

# Accessibility Policy

## Policy aim:

Accessibility refers to delivery of services or the design of environments, products and devices for people with a disability. The aim of this policy is to ensure that appropriate accessibility is in place for all Imperial College Union members.

The policy aims to ensure that disabled members of the Union can reach their full potential, to diversify activities and to reduce the experience of isolation of members with a disability. The Union is committed to ensuring that all members should be given equal opportunities regardless of ability. The policy will provide guidance to what the Union can reasonably ensure.

## Overview

1. Legal Framework
2. Reasonable adjustments
3. Spaces Accessibility
4. Neurodivergent Accessibility

### **1. Legal Framework:**

- 1.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, disability is defined as “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”
- 1.2. The term “substantial effect” should be interpreted as anything that has more than a minor or trivial impact.
- 1.3. “Long term” effects refer to something that has affected someone or is likely to affect someone for at least 12 months.
- 1.4. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on service providers to provide adequate access for disabled people and to make reasonable adjustments to allow them to access all services and resources.

### **2. Reasonable Adjustments**

- 2.1. The Union has the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons in Union spaces or participating in Union activities. ‘Spaces’ refer to both physical and digital settings. All parts of the Union will make reasonable adjustments for accessibility on request, make members aware of the availability of reasonable adjustments, and treat its members’

requests for reasonable adjustments with respect and discretion.

- 2.2. Adjustments will be made such that:
  - They will meaningfully reduce the disadvantage a person faces whilst maintaining relevant standards for all Union members.
  - The adjustments are affordable and practical, assessed in reference to the cost and the benefit, the availability of internal funding and external grants and the resources/time to make the adjustment.
  - The adjustments do not endanger any persons.
- 2.3. Reasonable adjustments will be made to:
  - Physical features that put disabled people at a disadvantage.
  - Provisions or practices that put disabled people at a disadvantage.
  - Digital content hosted by the Union and its constituent parts.
  - Any matter where a disabled person would be put at a disadvantage in comparison to persons who are not disabled.

### **3. Spaces Accessibility:**

- 3.1. The Union is committed to having a fully accessible building so everyone can use Union facilities and attend events and meetings in the building.
- 3.2. Ordinary Meetings of Union Council and sub-committees of Council may only take place in flat-space rooms, and not in tiered lecture theatres.
- 3.3. Bars and facilities as a minimum will be wheelchair accessible.
- 3.4. Physical Union spaces, as bookable by students, must be wheelchair accessible – and this should be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 3.5. Clubs and societies should make reasonable efforts to host activities in accessible spaces, both in the Union and other spaces. These efforts should be communicated through an accessibility statement, particularly when advertised on Union channels such as the 'What's On' page.
- 3.6. The Union shall ensure information about physical accessibility within its spaces is readily available.

### **4. Neurodivergent Accessibility**

- 4.1. The Union understands that 'neurodivergence' refers to persons whose brain functions, learns and processes information differently to others. Neurodivergence includes those who live with Dyslexia, Autism, ADHD, Dyspraxia and other neurological conditions.

- 4.2. All documentation produced by the Constituent Unions, Management Groups, Union Council and its subcommittees, and future working groups, should meet the guidelines for Dyslexia accessibility outlined by the British Dyslexia Association, excluding the need for cream/pastel coloured paper.
- 4.3. Cream/pastel coloured paper meeting the requirements as outlined by the British Dyslexia Association should be available at the Union. For all printed documents for the aforementioned groups, an option to have said documents printed on this paper should be offered.
- 4.4. Efforts should be made to ensure that meeting spaces for these groups meet the accessibility standards set out by the Autistic Self Advocacy Network during booking. As much as possible, meetings should be ensured to have: a detailed agenda, meeting times limited to 2 hours, clearly outlined procedures (including procedures on how meetings can be attended if you cannot be physically present), at least one rest/toilet break in any meeting over one hour long and meetings not held before 10am.
- 4.5. Future developments of the Imperial College Union website should consider how the guidelines on accessible website design outlined by the British Dyslexia Association can be implemented.