

# Accessibility Checklist for Microsoft Word Documents

## Design and Layout

- Avoid using watermarks
- Balance text and the use of white space on each page
- Use the correct heading style (Heading 1: Main, Heading 2: Section heading, etc.); this can be checked using the Navigation Pane
- Each heading contains no more than 2-3 paragraphs of content
- Use bullet points to avoid long uninterrupted paragraphs
- Use numbered lists if the order of items is important
- Do not use multiple spaces, lines, or tabs for layout design
- Use left-justified margin
- Use a minimum of 12-point font size
- Use Sans serif font such as Arial, Comic Sans MS, Courier New, Georgia, Tahoma, Verdana, or Franklin Gothic
- Avoid the use of italic, underline and capital letters
- Use bold text for emphasis

## Contrast and Colour

- Use dark font on white background or light font on dark background
- Never use color alone to convey information; use text or other visual presentations in addition to color
- If using colour, ensure high contrast

## Content

- Give the document a descriptive title
- Use headings that match the information that follows
- Give every hyperlink a meaningful and descriptive display text and avoid meaningless phrases such as "Click here", and "Learn more"
- Use short sentences and straightforward messages
- Do a spell and grammar check

## Figures and Media

- Insert figures using the "In line with text" function
- Ensure diagrams and pictures are large enough to easily see details
- Provide written descriptions using the "Alt text" function
- If the image contains text, repeat the text exactly in the Alt Text description or adjacent content
- For decorative images, write " " (Double quote – space – double quote) in the Alt Text title and description. This tells screen reader software to skip over the image instead of describing it
- Provide captioning for video clips and text transcripts for audio clips
- Avoid using orange, red, and green in your graphs or objects

## Tables

- Correctly define column headers in the first row of a table
- Use the Tab key to move through the table cells. Make sure the tab order of cells matches the table appearance
- Avoid tables that are used for layout when possible
- Avoid using blank columns and rows for visual formatting
- Avoid merging or splitting cells

## Saving and Printing

- Avoid printing on glossy and colored paper
- Save the file as a .docx document
- Give the document a descriptive file name