

We aim to create an inclusive, diverse and accessible environment where it is everyone’s responsibility to ensure all members of our University community are treated with fairness, dignity, respect and have a sense of belonging.

It is therefore everyone’s responsibility, when organising celebrations, to consider our diverse community to ensure everyone feels welcome and able to attend.

## **Location**

When looking for a location for your winter celebration consider ways to make your event accessible so everyone feels that they can attend, including those with disabilities.

Consider the following:

* Could a wheelchair user be able to access the building?
* Are there places for someone with mobility challenges to sit down?
* Is there disabled parking either at or near the venue?
* Could someone with hearing difficulties take part in conversations? Some people with a hearing disability may find that it helps them to sit with their back against a wall.
* Would an LGBT+ colleague feel comfortable attending an event at the location you choose?
* A quiet room for colleagues to pray, meditate or have some time away from events if they feel overwhelmed

Whilst we know that you can’t always control the venues that you consider, there are plenty of accessible venues that you can choose from. If you need help looking for accessible venues, you can use [AccessAble](https://www.accessable.co.uk/).

We recommend that you ask if anybody has any requirements, don't assume. The best person to advise you is the person who has the protected characteristic.

## **Invites**

Ask your team what they want to do and where they want to go. You won’t be able to please everyone but at least you will have an idea of what people do want and when suits everyone best. You may get suggestions for things that you may not have thought of.

Make sure to invite everyone including new starters, temporary staff and any staff who are working off-site or on parental leave.

It’s possible they may say ‘no’ but the act of being invited to an event can often mean just as much as actually going to the event and they may also be able to contribute to the choice of somewhere to celebrate.

## **Alcohol and dietary requirements**

Whilst alcohol may form part of many celebrations, there may be people who choose not to drink for a number of reasons e.g. religious, health or medical conditions or personal choice. Be considerate of other people’s choices and ensure that there are options for soft drinks. This also supports anybody who needs to drive.

Dietary requirements must be taken into account. More people are making the choice to become vegetarian or vegan and some religions also specify certain dietary requirements as well as food allergy considerations

## **Wellbeing**

Times of celebration can be difficult for some people. Loneliness can be heightened when all around us are celebrating. You can access support, such as our Employee Assistance Programme on our [wellbeing pages](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/wellbeing/).

## **Colleagues of faiths or no faith**

We have a diverse community of staff and students who mark religious celebrations throughout the year. We encourage you to familiarise yourself with the [EDI calendar](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/media/corporate/staffnet/services/equality-and-diversity/Online-66568_UoM_Diversity-Calendar-23_compressed-2.pdf) to have an awareness and be respectful of those people who are celebrating their faith.

Winter time holds traditional Christian connotations of Christmas along with wishing people a ‘Merry Christmas’ as a greeting. As long as you are respectful and mindful of those who may have no faith or are of a different faith then you can give somebody your best wishes by way of wishing people happy holidays, and most people will accept the sentiments in the way they were intended.