These guidelines have been developed to enable you to give due consideration for the needs of deaf and disabled people who may attend an event, short course or conference that you organise on University premises.

Please note that to ensure effective allocation of accessible conference space, ALL such bookings are to be made via the University’s central Conference Office.

The Conference Office will:

- discuss the requirements in detail with the client before booking the event
- ask the event organiser about the requirements of any disabled presenters or delegates
- encourage the event organiser to visit the venue to assess levels of accessibility prior to the booking being confirmed
- check that the event organiser has their own helpers on hand on the day to guide and support all your delegates

1. Legislation

Events taking place on University premises that are open to members of the public are covered Equality Act 2010 in terms of equal access for disabled people. As a service provider, the University is not permitted to treat a D/deaf or disabled person less favourably than they would treat others, without a justifiable reason. Reasonable adjustments should be made to make the service accessible.

These guidelines have been formulated to advise you on what you need to take into account when you are arranging any event that is open to members of the public.

2. Guidance for Event Organisers

- Before booking accommodation for your event, establish whether the premises are accessible to deaf and disabled people. You should contact the Conference Office or the person responsible for booking the venue that you are using.

- As well as considering access, you should also consider how you would evacuate disabled delegates (particularly wheelchair users) in an emergency situation. The University’s Fire Safety Officer can provide specific advice on this issue (Richard.Norris@bristol.ac.uk).
If you are advised that a building is not accessible and there is any possibility that a person with mobility difficulties might attend your event, that building should not be used.

Ensure that booking forms allow for any additional services or support requirements to be communicated. **It is advisable to obtain this information as far in advance as possible of your event so that any support can be arranged.** If you are informed in good time that a person will need additional support, you must take steps to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to provide this support.

If your conference/event/short course is residential, ensure that adapted accommodation can be provided if required. In the absence of suitable accommodation on University premises, alternative accommodation in an accessible hotel must be arranged. The Conference Office can provide details if required.

It is not acceptable to charge disabled people additional costs to cover support. It may be appropriate for the fees that you are charging for your short course, conference or event to be re-evaluated to ensure that support can be funded from these costs.

### 3. Checklist

If you are involved in the organisation of any event that is open to the public and that will be taking place on University premises, you should consider the following areas:

**Car parking:**
- Availability of disabled parking
- Proximity to venue
- Accessibility implications from parking to venue

**Entrance point:**
- Is there a level entry point to the venue?
- If not, do any steps have handrails and ramps?

**Signage:**
- Is the signage clear?
- Is appropriate print/colour used?
- Is there a member of staff available to point people in the right direction, or help them to their seat?

**Routes:**
- Are all routes easily negotiable? For example, to the refreshment area.
- Are doors easily opened?
- If stairs are involved once inside the building, is there a lift?
- Is it clear what to do in case of an emergency?

**Facilities:**
- Does the venue have an accessible WC?
Is this clearly signposted?

**Support:**
Is there an induction loop installed?
Is it switched on and who has responsibility for checking this?

**Specific Requirements:**
- How are places reserved on your event?
- Are alternative forms of booking offered?
- Are individuals asked if they have any special requirements prior to the event?
- Can seats be reserved in advance (visually impaired people may request a seat at the front)?
- Are individuals advised that information is available in alternative formats (it is advisable to list the formats that can be provided)?
- Are speakers asked if they require audio-visual aids?
- Are speakers informed of your EO stance and asked to comply with any reasonable adjustments that may be required (for example, taking a break at a suitable juncture if a sign language interpreter is present)?
- Is the stage/speaker area accessible?
- Are any microphones or lecterns height adjustable?
- What are the requirements of people providing specialist support (for example, interpreters, note-takers)?

4. **Further information**

ALL bookings should be made through:

**University Conference Officer:** Lisa Hudnott  
Telephone: (0117) 954 5536  
Email: Lisa.Hudnott@bristol.ac.uk

**Equality and Diversity Manager:** Tracy Brunnock  
Telephone: (0117) 33 17029  
Email: Tracy.Brunnock @bristol.ac.uk