

Trinity Inclusive Clubs and Societies Guidelines



Towards Inclusive Clubs and Societies

Trinity Ability co_op.
Funded by the Trinity Trust.
Trinity College Dublin 2021.



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“

Accessibility is being able to get in the building. **Diversity** is getting invited to the table. **Inclusion** is having a voice at the table. **Belonging** is having your voice heard at the table.

- Author Unknown

”



1. Introduction

For many, societies and clubs are what they remember most when looking back on their college years. Unfortunately, until now, this important part of the college experience **has not been equally available** to everyone. Students with disabilities are so often excluded from clubs and societies for a variety of reasons, including **physical inaccessibility, stigma, a lack of understanding, and negative attitudes** towards disabled people.

At its core, the aim of the Towards Inclusive Clubs and Societies Project is to improve education and increase understanding about the experience of disabled students. **The Trinity Trust** has funded the Trinity Ability co_op's efforts to create resources for clubs and societies that **provide solutions** for the barriers to inclusion that exist.

This project could not have succeeded without the passion and expertise of the Trinity Ability co_op and Disability Service summer team. Jordan Collins, Conor Myler, Niamh Barry, Courtney McGrath, Scott Byrne, Mairead Maguire and Jessica K. Doyle worked closely with me to create and review these resources.

I would also like to thank all who gave feedback and contributed to different components of the project. Collaborating with the Central Societies Committee and Dublin University Central Athletic Club was invaluable in understanding the needs of clubs and societies.

It was fantastic to have the support of those who featured in the training videos, including Provost Linda Doyle, Associate Vice Provost Lorraine Leeson, the Senior Dean, Professor Eoin O'Sullivan, Dr Vivian Rath and Mark Pollock.

It is now up to clubs and societies to put inclusivity and accessibility **at the centre of everything they do**, so that everyone can learn new skills, form lasting friendships, and make invaluable memories. I hope these guidelines assist you in this mission.

- **Rachel Murphy.** Project Lead.

Key Recommendations

1.

Create a social environment that is inclusive to people with disabilities. This can be achieved by creating an open, welcoming atmosphere at all activities, education and by challenging the stigma and stereotypes that exist about disabled students.

2.

Host activities in accessible spaces. There are accessible spaces in Trinity that can be booked for club and society events and these guidelines will help point you in the right direction.

3.

Introduce an Accessibility and Inclusivity Officer to your club or society, or having someone responsible for accessibility and inclusion is an important step. The most inclusive clubs and societies are the ones who have introduced a role like this, in Trinity and beyond. We have provided roles and responsibilities in these guidelines to help you with this.



Towards Inclusive Clubs and Societies



The Towards Inclusive Clubs and Societies Project aims to **equip clubs and societies** within Trinity College Dublin with the necessary skills and support to design their organisation to be **accessible and inclusive to students with disabilities**. This has been divided into three streams: [The Inclusive Trinity Clubs and Societies Checklist](#), The Trinity Inclusive Clubs and Societies Guidelines and 4 training videos.

The guidelines are based on **real life experience** and explore different areas of society and club life. They outline clearly how clubs and societies can become more accessible and inclusive for students with disabilities. Clubs and Societies that demonstrate clear effort towards becoming more accessible and inclusive to students with disabilities will be awarded with a **digital badge** upon completion of the checklist.



Clubs and Societies committing to accessibility and inclusion will have a significant influence on the lives of disabled students in Trinity, with a **gateway of opportunity** opening for social engagement, and personal development.

It is acknowledged that disability is just one cohort of people who are often excluded from student life, and that there is **intersectional issues** we share with other minority groups (e.g LGBTQIA+, Ethnic minorities, mature students and students from socio economic disadvantaged background.) We hope that this project will **lay the foundation** for future changes in our social parts of the Trinity experience projects that focus on each individual aspect of inclusion.



Trinity Ability co_op

The Trinity Ability co_op is a co-operative movement towards **radical inclusion** led by students with disabilities. Our aims include making Trinity an **inclusive environment** for disabled students and **raising awareness** of their experiences. You can find out more about the Trinity Ability co_op on our [website](#).

Trinity Trust

The Trinity Ability co_op was **funded by the Trinity Trust** to complete this project. The Trinity Trust Special Fund was established to support and enhance student life during the pandemic and to assist student societies, sports clubs, and other organised student groups to develop new projects that advance learning and education in college.

One of the main sources of funding for the TCD (Trinity College Dublin) Association & Trust grants comes from the [TCD Affinity Credit Card](#). With over 10,000 cardholders to date, a percentage of the annual turnover on these cards is donated back to Trinity by Bank of Ireland.

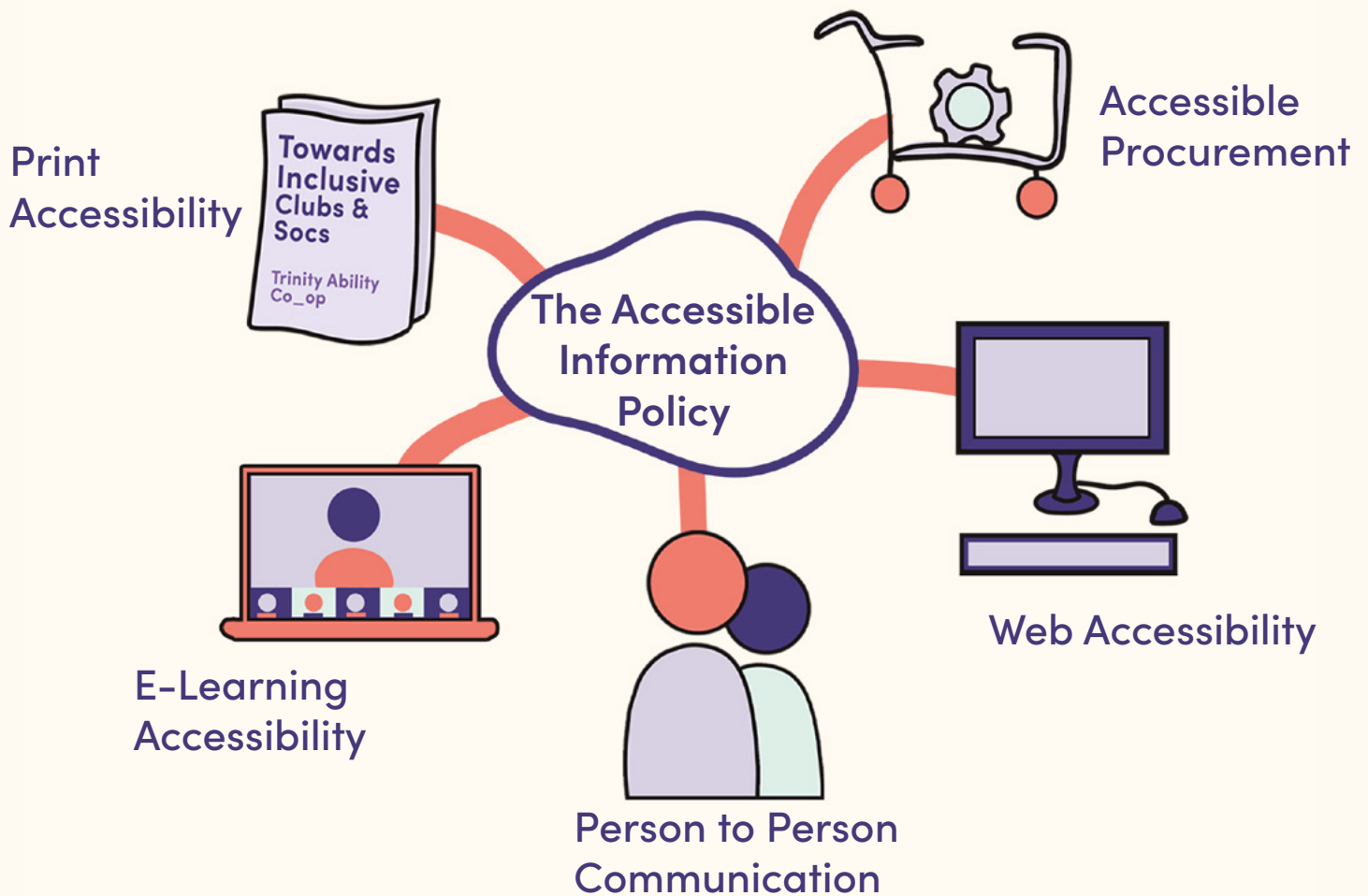


2. Disability in University

Policies and guidelines

There are many Trinity policies that are useful for Trinity Clubs and Societies to be aware of that promote accessibility and inclusion. **The most relevant policies and guidelines include:**

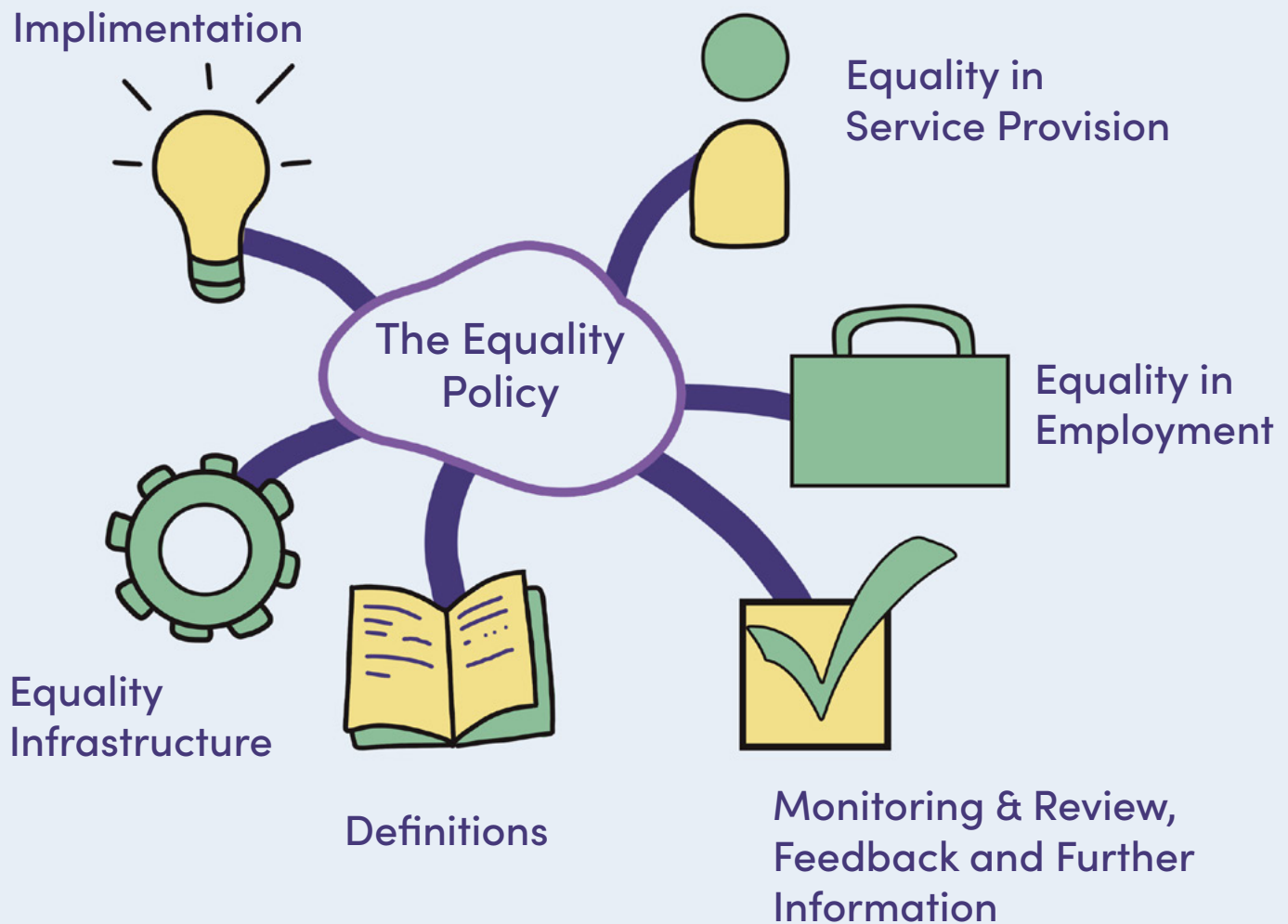
The Accessible Information Policy sets out a formal commitment by Trinity that information, in all its forms, should be available in an accessible format, and inclusive of disabled people.



The Capitation Committee is a sub-committee of the Student Life Committee, which brings together the five capitated bodies: Dublin University Central Athletic Club (DUCAC), the Student's Union (SU), the Central Societies Committee (CSC), the Graduate Student Union (GSU) and College Publications.

The Terms of Reference governing the workings and composition of the Capitation Committee can be found at [this link](#).

The Equality Policy outlines Trinity's commitment to equality in employment, education, and service provision. It promotes equality for staff, students, and visitors in all aspects of college activity, and to remove any barriers to full participation in Trinity life. It explores the following areas:

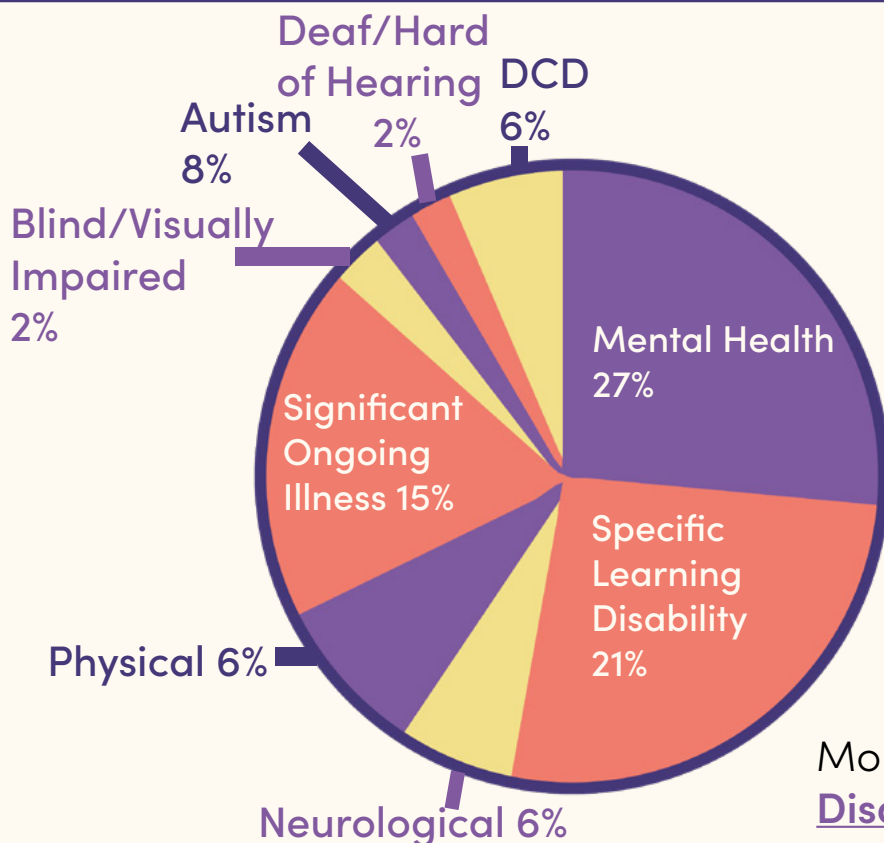
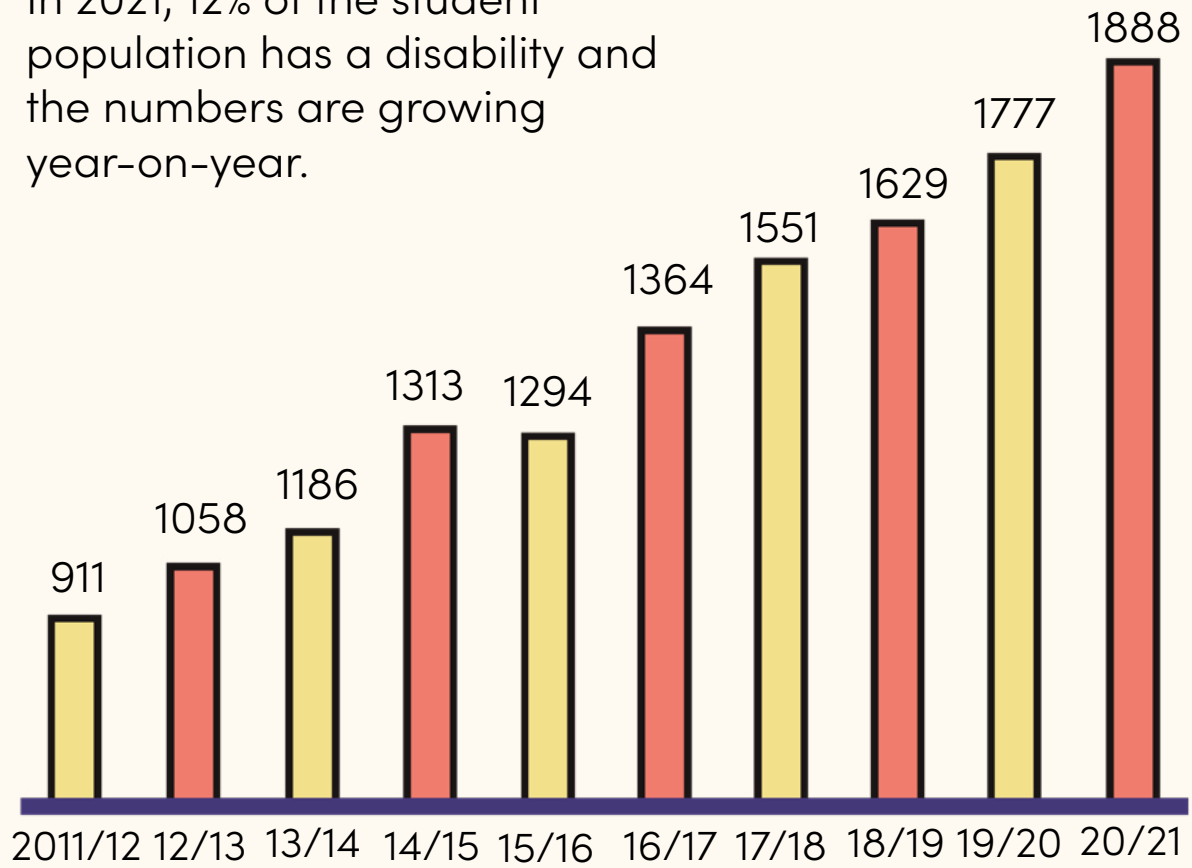


The Equality Committee are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented. Societies and clubs are among those who are obligated to adhere to this policy. As a club or society leader, you must ensure that all committee members are familiar with the content of this policy, and how it can be applied into practice.

These policies ensure that people with disabilities can **fully participate** in all aspects of college life, which includes clubs and societies. The recommendations in these guidelines will provide you with many ways to make sure you are following this.

Disability Data in Trinity

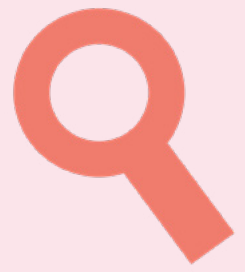
In 2021, 12% of the student population has a disability and the numbers are growing year-on-year.



Breakdown of Total Students registered with the Disability Service in Trinity by category of disability for 2020-21.

More data is available on the [Disability Service website.](#)

What is a Disability?



Search

Disability is not a fixed characteristic that belongs to the individual but rather an oppressive, socially constructed role imposed on top of people's impairments. Impairment can be viewed as a difference in functioning which diverges from culturally valued norms in a diverse society.

The **social model of disability** sees 'disability' as the result of the interaction between people living with impairments and an environment filled with physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers. It therefore carries the implication that the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment must change to enable people living with impairments to participate in society on an equal basis with others.

The legal definition of disability (Employment Equality Act 1998 and Equal Status Acts 2000) is as follows:

1. "the total or partial absence of a person's bodily or mental functions, including the absence of a part of a person's body,
2. the presence in the body of organisms causing or likely to cause, chronic disease or illness,
3. the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of a person's body,
4. a condition or malfunction which results in a person learning differently from a person without the condition or malfunction, or
5. a condition, illness or disease which affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement or which results in disturbed behaviour.

And shall be taken to include a disability which exists at present, or which previously existed but no longer exists, or which may exist in the future, or which is imputed to a person." A disability is significant, long term and/or enduring in nature, lasting longer than a year.

What is a visible or invisible disability?



Visible disabilities can be noticed by looking at someone, whereas **invisible disabilities** are not immediately apparent.

A lot of people fail to consider that someone has a disability unless they can see it. Anyone you meet could have a disability, whether it is obvious to you or not.

Most disabilities are invisible.



What is Disability Inclusion?

Disability inclusion in Trinity is no longer optional, it is an expectation. Students entering Trinity today have grown up with an expectation to be treated equally and they have witnessed the inclusion and mainstreaming of students with disabilities their entire lives. The most powerful barriers to full inclusion include stigmas about disabled students, negative attitudes, and lack of understanding among university staff, Student Unions and Clubs and Societies.

Inclusion embodies involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognised. An inclusive university promotes and sustains a sense of belonging in all aspects of student life. It values and practices respect for the talents, beliefs, and backgrounds of all members.

What is Accessibility?



Accessibility encompasses more than just physical access to buildings or the external environment. It is the gateway to full participation in society for people with disabilities.

Accessibility involved adequate fulfilment of human rights such as health care, education, housing, communications and to travel freely.

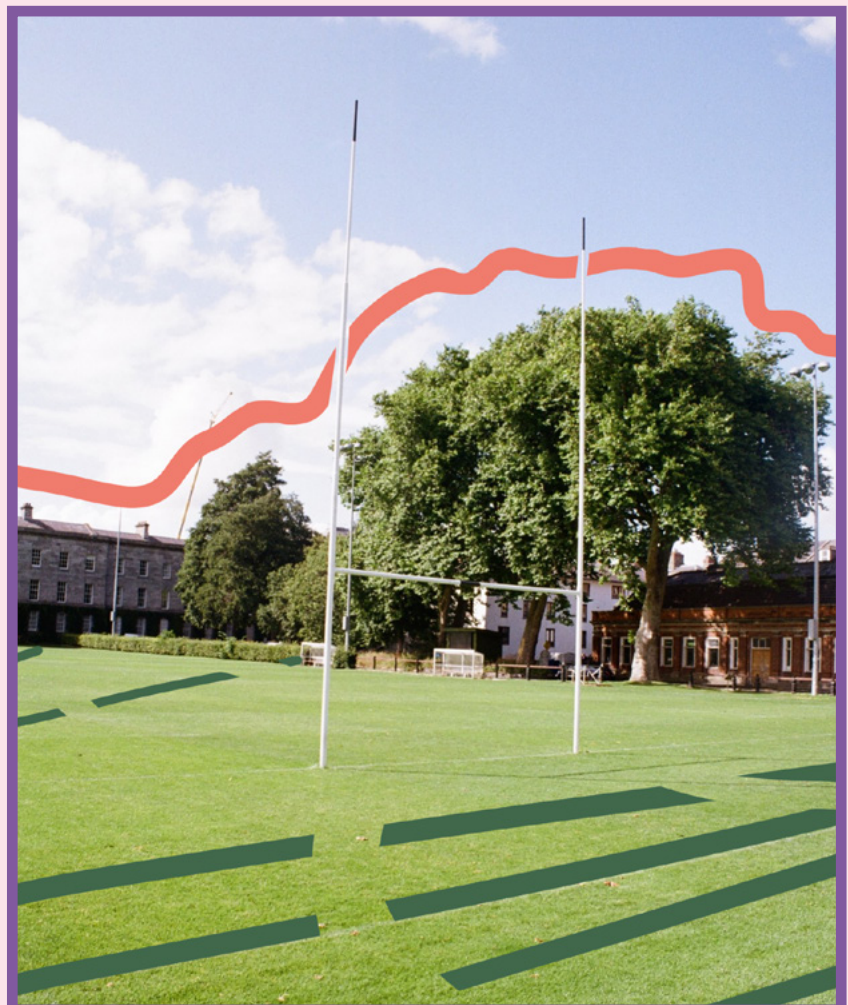


What is Belonging?

Belonging is a feeling experienced as an outcome of inclusion. It means that you feel part of a group, where you are valued and safe.

The idea of belonging highlights how limited the ideas of diversity, accessibility and even inclusion can be.

A club or society can only be truly inclusive when disabled students feel they belong there.



Disability Etiquette

Disability Etiquette refers to **respectful interaction and communication with disabled people**. Disability etiquette involves treating disabled people with the same respect and courtesy you would anyone else.

How disability and disabled people are referred to can be **limiting, and harmful**. One way to change detrimental attitudes or stigma toward disability is to intentionally use more inclusive language that **dignifies people's images and expectations**.

Definitions of socially constructed concepts such as those above are important to understand when talking about disability and using inclusive language.

Disability Orientation

Person-first and identity first orientation are both used by people when referring to themselves and their disability.

- **Person-first:** Person with a disability.
- **Identity-first:** Disabled person.



These guidelines use a **combination** of both person-first language and identity-first language. It is crucial to respect that everyone has their own preference. You should **ask** people what language they prefer.

Reflect on how you communicate with disabled people



- Avoid subconsciously dehumanising language like ‘wheelchair-bound’ or ‘confined to a wheelchair.’ Say ‘wheelchair-user.’ / Rather than ‘they suffer from anxiety’ say ‘they have anxiety.’
- Avoid negative and outdated terms such as ‘invalid,’ ‘crippled,’ ‘victim,’ or ‘handicapped.’
- Do not use terms like ‘normal’ when referring to people without disabilities.
- Avoid portraying or describing disabled students as **overly brave, special, or inspirational.**
- People with disabilities advocate for themselves. **Speak directly** to the person with a disability, **not** to their assistants, interpreter, or companion.
- Avoid **drawing attention** to people’s disability by apologising for using everyday expressions like ‘as you can see,’ or ‘stand up for yourself.’ It is likely that people would find the apology more offensive than the phrase itself.
- Do not make a disabled person feel **responsible** for managing your feelings about their disability, or for your **education** on disability issues.
- Understand that some people need to make noise, find it hard to remain seated and need space to move around.

Pro-active steps to take

- 1. Understand** that people are not obligated to disclose their disability to you.
- 2. Ask** before you try to support someone with a disability and only do so when they need it.
- 3.** Most disabilities are invisible. In Ireland, one out of every seven people has a disability, so **you should not presume** that someone does not have a disability just because you cannot see it.
- 4. Do not make assumptions** about what disabled students can or cannot do. This is the case even if you have a friend with the same disability.
- 5. Avoid physical contact** without consent. This includes canes, wheelchairs, scooters and so on, as equipment is part of the personal space of people with disabilities.
- 6.** When speaking to someone who is blind or visually impaired, **identify** yourself. **Walk** on the opposite side of a guide dog or cane.
- 7. Do not distract, feed, or pet** service animals without the consent of the owner.



8. **Ask** someone whether they would like you to repeat or rephrase something rather than presuming that they do. If someone does not understand, be patient with them and do not speak too fast.
9. If you do not understand someone with speech and language difficulties, **be patient**, ask them to repeat themselves and do not interrupt or finish their sentences.

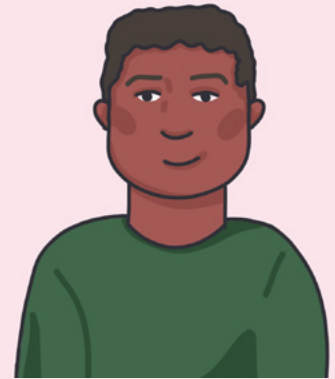
10. Understand that people have **different communication styles**. Some find social interaction challenging, especially with new people but that does not mean they should be excluded.
11. Give **written and audio instructions** when possible.
12. **Do not cover your face when speaking**. Many deaf people rely on lip reading to understand what someone is saying. You should **make eye contact with a deaf person** first if you want to communicate with them.

Case Study #1

The societies, clubs and students mentioned in these case studies are hypothetical.

The Challenge

Emmett signed up to the Film Society during Fresher's Week and had been a member of the Film Club in his secondary school. Emmett has cerebral palsy and uses a crutch to mobilise across long distances. Emmett is eager to get involved in society life and has signed up for the Film Society introduction night. Emmett is excited to attend the event but is anxious that he may experience barriers to attending if the venue is not accessible for his needs. Emmett has contacted the Accessibility and Inclusion Officer of the society for information.



Name: Emmett

Pronouns: He/him

Course: Junior Fresh Psychology

The Solution



1. Immediate

Emmett emailed the Film Society's [Accessibility and Inclusion officer](#) to enquire about the accessibility of the venue for the introduction night. The role of the Accessibility and Inclusion Officer is to ensure that the access needs of all society members are met and to promote diversity and inclusion within the society. The Accessibility and Inclusion Officer liaised with the events committee to ensure that the venue was physically accessible in advance of the events. The accessibility officer notified Emmett that the venue of the event was accessible and had level access.

2. Longterm

To minimise inaccessibility and exclusion occurring, the Accessibility and Inclusion officer arranged with the society committee to book events in accessible spaces where possible. The Accessibility and Inclusion Officer further developed accessibility notices for each event and activity run by the society, which highlighted the accessibility and demands of each event/activity within the society.



Guidance

The Accessibility and Inclusion officer reviewed the accessibility of the venue with the [Trinity Event Checker](#) to find venues for future events.

Additionally, the accessibility officer reviewed the [Make College Events Accessible Webpage](#) for guidance.

As a society within Trinity College Dublin, the Film Society is obligated to organise accessible and inclusive events, as per the Accessible Information Policy and the Equality Policy. within the University.

3. Social Environment

How do I make people feel welcome to my club or society?

- The easiest way to make people feel welcome is to **demonstrate your commitment to inclusion** by making your activities accessible and asking people what supports they need.
- Tell your members:
 1. They can request accessibility accommodations.
 2. That you have completed the Towards Inclusive Clubs and Societies Checklist.
- **Educate** committee members and teams about disability. This can be done by sharing resources with them or hosting disability awareness events. Reach out to the Trinity Ability co_op if you need any help with this!
- Host **introductory events** at different points throughout the year, aimed at recruiting new members.
- It is important that everyone takes part in **introductory activities**. Consider activities in smaller groups with a mix of new, older and committee members in each group.
- At each event, select members of committee who will **welcome people as they arrive**. All members should feel they are valued, whether they are on committee or not.
- Avoid things that create an **elitist and cliquy** atmosphere. This can be achieved by ensuring that everyone is included and valued at all activities, for example, ensure that there is space for new members at every activity.

Inclusive Committees

The minimum all Clubs and Societies should do is have an **Accessibility and Inclusion Officer.**

Introducing an Accessibility and Inclusion Officer to your club or society is an active step in becoming more inclusive to people with disabilities and other minority groups.

The roles and responsibilities could be shared across committees, for example, a public relations officer being accountable for the accessibility of online communications and an events officer being accountable for physical access and accessible event planning.

Accessibility and Inclusion Officers can seek support and guidance from key people within the college that are concerned with disability access and inclusion such as the Disability Service, Trinity Ability co_op, and the TCDSU/GSU officer for students with disabilities.



Roles and Responsibilities of an Accessibility and Inclusion Officer

1. To ensure that disabled students are included and **feel that they belong** in the club or society.

2. To ensure that activities and events are accessible, and inclusive to all disability types, by acknowledging universal design for access and learning.

3. To address the specific **accessibility requests** of people with disabilities in a timely manner within your club, or society.

4. To book ISL interpreter services, as requested, in a timely manner. See guidelines for how to book an ISL interpreter below.

5. To ensure that all committee members are aware of and committed to **accessibility and inclusion** in their individual role.

6. To create **cultural awareness** within their club or society regarding accessibility, inclusion, and the barriers that people disabilities experience in college.

7. To ensure that the club or society is **adhering to college policy** relating to access and inclusion such as the Accessible Information Policy, and the Equality Policy.

8. To **evaluate the accessibility and inclusion** of events and activities delivered by the club or society each year.

How do I support committee members with disabilities?

Planning accessible and inclusive events and activities within your club or society is likely to **encourage people with disabilities to engage** and become active members.

Disabled students should be encouraged to apply for and assume **committee member or team positions** within your club/society. Equally, these members must be supported throughout their role.



Tips

- To maintain an inclusive environment in your club or society you should **check-in** with members regardless of whether they have a disability or not.
- Remember that people **do not have to disclose** their disability to you, so all committee or team members should be supported and treated with respect and understanding.
- If you suspect that a fellow member with a disability is struggling or experiencing challenges in managing the responsibilities associated with their committee position, **reach out**. Ask your fellow committee or team member how they are managing, and if there is anything you can do to help.
- Creating a **balance** between academic workload and social activities, training and matches is challenging at times, reaching out to your fellow members can support them with **managing their position**, and prevent withdrawal from your club or society.

What support is available for disabled committee members?

Lots of disabled students have great experiences on society and club committees. If you have any questions or concerns about this, the **Disability Service** can help you!

The Disability Service Grad Intern

The [Disability Service Grad Intern](#) can advise you on how to get involved in student life. They will be hosting Student Engagement and Development drop-ins where students can discuss what they want to get involved in. The Graduate Intern will point them in the right direction and highlight opportunities in which they can become more involved in clubs and societies.



Disability Officer or Occupational Therapist

Reach out to your **Disability Officer**, or [Occupational Therapist](#) within the Disability Service here in Trinity. Occupational Therapists are experts in supporting those with disabilities to engage in and manage everyday life. Your Occupational Therapist can support you with managing your academic workload, social life, and other responsibilities such as being a committee member during your time in college.

How to host accessible meetings

1. Plan the meeting in an **accessible venue** or online alternative. Ask for any accessibility requirements. For example, see [How to Make Accessible Presentations](#).
2. Ensure that all participants are provided with specific details **well in advance**. For example, exact location, transport routes, time, and agenda.
3. Stick to the agenda, participants should introduce themselves when they speak. Summarise discussions and decisions at the end of each item.
4. Consider the **length of time** that the meeting goes on for. Some people will struggle to sit in the one location for longer than one hour.
5. Circulate **notes** to all members after the meeting.
6. Be aware that some students will have **sensory requirements** which need to be accommodated, such as leaving their camera off or turning down the lights in their room.
7. Ask people about the accessibility of the meeting and make improvements based on this.

Case Study #2

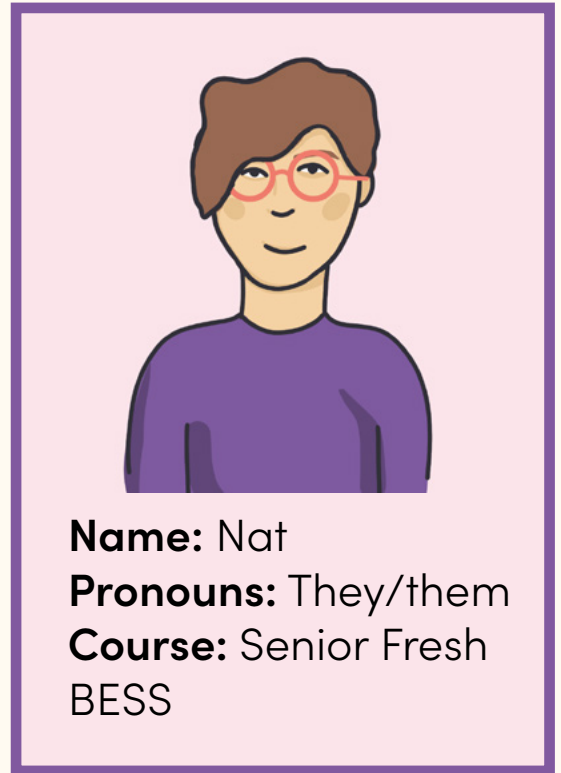
Challenge

Nat is a member of the college football team. Nat has ADHD and struggles to stay focused during training sessions when the format of training is not structured and sent to participants in advance.

Nat informed their coach that they have ADHD, and that they would benefit from this. However, Nat's coach was not aware of how to tailor the training session in a structured and predictable format.

The Outcome

Nat attended the training session, and their coach had not organised the session in a predictable, or clear format. Nat struggled to engage in the training as a result, and many of their teammates passed comments about their performance. Nat left training feeling upset, and reluctant to return.



Guidance

All individuals involved in clubs, including coaches should be aware of disability inclusion. Use these guidelines to raise awareness about topics like disability etiquette and supporting disabled members.

For more specific information about disability types and sports, check out the Cara sport's [disability factsheets](#).

4. Physical Environment

While disabled people should always be consulted on what their needs are for events, activities and everyday life, designing your event or activity with consideration for the general needs of disabled students will remove barriers to participation from the beginning and create an inclusive environment. The physical environment is complex, and this section will outline the various components.

For events and activities that are taking place on campus be sure to use check out the [Trinity Event Checker](#) for guidance.



What is an accessible space?

Entry points ensure that individuals can enter and exit spaces. Level access is the best option for entry points, as it removes barriers to access for those who experience challenges with mobility, and wheelchair users.

Ensure that once an individual has entered the building, that they can **continue to move throughout** without experiencing barriers to engagement; be sure to enquire about steps in and out of event spaces, elevators, and emergency exits for those with mobility challenges, and wheelchair users.

While entry points ensure that individuals can enter and exit an activity, guaranteeing that your event or activity has **accessible facilities** like changing spaces, and toilets is equally as important. Be sure to enquire about accessible facilities when planning your event or activity. Make sure that the accessible toilets are available for the use of disabled people and not being used for other activities.

Components of an accessible space.

1. Accessible Facilities

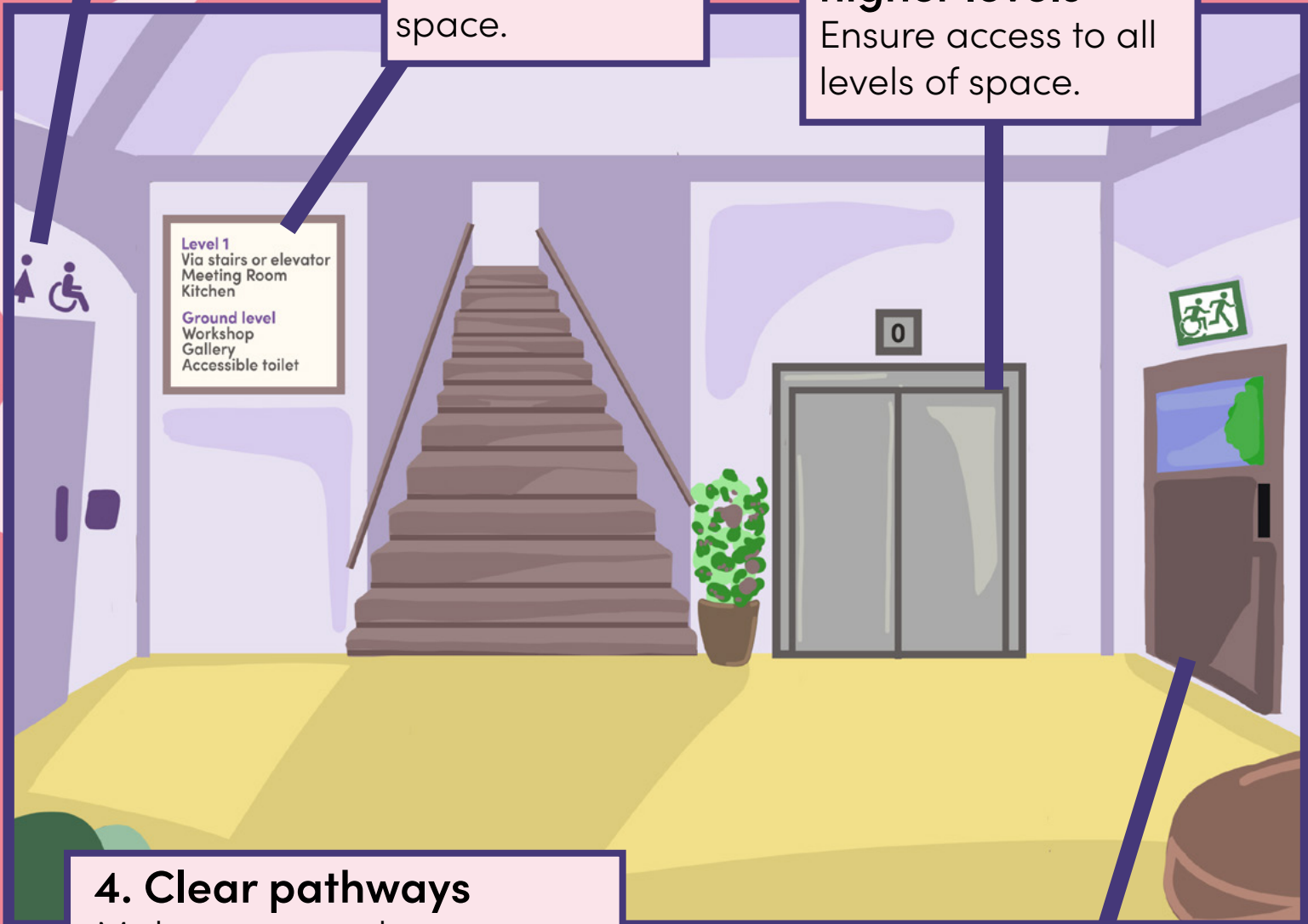
like toilets and changing spaces.

2. Clear Signs

making it easy to navigate the space.

3. Elevators to higher levels

Ensure access to all levels of space.



4. Clear pathways

Make sure people can move around the space with no barriers. This is important for disabled people (for example; wheelchair users and people who are blind/visually impaired).

5. Level Entrance

Ensures that barriers to entrance are removed for wheelchair users and those with mobility challenges.

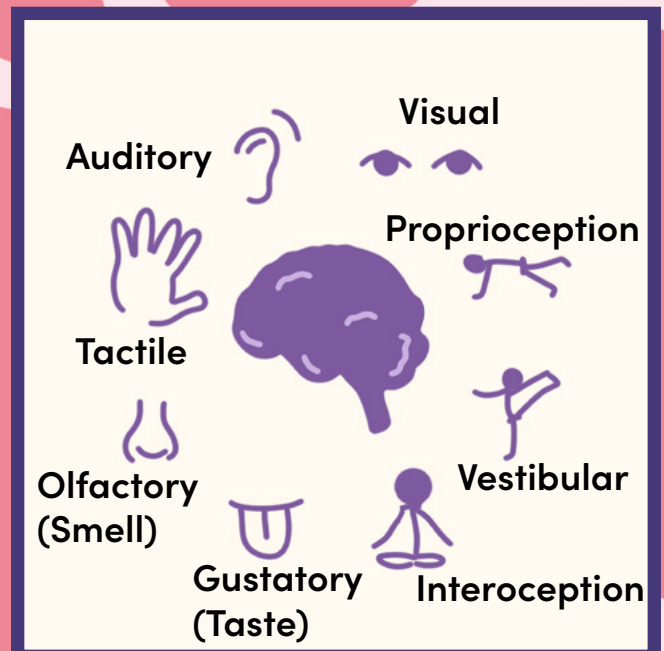
Sensory Environment

Everyone has a unique sensory system; our sensory systems dictate how we perceive the world around us. How people experience their sensory environment can change depending on time, energy and stress levels.

When planning activities, whether it is a large event or a smaller training session it is essential to consider the sensory environment and the diverse ways in which your environment is perceived. You can find out more about this at [TCD Sense](#) and on the [Disability Service website](#).

Tips to make spaces sensory-friendly

Adequate lighting is necessary for those who experience challenges with mobilising, as well as those who have low vision, or are blind. Considering the lighting of your venue is also important for those who may be sensitive to light, or experience distress when exposed to different types of lighting, such as strobe lights or fluorescent lights.

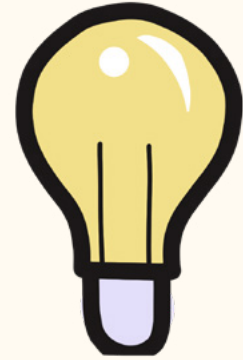


Considering the sound level, and ambience of your event venue is essential, as it ensures that participants can process the sounds around them e.g., music, speaking, instructions. Sound level is also important for those who are deaf, or hard of hearing. Enquiring about a loop system is an essential step towards facilitating your event to be accessible for deaf people. Sometimes people can find sound (auditory input) overloading and may require a space to take a break and recharge. Unexpected background noise can be distracting or distressing and people can find it hard to filter them out to interpret what someone is saying.

5. Steps to planning an accessible and inclusive event

1. Coming up with ideas

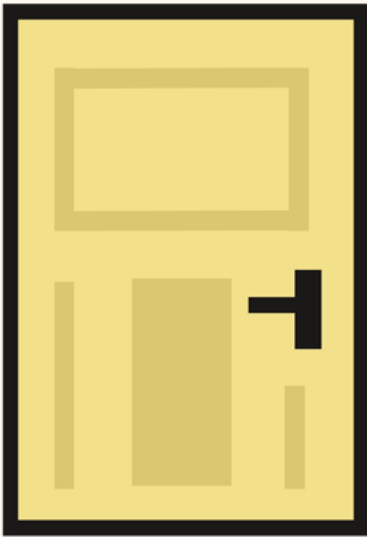
The first step to planning an accessible event is deciding **what the event will be**. Will it be a film screening, a pub quiz, a football match, or an online seminar? A good way to become more inclusive to people with disabilities and others is to plan events that cater to a wide range of people. There should be a variety of ways that people can get involved in your club or society.



Tips:

- Host activities in the **daytime and the evening** so that people with fatigue, work or childcare commitments can attend.
- Make sure you have **non-alcoholic events**, and that people can enjoy all of your events without alcohol.
- Host **taster events** in Freshers Week, ReFreshers Week and throughout the term that focus on welcoming new members to the club or society.
- If your club or society hosts webinars, guest speaker events or debates, cover a **wide range of topics**. You could host educational and awareness events to make your club or society more inclusive as a whole.
- Try out **adapted activities**, like yoga or wheelchair fencing.
- Contact the [Sports and Physical Activity Inclusion Officer](#) for recommendations and supports with adapting your club or sports activity for people with disabilities.
- Contact the [Disability Service](#) for recommendations and supports for adapting your society activities for people with disabilities.

2. Booking a space



There are lots of accessible spaces to host events in Trinity. It is important to plan meetings and events **in advance** due to the high volume of clubs and societies, so that your events will be accessible.

The [Enquiries Office](#) are responsible for managing all enquiries and bookings related to the Students' Union, the Graduate Students' Union and College societies.

The Enquiries Team are in House 5, via the entrance to Regent House. They can be contacted at the details below:

Email: enquiries@tcd.ie

Telephone: +353 1 896 1724 or +353 1 896 1897

Office Opening Hours:

Monday to Thursday 9.00am – 5.00pm

Friday 9.00am – 4.45pm

Closed Bank Holidays

Further details on booking guidelines are outlined in the appendix.

The [Trinity Event Checker](#) is a good place to start when trying to find accessible spaces on campus. Remember there are more spaces on campus than you think and don't always go for the easy option or space you always use as this may not be accessible.

How to book accessible spaces in Trinity

Space	Owned by	Booking details
<p>Classrooms (Arts Building)</p> <p>Lecture theatres (Arts Building and Hamilton)</p> <p>Graduates Memorial Building</p> <p>Regents House</p> <p>Goldsmith Hall</p>	<p>Enquiries Office</p>	<p>Email: enquiries@tcd.ie</p> <p>Telephone: +353 1 896 1724 or +353 1 896 1897</p>
<p>An Mheitheal (Printing House Square)</p>	<p>Disability Service</p>	<p>An Mheitheal space holding up to 60 people is bookable from the Disability Service (askds@tcd.ie)</p>
		<p>Opening semester 2 (21-22). All Clubs and Societies' will be expected to complete the Inclusive Clubs and Societies Checklist to ensure they are inclusive.</p>

Space	Owned by	Booking details
Room 4017, Zón Mac Léinn (Arts Building) Auditorium	Faculty of Arts	The Zón Mac Léinn (4017) can be booked by clubs and societies after 4pm by emailing the Faculty of Arts at artshss@tcd.ie .

As part of this project, a review was undertaken by the Trinity Ability co_op of the accessibility of these spaces. See Appendix.



3. Promotion

Event promotion and publicity is one of the most important parts of the planning process. It should be clear from this stage that people with disabilities are welcome at your event.

Check out the [Social Media Accessibility](#) section to find out about how to promote your event in an accessible way online.

When promoting the event, accessibility should be clear from posters, social media graphics and captions if they are accessible. Include an accessibility statement, such as **'This event is physically accessible. It has level entrance, wheelchair toilets and a quiet breakout space.'**

4. Accessibility Requests

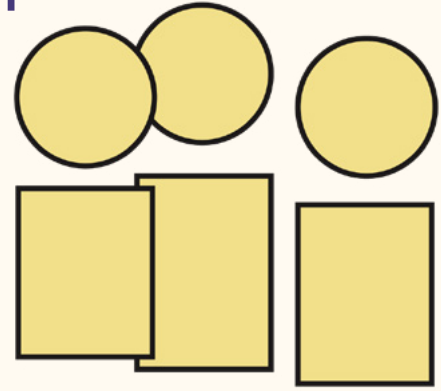
It is crucial that you **ask attendees what supports and accommodations they require** in order to attend your event. You should have a clear process for responding to accessibility requests to ensure that everyone can enjoy your event.

It is also key that accessibility is considered when budgeting and that you plan your event well in advance. To book a space or ISL Interpreter in Trinity a minimum of two weeks' notice is required.

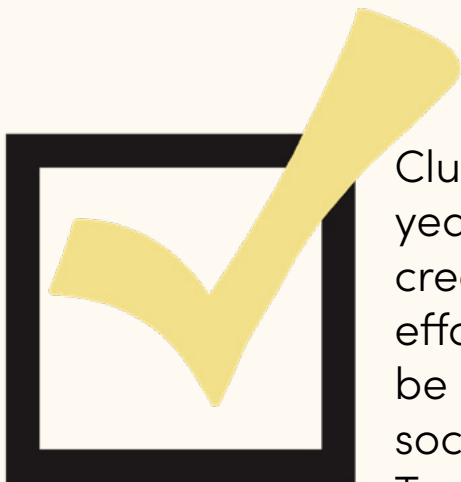


5. Creating an Inclusive Environment

The social environment of clubs and societies **can exclude** students with disabilities. This is an important but often overlooked factor, as it can be **difficult to recognise**. The previous sections went into detail about the types of social exclusion that impacts disabled students, but here is what can be done to change this.



- **Educate** yourself on disabilities. A lot of people are uncomfortable with things they do not understand, and they fear saying the wrong things. The [Disability Etiquette](#) section is a good place to start, as well as the different student stories on the Trinity Ability co_op [website](#) and social media accounts.
- Organise events relating to disability to build **cultural awareness** about disability in your club or society. For example, a panel discussion about invisible disabilities, or an autism awareness and acceptance webinar.
- **Welcome all members**, new and returning to each event and activity. Try to get to know each other and mix up groups of people that gravitate towards each other. Committee members should be responsible for talking to people who are alone or struggling to get involved.
- Understand that people have **different communication styles**. Some people might find it difficult to engage in conversation but that does not mean they do not want to.
- Give **clear instructions on expectations**. This might include the time that people are expected to show up to events or meetings, the dress code, or the structure of meetings.
- If you are aware that a participant or a team member of your sports club has a disability, you can find disability specific information for sports on the [Cara website](#).



6. Evaluation

Clubs and society committees change each year. There are many elements that go into creating a successful club and society, and the efforts of one committee towards inclusion can be **lost in the handover process**. Clubs and societies should prioritise all aspects of inclusion. To ensure that they are inclusive to people with

disabilities they should **reflect and evaluate** this by using these guidelines, the checklist, and other resources throughout the year.

This should be central to handover training. Some things to consider include, 'where are the barriers to inclusion in our society?' (See our checklist report), 'What improvements have been made, and what can we do in future?'

Inclusivity is constantly changing; it is crucial that it is an ongoing process for all clubs and societies.



Silent Disco

an accessible and inclusive event.

- Courtney McGrath (Chair of Sign Soc 2019/20)

This example is hypothetical, but it is based on a real event hosted by Trinity Sign Language Society in collaboration with DUDJ and Trinity Ents in November 2019.

Idea

Disability Week was approaching and the committee at Sign Soc wanted to produce ideas for events. They wanted to host an event that **covered a lot of areas of accessibility** and catered to the interests of a wide range of people. The committee decided to host a Silent Disco.

All attendees wore headphones. This meant that no one could hear their friends, so it was a way of showing what it is like for a deaf person and the importance of communication through **Irish Sign Language**. There were videos showing fun party signs like 'dance' and 'cocktail' so that people could learn and practice ISL!



The Silent Disco was also an accessible option for people with sensory processing issues as the headphones could be removed or the volume could be adjusted. It was inclusive as everyone was wearing headphones, so **no one stood out from the crowd!**

Finding a space

The next step was choosing a venue for the Silent Disco. Sign Soc made sure to plan so that **they had the time to find an accessible venue**. They wanted to host this event in a nightclub and did some research.

Dublin nightclubs are often inaccessible, but **after some research** they found one that was close to Trinity! After contacting the nightclub, the Events Officer and Accessibility and Inclusion Officer were informed that the venue had **level access, wheelchair levels at all bars** and that it was wheelchair accessible. This was the perfect option as it was close to Trinity and had good transport options.

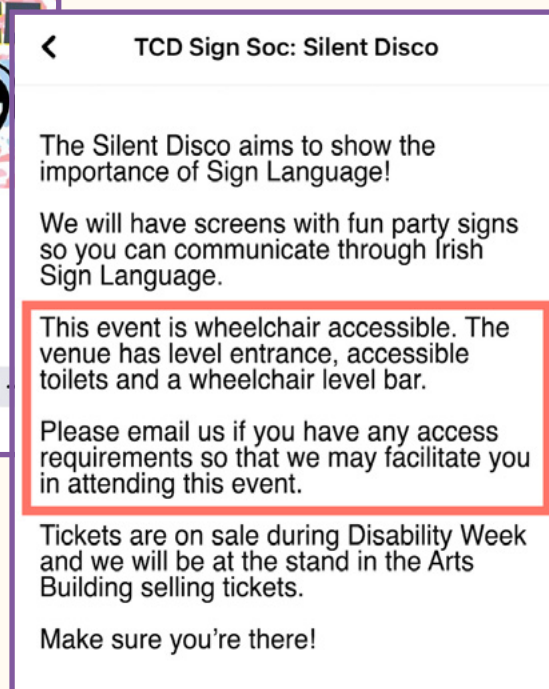
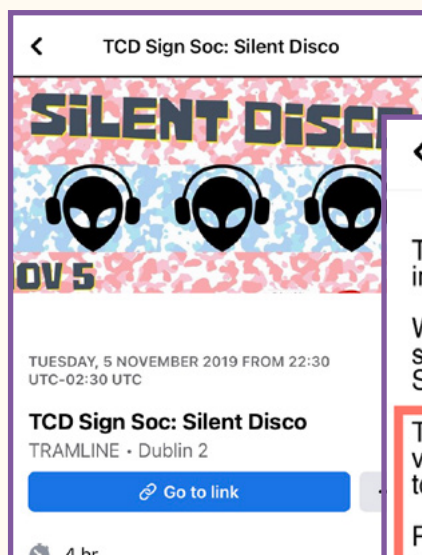
Promotion

When the society had finished the planning process, they began to promote the Silent Disco. On social media posts they included an accessibility statement that said,

‘This event is wheelchair accessible with level entry and wheelchair accessible toilets.’ They also asked

people to get in touch if they had any accessibility requirements, by including a statement from the Trinity Accessible Information Policy; **‘Please indicate if you have any access requirements so that we may facilitate you in attending this event.’**

The society sold tickets online and in the Arts Block during Disability Week. They were flexible with the times people could buy tickets. This was to provide people who might not be able to make it on campus at a particular time the option to buy tickets.



Social Environment

Prior to the event, they recorded the ISL videos and made sure that all the headphones worked so that everything would run smoothly. Members of the committee **welcomed attendees** to the event and interacted with them, especially if they were on their own. There were lots of seating areas available for people to take a break if they wanted to.

It was a successful event, and everyone really enjoyed it! It was a wonderful opportunity for people to have fun and learn some ISL in a way that was accessible and inclusive to everyone.

Evaluation

After the Silent Disco event the committee evaluated its accessibility and inclusivity. They recorded **what went well** like finding an accessible nightclub so that future committees could use this information. The society also considered **what could be improved** next time. They asked society members how accessible the event was through a survey and learned that the social media used to promote the event graphics **were not accessible**.

The colours were not contrasted enough which made it difficult for people with visual impairments and learning disabilities to understand. They decided that going forward, they would ensure their social media content was accessible! (For tips on this, check out the section on [social media accessibility](#)).



How to book an Irish Sign Language Interpreter

If a Deaf person who communicates using ISL wants to attend, book an ISL interpreter. Please ensure to ask about all accessibility requirements before the events takes place. There is **no need** to book an ISL interpreter if no deaf people have requested this for their attendance.

The cost of ISL interpretation services is **covered by the college** in order to facilitate the engagement of deaf, and hard of hearing students and staff within Trinity College Dublin.

Due to the constraints in terms of demand and supply of ISL services, a **minimum of two weeks' notice** is required to source ISL interpretation services; emphasising the importance of publishing your event with sufficient time for students with disabilities to contact you, and for reasonable accommodations to be made. ISL interpreters are typically booked on an 'as required' basis.



ISL Interpreting Suppliers (recommended by Trinity)

Bridge Interpreting

Phone: +353 87 9046594

Email: bookings@bridgeinterpreting.ie

Web: www.bridgeinterpreting.ie

The current rate (including VAT) at the time of publication for a half day is €145 (the minimum callout rate), and a full day is €290. Bookings are normally for a half day (3 hours) or a full day (6 hours).

Irish Remote Interpreting Service (IRIS)

Facilitates short (up to 20-minute) meetings where the interpreter is online (via Skype or Oovoo) at a remote location.

The annual fee is paid by Trinity.

More information: <http://slis.ie/index.php/services>

Quick guide to booking an ISL Interpreter in Trinity

Advertise your event as early as possible (**at least two weeks in advance**) Include a **statement** that asks attendees for accessibility requests.

If you receive a request for an ISL Interpreter, **contact an ISL supplier** for a quote and availability.

Complete the Disability Service's [Provision of ISL Payment Form](#) to get a Purchase Order (PO) number.

Send the **PO number** to the ISL supplier to confirm the booking.

Case Study #3

The Challenge

Isabelle is autistic and often struggles to engage in large events due to their loud and busy nature. Isabelle is overstimulated by busy environments and is anxious about attending society events for this reason. Isabelle contacted the VDP (Vincent De Paul) Accessibility and Inclusion Officer regarding this, as she was worried the event would be overstimulating.



Name: Isabelle
Pronouns: She/her
Course: Junior Fresh Sociology

The Solution

1. Immediate

The Accessibility and Inclusion Officer asked Isabelle what they could do to facilitate her attendance at the event. Isabelle shared that she uses **noise-cancelling headphones** when feeling overstimulated and sometimes must remove herself from overstimulating environments. The Accessibility and Inclusion Officer reassured Isabelle that she could take sensory breaks when required and that the use of noise-cancelling headphones would not be a problem.

2. Longterm

The Accessibility and Inclusion Officer scheduled to have an autism awareness and acceptance event to orient society members to the needs of autistic people. The Accessibility and Inclusion Officer decided to add a sensory component to the accessibility notices of each event/society activity so that autistic people and other neurodiverpeople, who may experience challenges due to the sensory environment, can **plan and adapt accordingly** in advance of the event/activity.

Guidance

The Accessibility and Inclusion Officer reviewed the [Introduction to Autism](#) document by AsIAM to gain a greater understanding of autism and the needs of autistic people. The officer also reviewed the [Make Your Club Autism-Friendly](#) video on the AsIAM website, the Equality Policy, and the Accessible Information Policy within Trinity College Dublin. As a society within Trinity College Dublin, the VDP society is required to organise accessible and inclusive events, as per the Accessible Information Policy and the Equality Policy within the university.



6. Resources and Documents

Social Media Accessibility

Social Media Accessibility is an easy step to take to become more inclusive to people with disabilities. Follow these steps on your club, societies, and person social media accounts!

1. Alternative Text

What?

Alt text is words or phrases that are inserted as attributes in HTML documents to tell website viewers the nature or contents of an image.

Why?

People with visual impairments use screen readers that read aloud social media content. On platforms like Instagram, most posts are images, and this allows screen reader-users to know what images contain.

How?

Describe the contents on the image.

Check out the [Disability Service website](#) to find out how to use this feature on different platforms. **Tip:** describe the image as if you were describing something you see on your phone to someone else.

For example:



Alt text:

Front square at Trinity College Dublin. It is a bright day, with the campanile in the background and two people walking along the grass in front.

2. Captions on videos

What?

Captions are text versions of speech added to video content. They can be closed or open.

Open captions = these are part of the video content.

Closed captions = these can be turned on or off.

Why?

Captions are useful for people who are deaf or hard of hearing to understand video content. They benefit all social media users as many people prefer to watch videos with the audio off.

How?

1. Facebook, YouTube, Instagram stories and TikTok have automatic captioning features. Make sure to keep up to date with new features as social media platforms gradually become more inclusive!

2. You can also use websites and apps like Kapwing, Clipomatic or Captions.

Find out more on the Disability Service website!



3. Camel Case Hashtags

What?

Camel Case is when you capitalise the first letter of every word in a hashtag.

Why?

Screen readers read out hashtags as one continuous word if they are not capitalised. This makes them impossible to understand.

How?

Instead of using hashtags like #towardsinclusiveclubsandsocieties, capitalise the first letters of each word so it is

#TowardsInclusiveClubsAndSocieties.

4. Accessible text for post captions

What?

Social media captions and tweets can be inaccessible for people using screen readers.

Why?

Screen readers read aloud the code for links, emojis, GIFs and anything that is not plain text. This can mean that the caption does not make sense or is long and complicated.

How?


It is okay to use emojis but use them sparingly and one at a time. Include links at the end of the caption and write in plain language.

For example:

Send post

This caption is #notaccessibleforscreenreaderusers 🥹🥹🥹 check out the Disability Service website tcd.ie/disability/ for more social media accessibility tips!!!!



Send post

This caption is #AccessibleForScreenReaderUsers. Check out the Disability Service website for more social media accessibility tips at this link tcd.ie/disability/.



5. Creating Accessible Social Media Graphics

What?

Social media graphics are often inaccessible due to the font and colours used.

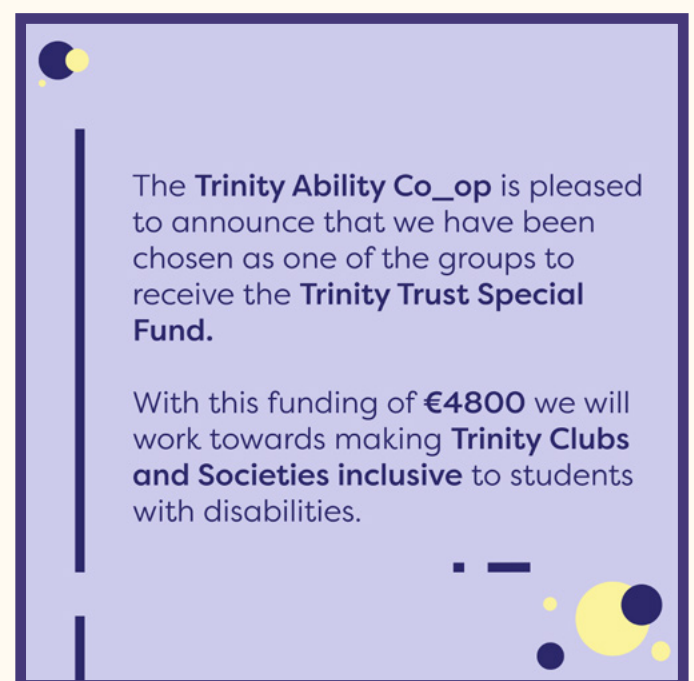
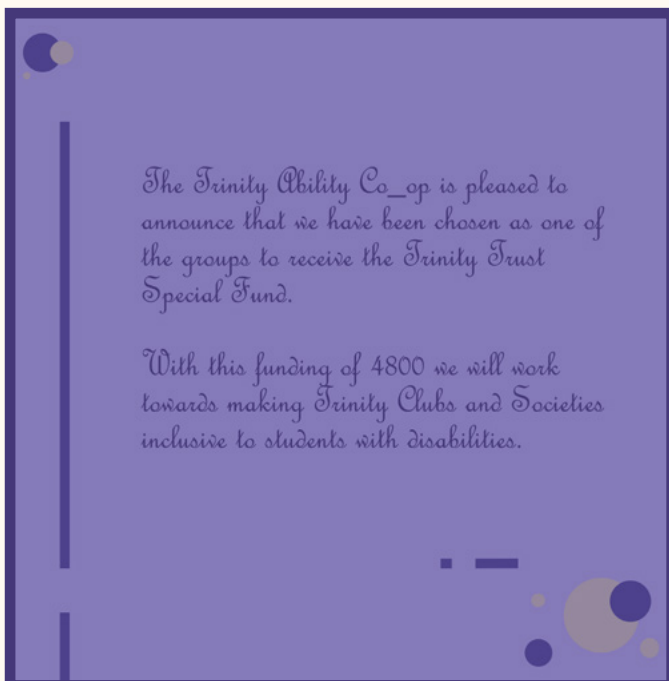
Why?

This can make it difficult for people with visual impairments or learning disabilities to see the graphic. This is especially important when the graphic is portraying valuable information like dates, locations, and times.

How?

It is possible to create social media graphics that are both well designed and accessible! Use sans-serif fonts and high-contrast colours. You can review this by using an online contrast checker or by putting on a black and white filter on the image.

For example:



X



Document Accessibility

All documents circulated by your society should be accessible (See: [Accessible Information Policy](#)). This includes Club/Society publications, leaflets, PowerPoint Presentations and Word documents. Here are some tips on how to do this:

1. Creating accessible Word documents

1. Use a **sans serif** font (e.g., Arial, Verdana, Calibri) in size **12** at least. Use **1.5** spacing and left align the text.
2. Avoid underlining or italicising text. Use **bold** instead.
3. Use **Heading styles and formatting**. This makes it easier for screen reader users to navigate the document.

Heading 1

Heading 2

A bit of text

4. Ensure there is **good contrast** between the font and paper colours.
5. Use the **Microsoft Word Accessibility Checker** to make sure your document is accessible.

Find more resources and information on the Disability Service website.

2. Creating Accessible PDF documents

1. Use a **template** on Microsoft PowerPoint. These already have reading order and heading styles.
2. Make sure that every bullet point has a full stop.
3. Use **alt text** on images.
4. Choose colours that are in **high contrast** to each other. Avoid black on white as they can cause glare for some users.
5. Provide a **transcript** of any audio-visual material in the notes section of the slides.
6. **Circulate your presentation** with all attendees in advance of the event or meeting. This ensures that people can read ahead and have an easier time following the presentation. It will also allow people with visual impairments to navigate the presentation in advance or afterwards.
7. Use the Microsoft PowerPoint Accessibility Tool.

Find more information about making accessible PDF documents on the [Disability Service website](#).

Conclusion

These guidelines were designed to support the development of clubs and societies that are inclusive to students with disabilities alongside the Inclusive Clubs and Societies Checklist and Training Videos

Return to these resources throughout the year and keep note of your improvements.

You can contact The Trinity Ability co_op if you have any questions about these guidelines, the project or how you can become more inclusive to disabled students. We are happy to support you in this!



Contact/Social Media

Email: abilitycoop@gmail.com

[Twitter](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

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Mairead Maguire - Contributor.

Jessica K.Doyle - Contributor.

Niamh Barry - Videographer.

References and Further Reading

[Trinity Ability co_op](#)

[Trinity Disability Service](#)

[Trinity Equality Policy](#)

[Trinity Accessible Information Policy](#)

[Trinity Dignity and Respect Policy](#)

[Trinity Disability Service Social Media Guidelines](#)

[Cara Sport Inclusion Disability Charter](#)

[Cara Sport Disability Factsheets](#)

[Online Course Accessibility Checklist \(Washington University\)](#)

[Inclusive Students Union \(Equality Challenge Unit UK\)](#)

[Inclusion Guide Resource Pack \(University of Bath Student Union\)](#)

[Inclusive Societies Policy \(University of Newcastle Student Union\)](#)

[Social Media Accessibility Guidelines \(Princeton University\)](#)

[Accessible Online Meetings \(European Disability Forum\)](#)

Appendix

Accessibility of society rooms

Goldsmith Rooms (A30, B31, C32, D33, E34, F35, G36)

These rooms are accessible. They are situated on the groundfloor, with automatic doors at the main entrance. The entrance to some rooms were blocked by storage, chairs etc. Entrances and pathways in these rooms should be kept clear of obstructions so that committee members with disabilities can use these spaces.

Atrium Rooms (1,2,4,6,7,8,9,50)

These rooms are accessible, via ground level entrance or elevator to upper levels. The entrance to some rooms were blocked by storage, chairs and furniture. The doorways are narrow and need to be kept clear to ensure access.