

Accessible...

Placements, Study Abroad and Field Trips

The following points of advice will support staff involved in all aspects of work in placements, study abroad and field trips to ensure that accessibility issues are considered as part of the learning and teaching process.

- Always consult the students' Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and individual students about their needs and make reasonable adjustments where recommended.
- If an environment is not accessible, but the activity plays an essential role in the curriculum design, consider alternative activities that enable students to fulfil the learning objectives. e.g. if a site is not accessible to wheelchair users, is it possible to find an accessible site which provides the same learning opportunities? Prepare a list of alternative activities which can be referred to if disabled students are unable to participate in the original tasks.
- Prepare a set of support materials (e.g. photographs or video recordings) which can be used to prepare students for placements, study abroad or field trips. It is a good idea if the materials show the nature of the site, the accommodation, access points, toilet facilities and previous students undertaking typical placement, study abroad and field trip activities.
- Contact each placement, study abroad and field trip provider (e.g. a company, an institution, an organisation or an authority) and ask it to nominate a link person to be your main contact and who is familiar with the event, location and accessibility issues. Do not assume that the link person is in charge of disability issues: if the provider has a person in charge of disability issues, contact that person also.
- Ensure that all providers are aware of positive communication strategies (e.g. inclusive language).
- If the event is taking place abroad, obtain socially and culturally specific disability information (e.g. by visiting <http://www.studyabroad.com> or <http://www.culturegrams.com>). This is important because it can help to prevent discrimination and harassment.
- Bear in mind that sometimes enquiries about accessibility by telephone will not be sufficient. It might be necessary to arrange a preliminary visit.
- Prepare a clear and accessible outline of each event, including practical issues such as
 - the purpose of the activity and intended learning outcomes
 - when and where the event is taking place, including travel and transport details
 - expectations of the student before, during and after the activity
 - the length of time the students are expected to work each day: this is particularly important for students for whom fatigue might be an issue

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- lines of communication during the event, including a contact at the University and one at the provider of the activity
 - details of the site, e.g. terrain, climate, facilities
 - accommodation details and their level of accessibility
 - cost
- Consult with the student regarding their individual needs on placement, field trips or study abroad. Encourage the student to discuss support with the DRC, including financial support through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) or the 'Access to Work' initiative. Include in your discussion:
 - specific transport, parking, accessibility and accommodation requirements
 - educational assistance during individual and/or group work
 - personal support during formal and informal events
 - medical support
- Add all adjustments to the student's Individual Learning Plan.
- Useful online resources for providing work experiences for disabled students can be found at:
 - <http://www.disabilitytoolkits.ac.uk>
 - <http://jobcentreplus.gov.uk>

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