



Leisure factsheet 5

Policies and procedures

**activity
alliance**

disability
inclusion
sport


Policies and procedures underpin your organisation.


Effective and inclusive policies and procedures will help drive positive experiences for disabled people, people with long-term health conditions, and your wider audiences.





What makes your policies and procedures accessible?


Organisations which consistently meet the needs of disabled people and people with long-term health conditions typically have policies and procedures which are:


 Well informed with widespread consultation and expert input on content.


 Inclusive of a diverse range of needs, health conditions, and impairments.

 Strengthened by flexible and positive attitudes and approaches.

 Outcome focused with a person-centred approach that is evidenced by reach and impact.

 Embedded with inclusion and access as core principles in all policies and procedures.

 Applied across and in every aspect of the organisation.

 Supported by a trained workforce with information actively communicated and widely understood.



Consider your existing policies and procedures and ask yourself:

- Do you know if they are fit for purpose?
- Are disabled people, people with long-term health conditions, and disability organisations routinely consulted on policy content?
- How confident are your workforce in implementing your policies and procedures?



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Taking an inclusive approach to developing your organisation's policies and procedures should ensure their effectiveness and impact:

Review and embed

Inclusion should be embedded across all your organisation's new and existing policies and procedures. You may have a designated individual or team responsible for policy development. Encourage them to set out an inclusion action plan and be proactive in seeking out and embedding inclusive best practice.

Identify and use inclusive elements within your existing policies and procedures to drive further positive change. Remember policies and procedures don't always need to be long or overly complicated - keep it simple.



Top tip: Think about when your policies and procedures were last reviewed and ask yourself:

- What is your process for making sure policies are up-to-date and effective?
- Can you build on regular review cycles to check and challenge content and embed accessibility?

Focus on outcomes and positive experiences

Be outcome focused. Every policy should give disabled people and people with long-term health conditions a positive experience. This will require you to be proactive, gather evidence of disabled people's and people with long-term health conditions' needs and monitor impact. Ideally, policies should be consistent and sustainable. However, they'll also need to enable flexible approaches to overcome individual challenges and barriers.



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Consult widely

Engage directly with disabled people, people with long-term health conditions, and disability organisations to design, review and refine your policies. Consider a diverse range of conditions and impairments to make sure your policies are well informed and truly meet the needs of disabled people and people with long-term health conditions.



Top tip: Involving a broad cross section of your workforce will bring specialist knowledge and expertise to your content development too. This is were having a diverse workforce is a valuable asset!

Inclusive general policies

General policies apply equally to disabled people, people with long-term health conditions, and non-disabled people. Consider how inclusive your policies are overall and ask yourself:

- Are disabled people treated fairly within your membership terms and conditions, emergency evacuation, or confidentiality arrangements?
- What about your safeguarding, complaints, or recruitment procedures?



Top tip: This is a great opportunity to draw together your whole organisation around inclusion to implement best practice.



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Co-produce disability specific policies

Disability specific policies are those more likely to affect disabled people and people with long-term health conditions than non-disabled people. Examples could be concessionary pricing, personal assistant (carer) or assistance animal policies. Other examples are alternative formats or use of accessible car parking bays. Do your policies reflect up-to-date best practice? Are they co-produced with disabled people to make sure they truly meet their needs?



Top tip: Organisations like Assistance Dogs UK, Disability Rights UK (for benefits information), and Activity Alliance (for inclusive communications information) have factsheets which may be helpful.



Developing accessible policies and procedures

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Support your workforce

Policies and procedures are live documents to be used as part of daily operations. They should be widely promoted to your workforce through internal communication channels.

Your workforce must be supported by ongoing training around inclusive policies and procedures. This will help your teams to establish positive attitudes and approaches towards accessibility for everyone.



Top tip: Think about ways to include inclusive elements of your policies and procedures into checklists and reporting procedures.

Share information and drive awareness

Your inclusive procedures should be openly shared, understood, and embedded within your organisation. Appropriate policies should also be clearly communicated externally with your customers. This allows disabled people and people with long-term health conditions to understand what you provide and decide if it meets their needs. It is also a great opportunity to gain feedback on whether your policies are appropriate and are being successfully implemented. Don't forget your information should be actively promoted in a range of accessible formats.



Useful resources

Activity Alliance has a suite of resources and services that can support your policies and procedures.

- Our [Reopening Activity: An inclusive response guidance](#) resource gives considerations for community sport and leisure providers on including disabled people and people with long-term health conditions.



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This factsheet is part of our leisure resource.

View the full resource on our website:

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This document is available in Word format. Please contact us if you need support. Activity Alliance is the operating name for the English Federation of Disability Sport. Registered Charity no. 1075180.