address accessibility when:

- “specified users” includes people with a range of disabilities, and
- “specified context of use” includes accessibility considerations such as assistive technologies.
- Accessible things are safe, usable and available - but not necessarily vice versa. E.g. all medicines are drugs, but not all drugs are medicine!

Why is it important?

- Around a third of students at the ANU have a disability, whether they are registered with Access & Inclusion or not - so making your events accessible will impact a lot more students than you think. Even if you don't ‘see’ anyone who you think is disabled, you're more likely than not to be helping someone by making your event accessible.
- Efficiency - all accessible things are efficient, safe and well planned - e.g. multiple formats, easy directions and more transport options...
- Learning to be inclusive is a learned process. It's not natural for anyone but making things a cultural norm help a lot - and we all benefit from it! An example - content warnings!

Physical accessibility (venue):

- Wheelchair accessible - is there a ramp or lift? If there isn't, say it's not. Feel free to test this with a rolling chair.
 - If the event is catered - height of tables being wheelchair accessible
 - If outside, is the ground uneven? Will the ground be slippery if it rains (e.g. unsafe for wheels and crutches?)
- Parking - where is the closest accessible parking?
- Bathrooms - where is the closest accessible and gender-neutral bathroom?
- Lighting - does your event have bright or flashing lights? Can you book a room nearby that is quiet & dark where people with sensory difficulties can take a break?
- Sound - does your event involve loud, sudden sound? Is the room you are in equipped with an audio loop? If it involves people speaking at the same time (discussion groups for example) can people who have trouble hearing go in a quieter area to talk? Do you have microphones for people speaking at the front of the room & people asking questions?
- Directions (physical signs) and also extra chairs and water even if your event doesn't

usually require sitting or exercise.

- A lot of these things can and should be considered when you complete a RAMP - factor these things in as a RAMP should not just include what happens in the case of a fire etc, but if a person has a seizure/physically isn't able to move/is too loud.

Food:

- Allergen FREE vs Allergen FRIENDLY (e.g. may contain ____ vs contains ____)
- Nut-free food is advisable
- It's best to always have signed Gluten Free, Dairy Free, Vegan options
- Ingredient labels - even if just listing main ingredients and labels

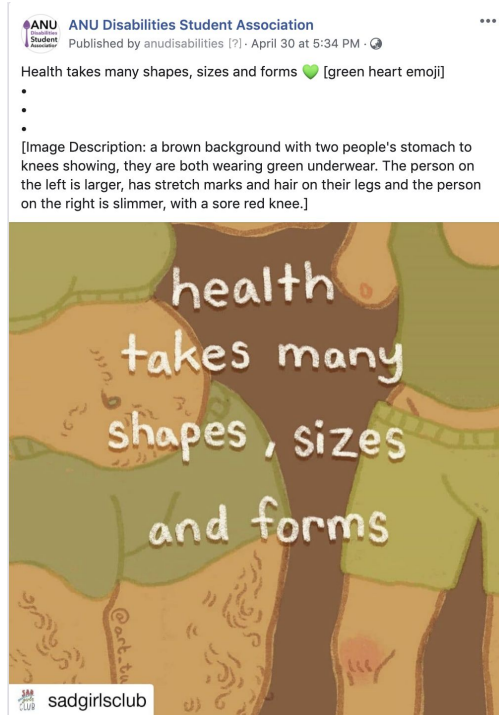
Social Media:

When advertising your event, use this statement to specify that your event is accessible and to what extent:

At [C&S name], we strive to make our events as inclusive as possible. Our event venue is accessible (via ramp/lift), with accessible parking available nearby at [insert location], and accessible unisex bathrooms available within the building/[nearby building]. We do/do not have GF/DF/NF/V food options available. If you have any accessibility requirements, don't hesitate to email us at [insert email address], or call us at [insert phone number].

As well as:

- Image descriptions! The convention is to describe every image (including FB event cover photos) in square brackets [like this], including a description of size, colour, image and style. This should happen on Facebook, Instagram and wherever else your club puts out information. Here is a good example:



- Similarly, this should be done for emojis like this: 🙋 [wave emoji]
- Accessible hyperlinking! A hyperlink that is 3 lines long is not great for someone with a screenreader.
- If you are doing a video - make sure it has captions!
- Give graphics visible colour contrasts (yellow or light pink on a white background isn't great)
- Lecture or conference? Digital versions of your physical handouts and vice versa. Use word documents as well as PDFs.
- A great guide to accessible social media can be found [here](#)
- Always encourage contact for further concerns

Safety:

- Content warnings - these look like this 'CW: depression' on the event advertising and on the doors of the event to prewarn people, *as well as* saying it verbally at the start of the event. Preferably, signal when you are going to be talking about the potentially triggering topic, and have a break just beforehand, allowing people time to take a break & excuse

themselves from that section in a way that doesn't not draw attention to them

- Mental health first aid training/disclosure training is advised for at least some volunteers
- Where there is alcohol or drugs involved, have at least a few sober rep people, and identify them to the group beforehand.
- While the DSA does not encourage the use of drugs and alcohol at events as it can have unexpected effects on people on medications/exclude students from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds, we suggest that you practice consumption safely rather than not discussing it beforehand with attendees.
- Having a few sober reps that are non-male identifying is also advisable.
- If you are running a large-scale event, you can contact the Disabilities Student Association to check if you should consider any other variables

What happens if things go wrong?

- In your RAMP, make sure you have planned for if things go wrong. Have a plan for which volunteer will provide first aid, including mental health first aid, if needed. Have a plan for if someone with a disability arrives and the event, for whatever reason, is not accessible to them.
 - For example, if your mics aren't working on the day, acknowledge this to everyone, and state that people who may have trouble hearing can move to sit at the front and be provided with a print-out copy of the transcript later.
- It's important to acknowledge that your events are never going to be fully accessible. Some events, (such as Friday Night Party or pub crawls) are inherently inaccessible, so its more important to have a plan for what to do if things go wrong, than to try and think of every single different accessibility requirement.
- At the end of the day, you don't want to be patronising or tokenistic in the way that you approach accessibility. Accessibility needs to be practical rather than to make yourself feel good.

How to talk to people respectfully:

What's HOT	What's NOT
Respect everyone's way of identifying – some people use person first language (person with disability) & some prefer identity first language (disabled)	Avoid sweeping terms about disability like 'the blind' or 'the deaf'. Never ignore someone's preference when identifying.
Say 'has a disability'. People don't suffer just because they have a disability	Don't say a person is 'afflicted with' or 'suffers from' a disability. A disability isn't something to 'overcome'
Where possible use the appropriate clinical name, such as 'person with schizophrenia' or person with mental illness'	Don't use phrases with negative meanings like 'crazy', 'insane', 'lunatic', 'mental' or 'nuts'
Wheelchairs enable mobility. Say 'wheelchair users'	A person is not 'confined to a wheelchair' or 'wheelchair bound'

In addition to this:

- Don't talk down to people with disabilities, particularly those with neurological, cognitive and intellectual disabilities
- There is no need to single people out for having a disability and ask if they need help.
 - For example, if a wheelchair user looks like they are struggling to get up a ramp, wait for them to ask for assistance rather than asking or touching their wheelchair.
- Speak and act in the same manner as you would around an able-bodied person
 - For example, if you can see that someone has a hearing aid, there is no need to speak slower or over-annunciate your words to them.

Who can help?

- The Disabilities Officer who you can email at sa.disabilities@anu.edu.au
- The ANUSA Executive who you can email at sa.exec@anu.edu.au
- Access and Inclusion
- If you need extra funding to make your event more accessible you can contact the Disabilities Student Association which may be able to help your club or they may be able to point your club in the direction of external grants

