

UNIVERSITY OF THE **FREE STATE**



UNIVERSAL ACCESS CHECKLIST

Centre for Universal Access & Disability Support (CUADS)
a Department of the Division of Student Affairs at the University of the Free State

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*Inspiring excellence, transforming lives
through quality, impact, and care.*

VISION **130**
Renew and Reimagine
for 2034

UNIVERSITY OF THE
FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA
FREISTATA



CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES CONSIDERED



VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

BLIND OR PARTIALLY SIGHTED

- Presenters must introduce themselves and offer a description
- Audience members must introduce themselves before commenting or asking a question
- Good quality audio
- Preferred seating
- Be descriptive when presenting instead of pointing
- Convert material into audio/braille at CUADS



MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS

WHEELCHAIR USERS, AMPUTEES, CEREBRAL PALSY, MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY, SPINA BIFIDA

- Easy access to buildings
- No steps at the entrance
- Ramp not too steep
- Venue layout/ table set-up to be considered



HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

DEAF, HARD OF HEARING AND/OR DEAFENED

- Sign Language interpreters
- Preferred seating
- Switch subtitles on when showing videos
- Lighting
- Closed Captions
- Transcriptions of audio material



LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

DYSLEXIA, ADD/ADHD, HYPERACTIVITY OR COMBINATION OF THE AFOREMENTIONED

- Use colours/highlight important terms
- Majority of population
- Invisible disability
- Transcriptions of audio material



MENTAL HEALTH DISABILITIES

DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, PANIC DISORDERS, SCHIZOPHRENIA AND/OR BIPOLAR DISORDER

- Diagnosed by a registered mental health practitioner
- Recordings (audio format)

UNIVERSAL ACCESS REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION



Events (including conferences, seminars, webinars etc.) organised by the UFS & student structures must aim to be as universally accessible as possible, to ensure that attendance is far reaching and impactful. Barriers to accessibility can be mitigated by following reasonable accommodation measures stipulated in the list that follows. As far as possible the checklist must be met.

PLANNING

1. All events must include RSVP's to ensure that people who need reasonable accommodation can indicate whether they require:
 - ☐ Accessible material formats (transcription & audio recordings)
 - ☐ Closed captioning
2. The department arranging the event must then make contact with the individuals who requires access to ascertain which formats or communication method is needed.
3. Reasonable accommodation requests must be sent out to speakers/panel members 2-3 months in advance. This is done to ascertain what resources and support the speaker and panel members will need. E.g; if speaker is a wheelchair user, arrangements must be made in advance for a ramp.
4. Seating area for persons with disabilities must be designated and marked as reserved towards the front. This is for all disabilities.
5. Spaces between seats must be arranged to be able to accommodate mobility impairment requirements (wheelchairs, canes, service dogs etc).
6. If the venue has lifts for wheelchair users but the event is happening after hours then arrangements need to be made in order to obtain the keys for the lifts, in the event that a member in the audience or a guest speaker has a mobility impairment.
7. Signs for entrances, exits, bathrooms etc need to be made and put up around the venue in large print.
8. For outdoor events, certain textures like grass and grainy sand are not accessible for wheelchair users. Pathways need to be constructed or the venue must be changed.
9. Where there are heavy doors that mobility impaired and visually impaired students cannot push or pull, a volunteer must be stationed at the door.
10. Mark the walkways in foyers clearly so that a big path for wheelchair users, crutches users and service dog users is cleared in the middle with straight routes to the entrances, exits and bathrooms.

BELOW IS A CHECKLIST TO ASSIST IN MEETING ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

VENUE ACCESSIBILITY

- ☐ Wheelchair accessible pathway to building or venue (incl. ramps). Stages must also include ramps.
- ☐ Persons with disabilities should be allowed to be seated first in the designated seating. This will assist easy navigation for people with mobility and sensory impairments.
- ☐ Accessible doorways. Where this is impossible, a volunteer must be stationed at all entrances, exits and bathrooms.
- ☐ Inclusive bathrooms / toilet(s)
- ☐ Floor and path surfaces for students with mobility impairments must be indicated with tape. Middle path should be cleared off to allow for access.
- ☐ Audio equipment (sound & loop). Microphones must be used so that students with hearing impairments are catered for.

MARKETING

- ☐ Event posters must have event details (time, venue etc) indicated in large neutral coloured font.
- ☐ Ensure that event details and poster is shared with CUADS well in advance, who will alert students registered on the CUADS database.
- ☐ Include RSVP details on event posters

PRESENTATIONS & LECTURES

- ☐ Sign Language interpreter must be arranged if you are aware that audience or panel member will require sign language interpreters.
- ☐ As far as possible, try to obtain speeches from speakers beforehand so that printed copies can be made for persons with hearing impairments.
- ☐ Video/audio/podcasts/recordings of talks & lectures for access when off-campus

AUDIO-VISUAL PRESENTATIONS

- ☐ Must include subtitles or closed captions in videos.
- ☐ Descriptive audio for videos. All videos and images being shown must be described out loud for persons with visual impairments.
- ☐ Warnings for garish and harsh lighting in videos and images must be made before the material is shown in order to alert persons with sensory impairments.

PRINTED MATERIAL

- ☐ Enlarged print
- ☐ Braille
- ☐ No garish or harsh colours
- ☐ E-text

FOOD REQUIREMENTS

- ☐ Food provided must be clearly labeled and should also aim to have ingredients labeled to alert people with dietary requirements and allergies.

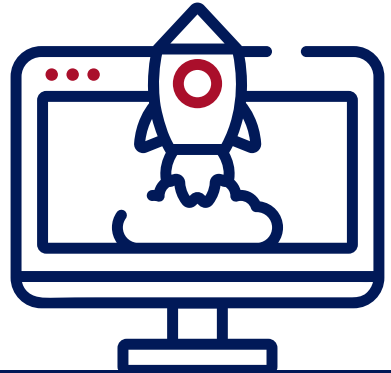
PREFERRED PRONOUNS

- ☐ In accommodation requests, be sure to ascertain the preferred pronouns of speakers or panel members.
- ☐ Before the event starts, indicate to audience that when introducing themselves they must state their preferred pronoun.



TIPS FOR VIRTUAL PLATFORMS:

When using meeting platforms for lectures, i.e. Zoom or MS Teams etc, provide for speech-to-text option (captioning) and ensure that recordings can be saved as well and/or distributed. This will include persons with hearing impairments and assist with note-taking. See links below on how to enable them. The built-in live captioning works reasonably well, but it will never be 100% due to different accents, etc. Zoom also has the option for the video author to add their own captions.



Zoom:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/207279736-Getting-started-with-closed-captioning>

Microsoft Teams:

<https://support.office.com/en-us/article/use-live-captions-in-a-teams-meeting-4be2d304-f675-4b57-8347-cbd000a21260>





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