Understanding Meeting Accessibility

Accessible meetings allow people to receive information, contribute and take part without unnecessary barriers. Different people may need different formats, environments or ways to participate.

Four areas of meeting accessibility

Communication

Clear language, captions, written information and alternatives to speaking aloud.

Sensory

Consider noise, lighting, visual distractions, breaks and quiet spaces.

Physical

Accessible rooms, seating, equipment and remote attendance options.

Cognitive

Agendas in advance, processing time, clear structure and manageable information.

What helps me feel included and able to participate in meetings?

What barriers have I experienced during workplace meetings?

Gentle reminder

Accessibility is a workplace responsibility, not something an employee should have to manage alone.

Preparing for an Accessible Meeting

Preparation can make meetings more predictable and manageable. It is reasonable to ask for information and arrangements that allow you to participate meaningfully.

My meeting preparation checklist

- [ ] I know the purpose of the meeting.
- [ ] I have received an agenda or key questions in advance.
- [ ] I know who will attend and how long it may last.
- [ ] I have the materials in an accessible format.
- [ ] I know how to request breaks or alternative ways to contribute.

What information would help me prepare?

Are there any adjustments I would like to request before the meeting?

What would help me feel more comfortable taking part?

Gentle reminder

You can ask for meeting details or adjustments in advance. You do not need to wait until a difficulty occurs.

Communicating My Accessibility Needs

You can describe what would help you participate without sharing more personal or medical information than you choose. A request can focus on the barrier and the practical change needed.

An example of a clear request

A possible starting point

“To participate fully, it would help me to receive the agenda in advance and have key decisions confirmed in writing afterwards. Could we arrange this for future meetings?”

Disability-related reasonable adjustments are not simply optional preferences. In some circumstances, employers have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments.

What would I like others to understand about my meeting needs?

Which changes or adjustments would make the biggest difference?

How would I prefer to communicate my request?

Gentle reminder

Requests may be made in writing, through a manager or HR, or with support from a representative.

Participating During Meetings

Meaningful participation does not have to look the same for everyone. Accessible meetings make room for different communication styles, processing needs and ways of contributing.

Supportive approaches during a meeting

Contributing

Speak, type, write, use chat or send comments after the meeting when appropriate.

Processing

Ask for clarification, pauses, written summaries or additional thinking time.

Sensory needs

Adjust lighting or sound, use agreed aids, take breaks or join remotely.

Accessing support

Use agreed adjustments, accessible materials or assistance during discussions.

What helps me follow and understand meeting discussions?

How do I prefer to contribute ideas, questions or feedback?

What could I ask for if I become overwhelmed or lose track?

Gentle reminder

You can ask for clarification or a pause. Needing a different way to participate is not a failure.

After the Meeting

Accessible follow-up can be just as important as the meeting itself. Written decisions, clear actions and time to process information can help prevent confusion and reduce pressure.

My meeting follow-up record

Meeting date and purpose

Important information or decisions

Actions I need to take and any deadlines

Questions or clarification I still need

Adjustments that helped, or changes needed next time

Gentle reminder

It is okay to request a written summary, clarification or time to review information after a meeting.

My Accessible Meetings Plan

Use this page to bring together what works for you. You may keep it private, use it to prepare requests or share selected parts with someone supporting your workplace accessibility.

Before meetings: what helps me prepare?

Communication: how do I prefer to receive and share information?

Environment: what sensory or physical adjustments help?

During meetings: what supports my participation?

Afterwards: what follow-up information or time do I need?

Support requests: who can help arrange adjustments?

Gentle reminder

Accessible meetings are a shared responsibility. Your needs deserve to be recognised and respected.