UNIVERSITY OF
WEST LONDON
The Career University

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Checklist for People with Disabilities in Esports and Gaming

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How to use this checklist

Self-Assessment: Go through each item and mark its status (Yes / No / N/A).
Prioritisation: Identify areas where your organisation/institution needs the most improvement.
Action planning: For each "N" (No), outline specific steps, assign responsibility, and set.

Introduction

As the esports and gaming industry continues to grow and diversify, people with disabilities must not be left behind. Inclusive and accessible environments are not only a moral and legal responsibility, but they are also essential to building vibrant, innovative, and representative gaming communities. This checklist is designed to support organisations, institutions, and individuals in making their environments more inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities, whether as players, coaches, content creators, analysts, or fans.

Developed through panel discussions and focus groups involving educators and industry professionals, this checklist reflects real-world insights and lived experiences. It forms part of the University of West London's Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) activity, promoting collaboration between academia, industry, and community to advance accessibility and equity in esports and gaming.

This Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Checklist was developed as part of the Knowledge Exchange Initiative led by:

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In collaboration with:

Awareness and Education

To build foundational understanding and empathy within the organisation/institution.

DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING

Provide basic training on various types of disabilities (physical, sensory, cognitive, neurodivergent, mental health) and their impact.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Identify free/low-cost online resources (eg ADA, local disability organisations).		
Schedule short, mandatory sessions for staff, coaches, and key volunteers.		
Include personal stories/ perspectives where appropriate (with consent).		

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE GUIDE

Educate on person-first language and avoid outdated or offensive terms.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Create a simple one-page guide.		
Share it widely and encourage its use in all communications (verbal, written, social media).		

NEURODIVERSITY AND MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

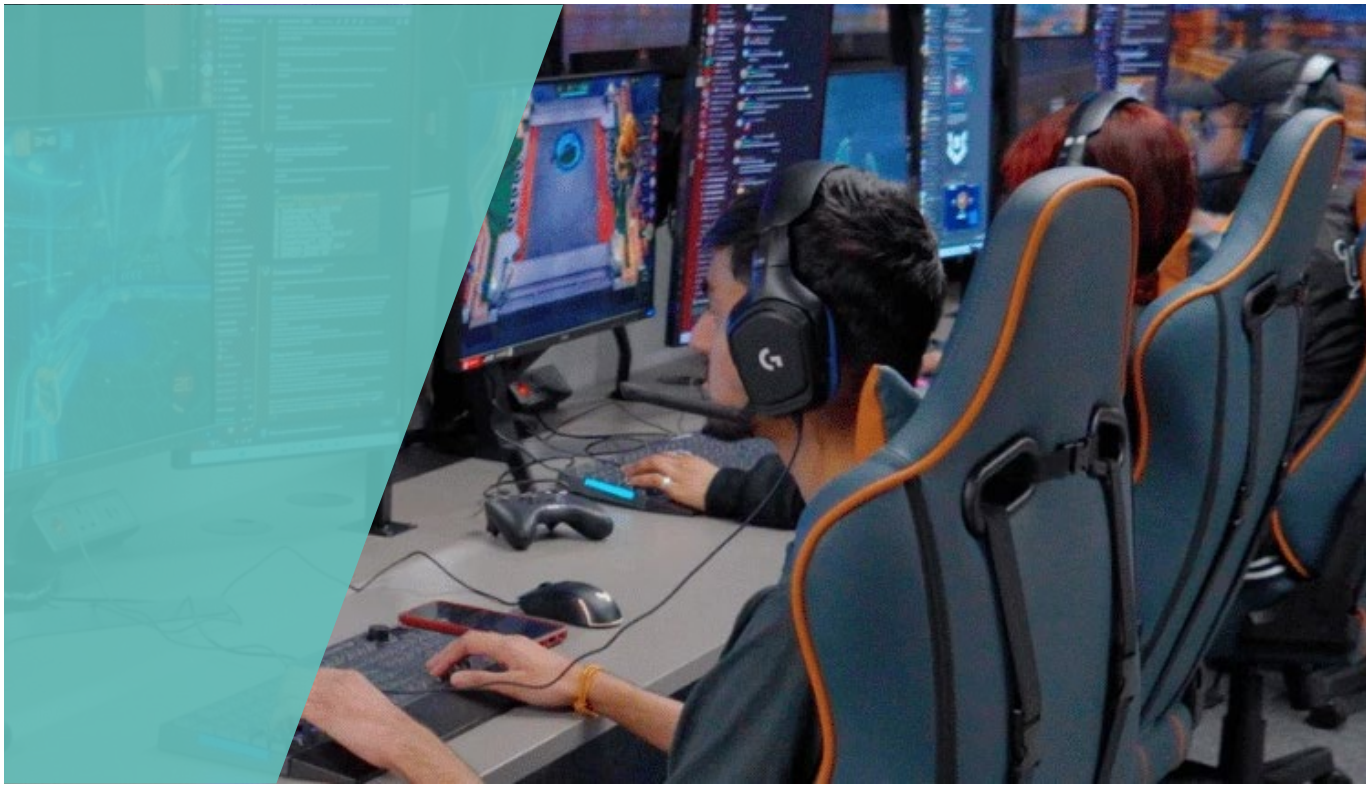
Understand neurodiversity (eg ADHD, autism) and common mental health challenges in competitive environments.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Provide resources on sensory sensitivities, communication styles, and stress management.		
Emphasise the importance of a supportive, low-pressure environment.		

ACCESSIBILITY BASICS

Introduce fundamental concepts of digital and physical accessibility.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Explain what "accessible" means in practice (eg alt text, captions, ramp access).		
Highlight the "why" behind accessibility – it benefits everyone.		



Policy and Commitment

To formalise inclusion efforts and demonstrate organisational commitment.

PUBLIC EDI STATEMENT

A clear, public statement committing to equity, diversity and inclusion for people with disabilities.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Post on website, social media, and in relevant materials.		
Highlight the "why" behind accessibility – it benefits everyone. Ensure it is easily discoverable.		

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Explicitly include disability as a protected characteristic in all non-discrimination policies.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Review existing policies and update as needed.		
Ensure all staff/students are aware of discrimination reporting mechanisms.		

ACCOMMODATION REQUEST PROCESS

Establish a clear, confidential, and accessible process for requesting accommodations.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Designate a specific point person (eg EDI lead, student services, HR).		

FEEDBACK AND GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

Create an accessible way for individuals to provide feedback or raise concerns about inclusion.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Offer multiple channels (email, anonymous form, direct conversation).		
Ensure a timely and respectful response process.		

Programme and Competition Design

To ensure esports programs and competitions are inherently inclusive and adaptable.

FLEXIBLE PARTICIPATION OPTIONS

Offer various ways to participate beyond competitive play (eg coaching, content creation, team management, analysis).

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Promote these roles alongside competitive opportunities.		
Highlight skills transferable to these roles.		

ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE

Consider and, where possible, provide or facilitate access to adaptive controllers, peripherals, and software.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Research common adaptive tech (eg Xbox Adaptive Controller, specialised mice/keyboards, eye-tracking).		
Partner with local disability organisations or assistive tech providers.		
Budget for or seek grants for adaptive equipment.		

GAME SELECTION AND ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES

Prioritise games with built-in accessibility options.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Research games with remappable controls, colourblind modes, adjustable UI, text-to-speech, speech-to-text, difficulty modifiers.		
Educate players/coaches on how to utilise these features.		

RULES AND FORMAT ADAPTABILITY

Be open to modifying rules or formats to accommodate specific needs without compromising competitive integrity.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Extended break times, specific seating arrangements, use of assistive tech during play (if not providing unfair advantage).		
Consult with the individual and disability experts when making modifications.		

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY

Ensure all programme information is accessible.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Use clear, concise language.		
Provide information in multiple formats (eg large print, digital text, audio descriptions for videos).		
Ensure website/platform is WCAG compliant (or working towards it).		

SENSORY-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS

Consider sensory needs for events and practice spaces.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Offer quiet zones or break areas.		
Control lighting and sound levels where possible.		
Avoid strong scents.		

Physical and Digital Environment Accessibility

To ensure all spaces and platforms are physically and digitally accessible.

VENUE/FACILITY ACCESSIBILITY

Ensure physical spaces meet accessibility standards.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Ramps, elevators, accessible restrooms, wide doorways.		
Clear pathways, accessible seating/workstations.		
Adequate lighting.		

ONLINE PLATFORM ACCESSIBILITY

Ensure websites, communication platforms (Discord, Teams), and streaming platforms are accessible.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Use alt text for images, captions for videos.		
Ensure keyboard navigation is possible.		
Check for screen reader compatibility.		
Provide clear instructions for joining/participating online.		

COMMUNICATION ACCESS

Provide communication support as needed.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Designate a specific point person (eg EDI lead, student services, HR).		

Recruitment and Outreach

To actively encourage and support the participation of people with disabilities.

INCLUSIVE MARKETING AND IMAGERY

Use diverse imagery that includes people with disabilities in promotional materials.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Showcase adaptive equipment and diverse body types.		
Avoid tokenism; ensure representation is authentic.		

TARGETED OUTREACH

Partner with disability organisations, special education departments, and community groups.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Attend disability-focused events.		
Share information directly with relevant networks.		

ACCESSIBLE REGISTRATION AND APPLICATION

Ensure all registration forms and application processes are accessible.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Online forms should be screen-reader friendly.		
Offer alternative formats (eg phone registration, paper forms).		

SCHOLARSHIP/FINANCIAL AID (EDUCATION SECTOR)

Explore and promote scholarships/financial aid specifically for esports students with disabilities.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Work with financial aid offices to identify opportunities.		
Highlight these in recruitment materials.		

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

To ensure ongoing commitment and adaptation based on experience and feedback.

REGULAR REVIEW AND AUDIT

Periodically review the checklist and organisational practices for compliance and effectiveness.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Schedule annual or bi-annual reviews.		
Involve individuals with disabilities in the review process.		

DATA COLLECTION

If collecting demographic data, do so ethically and with consent, to understand representation.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Ensure anonymity & data privacy.		
Use data to identify gaps and inform strategies, not to single out individuals.		

PARTNERSHIPS AND CONSULTATION

Maintain relationships with disability advocates, organisations, and experts.

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Seek external advice and consultation when needed.		
Stay informed about best practices and emerging technologies.		

CELEBRATE SUCCESSES AND SHARE STORIES

Highlight positive examples of inclusion and success stories (with consent).

Actionable Steps	Status (Yes/No/N/A)	Notes
Share on social media, newsletters, and at events.		
Inspire others and demonstrate commitment.		

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Disclaimer

This checklist is provided as a practical resource to help organisations, institutions, and individuals improve accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities in esports and gaming. It is not intended to serve as legal advice or to replace consultation with qualified professionals. The content has been informed by focus groups, panel discussions, and expert input, and reflects current best practices at the time of publication. However, users should tailor the checklist to their specific context and ensure alignment with relevant local, national, and international legislation and standards.

While the University of West London and its collaborators have made every effort to ensure the accuracy and usefulness of the information, no responsibility is accepted for any loss or liability arising from the use of this document.

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