Checklist for the Organisation of Accessible Events at HHU (based on a publication of Studentenwerk Deutschland1)

Thank you for your interest in this checklist! It should make it easier for you to **plan, prepare and carry out accessible events at HHU**. By taking the listed points into account, you will enable people with and without disabilities or chronic illnesses to access your event and to actively participate.

When talking about accessibility, the first thing that probably comes to mind is free access to rooms for wheelchair users. But to make events really barrier-free, it is not enough to simply remove structural barriers such as stairs or narrow passages.

Accessibility is not bound to a fixed standard. In many cases, it is rather based on the individual needs of the participants of an event. **In order to adjust your event to your participants individually, it is not necessary to fulfil all the points of this checklist.**

Especially if you are planning an event with fewer barriers for the first time, it is understandable that some things will not run smoothly right away. On the contrary - you have at least taken a first step towards accessibility.

Planning

When planning an event with as few barriers as possible, it is important to focus on the needs of the participants. It is best to ask early on for any assistance or requirements that need to be met so that everyone who wants to take part in your event can do so.
For students with hearing or visual impairments, sign language or written interpreters are an important aid in following the event. Please contact BBSt to find out more about how to offer such assistance for your event.

The following points will help you with the preparation:

- plan a budget for accessibility
- ask about the need for support at the time of the invitation (for a suggested wording see point 3 "Letter of invitation")
- book sign language interpreters or written interpreters in due time if required.
    - Please note: interpreters for 45 minutes or more must always be booked in double occupancy
    - Fee for interpreters approx. 55€/hour plus travel expenses according to the Federal Travel Expenses Act. (Status 2012)
    - Laptops, if necessary an extra beamer as well as an additional

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[1] Deutsches Studentenwerk, Information and Counselling Centre for Studies and Disability (IBS) - Checklist for the Organisation of Accessible Events (2012)

o screen for written interpreters (booths for them to work in would be ideal)
- If necessary, organise special transport services (DRK or Johanniter) from the station to the venue
- It is necessary to contact the speakers personally in order to find out about their possible needs.

Requirements for the Event Location and Event Room

Not only the campus itself, but also the accessibility of the event location plays a role in accessibility. It is therefore important to check whether accessible public transport is available. Information on the accessibility of train stations can be found at www.bahnhof.de. If there is no barrier-free public transport in the city centre, a special transport service (e.g. DRK or Johanniter), mobility helpers, etc. need to be taken into consideration and contact persons have to be announced. The assumption of costs must be clarified in advance. The BBSt can offer you support in this matter.

The following must be considered with regard to the accessibility of the room:

- Stepless access to all rooms used; e.g. event room, entrance foyer, dining room, terrace, speaker's podium, etc.
- check whether individual steps can be bridged by ramps and whether such ramps are available
- Door widths: at least 0.90 m clear width (inside the door frames)
- WC suitable for wheelchairs

The seating, lighting, acoustics and other equipment in the room are also crucial for successful participation in your event.

Therefore, please note the following:

- tables for wheelchair users at seat height
- wider aisles, leave space between the rows of seats
- do not seat all passengers, but leave space for wheelchair users in various areas
- extra seats for sign language interpreters (opposite the participant, table, chairs without armrests)
- check options for darkening and lighting (essential for people with visual and/or hearing impairments)
- check the acoustics of the room
- sufficient power sockets for people with visual impairments who use their laptops for taking notes and reading

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- height adjustable lectern for speakers
- Accommodation
  - Accommodation (hotel, guesthouse) with accessible rooms should be available at the event location and accessible by public transport.
  - The accommodation should meet the following criteria: stepless access, door widths of at least 0.90 m clear width (space in the door frame), lift, barrier-free shower
- consider longer travel times, plan longer breaks
- provide food for people with allergies and intolerances (e.g. vegetarian, vegan, lactose-, fructose- and gluten-free)
- stem glasses and/or straws should be available

Letter of Invitation and Registration Form/ Event Documents

If you use an invitation letter or registration forms for your event, please make sure that this is as barrier-free as possible (see information on creating barrier-free forms). People with visual impairments, for example, need certain requirements to be able to read texts properly.

Here are some tips:

- use a sans serif font, for example Arial, Calibri, Verdana
- pay attention to high-contrast design, i.e. black on white or yellow
- at least 12 point font size
- The registration form should include:
  - requirements for sign language or written interpreters
  - inquiring needs for texts with bigger print or as an online version
  - choice of meals
- Offer the travel description not only in the form of graphic city maps, but also as text.
- If the invitation is sent by e-mail as an attachment, please ensure that the file is accessible.
- The announcement on the Internet should be made via an accessible Internet version.
- If an announcement is made without a registration form, for example on the Internet or in magazines, a note on the registration of disability needs should be included for interested persons with disabilities:

Formatiert: Tabstopps: Nicht an 0,89 cm

"We kindly ask you to inform us of your disability-specific individual needs as early as possible so that we can, for example, schedule sign language or written interpreters or convert written documents.

Information on the Creation of Accessible Forms

Digital accessibility is often unintentionally neglected. Since all students, with or without disabilities, benefit from well-structured and clearly arranged materials, it is worth paying attention to accessibility. Here you will find an example by TU Dortmund with further information on the creation of accessible documents.

Accessibility in digital documents means

- using sans serif fonts, for example Arial, Calibri, Verdana
- paying attention to high-contrast design, i.e. black on white or yellow
- at least 12 point font size
- If required, prepare event documents in large print (at least 14-point font), smaller texts also in Braille.
- Enable the transfer of more extensive documents, for example on a USB stick
- If knowledge of the documents is essential for the event, these must be sent to the participants in advance of the event. Make sure that the files are accessible so that they can be read by the software (so-called screen readers).
- Provide sign language or written interpreters with the documents in time before the event

Implementation of the Event – you're almost there!

You have already taken care of the planning, invitation and consideration of the spatial conditions with regard to barriers. When it comes to the actual implementation of your event, you simply continue in the same way.

The last steps in the realisation of your event:

- Information materials and notices for wheelchair users should not be placed and/or displayed too high.
- Put up signs for the barrier-free toilets.
- Place sign language interpreters clearly visible for deaf participants.
- Reserving places for written interpreters.
- Reserve suitable places for participants with a hearing impairment and inform them of this when registering.

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- Presentation of the contents:
- The speakers should be informed that there are participants with disabilities.
- The speakers must be clearly visible.
- Presentations must have a sans serif font and be high-contrast (see above); if necessary, inform the speakers in advance.
- Use microphones.
- For participants with a visual impairment, texts, pictures, tables etc. must be verbalised in PowerPoint presentations.
- For participants with hearing impairments, texts are to be visualised.
- Breaks are important for all participants, but it should be noted that rest periods are particularly important for people with disabilities or chronic illnesses and should be longer.

Documentation of the Event

It is very helpful if you make your event accessible to students who for various reasons cannot attend your event on site. By making lectures, PowerPoint presentations and other materials available online, you enable these students to participate from home. In view of the current corona pandemic, this approach is likely to remain relevant in the future.

Please note:

- Accessibility of documents, if they are published on the internet pages (see Information on the creation of accessible documents)
- Practical tips for designing accessible PDF documents