

A guide to accessible events at Federation University

An accessible event is designed to be inclusive so everyone can participate, including people with disabilities. This may include physical access for wheelchair users, or other assistance to enable full participation for example creating a culturally safe, welcoming environment.

An event at FedUni refers to any function or activity, and may include campus tours, workshops, concerts and media events. Attendees may include staff, students, prospective students and visitors.

The checklist below has been developed as a starting point for event planning at FedUni.

Considerations for hosting an accessible event

- Are event locations accessible (no steps or barriers) for those with mobility aids? Is there adequate space to move about?
- Are accessible toilets located nearby? Is there appropriate signage from the event to the accessible toilets?
- Have you included a way for attendees to register their specific needs or supports?
- If additional support needs are requested, have you contacted Accessibility Services?
- Is the stage accessible to people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters and walking aids?
- Are paths and ramps free from signs, stalls or banners?
- Is seating provided for people that may not be able to stand for the duration of the event?
- Is seating available at the front for people with low vision or for those who lip read?
- Are tables and chairs provided where food is served? Some people with disabilities may not be able to carry or hold a plate of food without a table to place it on. Will a staff member be available to provide assistance if required?
- Consider dietary needs and options available.
- Will there be special lighting effects used? Some special effect lighting (for example strobe lighting) can affect people differently. How will you let attendees know about this before the event?
- For all presentations, consider the appropriate level of amplification (microphones and speakers) for the venue.
- Is the audio visual equipment accessible to a speaker/presenter using a wheelchair? Is the equipment at a height where they can both access the controls and be visible to the audience? Is there enough circulation space around the controls?
- Consider removal of all background music during presentations as this can impede reception for people that are hearing impaired and people with processing disorders.

Other things to consider

There are other things to think about when creating an accessible event.

This might include the language you use and considering different ways to give people information and directions.

The following information provides some helpful examples to keep in mind and a range of Student Services that may provide advice on your accessible event.

Gender

You may not know a person's gender. You can still address them politely without making assumptions.

Language to Use	Language to Avoid
Colleague, everyone, students	Ladies and gentlemen, guys
Parent	Mother, Father
Partner	Boyfriend, Girlfriend, Husband, Wife
Child	Son, Daughter
Sibling	Sister, Brother

Pronouns

Everyone has pronouns. These can be she/her, he/him, they/them, a combination, or something else entirely.

When you know someone's pronouns, use them. It shows respect and helps them feel seen.

If you are unsure of someone's pronouns, opt for inclusive language. This means using gender-neutral pronouns like 'they/them' instead of assuming someone's gender.

Pronoun	How to Use it
They/Them	I saw Alex come to work today and they seemed happy. I hope to see them soon to hear all about it.
He/Him	I saw Alex come to work today and he seemed happy. I hope to see him soon to hear all about it.
She/Her	I saw Alex come to work today and she seemed happy. I hope to see her soon to hear all about it.

Addressing a crowd

Make everyone feel welcome from the start. Avoid gendered language like "welcome ladies and gentlemen....."

Consider alternatives such as:

- Welcome everyone
- Good morning/afternoon/evening everyone
- Hello awesome people!

Tip: If you are introducing yourself, consider including your pronouns after your name. This sets a positive example for pronoun use within the group.

Parents and gender

Families come in all shapes and sizes.

Not everyone has a mum and dad, or lives with their biological parents.

Neutral Terms	Avoid if Unsure
Family	Mum
Parents	Dad
Guardians	
The people who care for you	

Writing it down

- Be prepared to help visitors remember key information.
- Consider keeping a pen and small notepad or sticky notes handy.
- When giving directions or important details, offer to write them down.
 - Use a phrase like: 'Would you like me to write this down for you?'
 - This gives them the option without being pushy.
 - Written notes can be a lifesaver, especially with complex instructions.

Giving directions

- Consider keeping an accessible campus map handy. This can help you give accurate directions and allows you to point out accessible routes. <https://federation.edu.au/about-us/our-campuses>
- Familiarise yourself with campus facilities. This includes parent rooms (changing/feeding), accessible toilets, and all-gender toilets (refer to the section below).
- Be mindful of accessibility when giving directions.
 - Offer options: 'This path has stairs, or would you prefer a route without stairs?'
 - Phrase it as a question to gauge the visitor's needs.

Wearing a lanyard

- You may like to show your support for diversity and inclusion. Wearing a lanyard is a great way to demonstrate inclusivity and allyship.
- FedStore offers lanyards in a few designs including Indigenous and rainbow designs.

Posters

- Consider displaying posters in your work area or at your event to show inclusivity. You can download posters from the Aboriginal Education Centre or Student Equity and Safer Communities pages.

Student Services

The following Student Services may be able to provide further advice when planning your accessible event

Aboriginal Education Centre

- The Aboriginal Education Centre (AEC) provide a wide range of support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and prospective students.
- The AEC have offices at all the campuses, including Mt Helen, SMB, Wimmera, Berwick, and Gippsland
- <https://federation.edu.au/aec>

Accessibility Services

- Support can include:
 - Help with enrolment and Orientation to campus.
 - Learning Access Plans for reasonable adjustments to study
- The Accessibility Services Student Handbook is available on the website.

<https://www.federation.edu.au/students/wellbeing/accessibility-support/>

Student Equity and Safer Communities

- Provides individual support to students from a wide range of backgrounds and life experiences, and on all equity related matters.
- Supports students from Out-of-Home care backgrounds (students with experience of foster care, kinship care, residential care)

<https://www.federation.edu.au/students/wellbeing/equity-and-inclusion/>

Accessible and inclusive facilities on campus

There is a variety of accessible and inclusive spaces on Fed campus'

- Parent rooms
- Accessible toilets
- All gender, or unisex toilets
- Multi-faith reflection rooms
- Muslim prayer rooms
- Q Space
- Quiet rooms

To find out more and explore campus' visit:

<https://www.federation.edu.au/students/wellbeing/accessible-and-inclusive-student-spaces/>