

Accessible Format Guidelines

General

- Make sure all of your visual materials are **seamlessly compatible with screen readers and other text-to-speech (TTS) software**

Fonts

- Use at least **font size 12pt** or above
- Use **1.5 or double line spacing** where possible
- **Colour code text** - put information in one colour, and a question in another
- Fonts should be clear, rounded, and have space between letters - a **sans serif typeface and kerning** (printed/un-joined text) is preferable

Examples:

Century Gothic

Comic Sans

Arial

Helvetica

Calibri

Tahoma

Headings and Subheadings

- Headings should be a **font size that's at least 20% larger than the main body text** (Microsoft has accessibility options under 'Layout' tab that will help to align headings correctly)
- **Avoid underlining and italics** which can make words 'run together': **use bold text for titles, sub headings, or to draw attention to important information or key terms**

Page Layouts

- **Left align, without justification**
- **Wide margins**
- **Avoid multiple columns**
- **Avoid too much text** on a page
- **Break up text** with regular section headings in long documents, and include a **table of contents**
- **Avoid the use of background graphics with text over the top**
- **Use text boxes or borders** for headings or to highlight important text

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Writing Style

- Ensure sentences and written instructions are **short and simple**
- **Keep paragraphs as short as possible** - dense blocks of text are difficult to read
- Use **numbers or bullet points** rather than continuous prose - and use them consistently
- Include **flow charts, illustrations, and diagrams** to break up large sections of text or to demonstrate a particular procedure

Colour Schemes and Readability

- Where possible, particularly for non-printed materials, **avoid white backgrounds**, opting preferably for off-white/pastel colours
- **Use sufficient contrast levels between background and text:** avoid black text on a white background, and light text on a dark background
- **Avoid colours such as green with red/pink** in your content where possible as they can cause difficulty for people who are colour blind or have colour vision deficiencies
- **Avoid patterns on backgrounds where there is a lot of text** - it will be less distracting for the reader

When in doubt, use the **ACCESSIBILITY button** on all Microsoft programmes to check your documents/presentations.

MultiMedia

- Use **Alt Text** for all images
- **Provide captioning and transcripts** for videos and audio content

PowerPoint Presentations

- Ensure slide contents can be **read in the order that you intend them** to be, and give every slide a **unique title** - this helps screen readers properly communicate your work
- **Ensure that colour is not the only means of conveying information** - this is challenging for people who are blind, have low vision, or are colourblind
- Try to use a **larger font size (18pt or larger)** where possible
- **Use images** to break up blocks of text and make your slides easier to scan
- **A colourful, high-contrast graphic layout, with pictures and text** creates a structured design - far easier for people with dyslexia to understand

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References

1. https://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/sites/default/files/page_content/Dyslexia%20Friendly%20Formats_2.pdf
2. <https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/advice/employers/creating-a-dyslexia-friendly-workplace/dyslexia-friendly-style-guide>
3. <https://www.cartridgepeople.com/info/blog/dyslexia-style-guide>
4. <https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3132525.3132546>
5. <https://www.dyslexic.com/quick-guide-making-content-accessible/>