

CHECKLIST A – MAIN CONFERENCE CHECKLIST

This checklist is intended to be used in conjunction with the [Introduction](#) contained in “MAKE YOUR CONFERENCE ACCESSIBLE”

	Commentary	Space for your notes
Location and transport		
Is the venue easily accessible by public transport or car?		
Is the nearest train and/or bus station accessible?		
Is there accessible connecting transport suitable for wheelchair users eg taxis from the station?		
If you are laying on special transport, such as a coach or minibus, ensure that this is accessible too.		
Consider carefully the arrangements for car parking and dropping off passengers at the venue.	Checklist B contains useful guidance on these topics.	

<p>Venue</p> <p>Before booking, consider whether all areas of the venue that delegates will use are fully accessible.</p>	<p>There should be basic details on accessibility in the venue's promotional material. But you should check the accessibility of the venue yourself: do not rely solely on a venue's promotional material or a booking agent's assessment of accessibility.</p> <p>Suggestions for assessing the accessibility of a venue are set out at the beginning of Checklist B.</p>	
<p>Conference organisation</p> <p>Have you checked before employing any external conference organisers that they have experience of dealing with access issues and making adjustments for people with disabilities?</p>		
<p>Have you agreed who is to be responsible for ensuring that the conference is accessible? Is the requirement to do this written into their contract?</p>		
<p>Have you checked on these arrangements at conference planning meetings?</p>		
<p>Have you checked whether any of the facilitators or presenters have specific requirements eg accessible accommodation, car parking space, personal equipment, a syndicate room close to the main hall?</p>		

<p>Have you captured the particular requirements of disabled people on a database and followed up with individual delegates and facilitators well in advance if anything is unclear?</p>	<p>Ensure that you take into account the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. You may need to obtain people's express written consent to the collection and distribution of their personal details. Take legal advice where appropriate.</p>	
<p>Have you included personal assistants in counting numbers of delegates, seating arrangements, catering etc?</p>	<p>Personal assistants may accompany people with impairments, and may need to be seated with them during the conference.</p>	
<p>Will you have enough helpers available on the day to meet, greet and direct people and help to meet the accessibility requirements of disabled delegates and facilitators?</p>	<p>Remember that you can never have too many helpers! Consider whether they need disability awareness training or guidance on disability etiquette.</p>	
<p>Invitations</p> <p>Are you sending out the invitations early enough before the conference to be able to respond to any accessibility requests?</p>	<p>You need to send the invitations out early so that, for example, you are able to book a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter if needed. (Sign language interpreters are in short supply – you normally need to give at least four weeks' notice to the RNID.) There may be other similar arrangements that take time to put in place.</p>	

<p>Are the invitations in a minimum of 12 point sans serif font (and ideally 14 or 16 point)? Can you provide them in alternative formats – Braille, large print etc? Can you send them electronically instead of in hard copy?</p>	<p>Useful publications dealing with the production of accessible documents include “Producing Accessible Information - a practical and strategic guide” Employers Forum on Disability. Number 2 in a series of 3 Customer Action Files. Order on-line from EFD www.employers-forum.co.uk; and Royal National Institute for the Blind “See it Right Pack” - order on-line from RNIB www.rnib.org.uk.</p>	
<p>Have you advised people about the accessibility of the venue and any shortcomings in accessibility?</p>		
<p>Have you asked people to let you know of any particular access requirements, adjustments, seating preferences and dietary requirements?</p>	<p>Avoid asking people if they have any ‘special needs’. Ask people if they have any ‘accessibility requirements’ or use a phrase such as ‘please let us know what we can do to make this conference fully accessible to you’.</p> <p>Examples of seating preferences: a delegate wishing to tape the conference may need to sit close to the speaker; some delegates may wish to have aisle seats reserved for them.</p>	
<p>Have you put in place arrangements for confirming that people’s requests will be met?</p>	<p>A personal telephone call is the best means of ensuring that arrangements are appropriate.</p>	

<p>Have you provided a clear map that shows the parking areas and entrances designated for disabled people?</p>	<p>You could offer the option of specific information about designated parking, access to the venue and the layout of the conference suite. Example document 1 is an example from the Centre for Accessible Environments.</p> <p>Maps should be available in alternative formats, including large print, for people with visual impairments. Where colour is used, there should be a good colour contrast.</p>	
<p>Delegate packs/handouts</p> <p>Do the packs take account of guidelines on accessible documents? Can you provide the packs in alternative formats eg Braille or large print?</p>	<p>Useful publications dealing with the production of accessible documents include “Producing Accessible Information - a practical and strategic guide” Employers Forum on Disability. Number 2 in a series of 3 Customer Action Files. Order on-line from EFD www.employers-forum.co.uk; also Royal National Institute for the Blind “See it Right Pack” - order on-line from RNIB www.rnib.org.uk.</p>	
<p>Can you send the documents electronically?</p>		
<p>Have you provided full size copies of any slides to any delegates who have requested them?</p>		
<p>Have you provided lanyard badges (which can be hung round the neck) rather than those that need to be put on with a clip or safety pin?</p>		

<p>Programme</p> <p>Have you planned in sufficient breaks to enable people to move around between sessions if they need to?</p>		
<p>Have you allowed sufficient time for people to move between syndicated sessions and plenary sessions, particularly if the rooms are on different floors and the number of lifts/accessible lifts is limited?</p>		
<p>Are refreshment breaks long enough to enable people to have a drink/food and use toilet facilities (particularly where the number of accessible toilets is limited or they are not close to the conference hall or syndicate rooms)?</p>		
<p>Presentations</p> <p>Have you considered how to ensure that the presentations are as accessible as possible?</p>	<p>Best practice is for any videos to be subtitled, to assist people with hearing impairments. An audio-described version should be provided for people with visual impairments.</p>	
<p>Have you discussed the accessibility of presentations with the speakers?</p>	<p>Briefing Note 1 is a suitable note for you to give to your speakers to explain the importance that you place on accessibility.</p>	

<p>Plenary sessions</p> <p>Have you considered the needs of people with access requirements when setting up the main room?</p>	<p>It is particularly important to ensure that there is sufficient circulation space for wheelchairs. Wheelchair users will welcome being given a choice of where to sit.</p>	
<p>Have you booked a sign language interpreter or palantypist well in advance? (A palantypist provides near-simultaneous transcription of speech onto a computer screen for people with hearing impairments.)</p>	<p>Remember that sign language interpreters need regular rests, so you may need to book two interpreters to cover an all-day conference. You may also need lip speakers. You can book a sign language interpreter or lip speaker from the RNID Communications Service Unit through its website www.rnid.org or by ringing 020 7296 8148.</p>	
<p>Do you have someone available who knows how to work the induction loop system and who has the necessary equipment to test that it is working?</p>		
<p>Is any screen (eg for Powerpoint presentations) big enough to be seen from the back of the hall?</p>		
<p>Consider whether presenters will be easily visible or whether you need to arrange a platform.</p>		
<p>If any of the presenters use a wheelchair, have you asked them what support they need when moving onto the platform?</p>	<p>Options include a lifting platform and a ramp. If the ramp is long or steep, it may need hand rails on each side.</p>	

Have you checked with the speakers whether they wish to use a lectern?	If a lectern is to be used, it needs to be adjustable for people of different heights and you need to ensure that the speaker will be visible to the audience.	
Have you checked that there is sufficient light for the speakers to be able to read their notes?	The speakers may need additional lighting if the main hall lights are to be dimmed during their talks.	
If a table is to be used for a panel, is it the right height for a wheelchair user?	The preferred height for a desk or table according to BS 8300 is 760 mm with a minimum height to the underside of 700 mm.	
Is there an adequate sound system?	If things go wrong with the sound system, you should have someone available to rectify problems quickly.	
Have you asked all the speakers which type of microphone they would prefer?		
Is there a roving microphone for contributions from the floor?		
Have you ensured that all speakers know they must use a microphone?		
Can you provide clipboards for people who need them to take notes?		

<p>Have you met the needs of palantypists and other personal assistants eg electric sockets, different seating, table etc?</p>		
<p>Workshops/syndicate groups</p> <p>Have workshop leaders been briefed in advance on the accessibility requirements of any participants in their workshops?</p>	<p>To ensure that presenters, facilitators, and workshop/syndicate leaders operate to a high standard of accessibility, the briefing you provide them with should include guidelines on accessibility. Briefing Note 1 can be used for this purpose.</p>	
<p>Are syndicate rooms set up to accommodate the needs of people with accessibility requirements?</p>	<p>Examples include a different type of chair (with or without armrests, or with an upholstered seat instead of a plastic one); space for a wheelchair (including sufficient circulation space); induction loop.</p>	
<p>Does the layout of the room eg theatre style, circle, horseshoe, take account of the needs of people with visual or hearing impairments?</p>		
<p>If no breakout rooms are available, will you be able to separate groups of people sufficiently to enable them to have discussions without too much noise leaking from other groups? Are the groups small enough for people to be able to hear input from all members of the group? Are the acoustics of the hall suitable for multiple discussion groups?</p>	<p>People with hearing impairments will be particularly affected by noise from other groups. Groups should be placed in separate rooms wherever possible but, if this cannot be achieved, people need to be asked to make a conscious effort to keep the noise level to a minimum.</p>	

<p>Have you sent/given large print/Braille/full size copies of slides or handouts in advance of the conference/presentation/workshop to people with visual impairments who have requested them?</p>		
<p>Display stands</p> <p>Is there sufficient room between display stands to enable movement of delegates, including delegates using wheelchairs?</p>		
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Is the evaluation sheet available in alternative formats?</p>		
<p>Can it be completed and returned electronically?</p>		
<p>Does it ask people whether their accessibility requirements were met; and whether more could have been done on accessibility?</p>		
<p>The space below will allow you to record issues relating to your own conference.</p>		

