

Planning Academic Visits

Academic visits can be an enjoyable and educational experience. However, students may encounter barriers when faced with new environments, unfamiliar travel routes, or changes to their usual study routine. In some cases, students who do not obviously require support while at University may have access requirements when attending off-site visits. Careful planning of academic visits, and checking that they are accessible, helps to ensure that no student is inadvertently excluded from participating.

Here is some guidance about ensuring academic visits and trips are inclusive.

1. Plan all visits and trips at least 4 weeks in advance.

2. Inform your course's Disability Adviser about any scheduled visits and trips.

3. Provide clear access information about the visit to all students. Key information includes:

General information

- Date and location of the trip.
- Cost, and how much money they will need.
- Availability of food and drink.
- What will happen at the trip (e.g. will students be expected to take notes?)
- Timings and breaks. If breaks are flexible, let students know.
- Whether the visit is optional or essential. If it is essential, consideration should be given to how students who may not be able to attend can catch up.
- Who the student can ask for more information.

Information about the location / venue

- Accommodation details.
- Information about toilets (including accessible toilets).
- Information about step-free access.
- You could use an Access Statement Generator to help you: <https://www.disabled.cusu.cam.ac.uk/resources/access-statements/>
- If the venue has a AccessAble page, provide a link to it. <https://www.accessable.co.uk/>
- If pictures are available, share them.
- What is the built environment like? Will there be lots of people?
- If you don't have the necessary information, or it isn't on the venue's website, ask the venue.

Travel information

- Travel details and walking distances.
- How students will travel to the visit (e.g. independently or as a group).
- Meeting points
- Information about walking at the event, and whether seating is provided.
- Parking

4. If you are arranging tickets (e.g. group bookings), ensure that students' support workers also have a ticket.

The student is responsible for:

- Letting their Disability Adviser or relevant tutor know their access requirements for academic visits.

The Course Leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring visits are accessible.
- Providing access information to Disability Adviser and students, 4 weeks in advance.
- Requesting advice from the Disability Adviser where needed.

Course Leaders may delegate this responsibility to the person organising the trip.

The Disability Adviser is responsible for:

- Providing guidance about accessible academic visits.
- Arranging taxis for disabled students.
- Liaising with support workers about visits.

Case study 1

Nick receives an email from his Course Leader about a museum trip several weeks in advance. Going to new places can cause him to feel very anxious and sometimes he has not been able to attend trips arranged at short notice. Nick spends time discussing the itinerary with his Specialist Mentor, and plans strategies to manage his anxieties. Nick records the strategies in his app, Brain in Hand. Whilst he is at the museum, looking at the app helps him to manage his anxiety and he is able to concentrate on the trip as a result.

Case study 2

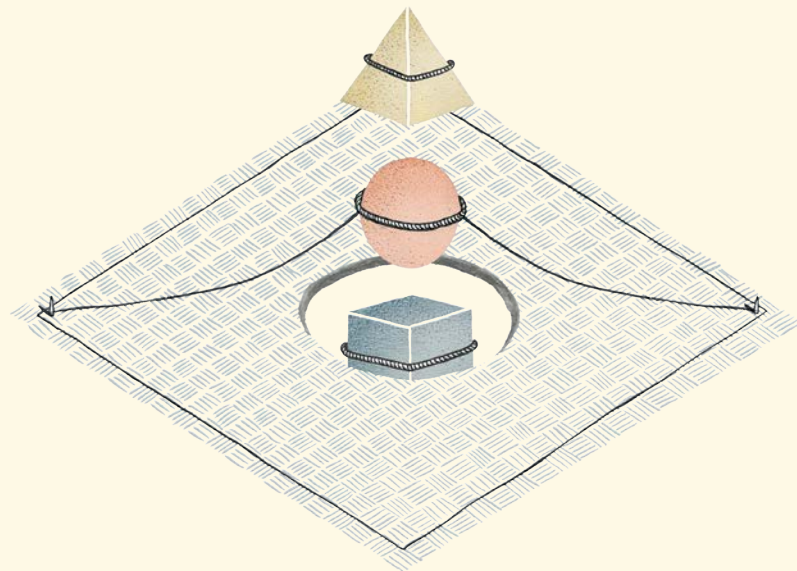
Chika receives an email from her Course Leader about a trip. It explains that students will travel to a museum together on the tube. Public transport isn't accessible for Chika, so she replies to her Course Leader and explains she will join them at the venue. Chika then emails her DSA Needs Assessor and asks them to arrange funding to pay for her taxi between LCC and the museum; this takes ten working days to arrange. Chika visits the museum's accessibility webpage to check where her taxi can drop her off and pick her up again later. Chika also notices that stools can be requested from the museum entrance, which is reassuring in case she needs to sit down while on the museum tour.

Case study 3

Ash receives an email from their tutor about a trip to an exhibition, which says that students will be required to make written notes. Ash needs a laptop in order to write, and it won't be possible to use one at the exhibition as no desks or seating are provided. Ash contacts their Disability Adviser for advice. The Disability Adviser arranges for a digital recorder loan, so that Ash can dictate any notes and transcribe them on their laptop after.

Ensuring academic visits are accessible supports UAL to meet its duty to make anticipatory adjustments under the Equality Act 2010. It also supports inclusion for all students, irrespective of whether they have disclosed that they are disabled or not.

The Disability Service can provide training and consultancy about planning inclusive academic visits. Please contact the Disability Service on 020 7514 6156 or email disability@arts.ac.uk to discuss further.



Disability Service

Inclusive, individual, empowering

disability@arts.ac.uk 020 7514 6156

Search for 'Disability' at arts.ac.uk

Illustration by Augusta Akerman, UAL Graduate

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