




“Am I included?”

Making your Society inclusive and accessible
to all


“Students’ unions and Guilds to ensure that their facilities are accessible and that all clubs and societies address the needs and support requirements of disabled students.”

**Disabled Student
Commitment**



The aim of today's session is to recognise what you are already doing and enable you to feel more confident about making future events more accessible and inclusive.

By the end of today's session, you will have considered:

- the barriers students face in accessing societies and events
 - how to support and include all students
 - how to improve students' experiences of accessing societies
 - how to plan your events and communication
 - one thing you will implement for your own society
- 

True or False

Consider the following statement

- Accessibility could mean making your buildings wheelchair accessible

True or False

Consider the following statement

- Being inclusive means remembering to promote your society to the whole student community

True or False

Consider the following statement

- Inclusive practices could include accessibility plans for social spaces

True or False

Consider the following statement

- You should treat everyone the same, regardless if they have a disability or not

True or False

Consider the following statement

- Accessibility means only responding to individual needs when they arise

True or False

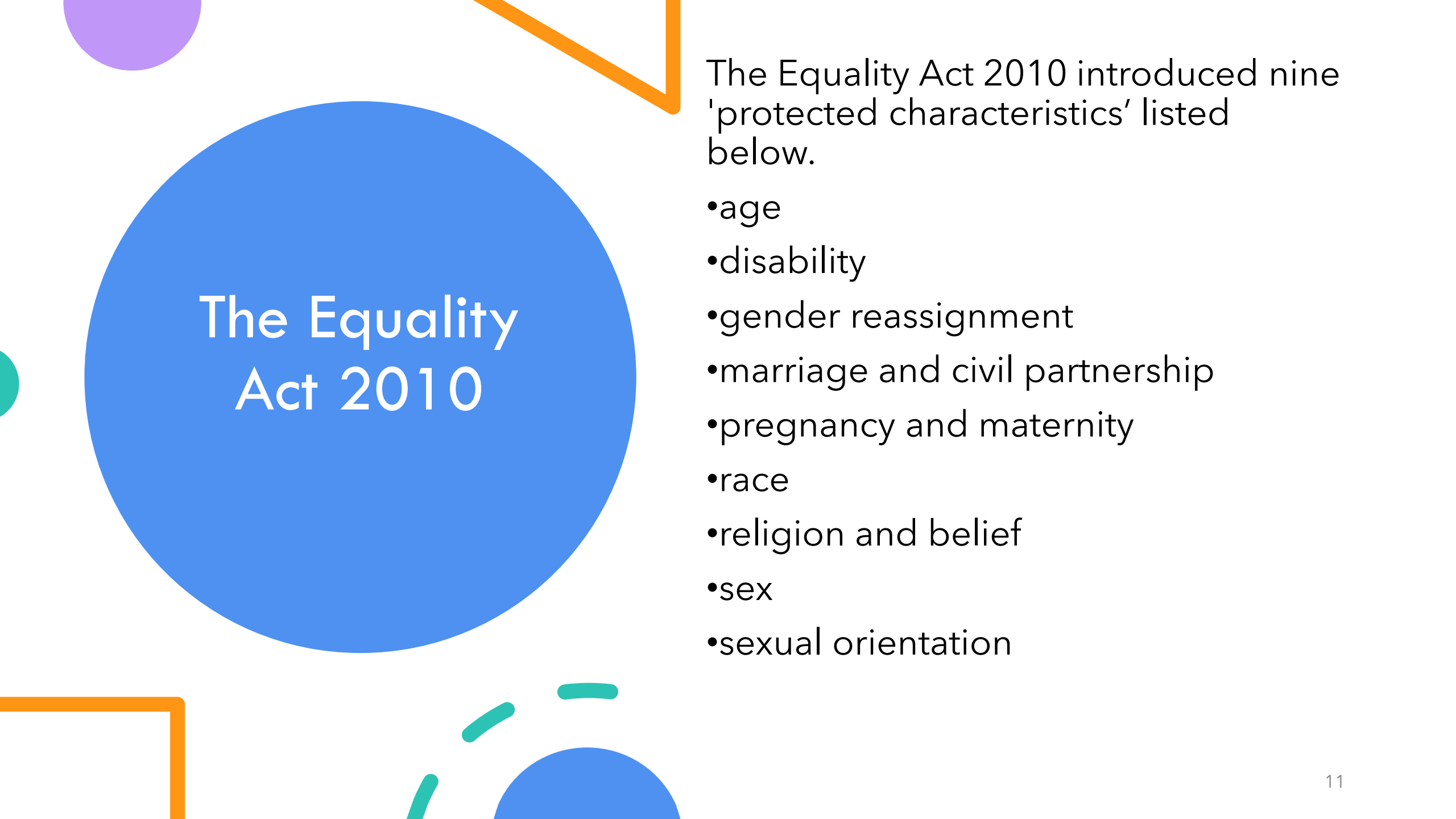
Consider the following statement

- Students with the same disability will have that same support requirements

True or False

Consider the following statement

- Disabled students tend to be slightly less satisfied with their course and wider learning experience than their non-disabled counterparts



The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 introduced nine 'protected characteristics' listed below.

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation



Socio-Economic
Background

Mature

Care Experienced

Disabled

Ethnicity

Refugees

Gender and
Sexual
Orientation

Religion/Belief

International

LGBTQ+

Estranged

Carer





Communications

Consider how the following societies
engage with their members.
What are your thoughts?



**Barbie film
Screening**

22
AUGUST
2023

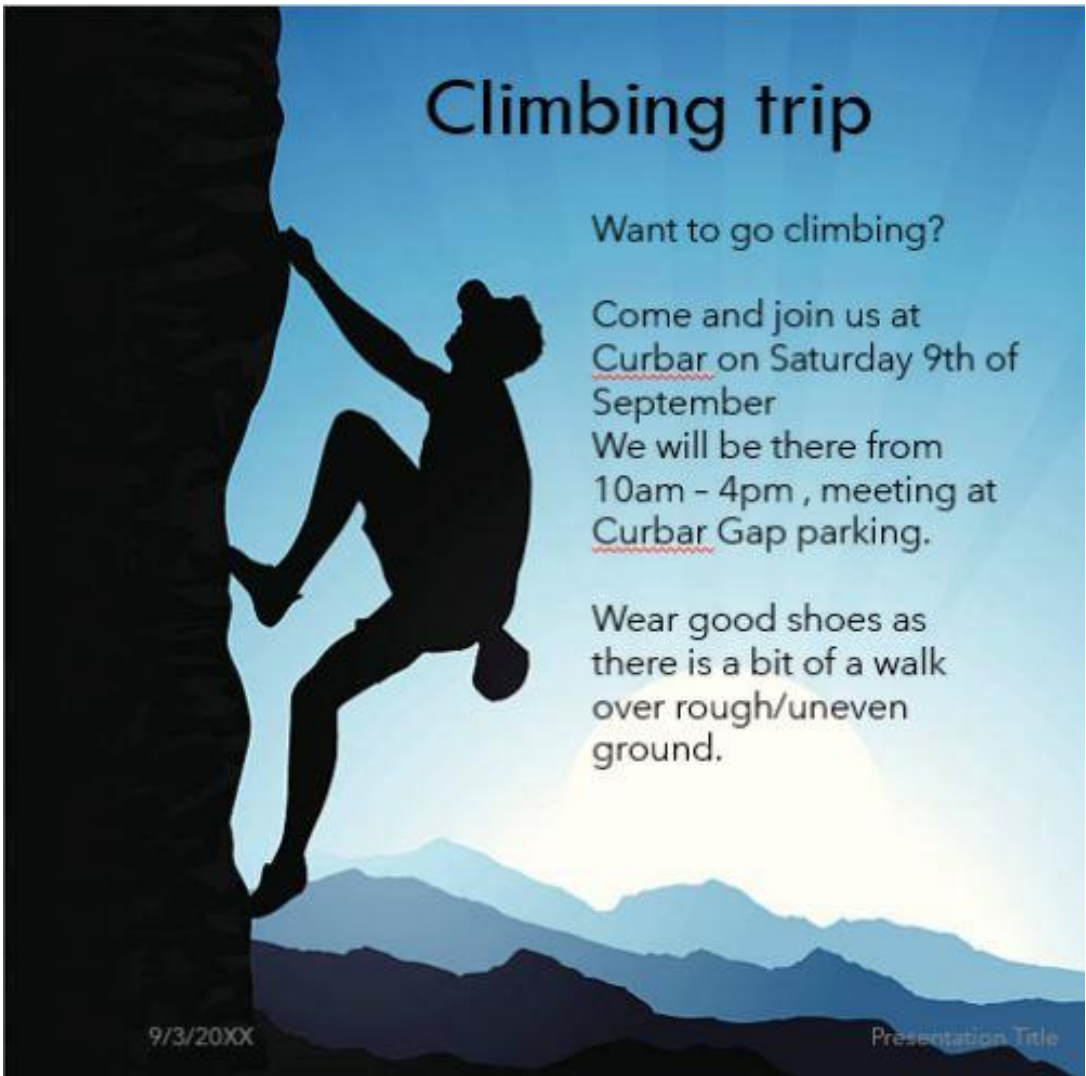
3PM-6PM

Subtitled film screening
Everybody welcome

The Stage at the Hubs - see the link for
directions and venue [information](#)

Food available please [complete this
booking form](#) with any individual
requirements

The poster features a red vintage car with yellow wheels, a red bucket of popcorn, and several red cinema tickets with 'ADMIT ONE' and 'CINEMA' printed on them. A red circular badge in the top left corner contains the date '22 AUGUST 2023', and another in the middle right contains the time '3PM-6PM'. At the bottom, there is a red banner with white text and a red and white checkered basket.



Climbing trip

Want to go climbing?

Come and join us at
Curbar on Saturday 9th of
September
We will be there from
10am - 4pm , meeting at
Curbar Gap parking.

Wear good shoes as
there is a bit of a walk
over rough/uneven
ground.

9/3/20XX

Presentation Title

The poster shows a black silhouette of a person climbing a dark rock face against a blue sky with a sun. Below the rock face are blue mountain ranges. The text is in a clean, sans-serif font. A date '9/3/20XX' is in the bottom left and 'Presentation Title' is in the bottom right.

Inclusion and accessibility – what are the good and bad points?

Good points:

- Everybody is welcome
- The film is subtitled
- The time might work for people who don't want to travel late
- The organisers have included a booking form so attendees can tell them what they need to consider
- There's a link to more venue information

Bad points:

- How information is communicated – links
- Some of the text is difficult to read
- Timing - people with caring and childcare responsibilities might not be able to attend
- Cost – is it free? Affordable?
- No contact details

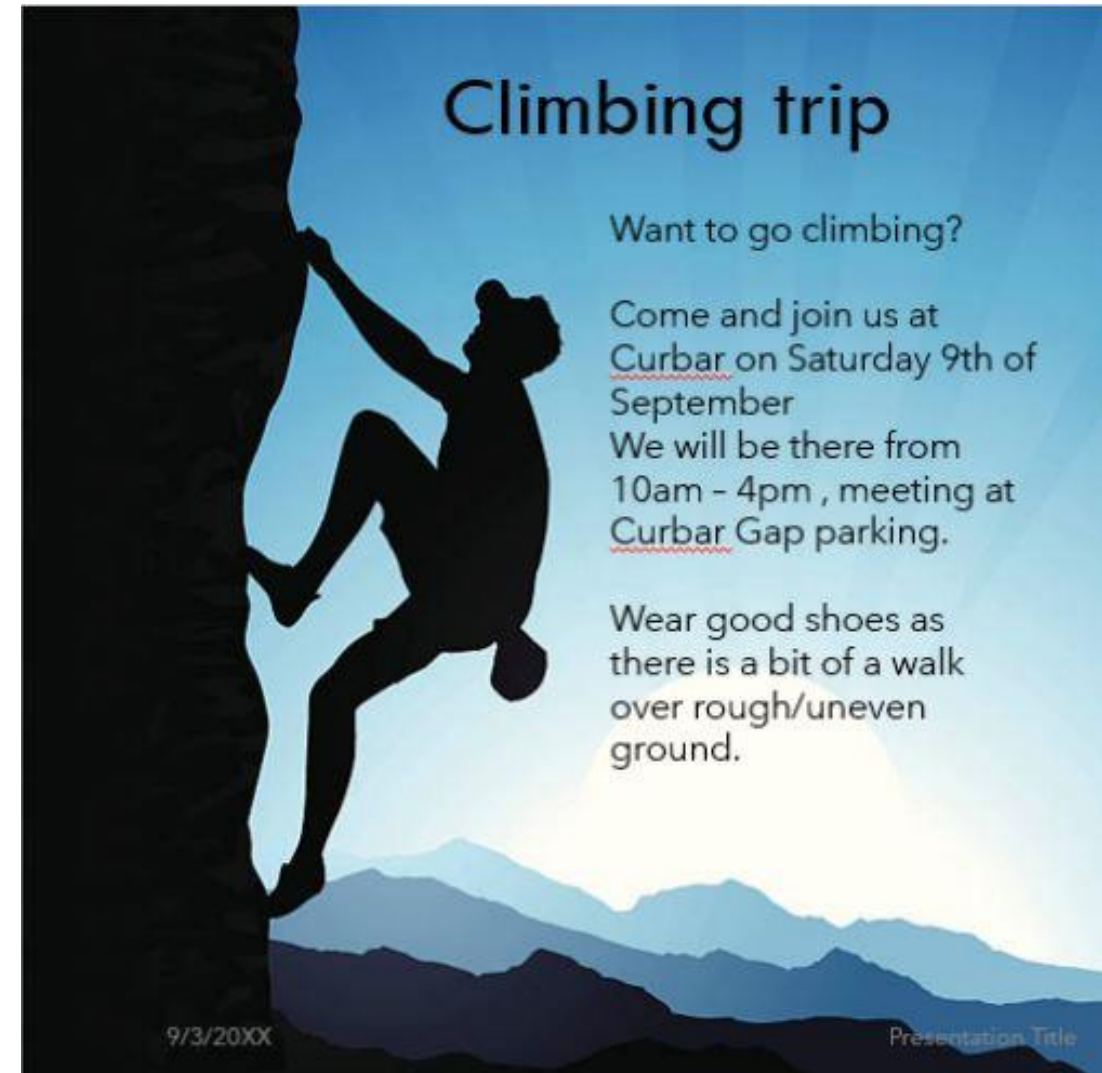


Good points:

- It's clear and easy to read
- Gives a meeting point
- Sets some expectations about the terrain
- It's at a weekend and won't impact on timetables

Bad points

- Communication lacks clarity
- The timings might not work for students with work/caring commitments
- What's the activity? What ability is needed?
- Cost isn't given - travel, equipment
- Requires an understanding of what 'good shoes' means



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9/3/20XX Presentation Title

How can you make communication about events more inclusive and accessible?

- Provide specific information
- Include contact details and encourage people to ask if they need information
- Try and include venue information on the event listing/poster. If you can't, add a QR code with the information
- Include directions, travel information. Lots of students will be new to Sheffield/UK
- Add information about the accessibility of the event so people can plan. You can use <https://www.accessable.co.uk/>
- Tell potential attendees what activities they'll be doing and if the event is open to all ability-levels
- If you can, advertise your events early to give people time to plan
- Think about the fonts and the language you use. How easy is the information to read?



Student profiles

Consider the following scenarios.
What barriers might the student face?
How could your society support this student?



- Izaq, is 30, studying Forensic Science, he has autism and is a keen online chess player. He's a first year student who heard about the Chess club during the Freshers' Fair. He's moved to Sheffield for his course.
- There was no club at his college so the majority of his games so far have been played online. He's hoping to meet likeminded people at the Chess Society. He likes talking about chess and spends time watching YouTube videos and reading about chess openings. What barriers might he face attending an event? How could you mitigate against these?

Barriers for Izaq

- What is the format of the chess club- is it likely to be very different from playing online?
- Will there be numerous games happening at the same time?
- How many people will be there?
- What is the etiquette for the games?
- How will players choose who plays black/white.
- Is there a league?
- How is the evening structured.
- Do players change after each game?
- Is there an element of turn taking?
- How does the session end?
- Do you need to provide a reminder to end games?
- What if games haven't finished by the end of the evening?
- Does he need to bring his own board and pieces? Can he if he wants?
- Where will it take place?
- Will it be noisy?
- What distractions might there be?
- Can he bring a drink and snack?
- Can he check out the venue beforehand?
- Will someone meet him to explain?
- Is everyone expected to participate or is it OK to observe?
- Is there an expected base level of understanding/skill?

Potential solutions

- Be clear about what is to be expected
- Encourage questions prior to events
- Venue - think about accessibility, noise levels, lighting, volume of people
- Format - give a structure to the evening, expected duration. Make it clear whether are expected to attend for the duration or if they can come and go
- Level of skill/ability - is there an expected base level of understanding/skill?
- Participation/observation - is everyone expected to participate or is it OK to observe?
- Cost - are there any barriers to the cost of the event?



- Jack has a diagnosis of anxiety and finds interacting with new people really challenging. He hasn't spoken to a single person on his course since he started two years ago. Jack has two children, aged 7 and 9. He is finding himself increasingly isolated and so he wants to join the photography society to try to get to know other people. What barriers might Jack face?

Barriers for Jack

- Timing -making childcare arrangements for times of the events
- Financial -costs if equipment is needed + cost of joining
- Travel - how will Jack get there
- Social interaction - how large is the group
- Busy environments
- Unknown places
- Regular commitments

Potential solutions

- Timing -Provide information in advance/ offer child friendly events/ use a poll for dates and times
- Financial - Offer loan equipment/different payments schemes/clear cost information
- Travel - Provide travel information/ directions and maps/offer group travel
- Social interaction -Say how many places are available/ offer a buddy system/ named contact
- Busy environments - Dedicated quiet spaces
- Unknown places - Give venue information/ pictures/ tell people what they can expect
- Regular commitment -Offer give it a go sessions/ have optional for as and when attendance
- Make sure people feel encouraged to ask questions. And ask them - what they need



- Ruby is starting at Sheffield Hallam in September and will be studying Sociology. She is visually impaired and is interested in joining a few societies as she wants to try some new pastimes. She is interested in the drama society as she has done some acting in the past when she was in 6th form and enjoyed it. What barriers might she face and how could you mitigate against these?

Barriers for Ruby

- The accessibility of scripts.
- Will scripts be available in large or bold print?
- Will Ruby have to make scripts accessible herself?
- How will she get to events?
- Will there be a risk assessment?
- Are there any obstacles she would find difficult to navigate?
- How long do the meetings last?
- Will there be anyone who could guide her to the toilet/to get a drink whilst she's there?

Potential Solutions

- Speak to Ruby about her visual impairment - does she use any software / visual aids to support her reading currently?
- Will it help to make scripts/ reading materials available to her in advance so she can make these accessible?
- Timings - If she has a support worker/ sighted guide, would she like them to attend society events with her? Will their availability impact on when Ruby may be able to attend events?
- Location- offering events in a consistent location so Ruby can familiarise herself with the building.
- Accessibility- Consider where events are held, are there any hazards Ruby needs to be aware of?



- Helen is 23 and starting at Sheffield Hallam as a mature student. She is a carer for her Mum who she lives with in Sheffield.
- Helen wants to join a society as she has little time to meet new people but thinks it would be nice to do something for herself.
- She's worried about committing to a society as her availability varies depending on her Mum's care needs.
- What barriers might Helen face and how might societies attract students with commitments outside of study?

Barriers for Helen

- Can she attend a taster session before deciding to commit?
- Does she have to go to every meet-up?
- She may be worried that everyone is 18 and may not have anything in common.
- Are there societies that might appeal to a range of age groups?

Potential Solutions

- Advance notice of events with clear details about size of group, ability of group venue and travel arrangements
- Offer a chance to communicate with a member of the society before the first event
- A booking form to identify any individual requirements/ ask questions
- Transparency on level of commitment/ attendance required at a society
- Communicating changes in event dates/times well in advance as Helen may need to organise care.

Checklist

1. Communication
2. Location
3. Cost
4. Time
5. Flexibility

Thank you



One take away from today....

Please let us know of 1 thing you may do differently in your Society after today's training.

You can write on the Post-its provided or scan the QR code to add to our JamBoard.

<https://tinyurl.com/shujamboard>

Resources

Inclusive practice

- [Information about the Disabled Students' Commission](#)[External link \(Opens in a new tab or window\)](#), an independent and strategic group set up to advise, inform and influence higher education providers to improve support for disabled students. Their publications and resources include:
- [The Disabled Student Commitment](#)[External link \(Opens in a new tab or window\)](#) (April 2023)
- [Considerations for disabled applicants applying to undergraduate courses](#)[External link \(Opens in a new tab or window\)](#) (January 2021)
- Annual Report 2020-21: [Enhancing the disabled student experience](#)[External link \(Opens in a new tab or window\)](#) (January 2021)
- [Three months to make a difference](#)[External link \(Opens in a new tab or window\)](#) (July 2020)
- London South Bank University: [Supporting students who stammer in higher education](#)[External link \(Opens in a new tab or window\)](#) (2021)
- Institute for Employment Studies' report for the OfS: Review of support for disabled students in higher education in England (published alongside our [Insight brief](#) in October 2019)
- University of Bristol: [Getting things changed](#)[External link \(Opens in a new tab or window\)](#) (May 2018)
- Higher Education Funding Council for England: [Models of support for students with disabilities](#)[External link \(Opens in a new tab or window\)](#) (October 2017)
- Disabled Students' Sector Leadership Group: [Inclusive teaching and learning in higher education as a route to excellence](#)[External link \(Opens in a new tab or window\)](#) (January 2017)