

DISABILITY

What is disability?

- A disability is legally defined as any long-term impairment — mental or physical — which substantially affects your ability to carry out normal daily activities.
- Can you always tell that someone is disabled?
 - Many disabilities are **'invisible' conditions** and you would not necessarily be able to see that the person is disabled. The condition also does not need to be diagnosed, just the symptoms are enough to count as an impairment. The person does not need to describe themselves as 'disabled' to still 'count' and get support.
- How might disabled people describe themselves?
 - Disabled person / person with a disability
 - Having a disability / impairment / long-term health condition / chronic illness / condition / illness
 - Hearing impaired / deaf / Deaf (capital d Deaf)
- Key point to come out of discussion: The most important thing is not to assume but follow people's own lead on how they want to be described. E.g. especially in the US, phrases like 'differently abled' are often used, but lots of people would much rather you just called them 'disabled' — it's always best to ask first!

Why is it so important to make spaces accessible? Why does this fall under 'respect'?

- If you have time, a helpful way into this discussion is to ask:
 - What is it that prevents disabled people from accessing things in our society - what actually 'disables' them?
 - This can be tricky to get people's head around if it's their first discussion of it. You could start by bringing up these examples:
 - Someone who uses a wheelchair wants to go to an event, but there is no step free access, so they can't go. What stops them attending? Is it the fact that they can't walk, or is it the built environment which is inaccessible to them?
 - Someone who is blind gets into a lift, but none of the buttons have braille, and there is no audio announcing what floor the lift is on. What makes the lift unusable? The fact that the person can't see, or the lack of accessible functions in the lift?
 - Lots of disabled people argue that we should not view curing people's conditions as the 'solution' to disability — in reality, it is often inaccessible environments that 'disable' people. This is why it's important to plan and organise society in a way that includes disabled people.

Whose responsibility is it to make spaces accessible?

- **As a college community, we have a collective responsibility to make spaces accessible — it's not the responsibility of disabled people themselves.** Ensuring that all members of our community are welcomed, included and respected is very important at Christ's.

REFLECTION POINT

What negative assumptions are made about disability and how can we avoid them?

RESOURCES

- **Resources in college**
 - Porter's Lodge (01223 334900)
 - College Nurse
 - Tutor/Senior Tutor
 - Male/Female Welfare Officers
 - BAME Officer
 - LGBT+ Officer
- **Resources in the university**
 - [Student Unions' Advice Service \(SUAS\)](#)
 - Nightline - open between 7am and 7am, 01222374444
 - [University Counselling Service \(UCS\)](#)
 - Sexual Assault and Harassment Advisor (SAHA), Amy O'Leary (more info on handout)
 - Office for Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals (OSCCA)
 - [CUSU BME Campaign](#)
 - [FLY Cambridge](#)
 - [FUSE Cambridge](#)
 - [Cambridge ACS](#)
 - [third space](#)
 - [King's Traces of Empire](#)
- **In Cambridge**
 - Your GP (incoming Fresher's need to register)
 - Addenbrooke's A&E
 - Lime Tree Clinic
 - Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre (women only)
 - Broken Rainbow (LGBT+ only)
 - Samaritans

BBC iplayer:

- Windrush Scandal
 - Sitting in Limbo 2020: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p08g29ff/sitting-in-limbo>
- Murder of Anthony Walker
 - Anthony 2020: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000lb9c/anthony>

Books:

- **White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism** by Robin DiAngelo
- **Taking up Space** by Chelsea Kwakye and Ore Ogunbiyi
- **Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race** - by Reni Eddo-Lodge 2018
- **Natives: Race and Class in the Ruins of Empire** - by Akala 2019
- **How to Be an Antiracist** - by Ibram X. Kendi 2019
- **Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India** by Shashi Tharoor 2017
- **The Cross and The Lynching Tree** - by James H Cone 2013