

attitude
is everything

ACCESS
STARTS
ONLINE

Venue Access Info Guide

International English Version



**BRITISH
COUNCIL**



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About the Attitude is Everything

Attitude is Everything is a UK-based, disability-led charity that has supported the UK's live music industry since 2000. We have hundreds of Deaf and disabled volunteer mystery shoppers who feedback their experiences from gigs and outdoor events, which we use to inform our guidance.

We have worked with hundreds of venues and festivals across the UK to help them be more accessible for Deaf and disabled people.

We sign up venues and festivals of all sizes to our Charter of Best Practice, helping them to be as inclusive as possible.

About the Access Starts Online

The purpose of the Access Starts Online campaign is to enable venues and festivals to provide comprehensive and clear access information for potential Deaf and disabled customers.

This campaign was launch after research for our 2016 State of Access Report found that 52% of UK venues and festivals surveyed provided poor information or none at all.

To read the State of 2016 Access Report, visit: www.attitudeiseverything.org.uk/soar

This guide is designed to help venues create high quality information for Deaf and disabled audiences.

Where to put your access information

We recommend providing information on a dedicated webpage that is easy to find from the front page of your venue's website.

What to include in your access information

1. Introduction

- 1-2 lines on behalf of the festival to welcome Deaf and disabled customers.

The introduction text is a chance to communicate your venue's ethos when it comes to being inclusive.

2. Contact details

- A named person as a point of contact + their job role i.e. 'Access Officer'
- Email
- Phone
- Postal
- Give estimate of response time

Aim to provide a named person and have that person be responsible for all access-related communications. This greatly reassures customers and assists in providing continuity of customer service if specific access requirements are being discussed. We recommend a dedicated access@ email address rather than generic info@ address where possible. If not able to provide a phone number, inform customers to provide a number for you to ring. A postal address might be useful for sending any access facility booking evidence required. We think customers with access-related queries should be responded to within 5 working days.

3. Download link for all access info

- Provide a link to a downloadable word file.

This is really useful, especially for people who use screen readers because of a vision impairment, as they can download this and not have to navigate back to the access info page.

4. Venue description

- State whether or not there is step-free access to the box office, toilets and performance space(s) from the street.
- If the entrance / performance spaces are not step-free give the number of steps and whether this is up or down.
- If a temporary ramp or alternative entrance is used then describe how this works.

This information is essential to enable potential customers to make informed decisions about buying tickets and planning their attendance. Getting this right can cut down the number of direct customer enquiries ahead of any event.

5. Bookable access facilities

- Free tickets for personal assistants.
 - Describe scheme.

Providing free tickets in order to enable a disabled person to bring a personal assistant / support worker is a form of reasonable adjustment that enables people who require support linked to an impairment or long-term medical condition to attend your venue. It is reasonable for you to request evidence to support a request.

- Access to viewing platforms / areas
 - State if the venue has a viewing platform or area
 - Describe where it is in the venue
 - Describe the seating that is provided for non-wheelchair users + assistants.
 - Provide the distance to the nearest accessible toilet(s)

 - Describe how customers can access to this location i.e. is it bookable?

We recommend if possible allowing a Deaf or disabled customer and personal assistant plus the group of friends they are with access to the viewing platform or area. If this is not possible due to space allowances implement a 1 + 1 system. A stewarded system should be in place to ensure that only Deaf and disabled people who require this access facility can access it.

- Accessible parking (if applicable)
 - Describe any venue-specific accessible parking
 - If there is none, provide information about the nearest accessible parking in the Travel guide section

Having a process in place for how people can apply for the facilities on offer will make this smooth and quick put in place. Ensure everyone knows what the process is and what is on offer.

6. How to apply

- Describe process
- Describe the forms of evidence accepted (if required)

Having a process in place for how people can apply for the facilities on offer will make this smooth and quick put in place. Ensure everyone knows what the process is and what is on offer.

7. Travel guide

- Provide any relevant information regarding:
 - Accessible parking
 - Taxi drop-off for customers
 - Nearest accessible public transport hubs or stops

Provide distance to nearest accessible public parking and provide information about any restrictions. Consider the most accessible drop-off location and public transport stops for your venue and describe route including distances.

8. Arrival guide

- Venue opening times
 - Provide all relevant info including anything relating to daytime opening and standard opening times for gigs, or state if times are gig-specific
- Arriving at the venue
 - Describe what customers should expect upon arrival – who will direct them, who they should approach if they have any questions etc
 - Describe any early entrance options for customers who may request it as part of their access requirements (i.e. to avoid moving through crowds)
- Ticket and access accreditation collection
 - Describe access route from entrance to any box office
 - Describe what customers will need with them in order to collect tickets and access accreditation

Customers can be particularly anxious about arrival, particularly if they have accreditation to collect. Describing the process in advance alleviates this and cuts down on direct customer enquiries.

9. Toilets

- Describe accessible toilet provision
- Describe route and provide distance from any dedicated viewing platform or area to the nearest accessible toilet

We recommend siting viewing platforms and areas in a location that is best served by any accessible toilet facilities. All internal fittings should be checked to ensure that they meet best practice guidance for what is needed to make an accessible toilet in building regulations documentation.

10. Medical and welfare services

- State that you welcome attendees who need to bring medicines, food or drink to manage a medical condition, or medical equipment
- Invite people to contact you if they have any concerns
- Describe any services on site or who to approach in an emergency

Staff should be briefed on the policies and procedures in place. All venues should set up systems to ensure that people can gain access with the necessary medical supplies. It is important that self-management of conditions is not questioned by staff in an inappropriate manner i.e. door staff questioning why someone with Type 1 diabetes wishes to bring a glucose drink into a venue, or refusing entry to someone with an Epi-Pen to manage potential anaphylactic shock.

11. Access to performance

- Describe any services offered – audio enhancement such as hearing loops or infra-red systems, sign language, captioning, audio description, relaxed performances
- If not offered, state that this is the case at the present time.

Engaging with access to the performance means customers with hearing or visual impairments are able to gain the most from your festival.

12. Assistance dogs

- Describe policy + facilities available for dogs

Ensure you make customers who use assistance dogs aware that their animals are welcome to come to into the venue to assist them if needed.

13. Strobe lighting

- Describe festival policy

We urge all festival organisers to implement a strobe-free policy, as the presence of strobing, with or without warnings, poses a significant risk to people prone to strobe-related seizures. At the very least, prior and on-site warnings should be provided.

14. Other info


- Mention any other services or facilities that might be relevant, for example the presence of lowered bars and any respite or sensory spaces.

Next Steps

Schedule a team meeting

- Arrange some dedicated time to consider access and your venue
- Include people responsible for the website, customer service and on-site production
- Use this document as an agenda for discussion

Make a dedicated access info page on your website

- We recommend calling this page 'Access Info' alongside a suitable image such as a version of the internationally recognised wheelchair-user symbol: 
- Make this a standalone webpage rather than a section of a long FAQ

To contact Attitude is Everything, email us via:

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