

Security, Border Force and Customs Officers

Train the Trainer
Aviation Modules



Security, Border Force and Customs Officers

Security, Border Force and Customs Officers working in airports will need a basic understanding of their role in relation to disabled people and people with reduced mobility (PRMs).

.....

We suggest giving short verbal briefings to staff about what disability is and what challenges disabled people face, drawing on material from the core modules **What is Disability?**, **Customer Service Face to Face** and **Inclusive Communication**, and the aviation modules **Rights and Duties** and **Understanding Travel Challenges**. If you can, show or share the short animated videos, which carry memorable messages about supporting disabled passengers.

.....

It will be important to explore how staff can balance their particular role with supporting disabled passengers to have a travel experience that is safe, accessible and dignified.

We recommend using practical, experiential exercises where this is likely to be useful. For example, encourage delegates to think about the layout of airports and the importance of avoiding obstacles and trip hazards to enable access by people using wheelchairs or with a visual impairment.

The material in this document is designed to give you ideas about how to brief security, Border Force and Customs Officers in a relevant way.

Learning Objectives

1

Understanding the practical implications of supporting disabled passengers and PRMs

2

Developing empathy and understanding for disabled passengers and PRMs

What to Cover

Make sure that security staff understand, as relevant to their role:

- What disability is — the breadth of the term and that some impairments are immediately visible but many aren't
- The different barriers that disabled passengers face
- What the law says
- How they can offer practical support
- How best to communicate with disabled passengers
- Their role and responsibilities

Key Messages

Around 1 in 5 people may have problems when travelling linked to disability or health.

.....
This is more likely the older we get.

.....
This might be because the environment — airports, shops, cafes, walkways, toilets — create problems.

.....
Security, customs and other similar policies and practices can make people feel anxious.

For example:

- The direct eye contact required at passport control could be intimidating for people with autism-spectrum conditions or anxiety conditions.
- Security procedures, such as taking off shoes and belts, can be distressing for disabled passengers, for example those with painful conditions such as arthritis. People who have prostheses or joint replacements may set off security alarms and this may make them anxious.
- People with heart and breathing issues may become breathless if they have to stand for long periods.
- People with learning disabilities, autism-spectrum conditions or dementia may become particularly anxious or distressed.
- People with hearing or visual impairments may be anxious about understanding and complying with instructions.

Remember that you can treat people differently, and sometimes the law says you must do so, to treat them fairly.

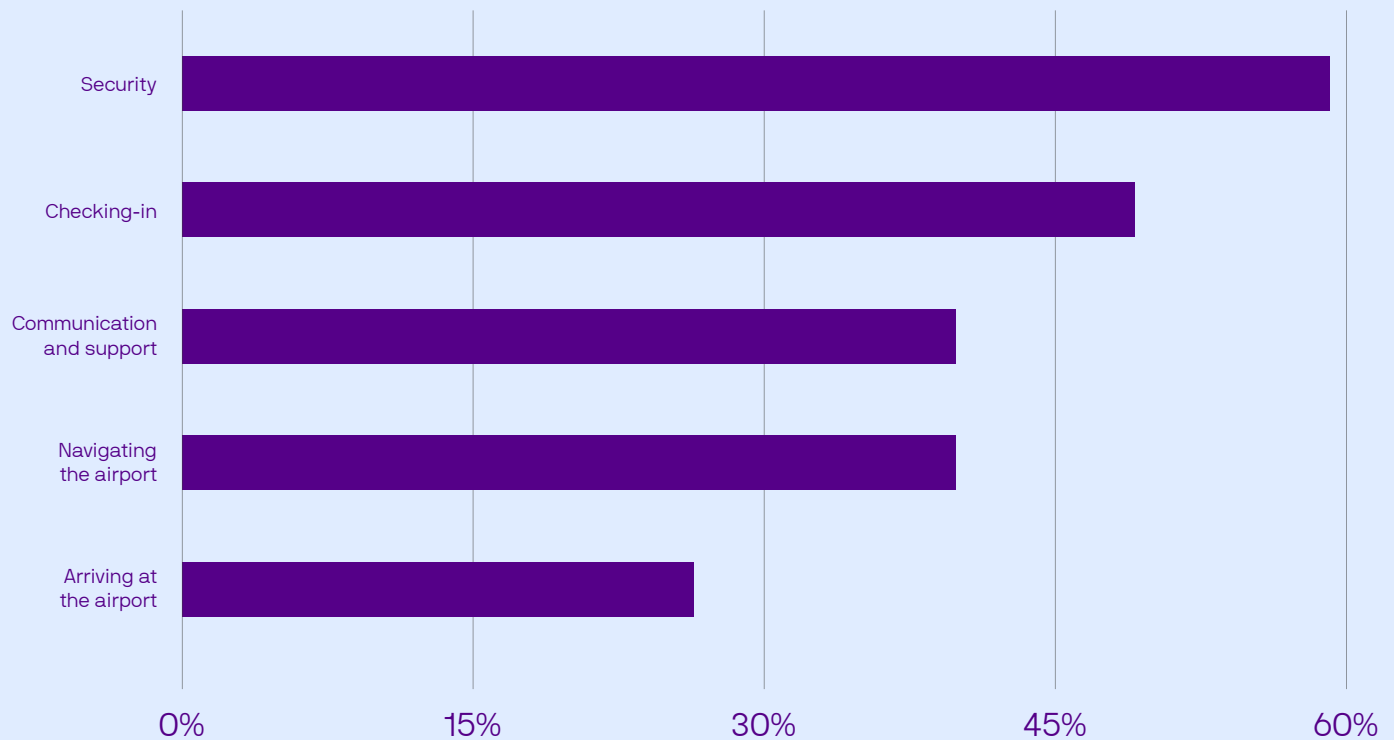
.....

You can prioritise disabled passengers so they don't have to queue. You can also adapt the usual security procedures — as long as you still perform the necessary checks.

How Disabled People See the Security Process

Security comes top in a list of barriers that disabled people encounter at airports, according to research by the Civil Aviation Authority.

Barriers by stage of journey



What the Law Says

The Equality Act 2010 states that those who have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities are disabled.

.....

This could be to do with how they move around; what they can see or hear; how they need information provided to them; or if they feel pain, or anxiety; or distress over a long period.

.....

Remember — many things that mean that someone is disabled aren’t visible.

.....

Airport operators, any services they contract and staff must not discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled people. This includes making reasonable adjustments to how security, Border Force and Customs services operate.

Understanding Everyday Challenges

Role Play

In pairs, ask one member of staff to imagine that they are going through security procedures as someone experiencing:

- Acute anxiety
- Significant joint pain and balance issues
- A visual impairment
- A catheter or colostomy bag

.....
Ask the other member of staff to think about what they can do to support the passenger. For example:

- Smiling and explaining the process
- Ensuring that someone has a chair to sit on to remove shoes and/or offering to assist someone to remove shoes or a belt
- Identifying themselves and asking if they can help; continuing to talk to explain different parts of the security process
- Looking directly at the passenger, speaking clearly, smiling, offering to write down instructions

Communication

Top Tips

Smile — people may be anxious. This can make a difference.

.....
Be patient. Sometimes people need extra time to understand what they need to do.

.....
Be ready to repeat what you have said, using different words to help someone understand.

.....
Always talk to a passenger or customer directly, not to a person they are with.

.....
Speak clearly and face people who are lip-reading.

.....
Offer to write things down.

.....
While complying with security requirements, if possible, **offer choices** and **offer practical assistance** with lifting luggage or moving a chair.

Checking What's Been Learned

**At the end of any briefing or practical exercise,
ask staff:**

-
● What stood out and what have they learned?
.....
- What changes will they make to the way they work to
ensure that they can help disabled passengers?
.....
- Where should they signpost disabled passengers
to in the immediate environment if the passenger
needs help? For example, where could a passenger
get first aid?
.....
- Where should they go for advice on how to help
disabled passengers?

REAL

Depending on the time available, use the REAL theme to **summarise key messages**, and remind people about the Respect, Empathise, Ask, Listen theme of the training.

You can use the train the trainer notes on REAL here and/or in other sections of the training.



REAL

Respect

REAL

Empathise

REAL

Ask

REAL

Listen

REAL Passenger **REAL** Person



Department
for Transport