



BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS: ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES



F+ Accessibility Accreditation

We will award your venue/event a **F+** if you meet the following criteria:

- 1) You describe what access there is for the Disabled such as a Wheelchair Ramp, Disabled Toilet, Hearing Loop, British Sign Language Interpreters, Braille literature, raised platforms and such. This needs to be clearly displayed within your event information.
- 2) You offer Disabled Customers extra tickets for Personal Assistants free of charge.
- 3) You provide a Priority Area for Disabled customers near the performance area such as a raised viewing platform or an area where viewing the stage is not obstructed.
- 4) You make reasonable adjustments to enable a Disabled performer to perform on the stage.

For more information please carry on reading.



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Accessing your Venue/Event

It is recommended by us that you detail what access there is to your venue/event onto your website and ensure that this is linked to from your homepage.

Did you know that wheelchair users make up approximately 8% of the UK's Disabled population. In this, knowing whether there is a small step, three steps or a flight of steps, or whether there is seating or a hearing loop available, could be the difference between someone considering whether or not to buy tickets.

Personal Assistant Tickets

Deaf and Disabled people should be able to apply for an extra ticket, free of charge, if they would be unable to attend a gig or outdoor event without the active support of another person.

The Personal Assistant (PA) is there to support the customer. Sometimes the support may involve 1:1 assistance, usually the support will focus on other areas such as travelling to the venue, interacting with the staff, eating and drinking, support within a crowd, finding their way around a venue and in some cases using the toilet.

If you have a policy which allows the Deaf and Disabled clients to attend without charging their PA, you are ensuring that you are providing reasonable access to your venue without incurring additional costs to you or to your customer.

An individual making use of a Personal Assistant at an event does so in order to facilitate an equal experience, and waiving the cost of their attendance is a suitable reasonable adjustment on behalf of venue and festival organisers when seeking to comply with the Equality Act 2010.



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Priority Areas

As Disabled customers pay the same price for their tickets as non-Disabled customers, under the Equality Act 2010, venues must provide everybody with an equal experience.

Small venues may have a Disabled priority area at the front of the venue near the stage to give wheelchair users or seated Disabled people a suitable view of the performance without the need for structural changes.

For larger venues or events, it would be prudent to consider a raised viewing area to improve the event experience for those who are Deaf or Disabled.

Example 1: A British Sign Language Interpreter is being employed, to ensure the Interpreter is not in a position where sightlines are compromised and the Interpreter is on stage.

Example 2: A customer attends your play and is in a wheelchair. To ensure the customer is able to enjoy the event without their sightlines being compromised, offer the customer a space up front near the stage.

Quiet Areas

This section applies to everyone, where possible, providing an area which is reasonably lit up and quieter than the performance area allows people to take a time out. Sometimes noise can be too much for people especially those who struggle with noise sensitivity or with crowds.

This is a positive way of including people with Mental Health issues because often people do not want this to be highlighted.

Example: A customer attends a comedy event at your venue, finds the crowd too loud and claustrophobic. Instead of going home early, the customer would go to the quieter room to take time out, have a drink and return back to the event.



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Guide Dogs and Service Dogs

When a customer arrives with a Guide Dog or Service Dog, it is important to ensure the user feels welcome to the venue/event and to ensure the user is aware of potential dangers especially if the user is Visually Impaired.

“It is against the law for service providers to treat people with disabilities less favourably because of their disability, or because they use disability related equipment such as a wheelchair or have a guide or assistance dog with them.” (Source: GuideDogs.co.uk & Equality Act 2010)

If unsure of what to do, why not talk to the customer and see what you can do to assist him/her. This is the best way to ensure the customer feels welcome! Example questions would be:

“Hello, if you need any assistance please let me know.”

“Is there anything I can do for you?”

Performers

All performers will expect to have access to the stage so they can perform. If the performer has a Disability, it is important that you and the performer take time to talk and work out what adjustments are needed.

For example: The performer uses crutches to move around and requests that someone assists him get onto the stage so he can perform his set. He may ask for drinks to be brought to the stage and some assistance to get down.



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Staff

Serving Disabled and Deaf Customers as you would serve anyone else is a must. They are people just like you, would expect to be served with respect and fairness. If the customer requires some assistance, the staff member should be prepared to help if required.

Example: The customer uses crutches to get around and has ordered a drink but is unable to carry it to their table from the bar. They ask for some help and the bar member would assist by taking the drink to the table.

Much of this is common sense, such as listening when the customer asks for assistance as they would with anyone else.

Useful Links:

For more information or advice, please contact: accessibility@thehullfringe.co.uk

Equality Act 2010: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Equality Human Rights: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/guidance-businesses>

Disability Rights Collation: <http://www.choicesandrights.org.uk/>

Elephant In The Room: www.facebook.com/hullelephant

Guide Dogs and the Equality Act 2010:
<https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/supportus/campaigns/access-all-areas/faq>

British Sign Language Interpreters: <http://yorkshire-bsl-interpreters.co.uk/>

Hull and East Riding Insitute for the Blind (HERIB): <http://herib.co.uk/>

Wheelchair Ramps: <https://www.eden-mobility.co.uk/>



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