ASAPD

AUSTRALIAN SPORTING ALLIANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

OTIUM

SPORT + LEISURE + COMMUNITIES

DISABILITY SPORTS – COMMUNITY FACILITY GUIDELINES

Volume 3: Aquatic

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FORWARD

Sport and active recreation can transform lives by improving health and wellbeing, building confidence, creating social connections and strengthening communities. For people living with a disability, aquatic facilities provide valuable opportunities for participation, recreation, skill development and competition.

Aquatic environments can, however, present unique accessibility challenges. Swimming pools and aquatic centres must respond to diverse mobility, sensory, vision, hearing and other access requirements if people living with disability are to participate safely and confidently.

The Disability Sports – Community Facility Guidelines (Volume 3: Aquatic) complete the three-volume Community Facility Guidelines series covering indoor, outdoor and aquatic sporting environments. They provide practical guidance for planners, designers, government agencies, facility owners and operators, sporting organisations and other stakeholders involved in developing and managing community aquatic facilities.

As Australia progresses towards the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, there is an important opportunity to create a lasting infrastructure legacy by embedding accessibility and inclusion within community sporting environments.

Aquatic accessibility extends beyond simply entering and exiting a pool. These Guidelines consider the complete participant journey - from information, arrival and wayfinding through to pool access, changerooms, lighting, acoustics, communication, spectator areas and supporting facilities. They also recognise that good design must be complemented by management practices that provide equitable access to programs, training and competition.

Founded on the principles of respect and recognition, diversity, collaboration, integration and sustainability, the Guidelines seek to create welcoming aquatic environments that bring people together.

Together with Volumes 1 and 2, these Guidelines provide a practical foundation for creating community sporting environments where people of all abilities can participate, connect, compete and thrive.

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Co-Chairs
Australian Sporting Alliance for People with a Disability

1. INTRODUCTION

The **Disability Sports—Community Facility Guidelines (the Guidelines)** are a practical resource for planning, designing, managing and utilising community sports facilities for activities involving people with disabilities and their associated organisations.

1.1. GUIDELINE NEED

While positive strides are being made to enhance outcomes within sports infrastructure for people with disabilities, a significant disparity remains between the community participation opportunities available to the able-bodied and those available to people with disabilities. This inequity spans locational accessibility, facility functionality and design, access to fields of play, and the overall experience of people and delivery organisations, highlighting a critical need for improvement.

There is a genuine desire within the government and the sports sector to address the challenges mentioned; however, limited resources are available to guide public servants, sporting organisations and industry advisors. A comprehensive tool that integrates the needs of people with disabilities and associated organisations from early planning to delivering and managing community sporting infrastructure can significantly enhance outcomes. By adopting a realistic, sustainable and phased approach, we can ensure that people with disabilities enjoy the same opportunities and experiences as other members of the sporting community.

The runway to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games has, and will, provide several opportunities to reimagine and develop new strategies and visions that can create positive legacies for the sporting landscape in Australia. One of these areas is the development of best practise facility strategic advice that provides guidance and purpose in the design of the facilities for people participating in sport who have a disability, impairment, or a limitation. The aim is to normalise standards so a universal planning strategy can be created for all Australians at all venues. All venues must be accessible, ensuring all people are valued.

In developing this guidance, accessibility, impairment, and inclusion (including competitors, officials, volunteers, and spectators) will be the driving parameters for future facility developments for all, without the need to develop a standalone facility for people with a disability, impairment, or limitation.

The Guidelines provide access to sports facilities for all people regardless of their disability, noting the intersectionality of disabilities where people may have more than one disability.

Swimming pools present unique accessibility challenges, especially for athletes with mobility, sensory, and vision impairments.

The Guidelines are needed in order to support people with a disability with:

- Improved accessibility to venues and aquatic facilities
- Growth in participation and sustainable competition opportunities
- Improved sports participation integration between people with disabilities and able-bodied athletes
- Enhanced knowledge sharing and education between sports for people with disabilities and able-bodied sports
- Venues and facilities that are designed to incorporate the needs of and to optimise the user experience for athletes with a disability.

1.2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Guidelines is to inform community sporting infrastructure locational accessibility, management and access arrangements, and facility design. The Guidelines are envisaged to support sporting organisations, planners, architects, builders, operators, government agencies, and educational institutions in enhancing sporting outcomes for people with disabilities.

1.3. SCOPE

The Guidelines are prepared for the specific needs of the following sports infrastructure types:



Volume 1 (Indoor Sports) was released in 2025, Volume 2 (Outdoor Sports) was released in July 2026, whilst this, Volume 3, informs the needs of aquatic facilities.

Otium Planning Group (Otium) prepared the Guidelines for the Australian Sporting Alliance for People with a Disability. To ensure Guidelines accuracy and capacity for implementation, advice on the standards and peer review activities has been undertaken by:

- Deaf Sports Australia - Cindy Lu Bailey OAM
- Sport Inclusion Australia - Chantel Lewis
- University of Queensland - Karen Graham
- Blind Sports Australia - Matt Levy PLY OAM
- Inclusion Sports Design - Michael Woods
- ASAPD - Ross Ashcroft.

Given that most sporting facilities are non-sport specific, the Guidelines consolidate the needs of partner sports into a single document, with a focus on achieving multi-use outcomes.

1.4. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The Guidelines are informed by leveraging and are consistent with the following Australian Sporting Alliance for People with a Disability strategic documents:

ASAPD
AUSTRALIAN SPORTING ALLIANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

Members sport specifications, guidelines and recommendations

Produced by Australian Sporting Alliance for People with a Disability.

2. FACILITY HIERARCHY

2.1. VISION

The Vision of the Guidelines is for community sports facilities for people with disabilities to:



Provide a similar level of locational accessibility to community sports facilities to that enjoyed by able-bodied athletes.



Provide peak time accessibility to pools for training and competition opportunities for people with disabilities.



Encourage a collaborative and integrated environment between people with disabilities and the able-bodied.



Enhance opportunities to put sport for people with disabilities on display to the broader community.



Support a healthier community by optimising opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in sport, socially integrate and be physically active.



Enhance the investment in and sustainability of sports infrastructure by optimising use and viability.

2.2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Guiding Principles for the planning, design, development and management of sports facilities for people with disabilities are:



Respect and Recognition

Future community sports facilities will recognise and celebrate the important role that sports play in supporting a healthier community for people with disabilities.

Diversity

Future community sports facilities will offer numerous opportunities for individuals with disabilities to engage in sporting activities.





Collaboration and Integration

Future sports facilities will cater to disabled and able-bodied athletes, promoting social interaction, knowledge sharing and collaboration.

Sustainability

Future community sports facilities will support the sustainable growth of sport participation for people with disabilities and optimise the use and financial performance of infrastructure.



2.3. HIERARCHY

Regional, state, national, international and high-performance standard sports facilities provide important pathways in sport for people with disabilities. However, these guidelines focus on optimising community sports participation for people with disabilities and do not include the broader classification needs of these higher standard uses and facilities.

Outlined below is a summary of the purpose, provision, catchment and accessibility for district standard (community) aquatic facilities designed to meet the participation needs of people with disabilities and those without:

	DISTRICT STANDARD (COMMUNITY)	REGIONAL, STATE, NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL AND HIGH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS
Purpose	Can be standalone pool or part of other sport and recreation elements that accommodate the aquatic needs of the local community of people with disabilities for home and away fixtures, social sport, training activities and participation programs. Aquatic facilities considered within these Guidelines include: « Public pools « Private learn-to-swim pools « Education institution pools.	*Outside of the scope of these Guidelines.*
Provisional Rate	« One pool: 10,000 people.	
Locational Accessibility	« Pool to be located within a 15-minute drive time of most residents.	
Catchment Size	« Minimum 15-minute drive time catchment for a new aquatic centre = 30,000 people.	



3. FACILITY STANDARDS

The following facility standards are intended as a guide for preferred requirements, rather than minimum standards. Facility standards should be reviewed and applied in conjunction with relevant industry and construction standards.

The facility standards outlined below are general guidelines for multi-use community sports facilities designed to accommodate individuals with disabilities and those who are able-bodied.

3.1. INFORMATION

Publicly available information on a venue's suitability is the starting point for people with disabilities and influences their experience. To help people with disabilities research a venue's accessibility before they arrive, a range of strategies can be implemented that are informative, transparent, and easy to access, including:

- Dedicated section within the venue web page, including the potential for a companion website, including:
- Use of visual aids
  - Photos
  - Videos
  - Virtual tours
  - Virtual maps for route planning pre-arrival
  - Floor plans
  - Areas within the venue that aren't accessible
  - Pool chemicals in use
  - Typical decibel levels by activity area.
- Implementation of a companion app.
- Provide the opportunity for accessibility ratings and reviews.
- Offer downloadable resources
- Offer an accessible booking system.



3.2. ARRIVAL AND NAVIGATION

Transport and access to facilities are among the largest barriers preventing participation in sport for people with a disability, with access starting before the venue entrance. On this basis, the preferred arrival and navigation facility standards are:

- Map and design the entire arrival experience from the perspective of wheelchair users, people with vision impairment, and those requiring support services.
- Provide accessible parking and dedicated drop-off zones for taxis, community transport and buses, located close to entrances and accessible paths.
- Ensure wide, step-free circulation with automatic doors, generous corridors, and pathways of at least 1.8m to accommodate two wheelchairs passing.
- Use smooth, firm, non-slip surfaces throughout all internal and external paths of travel to maximise accessibility and safety.
- Deliver clear and intuitive wayfinding from public transport stops to key destinations, supported by accessible venue maps, audio navigation and QR-enabled navigation tools.
- Incorporate Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) signage, particularly around pools.
- Incorporate simple language, universal symbols and consistent communication that supports people of all abilities and language backgrounds.
- Provide information in multiple formats, including visual, verbal and written, supported by visual aids and demonstrations where appropriate.
- Optimise the co-location of pools, changerooms and amenities, while maintaining clear sightlines to exits and ensuring accessible ticketing and entry systems.

3.3. POOL ACCESS

The preferred pool access and entry options are a combination of several of the following offerings:

« Pool ramp with handrails on both sides.
« Beach-entry/ zero depth entry.
« Pool platform lift.
« Accessibility hoist (fixed or portable), provided one of the above entry solutions is also available.
« Landing area below water level.
« Wide stairs with dual handrails.



3.4. SURFACES

The preferred aquatic facility surface standards are:

« Slip-resistant surfaces throughout, including within pools.



3.5. ACOUSTICS

Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons can have a range of hearing abilities, and many will use assistive devices, such as hearing aids or cochlear implants, to enhance sound. These devices can often amplify reflected sound waves, which can be distracting and even painful. Strategies to support deaf and hard-of-hearing persons include hearing loops, communication and explanation tools, acoustic barriers and captioning on screens.

The five key areas planners should consider for deaf and hard-of-hearing persons are: space and proximity; mobility; acoustics and electromagnetic interference; sensory reach; and light and colour.

The preferred acoustic standards are:

« Hallways and sidewalks being made wider to allow conversations to occur while walking.
« Building entrances should utilise automatic sliding doors to enable conversations to continue while entering and exiting buildings.
« Ensure that the spaces are free of visual clutter and obstructions to support clear sight lines for sign language.
« Installation of strategically located soundproof panels, including acoustic treatments specific to an aquatic environment and adequate to manage peak-time noise levels.
« Create buffers from external noise sources such as traffic, other sports, or public areas.
« Rental/ loaned/ sale of items such as earmuffs, headphones, goggle options, including having an “emergency” kit available with these items for situations where an attendee/ volunteer experiences sensory overload.
« Consider zoning of activities, layout planning and managing overlap between spaces to reduce unnecessary noise and distraction.
« Ensure communication can be clearly heard, highlighted, and understood within activity areas.



3.6. LIGHTING AND SUN



The preferred lighting facility standards are:

« Avoid design outcomes that result in shadows from windows and/ or lighting sources for vision-impaired athletes.
« Ensure appropriate height of switches for people who use wheelchairs.
« Ensure pathways are lit.
« Make available UV-compliant sunglasses for hire/ sale.
« Uniform illumination across all water bodies and pool decks.
« Pool floor visible from all lifeguard stations.
« Zero critical supervision blind spots.
« Glare-controlled luminaires.
« Emergency lighting coverage of all aquatic areas, including appropriate emergency lighting for the deaf, hard-of-hearing and people at risk of seizure from epilepsy.
« Lighting design integrated with lifeguard surveillance plans and CCTV systems.
« Avoid strobe or flashing lights added to building alarm systems.
« Even lighting to support lip-reading or Auslan interpretation.
« Ensure lighting is adjustable where applicable.

3.7. AUDIO/ VISUAL/ TEXTURAL

The preferred audio/ visual/ textural facility standards are:

« Provide high-quality public address, audible start and navigation systems with clear, recognisable audio cues, minimal echo/ distortion, and no sound bleed into the pools.
« Incorporate hearing augmentation technologies, including hearing loops, live transcription, and provision for sign language interpretation on digital displays.
« Deliver real-time information through large, highly visible digital screens, scoreboards and portable visual signage that support accessibility requirements.
« Use integrated visual, auditory and tactile wayfinding systems to support navigation for people with diverse access needs.
« Provide colour-coded zones, high-contrast signage, braille, raised-letter signage and tactile maps to improve orientation and independent wayfinding.
« Incorporate textured and raised floor markings, tactile indicators and other physical navigation aids throughout buildings and aquatic facilities.
« Maximise visual contrast throughout the venue, including between walls and equipment, on glazed surfaces, pool edges and lane ropes, to improve visibility and safety.
« Include aquatic-specific accessibility features such as tactile pool edge indicators, clear pool edge contrast, audible start systems and dedicated tapping zones for blind swimmers.
« Ensure digital accessibility through accessible ticketing systems, venue maps in accessible formats, audio navigation apps, and QR-enabled wayfinding and information services.





3.8. CHANGEROOMS AND AMENITIES

The preferred changerooms and amenities standards for new or updated facilities are:

- Incorporate additional ambulant cubicles with grab rails and easy-access fittings.
- Design with wide circulation spaces.
- Ensure lockers, benches and pathways are at accessible heights and allow for side-by-side turning and passing, including provision for companion seats.
- Showers should include
  - Roll-in showers in the changeroom with a fold-down seat, handheld shower head, and grab rails.
  - Open shower areas for ease of access with curtain separation where appropriate.
- Toilets should include
  - Accessible toilets per team zone.
  - Additional ambulant toilets to meet peak-time demand.
  - Ceiling hoists.
  - Individual accessible cubicles.
  - Adult change tables.
- First aid rooms should be nearby and in a calm, accessible environment.
- Non-slip surfaces.
- Avoid accessible bathrooms doubling as family/ all-gender changerooms.
- Consider heating in waiting areas outside changerooms and amenities.
- Consider implementation of Master Locksmiths Access Key (MLAK).



3.9. COACHING/ OFFICIATING

The preferred coaching and officiating facility standards are:

- Incorporate accessible viewing and coaching areas to support observing and interaction with athletes.
- Ensure flexible layouts that can be reconfigured to accommodate different sports and coaching styles.
- Provide visual and auditory aids for coaches, officials and athletes, such as screens, tablets, or assistive technology.
- Ensure clear sightlines to the pools over any facility barriers.
- Ensure wheelchair pool deck access around pools.
- Install adaptive timing systems.
- Ensure commentary positions are accessible and unimpeded.



3.10. SPECTATORS

The preferred spectator facility standards are:

« Design spectator areas and position spectator seating sufficiently away from the pools to prevent sound interference with play.
« Incorporate acoustic barriers between spectator areas and the pools where practical.
« Wheelchair and companion spaces must be on an accessible route and not overlap circulation paths or aisles.
« Companion seating
  – At least one companion seat should be provided next to each wheelchair space
  – Alignment should allow shoulder-to-shoulder seating with the wheelchair user
  – Should be a standard seat, not a folding chair or temporary seat.
« Wheelchair users must have comparable lines of sight to other spectators.
« Wheelchair and companion seating must be dispersed throughout the venue across different viewing angles.
« Clear sightlines to the pools, scoreboard, and interpreters.
« Large visible screens for scores and announcements.
« Choice of viewing positions (shade, sun, elevated).
« Clear sightlines, including when spectators stand.



3.11. STORAGE

The preferred additional storage facility standards for aquatic facilities are:

« Sports chairs, prosthetics and assistance devices
  – 35-45m2
  – Capacity to accommodate a wide base of up to 900mm
  – Secure access and adjacent team lockers.
« Equipment storage
  – Include an additional 40m2 per pool that supports disability sports.



3.12. ENVIRONMENTAL COMFORT AND SAFETY

The preferred environmental comfort and safety facility standards for disability sports are:

« Provide shaded areas throughout pool surrounds, spectator areas, gathering spaces and circulation routes.
« Ensure shade is available at pool entry and exit points.
« Ensure pathways between parking, entrances and pool areas incorporate shade where practical.
« Provide UV-protected refuge areas for participants with medical conditions affected by sun exposure.
« Provide covered locations for wheelchairs, mobility devices and assistance equipment.

3.13. SUPPORTING FACILITIES

Where feasible, consideration should be given to providing the following support facilities:

« Accessible meeting rooms with two screens for visual and captioning
« Call room for athletes' pre-competition waiting
« A quiet room and low-sensory space
« Aquatic wheelchairs for temporary loan
« Support animal relief area
« Defined spaces for arrival, waiting, warm-up and competition
« Designated area that provides for fidget devices, including a chill-out space.



4. MANAGEMENT AND ACCESS

The provision and standard of aquatic facilities are essential components in enabling people with disabilities to participate. Equally important is ensuring that management and access arrangements support fair outcomes for people with disabilities.

4.1. USER ACCESS

Peak hour use of aquatic facilities is typically:

- Monday to Friday
  - 6am to 8am
  - 4pm until late.
- Saturday and Sunday
  - 8am to 12pm.

Similar to other members of the community, people with disabilities attend educational institutions, work and care for others. As a result, many athletes with a disability have minimal to no available time during traditional working days and hours for their sporting pursuits.

To encourage participation growth and maintain competition sustainability, it is essential to provide training and competition opportunities for people with disabilities during peak times. Additionally, peak time participation opportunities should be integrated with other sports facility activities and programs to promote social interaction, knowledge sharing and collaboration.



4.2. MANAGEMENT TERMS AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Regardless of the model implemented for managing aquatic facilities, the management arrangements should aim for best practice standards. Such standards include incorporating performance measures to ensure the objectives of a sports facility are realised.

The following measures should be incorporated into tenure agreements to enhance sporting outcomes for people with disabilities, the following measures should be incorporated:



Peak time access
Minimum of two (2) dedicated lanes per pool for a period of eight (8) hours per week for dedicated activities for people with disabilities.



Off-peak access
Minimum of two (2) dedicated lanes per pool ten (10) hours per week for dedicated activities for people with disabilities.



Carnivals and events
Implement a consistent booking policy for aquatic events for people with a disability to that offered to able-bodied event promoters.



Integration
Where possible, integrate activities for people with disabilities simultaneously as activities for other community members (except for activities by persons with disabilities requiring a quieter and/ or less lit environment).



Program and development
Develop new programs and activities aimed at increasing participation opportunities for people with disabilities.



Program diversity
Ensure aquatic facilities for disabled sports provide access opportunities for multiple, diversified activities.



Key stakeholder status
Include disability sport user groups in venue communications and planning alongside other community groups.



Data and reporting
Support future advocacy of the benefits of disability sports by recording participation levels of people with disabilities.



Maintain facility standards
Endeavour to maintain aquatic facilities to meet the standards of service outlined in the Guidelines.



Employment
Endeavour to optimise employment opportunities at venues for people with disabilities.



Staff
Provide disability awareness training and invest in professional development to strengthen staff capability to communicate effectively, support participation, build skills and foster progression in disability sport.

4.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF GUIDELINES

The Guidelines should be implemented based on a site-specific nature. The Guidelines should be peer-reviewed by people with a variety of lived experiences. Communication with the target groups (multiple people) is vital to the success of a facility in optimising opportunities for people with a disability. Adapt the standards on a site-specific basis following extensive engagement.

In particular, planning and design of new facilities should incorporate meaningful co-design with the community in which the pool is being built, to determine accessibility priorities (e.g., extended consultation/ planning processes, VR-based training or detailed mock-ups and photos).

Regular review of the Guidelines should be undertaken, including:

« Ensuring all documents use accessible templates

« Implement pre-event auditing, in-event auditing/ feedback and post-event feedback.



5. WARRANTIES AND DISCLAIMERS

The information in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium has applied its experience to the task, it has relied upon information supplied to it by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence', and these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

Otium's advice does not extend to, or imply professional expertise in the disciplines of economics, quantity surveying, engineering or architecture. External advice in one or more of these disciplines may have been sought, where necessary, to address the requirements of the project objectives. There will be differences between projected and actual results because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected, and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm, underwrite, or guarantee the projections' achievability, as it is impossible to substantiate assumptions based on future events.

Base level functional layout sketches, including renders and animated fly-throughs, are for indicative purposes only (not for design, construction or detailed costing purposes).

This report does not constitute advice, investment advice, or opinion and must not be relied on for funding or investment decisions. Independent advice should be obtained in relation to investment decisions.

Accordingly, neither Otium nor any member or employee of Otium undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any persons other than the client in respect to this report for any errors or omissions herein arising through negligence or otherwise caused.



APPENDIX A: AQUATIC FACILITIES STANDARDS CHECKLIST

PART 1 | INFORMATION, ARRIVAL, POOL ACCESS AND SURFACES

FACILITY		**AUDITOR**	
AUDIT DATE		**FACILITY CONTACT**	

Rating: *Tick Yes, No or N/A. Record evidence, location, defect and recommended action in notes. These are preferred guideline requirements and should be considered with applicable industry and construction standards.*

1. Information

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	Venue website has a dedicated accessibility section or companion page.	☐	☐	
2	Accessibility information includes visual aids, photos, video, virtual tour, maps and/or floor plans.	☐	☐	
3	Information identifies inaccessible areas, pool chemicals and typical activity-area noise levels.	☐	☐	
4	Accessible booking system and downloadable accessibility resources are available.	☐	☐	
5	Users can provide accessibility ratings or feedback.	☐	☐	

2. Arrival and Navigation

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	Arrival journey is mapped for wheelchair users, people with vision impairment and users requiring support.	☐	☐	
2	Accessible parking and taxi, community transport and bus drop-off are close to entrances and accessible paths.	☐	☐	
3	Step-free circulation, automatic doors and generous corridors are provided; key paths are at least 1.8 m wide.	☐	☐	
4	Internal and external paths are smooth, firm and slip-resistant.	☐	☐	
5	Wayfinding links public transport to key destinations using maps, audio and/or QR navigation.	☐	☐	
6	AAC signs are provided, particularly around pools; language and symbols are simple and consistent.	☐	☐	
7	Information is available in visual, verbal and written formats; pools, changerooms and amenities are logically co-located.	☐	☐	

3. Pool Access

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	A combination of accessible water-entry options is provided, rather than reliance on one method.	☐	☐	
2	Pool ramp has handrails on both sides, and/or beach-entry/zero-depth access is available.	☐	☐	
3	A pool platform lift is available and operational.	☐	☐	
4	A fixed or portable accessibility hoist is available in addition to another accessible entry solution.	☐	☐	
5	A below-water landing area and/or wide stairs with dual handrails is provided.	☐	☐	

4. Surfaces

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	Slip-resistant surfaces are provided throughout the facility, including within pools.	☐	☐	

PART 2 | SENSORY ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES

5. Acoustics

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	Circulation spaces support conversations while walking; entrances use automatic sliding doors where appropriate.	☐	☐	
2	Spaces have clear sightlines and are free of visual clutter that obstructs sign-language communication.	☐	☐	
3	Aquatic-appropriate acoustic treatments manage reflected sound and peak-time noise.	☐	☐	
4	Noise buffers separate pools from traffic, other sports and public areas.	☐	☐	
5	Earmuffs, headphones and goggle options are available, including a sensory emergency kit.	☐	☐	
6	Activity zoning and layout reduce unnecessary noise, overlap and distraction.	☐	☐	
7	Key communication is clearly audible, visible or otherwise accessible within activity areas.	☐	☐	

6. Lighting and Sun

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	Lighting avoids problematic shadows and glare; switches are reachable by wheelchair users.	☐	☐	
2	Paths, water bodies and pool decks have uniform illumination.	☐	☐	
3	Pool floor is visible from lifeguard stations with no critical supervision blind spots.	☐	☐	
4	Emergency lighting covers aquatic areas and considers Deaf, hard-of-hearing and seizure-risk users.	☐	☐	
5	Lighting integrates with surveillance and CCTV; strobe or flashing alarms are avoided.	☐	☐	
6	Even, adjustable lighting supports lip-reading and Auslan interpretation.	☐	☐	
7	UV-compliant sunglasses are available for hire or sale.	☐	☐	

7. Audio, Visual and Textural

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	PA, audible start and navigation systems provide clear cues with minimal echo, distortion or sound bleed.	☐	☐	
2	Hearing loops/augmentation, live transcription and sign-language display capacity are provided.	☐	☐	
3	Large screens, scoreboards and portable visual signs deliver real-time information.	☐	☐	
4	Wayfinding combines visual, auditory and tactile cues.	☐	☐	
5	Colour zones, high-contrast signs, braille, raised letters and tactile maps support orientation.	☐	☐	
6	Raised floor markings, tactile indicators and physical navigation aids are provided.	☐	☐	
7	Strong visual contrast is used on walls, equipment, glazing, pool edges and lane ropes.	☐	☐	
8	Tactile pool edges, audible starts and tapping zones support blind swimmers.	☐	☐	
9	Ticketing, venue maps, audio navigation and QR information are digitally accessible.	☐	☐	

8. Changerooms and Amenities

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	Additional ambulant cubicles, grab rails and easy-access fittings are provided.	☐	☐	
2	Wide circulation supports turning, passing and companion seating; lockers and benches are accessible.	☐	☐	
3	Roll-in and open showers include fold-down seat, handheld shower and grab rails.	☐	☐	
4	Accessible toilets are provided per team zone, with extra ambulant toilets for peak demand.	☐	☐	
5	Ceiling hoists, individual accessible cubicles and adult change tables are provided.	☐	☐	
6	First aid is nearby, calm and accessible; floors are slip-resistant.	☐	☐	
7	Accessible bathrooms are not routinely used as family/all-gender changerooms.	☐	☐	
8	Waiting areas consider heating and MLAK access where appropriate.	☐	☐	

PART 3 | PARTICIPATION, SPECTATORS, STORAGE AND SUPPORT

9. Coaching and Officiating

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	Accessible viewing and coaching areas support interaction with athletes.	☐	☐	
2	Layouts are flexible, and visual/ auditory assistive technology is available.	☐	☐	
3	Clear sightlines and wheelchair access are maintained around pool decks.	☐	☐	
4	Adaptive timing systems and accessible, unimpeded commentary positions are provided.	☐	☐	

10. Spectators

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	Spectator areas are positioned to limit sound interference; acoustic barriers are used where practical.	☐	☐	
2	Wheelchair and companion spaces are on an accessible route and clear of aisles.	☐	☐	
3	A standard companion seat is beside each wheelchair space at shoulder-to-shoulder alignment.	☐	☐	
4	Accessible seating is dispersed across viewing angles with comparable sightlines.	☐	☐	
5	Views to pools, scoreboards and interpreters remain clear, including when spectators stand.	☐	☐	
6	Large screens and a choice of shaded, sunny or elevated viewing positions are available.	☐	☐	

11. Storage

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	35–45 m^2 of secure storage is available for sports chairs, prosthetics and assistance devices.	☐	☐	
2	Storage accommodates equipment up to 900 mm wide and is adjacent to team lockers.	☐	☐	
3	An additional 40 m^2 equipment store is provided per pool supporting disability sport.	☐	☐	

12. Environmental Comfort and Safety

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	Shade and weather protection are provided along paths and at seating areas.	☐	☐	
2	Rest areas are provided every 50–80 m and accessible drinking fountains are available.	☐	☐	
3	Steps have high-contrast edges and tactile indicators identify hazards.	☐	☐	

13. Supporting Facilities

#	AUDIT CRITERIA	YES	NO	N/A / NOTES
1	Accessible meeting rooms include two screens for visual content and captioning.	☐	☐	
2	A call room, quiet/low-sensory room and defined arrival, waiting, warm-up and competition spaces are available.	☐	☐	
3	Aquatic wheelchairs are available for temporary loan.	☐	☐	
4	A support-animal relief area and designated fidget/chill-out space are provided.	☐	☐	

Audit Summary and Priority Actions

PRIORITY	FINDING / REQUIRED ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATE
High			
Medium			
Low			

Overall Audit Outcome

☐ Meets preferred standards ☐ Partially meets preferred standards ☐ Significant improvements required



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