

Accessibility Principles

11th August 2020

Report from Student with Disabilities Officer, VP Welfare and VP Societies and Media

Purpose of Report

This paper is for approval.

This paper is public.

Recommendations

That the Committee approve the following:

- 1. Lancaster University Students' Union will adopt the Social Model of Disability and adhere to the principles outlined in 2.1.**
- 2. The Student with Disabilities PTO, the VP Welfare and the relevant staff should be responsible for ensuring the creation of accessibility training for JCRs and student groups. (3.1)**
- 3. For large-scale group events run by the SU, a quiet secondary space should be provided. (3.2)**
- 4. Social media channels run by or affiliated with the Students' Union should be made accessible wherever possible. (2.1.8, 3.3)**
- 5. Accessibility requirements should be asked for and followed in relevant student groups. (3.4)**

Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Lancaster University Students' Union should be committed to ensuring that it is accessible to all students, including students with disabilities.
- 1.2. The long-term goal and intention of this policy is to state clear accessibility principles that the Lancaster University Students' Union should follow. We will work proactively to ensure that students with disabilities, as well as students facing accessibility issues for

other reasons, are effectively supported to achieve their study aims and access Students' Union activities, in line with all other students.

- 1.3. Refer to the following documentation in conjunction with this document for further reading:

1.3.1. Equality Act 2010

1.3.2. Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018

- 1.4. Definitions:

- Disability: Any long-term condition which has had a significant impact on an individual's life, including physical disabilities, specific learning difficulties, mental health difficulties and/or neurodiversity.
- Accessibility: Making materials, support and services usable by everyone regardless of disabilities or other circumstances that impact on an individual's ability to take part in events.
- Social Model of Disability: people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment or difference. Barriers can be physical, like buildings not having accessible toilets. Or they can be caused by people's attitudes to difference, like assuming disabled people can't do certain things.

2. Principles

- 2.1. Lancaster University Students' Union will adhere to the following principles:

1. Adopt the Social Model of Disability in proactively identifying and removing, or minimising, barriers to effective study and other activities over which we have a degree of control.
2. Be receptive to students with accessibility needs and work in partnership with them in the design, development and evaluation of accessible resources and services.
3. Ensure the involvement of the Students with Disabilities PTO, as well as students with disabilities, in the maintenance of this paper.
4. Maintain an inclusive, supportive, positive and proactive culture in which each student is treated as an individual with a unique combination of needs, without placing undue emphasis on the conditions from which these needs arise.
5. Ensure that we do not discriminate unlawfully against, or treat unfairly, any students or enquirers based on their accessibility needs.
6. Provide appropriate, effective and accessible training, guidance and support for all staff. Ensure that staff engage with diversity training that emphasises the need for accessibility.
7. Provide appropriate channels of communication for feedback about accessibility.

8. Aim for the website and any communications to not only be compliant with, but exceed the requirements set by the Accessibility Regulations 2018 and Equality Act 2010.
9. Make every effort to ensure that accessibility provisions are put in place in a timely and appropriate manner, where possible before these are encountered. Ensure that the Union is proactive in these provisions.
10. Ensure wherever possible that all physical and digital spaces used by the Students' Union with which members of the Union can reasonably be expected to engage, including those from third-party providers, are fully accessible for students.
11. Ensure that the Union encourages Lancaster University to follow similar accessibility standards.
12. Ensure that the Union is committed to providing training on accessibility for affiliated student groups.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. Training should be created for affiliated student groups on how to make social media and events accessible. The Students with Disabilities PTO, the VP Welfare, and the relevant staff should be responsible for ensuring the creation of this.
- 3.2. Large-scale group events affiliated with the Union should provide a secondary quiet space. This should include AGMs and hustings. We strongly recommend that this is also done at Extravs.
- 3.3. Lancaster University Students' Union will – unless impractical – use image descriptions, alt text and captions on videos for groups within and associated with the Students' Union.
- 3.4. Members of student groups – such as the Academic Representatives and Officer candidates – will be asked about their accessibility requirements, which should then be followed.
- 3.5. The Students with Disabilities Officer will create how-to guides on making social media accessible, which should then be distributed to the relevant student groups.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1. This paper has been created to establish accessibility principles that the Students' Union should follow, due to the lack of similar material. The Executive Committee is being asked to debate, refine and approve this paper, and then to follow these principles to the best of their ability, setting a positive example.

LGBT+ OFFICER COMMENTS

[Officer Comments Here]

BME OFFICER COMMENTS

[Officer Comments Here]

SWD OFFICER COMMENTS

[Officer Comments Here]

MATURE STUDENTS' OFFICER COMMENTS

[Officer Comments Here]

INTERNATIONAL OFFICER COMMENTS

[Officer Comments Here]

WOMENS'+ OFFICER COMMENTS

[Officer Comments Here]

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