

# Guidance

Implementation Date:

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SOUTH YORKSHIRE

**Issued by:** Kathy Anderson, Head of Diversity and Inclusion

## Inclusive Communications & Event Planning

In South Yorkshire Probation (SYP), diversity and inclusion are integral to our business. We are committed to, and striving to achieve, diversity and inclusion good practice in all areas of employment and every interaction with our service users, be they offenders or victims.

In order to comply with legislation and build a position as leaders in the field of diversity we must continue to embed an inclusive approach to all our activities. This includes the design and delivery of all our communication exercises and planning of events and meetings for all our staff and service users.

This document has been developed to complement;

- **SYP Single Equality Scheme,**
- **Diversity & Working with Offenders Practice Guidance,**
- **Disability & Working with Offenders Practice Guidance,**
- **Religious Observance and Working with Offenders Practice Guidance,**

It should prompt your thinking about diversity and inclusion in relation to planning, developing and delivering any communication or event. It will point you in the direction of the questions and issues you need to consider.

Prior to the event and at every stage of the communication process you will need to identify the likely demographic profile of your target audience – gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, age, sensory impairments, location, access to technology and different media formats, etc.

### **DESIGN – WHAT DO YOU WANT TO COMMUNICATE**

- Consider what points you are making and how these will be received by different groups.
- Consider some of the different ways you might be able to engage people e.g. younger v older people, males v females, victims v offenders v staff, etc.

- Consider the case studies, examples and imagery you might use – are they based on stereotypes and prejudices, might they prove insensitive, exclusionary or discriminatory to some groups.
- If working with an external provider ensure they have a copy of the four documents listed above plus this guide. They must be able to demonstrate their commitment and understanding to diversity and inclusion in their own employment and business practices.

## **DELIVERY – HOW YOU WANT TO DELIVER THE COMMUNICATION**

- Consider the need to provide written documentation in alternative **community languages** such as Urdu, Spanish, Welsh, etc.
- Consider the needs of people with **visual, hearing and learning impairments**. What alternative formats are you able to provide such as audio tapes, Braille, large print, British Sign Language Interpreters/video, etc?
- Consider using the Readability Function in Microsoft Word – Tools} Options} Spelling & Grammar} Show Readability Statistics & Select Grammar & Style in Writing style – once you complete a document check the spelling and the readability stats will appear once the spell check is complete.
- Use **Plain English** in your written communication;
  - Use a sans serif typeface – **Arial** for instance.
  - Use **font size** 10 minimum, **12** preferably or 14 for someone with a visual impairment.
  - Use only one or two typefaces when you design your document.
  - Use bold for **emphasis**.
  - Avoid using all upper-case letters and underlining.
  - **Don't** use *italics* for long text passages.
  - Always use captions with illustrations.
  - If a heading carries over into a second line, try to break it by sense.
  - **Don't justify** text.
  - Use **white space** graphically to invite your reader into the document.
  - Make sure you use a **good tonal contrast** between the type and the background.

## **Notes on Justified Text –**

With a left alignment, such as in this paragraph, where the text is evenly aligned at the left margin, the spacing between words is the same throughout the document. This is also true of a ranged right alignment.

With justification, to stretch each line out to the same length, the spacing between words varies from line to line — as in this paragraph. To avoid excessively wide word spacing, word processors may also hyphenate words at the ends of lines.

Use ranged left body text for smoother and easier reading. Justified text may look neater, but it is more difficult to read. Avoid splitting a word in two with hyphenation – it is more difficult to read words split over two lines.

- Wherever possible, make sure that all forms of communication make it clear that **alternative formats are available** if required.
- Make sure that communication exercises take place in a **timely fashion** so that those with additional communication needs can still access the information in a timeframe that allows them to respond appropriately.
- Where possible ensure communications are 'proofed' by a diverse range of people who will be able to advise on the appropriateness of the format for differing audiences.

## **DESIGN - EVENT PLANNING INC. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**

- As with Communications Design above plus,
- Consider your options concerning the inclusion of either stand-alone or an integrated approach to including specific diversity related materials. This is often best accomplished by using **inclusive imagery, examples and case studies** often referred to as the golden thread (weaving diversity throughout the body of the event so that it is naturally there and not included as a separate section).
- How might you **safeguard the emotional security** of participants who might feel isolated or vulnerable in some discussions, or presenters who might not feel competent in dealing with certain diversity related discussions?
- If working with an external provider or consultant please ensure they have copies of the four documents listed above plus this guide. They must be able to demonstrate their commitment and understanding to diversity and inclusion in their own employment and business practices.
- Ensure **breaks and rest periods** are built into events especially when using Interpreters who are required to have formal breaks at regular periods. When booking Interpreters be mindful of the need to double up with larger and longer events.
- When planning dates check the **multi-faith calendar** to avoid major cultural festivals and events, be mindful of the make up of your participants in offering refreshments.
- Ensure venues are accessible and do not suggest any **cultural/community bias**.

## DELIVERY

- As with Communications Delivery above plus,
- Ensure both the marketing/notification of events and booking processes allow for and encourage participants to **identify any access, communication or dietary requirements**. Once identified ensure the venue, caterers and presenters are given plenty of notification to enable them to meet the needs identified.
- Consider **alternatives to classroom-based training** that can often be problematic for both part time staff and those working irregular patterns because of child or elder care responsibilities. If this is the only way to deliver the event consider flexible delivery times to allow access for flexible workers.
- Give consideration to the **different learning styles** of people as well as the communication issues that might be inherent for people with visual, hearing and learning impairments. What alternative formats are you able to provide such as online programmes, audio tapes, Braille, large print, BSL Interpreters, etc? (See guidance on the intranet on Learning Styles).

## EVALUATION

- Consider how you might capture monitoring data about the make up of participants on your event. Are they representative of your target group or do some sub groups not access your event?
- Consider how you might analyse the respective successes or failures of different groups. Do certain groups find it harder to engage with your event?
- How might you use this analysis and feedback to review the design and delivery of your event in the future?

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