

Accessible Word Document Checklist

Styles

- Edit Styles in order to format document;
- Style elements have a different look from the others (i.e. Heading1 looks bigger than Heading2 etc.);
- Headings levels are correctly ordered;
- Do NOT use font formatting to style text.

Fonts

- Use 12 point or larger;
- Be consistent with the fonts used in the document;
- Use a sans serif font – such as Arial, Helvetica or Verdana;
- Using italics or upper-case letters for emphasis is not recommended.

Colors

- Use appropriate colour contrast (e.g. black and white);
- Make sure that all information conveyed with colour can also be conveyed without colour;
- For print documents use a matte/non-glossy finish.

Spacing

- To start a new page use the Insert tab then Page Break. Don't press Enter repeatedly to start a new page;
- Adjust spacing through the Paragraph formatting menu;
- Space between the lines should be at least 25 to 30% of the point size.

Images

- Set wrapping style of non-text elements as "In line with text";
- Add alternative text to graphics and images;
- Avoid text boxes and Word Art as they may be inaccessible to screen readers;
- Avoid using watermarks and background images as they can make documents illegible.

Columns

- To properly insert a column use Page Layout tab then Columns;
- Avoid using spaces and tabs, it will not be recognized as a column by assistive technology.

Tables

- Use the Insert tab then Table to properly insert;
- Use proper Table Headings and check the Header Row check box;
- If a table is longer than a page; Heading Rows must be repeated at the top of the table on each of the following pages.

Hyperlinks

- Ensure that the Hyperlink has context and describes where it leads;
- Avoid using "Click here" or "More info" as a link title.

Graphs and Charts

- Add a short caption preceding the chart or graph that describes their content;
- Provide an alternative presentation of any findings. For many charts, the best alternative format in which to present data is a table with the original figures.

Headers & Footers

- Do not manually type the page numbers. Use the Insert tab then Page Number.