

Protocols for ensuring accessibility in meetings and presentations.

1. **Speak so you can be heard** – and understood – do your best to speak with sufficient clarity and volume. Keep your face visible so listeners can use lip shape and facial expressions to help them follow what is said. For online events use the speaker spotlight setting so anyone speaking will become visible to the audience, make sure speakers can be seen on the screen clearly, avoid distracting backgrounds.
2. **Make use of equipment** – use microphones and loop systems for in-person activities.
For online video platforms use Live Transcription which will provide captions automatically for participants. This can be disabled for those who do not require it or find it distracting, it is advisable to allow a few minutes at the start of your presentation to explain this to participants. The other feature that will assist members with hearing loss is the speaker spotlight which when set will provide a full screen view of the speaker.
3. **Think about the setting or venue** – consider background noises, lighting or poor acoustics in venues when meeting in person. For on-line platforms make sure everyone is on mute once the discussion/presentation commences. Maintain plain backgrounds and good lighting on speakers faces so lip movements can be observed by those with hearing loss.
4. **Set the ground rules** – If taking questions or comments from participants or where multiple speakers are involved ensure a clear process is explained at the start and followed for raising questions or speaking in turn. In many ways online platforms are easier than in-person situations for ensuring only one person speaks at a time. Agree in advance someone to monitor chat and 'raised hand' to alert presenter at appropriate times. Using chat to display and take questions is useful for everybody, alternatively consider placing Q&As in a document on screenshare (for better visibility).

5. **Ensure visuals and written materials are accessible** using recommended font, font size, amount of text, colour and brightness contrast on each slide (<https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice/diversity-and-inclusion/1029-readability>). Provide hard or digital copies of handouts for members who notify you in advance of sight or hearing loss and on request (<https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice/diversity-and-inclusion/811-notes-for-speakers>). Organisers of virtual events need to remind their speakers to talk through their slides and powerpoints providing an oral explanation of the content for any participants with sight loss.