




How to plan activities that support engagement and meet outcomes

To help people with complex disabilities gain the benefits of taking part in sport and physical activity, we need to ensure that the activities we deliver are presented in a way which meets their needs. Use the below prompts to ensure your activity supports people to:

- take part in a way which is engaging and meaningful.
- work towards their desired outcomes.

Engagement methods

Participants will engage in activities using at least one of these senses:

-  Sight
-  Sound
-  Touch

Top tip



Before planning activities, it's important to speak to participants and their support networks, to understand how they like to interact with activities, and what they want to achieve by taking part.

You can collect all the information you need to know about the participants, using Sense's handy Participant Profile:



Each individual will engage differently, depending on their level of sight and hearing, and personal preferences. Below are some suggestions of how you might adapt your planning to ensure your delivery is appropriate for each participant's preferred engagement methods.

Preferred engagement method	How to encourage engagement	Example:
Sight	Vary your use of colours, lights, shapes, and movements	Waving colourful ribbons to encourage the participant to reach out in different directions.
Sound	Use a variety of different sounds, music, and verbal communication	Playing fast, loud sounds or slow, quiet sounds to encourage different speeds of movement.
Touch	Use equipment with a variety of textures, shapes, and sizes	Using a soft fluffy ball in place of a traditional sports ball, to encourage the participant to grip, squeeze and use it.

Outcomes

Sport and physical activity can provide a range of physical, social and personal benefits which can improve a person's wellbeing and happiness, as well as their ability to perform everyday tasks. Below are some suggestions of how you might

adapt your planning to ensure your delivery helps participants meet their desired outcomes. We have listed a handful of common outcomes, however there are many other outcomes which are not listed below.

Desired Outcome	How to work towards the outcome	Example
Strength	Include activities that require pushing, pulling, lifting, holding and gripping	Participants gripping and pulling on resistance bands.
Endurance	Include activities that require lots of physical movement	Laying objects out across the entire space, encouraging participants to move about the space to engage with each item.
Flexibility	Include activities that require stretching, reaching and twisting in different directions	Hanging sensory objects from above and encouraging participants to reach overhead to explore them.
Building relationships and trust	Include activities that require sharing, working together, taking turns, helping one another	Participants work as a group, passing an object between one another until everyone has held the object.
Communication	Include activities that require participants to identify, demonstrate or make choices	Participants pointing, looking, vocalising or moving in the direction of the person they would like to pass their object to, before passing it on.
Independence	Allow participants to complete the activity in a way that works for them, reducing the amount of support provided if appropriate	Setting a broad task (for example, move from cone A to cone B), and allowing participants to do this in their own way (walk, wheel, run, jump etc.)

Top tip

Any sport or activity can be adapted to meet any of the above engagement methods or outcomes. Think creatively about your activity, breaking it down into smaller chunks to help identify how you can adapt it to meet people's needs. For more guidance on breaking down sport to ensure it is accessible for people with complex disabilities, visit:

www.sense.org.uk/our-services/arts-sports-for-disabled-people/sport/sensory-sport/

