

# Symbols of Disability

## Group Discussion

Consider the familiar images below.



### Questions:

What do these symbols signify?

What kind of thoughts do they evoke?



# Experiencing Discrimination

Pair / Small Group Discussion

Consider the following questions with your partner or in a small group:

**Was there ever a time that you wanted to use a service that didn't cater for your needs?**

**What did you do?**

**How did you feel?**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



# Access to College

## Case Study

Michael was involved in a road traffic accident a few years ago and as a result suffered very serious spinal injuries. The medical diagnosis was paraplegia and Michael is now a wheelchair user.

In his Leaving Certificate exam Michael attained sufficient points to pursue an engineering course in his local third level college. After he submitted his enrolment form the college informed Michael that they do not have the facilities to accommodate a wheelchair user and therefore will not be in a position to offer him a place on their course.

**After reading the above story, consider the following statements and their implications:**

- a) Michael is unable to attend college because he is disabled and is confined to a wheelchair.
- b) As a wheelchair user Michael is disabled by the fact that the college he wishes to attend does not have wheelchair access.



## Defining Disability

Group discussion / Flipchart discussion 5

Analytically discuss the following definition of the term “disability” with your group.

### Definition 1

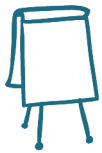
A substantial restriction in the capacity of the person to carry on a profession, business or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment.

### The Disability Act (2005)

#### Questions:

**Do you agree with the definition?**

**Are there negative/positive implications around disability inherent in the definition?**



## Defining Disability

Group discussion / Flipchart discussion 6

Analytically discuss the following definition of the term “disability” with your group.

### Definition 2

The disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by contemporary social and cultural organisations which take little account of people who have impairments, and thus exclude them from mainstream social and cultural activities.

### The National Disability Authority

#### Questions:

**Do you agree with the definition?**

**Are there negative/positive implications around disability inherent in the definition?**



# Bus Driver Refuses Entry

## Case Study

On the radio show Liveline, 9th of Aug 2007, a Monaghan man told listeners how a bus driver had refused to allow his brother, who has a developmental disability, to board his bus to take a trip to Belfast. The driver cited security concerns as his reason for refusing access.

The man was acting as his brother's carer on the day and had planned to accompany him on the journey.

The man further related that he had also raised the matter with management in the bus depot but the driver's decision was upheld.

### Questions:

**Why do you think the bus driver choose not to let the two men on board?**

**What factors may have influenced his decision?**

**Have you encountered or witnessed similar situations?**

**How did you feel?**

**How could you avoid similar scenarios in your work?**



# Job Interview

## Case Study

Stephen is a young man who has a mental impairment. He was employed in a temporary capacity as an assistant administrator with a large distribution company for nine months. Stephen progressed very well in the role and was highly regarded by work colleagues and management in the department.

The position became permanent and a list of suitable candidates was drawn up for interview as per company procedure. The interview panel comprised three department managers who are not known to any of the candidates.

Because of the nature of his impairment Stephen was not competent in the interview situation and had difficulty understanding and responding effectively to the interviewers' questions.

Because he rated poorly at interview Stephen failed to secure the permanent position and subsequently left the company.

### Questions:

**Should the company have dealt differently with Stephen's application?**

**How could the situation have been handled better?**

**Could anybody else have helped e.g. parent, his supervisor?**

**Do fear and power play a role and how?**



## Early Bus Pass

### Case Study

A 94-year old Battle of Britain veteran was ejected from a bus after a driver noticed his OAP travel pass was not valid - for another 40 minutes. The former RAF engineer had wanted to get on the bus at 8.50am so he could get into town for a day trip, but the pensioner's bus pass only offers elderly people discounted bus travel in Lancashire, UK after 9.30am. The driver told the old man he was too early, but when the elderly man said there was nothing on his own bus pass about restriction times, the driver ejected him from the bus.

### Questions:

**What motivated the employees to act as they did?**

**What rules were they following?**

**What consequences might he/she have faced for not complying?**

**How might the employer in each example assess and respond to the outcome?**

**How might each situation have been handled more sympathetically?**

**Have you ever been in a similar situation as an employee / service provider?**

**Have you ever been in a similar situation as a customer?**





## Disco Ban

### Case Study

A 20-year-old woman, who suffers from a bone disease, was denied access to a nightclub on the grounds that her crutches could be potential offensive weapons. The woman, who cannot walk unaided, was told by the security staff she could go in if she handed in the crutches, to be returned when she left.

The manager of the nightclub said the ban was imposed on legal advice after two violent incidents, and that their lawyers had assured them that they would not be infringing any discrimination legislation.

### Questions:

**What motivated the employees to act as they did?**

**What rules were they following?**

**What consequences might he/she have faced for not complying?**

**How might the employer in each example assess and respond to the outcome?**

**How might each situation have been handled more sympathetically?**

**Have you ever been in a similar situation as an employee / service provider?**

**Have you ever been in a similar situation as a customer?**



# Hospital Treatment

## Case Study

A Cork woman, who had to have her leg amputated for vascular reasons, was forced to travel to Dublin for a 6-week-long treatment, even though the same treatment was available in Cork. She was told that if she had lost her leg in a car crash, she could have availed of the treatment in Cork.

The woman had three young children and spending 6 weeks away from her family would cause very significant family upheaval. In the opinion of the senior surgeon the woman would have received the same level of care in Cork as in Dun Laoghaire. The only reasons preventing the woman from being treated near home were administrative.

### Questions:

**What motivated the employees to act as they did?**

**What rules were they following?**

**What consequences might he/she have faced for not complying?**

**How might the employer in each example assess and respond to the outcome?**

**How might each situation have been handled more sympathetically?**

**Have you ever been in a similar situation as an employee / service provider?**

**Have you ever been in a similar situation as a customer?**



## Practices and Procedures

### Pair/ Small Group Exercise

Review and assess general rules in your own organisation as to their practicality, flexibility and accommodation in meeting the diverse needs of all service users.

**Working in pairs, address the following questions in relation to your own work environment:**

Is there a particular rule or practice that is a constant cause of complaint from customers?

---

---

Are there any rules you disagree with? Why?

---

---

What rules in your current position could be adapted or improved in order to be more inclusive?

---

---



Who has the authority currently to change rules and policies?

---

---

Could the authorisation process be more flexible?

---

---

Is there anything that you could do to effect change?

---

---

Can you think of any examples when you have/have not been flexible about a policy when you had the opportunity to help a customer?

---

---



## Evaluating Current Services

Pair / Small Group Exercise

**Review the current provision of services in the organisation in relation to people with disability.**

What kind of services are we already providing?

Have they been successful?

---

---

Do any of them require revising?

---

---

**Identify gaps in the provision of current services.**

Have there already been requests from the public for certain services/access?

---

---

What gaps are we already aware of?

---

---



What new gaps have we discovered during the training?

---

---

What gaps could I personally address?

---

---



# Universal Design in my Workplace

## Pair / Small Group Exercise

**Working in pairs, address the following questions:**

Is there already evidence of Universal Design in your workplace or other public places you have visited (or services you have used)?

---

---

Consider your own working environment. What areas could be improved upon by applying the concept of Universal Design?

Consider all areas, e.g. the customer spaces, offices, canteen, toilets, car park etc.

---


---

Does our communication system cater for all needs?

Consider this from the point of view of the non-literate, non-native speakers of the language, visual impairment, hearing impairment, speech impairment/non-verbal etc.

---

---



Do we have adequate facilities for children that may accompany adults while using our services?

---

---

Are staff adequately trained to deal with the diverse needs of people?

---

---

Do we as an organisation convey a positive attitude in relation to disability?

---

---





# The Universal Design Detective

Creative / Observation

**When you are out and about, pay attention to spaces and services that:**

- are accessible and reflect the principles of Universal Design. How did you find using them?
- would benefit from Universal Design. These can be spaces that restrict access for some potential users, or require separate facilities.

Observe your environment through the eyes of “not normal”. Be on the lookout for other features of Universal Design other than the obvious.



# Architectural Barriers

Creative / Planning

An accessibility audit should identify and address the barriers that exist for people with disabilities within the organisation. With the help of the generic Accessibility Proofing Checklist, create a list of suggestions to remove architectural barriers in your working environment.

## Architectural Barriers:

**Building design, area adjacent to the building, parking areas, shape of room, size of doorways, hallways, etc.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



# Technological Barriers

Creative / Planning

An accessibility audit should identify and address the barriers that exist for people with disabilities within the organisation. With the help of the generic Accessibility Proofing Checklist, create a list of suggestions to remove architectural barriers in your working environment.

## Technological Barriers:

**Computers, photocopiers, fax machines, telephones and switches; inadequate or inappropriate assistive technologies.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## Physical Barriers

Creative / Planning

An accessibility audit should identify and address the barriers that exist for people with disabilities within the organisation. With the help of the generic Accessibility Proofing Checklist, create a list of suggestions to remove architectural barriers in your working environment.

### Physical Barriers:

**Objects added to the environment: doors, windows, lifts and lifting equipment, furniture, workstations, social facilities, bathroom hardware, etc.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



# Communication Barriers

Creative / Planning

An accessibility audit should identify and address the barriers that exist for people with disabilities within the organisation. With the help of the generic Accessibility Proofing Checklist, create a list of suggestions to remove architectural barriers in your working environment.

## Communication Barriers:

**Difficulties receiving information in person or by telephone;  
difficulties interacting with receptionists or other staff;  
difficulties receiving training.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## Information Barriers

Creative / Planning

An accessibility audit should identify and address the barriers that exist for people with disabilities within the organisation. With the help of the generic Accessibility Proofing Checklist, create a list of suggestions to remove architectural barriers in your working environment.

### Information Barriers:

**Inadequate or incomprehensible signage; difficulties reading brochures, forms, manuals, web sites, fax transmissions, equipment labels, computer screens, etc.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## Attitudinal Barriers

Creative / Planning

An accessibility audit should identify and address the barriers that exist for people with disabilities within the organisation. With the help of the generic Accessibility Proofing Checklist, create a list of suggestions to remove architectural barriers in your working environment.

### Attitudinal Barriers:

**Staff who do not know how to communicate with people with disabilities; staff who refuse to provide service; discriminatory behaviours.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



# Creating an Action Plan Blueprint

## Creative / Planning

In pairs or small groups, create your own proposal for an accessibility action plan for your organisation.

### Consider the following points in drawing up the action plan:

- Identify long-term and short-term projects by going through the accessibility auditing document created in the previous exercise
- Identify changes that can be made with little effort/funding
- Identify changes that require longer timescale/budgeting
- Suggest how to include and liaise with the management
- Consider whether contact or consultation with disability groups or other specialists is required
- Suggest a communication plan for informing the organisation staff (and if relevant, the public) about the accessibility project
- Identify roles & areas of responsibility that are to be allocated to staff





# Creating a Project Evaluation Plan

## Creative / Planning

In pairs or small groups, devise a plan to monitor and evaluate the change process on an on-going basis under PMDS criteria. This framework should be directly linked to the objectives set out in the action plan.

**Sample points to be covered:**

### Challenges

- What obstacles have we encountered?
- What is not working and why?
- Have new gaps appeared?
- Do we need to amend our plan?

### Successes

- Have the changes we made been successful?
- How have they made a difference?
- How have they been received by customers and within the organisation?
- What is working well?
- Have we succeeded in implementing services that are accessible for all?



## Meeting Targets

- Are projects being completed on time and within budget? (Refer to Project Evaluation Log)
- Is the action plan reflected in the organisation's policy and practise?

## Responsibilities

- Who will identify areas for future development?
- Who will follow up on future development plans?
- Is the senior management team actively involved?

## Impact

- What impact has the new provision made to our attitudes on disability?
- Have we had feedback from customers or staff?
- Reviewing the action plan
- When and how often is the plan reviewed?
- Who carries out the review?



# Action Against Change

## Case Study

XL Manufacturing Ltd. has been in operation for 25 years producing concrete products for supply to the construction industry. The company has enjoyed significant success in recent years and the workforce has now grown to 100 employees.

The company management is proposing to introduce a new computerised time-keeping and attendance system which requires each employee to electrically sign into the building when they commence and leave work.

There is considerable resistance among the employees to the introduction of the clock-in system and they are refusing to cooperate with its implementation.

The company insists that the change is an absolute necessity to cope with the growing employee numbers and will bring significant efficiencies to the human resource and payroll functions of the company.

The employees are threatening the management with industrial action if the company persists with the new technology.

### Questions:

**What factors might be motivating the employees to resist the introduction of the new system?**

**How might the company have better handled the proposed change?**



# The Basics of Universal Design

## Information sheet

Universal Design promotes an inclusive society by providing simple design solutions that accommodate everybody's needs. Accessible Design, while providing people with disabilities the right to access, does not go far enough because it does not express social integration.


Life expectancy is rising and modern medicine has increased the survival rate of those with significant injuries, illnesses and congenital conditions. Universal Design acknowledges disability, aging and other differences as part of everyday life.

There are strong economic advantages for promoting a Universal Design environment. As people with disabilities have become integrated into general community life, hold jobs and earn money their purchasing power has increased significantly. In the United States, consumers over 65 have the highest discretionary income and the trend is also evidenced in other countries. Over 50% of older people have a recognised disability.

Access barriers that restrict people with disabilities can also adversely affect a wide range of people e.g. people pushing baby buggies, shopping trolleys, large suitcases, luggage, etc.

### **Some features of Universal Design include:**

- No-step entry, including door thresholds level with the floor
- One-storey living
- Wide doorways and hallways
- Extra floor space

- 
- Non-slip surfaces
  - Good lighting throughout
  - Large-print forms for all
  - Websites accessible for users with a variety of disabilities
  - Spaces equipped with induction loops for hearing aid users
  - Using simple English in publications and other communication

## Principles of Universal Design

In 1997, the Center for Universal Design gathered a working group of architects, product designers, engineers and environmental design researchers, who collaborated to define the seven main principles of Universal Design.

### 1. Equitable Use

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

### 2. Flexibility in Use

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

### 3. Simple and Intuitive Use

Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

### 4. Perceptible Information

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.



## **5. Tolerance for Error**

The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

## **6. Low Physical Effort**

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

## **7. Size and Space for Approach and Use**

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

More detailed information and examples of these principles can be found online at:

[http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about\\_ud/udprinciples.htm](http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about_ud/udprinciples.htm)

The Principles of Universal Design Copyright 1997 NC State University, The Center for Universal Design



# Initial Accessibility Audit

## Generic Checklist for Accessibility Proofing


The following are the key questions to consider from the perspective of a disabled person using your premises.

### Entrance and arriving

- Disabled parking near the entrance, including access aisles
- Clear set down area
- Level access or ramp to avoid steps
- Finding the door
- Opening the door
- Location and usability of doorbell/intercom system
- Getting in the door
- Avoiding the leading edge of an open door
- Warning sounds indicating open or closing movement
- Handles and hinge sides in doors clearly marked and visible

### Reception area and hallways

- Easy access from entrance to reception desk
- High counters obstruct communication with a wheelchair user

- 
- Getting through the waiting visitors
  - Room to stop and let others pass
  - Location of public telephones
  - Keeping leaflets and notices accessible to all

## **Way-finding and signage**

- Adequate and appropriate signage throughout the building
- Easily legible typeface, font size and design in signs
- Consistent placing of signage
- Using colour and number codes to distinguish areas
- Signage indicating routes to public transport


## **Moving around and getting upstairs**

- Lift access to all levels
- Easy access to lift
- No need for wheelchair users to use the back door
- Clear markings on start of the stairs, steps and handrails
- Access to public transport

## **Interior design**

- Floor materials (non-slip, colours, visibility)
- Lighting (levels, location, glare and location of control switches)



- 
- Colours and contrast used in interior design
  - Acoustic treatment of spaces

## **Working space and office environment**

- Proper table and chair height
- Consider the style of the chair for back support
- Arm supports – required or obstructive
- The shape of work station (L-shaped or straight desk)
- Avoid overhead lockers and storage
- Enough free space for manoeuvring a wheel chair
- Availability of assistive equipment and technology
- Keep throughways clear of boxes

## **Toilet and hygiene facilities**

- Easily accessible locations, layout and adequate size
- Alarms and fittings (colours, types, location and maintenance)
- Sink/counter height and space underneath
- Operating taps, water temperature and pressure
- Doors (size, door furniture, signage and automation)
- Sanitary disposal



## Emergencies and evacuation

- Visual and auditory emergency alarms
- Clear evacuation routes & signage
- Location of evacuation areas and clear signage
- Special evacuation equipment (such as evacuation chairs)
- Evacuation assistance for persons with disability
- Availability and usability of communication devices
- Emergency and evacuation information in accessible formats


## Technical equipment

- Technical equipment that should be considered for accessibility:
  - information displays
  - public access terminals (ATM's, information kiosks, vending machines)
  - smart cards
  - computer hardware
  - computer application software
  - websites
  - telecom devices
  - multimedia products (DVDs, videotapes, CDs)
  - photocopiers
- What assistive technology is required/already provided?



## Information and communication

- Using Plain English (clear and concise language) in all communications
- All information should be free of stereotypes and discriminatory notions
- Things to consider in printed publications:
  - Using clear (sans-serif) typeface and large font size
  - Ensure adequate contrast between background and text
  - Printing on non-glossy material
  - Clear design
- Providing printed information in alternative formats:
  - Large print
  - Braille
  - Audio
  - Video
  - Electronic formats (CD-Rom/e-mail/PDF/RTF/Word document)
  - Irish Sign Language and other languages
  - Key words, pictures and symbols
- Providing communication support:
  - Translators and interpreters
  - Lipspeakers
  - Note-takers
  - Deafblind interpreters

- 
- Speech-to-text reporters
  - Options for information services
    - Telephone service
    - Text-messaging
    - Video phones
    - Face-to-face information
  - Make efforts to reach diverse target groups
  - Include accessibility information in marketing

## **Staff**

- Identifying & addressing attitudinal barriers amongst staff
- Training to increase awareness and understanding of issues relating to disability
- Training staff to deal with people with disability:
  - welcoming approach
  - face-to-face and telephone communication
  - writing easy-to-read documents
  - non-discriminatory interview practices
  - sign language
  - dealing with service animals
- The language used around disability
- Making sure staff knows what is expected of them

### Progress Logging Forms

The organisation might wish to track the achievements and progress of the accessibility projects. These sample logging forms can be used to record the progress of your team. You can also use them as a starting point and create your own customised tracking logs.

### Sample Action Plan Log

Reference	Project name	Project coordinator	Budget €	Target completion date	Management approval date	Consultation process completion date
<i>2/2010</i>	<i>Automated entrance doors</i>	<i>BG</i>	<i>€20,000</i>	<i>15/8/2010</i>	<i>31/05/2010</i>	<i>25/06/2010</i>

### Sample Project Evaluation Log

Reference	Project name	Final cost	Project completion date	Snagging list completion date	Issues outstanding
<i>2/2010</i>	<i>Automated entrance doors</i>	<i>€22,000</i>	<i>15/8/2010</i>	<i>28/8/2010</i>	<i>Need approval for overspend</i>

### Accessibility Action Plan Log

Reference	Project name	Project coordinator	Budget €	Target completion date	Management approval date	Consultation process completion date

### Project Evaluation Log

Reference	Project name	Final cost	Project completion date	Snagging list completion date	Issues outstanding