

Creating accessible PowerPoint presentations

This guidance explains how to create accessible PowerPoints for use in lectures and sharing electronically, so benefiting all students, not just those with identified needs.

Making text and structure accessible

- 1
 - To ensure text is visible to all students in a lecture theatre, use a sans-serif font (e.g. Arial or Veranda) in **18–22 point size** for main text and **30 point size** for headings (note some font sizes appear bigger than others). Avoid italics, which can be difficult to read.
 - Minimise the amount of text on each slide and keep the layout simple (using bullet points, for instance). If you find yourself putting a lot of text on a slide then provide this as a handout instead.
 - Use the layout options in PowerPoint rather than adding text boxes to a blank slide as this ensures screen readers can recognise titles. Give each slide a different title and number so students can navigate using assistive technology.
 - When linking to other resources, avoid using the phrase 'Click here'. Instead, give hyperlinks descriptive text such as 'Find resources by [searching the University's Library listings](#)'. This allows students using assistive technology such as screen readers to follow the link.
 - Ensure that there is a strong contrast between text and background, for example, dark text on a pastel or cream background (not white). Try to avoid contrasting red and green as these colours which can be difficult for those with colour blindness to differentiate.
 - Ensure that colours are not the only means of conveying information: use headings to help students distinguish between content.

Sharing slides

- 2
 - Make slides available online **24 hours in advance** of teaching, as well as at the start of the presentation or lecture. This allows time for students using assistive technologies to access materials and will give all students the opportunity to prepare. Sharing documents in advance, including glossaries of new terms or acronyms, is particularly helpful for those with disabilities (e.g. dyslexia) or those whose first language is not English. It may be vital for a deaf student to receive lists of new words before the lecture so they can work out a sign for those words with the interpreter.

3

Making images accessible

Adding descriptions to images or charts using the 'alternative text' feature ensures the information you want to convey is available to all students, including those using screen readers. To add 'Alt text' use the steps outlined in the [Microsoft Office guidelines](#) and follow these points:

- A short sentence describing the image is likely to be sufficient. Try to identify the key information that the image is intended to convey to students. In charts and graphs, this is often the data. If interpretation of the image is subjective or intended to teach a visual discretion skill, think carefully about which information you should include.
- If possible, avoid using terms that describe visual concepts such as 'foreground' or 'background'.
- If the image is purely decorative, you may want to just include a short summary or leave the 'Alt text' field blank.

4

Displaying data

Try to avoid using tables simply for formatting purposes. If you do need to display data in a tabular format, use the table function rather than formatting using the space bar. This will allow assistive technology to recognise the format. If you decide to use a table:

- Try to keep the table as simple as possible (avoid splitting or merging cells)
- Use [column headings](#) (found in 'Table Tools') to indicate which information is needed to interpret the cells in the table
- Keep table headings short and specific

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Using audio-visual content

Ensure that videos or audio content are accessible to all by enabling subtitles for videos and audio content and/or providing a transcript. Further [guidelines on using videos in PowerPoint](#) are available.



Examples of accessible slides can be found on the following pages. Check the accessibility of your presentation using the [Accessibility Checker](#). More details can be found via Microsoft Office's [Rules for the Accessibility Checker](#).

Large title heading (point size 28) using standard layouts. Title is numbered and in sans serif font.

Pastel background to create contrast with text. This is easier to read, especially for students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs).

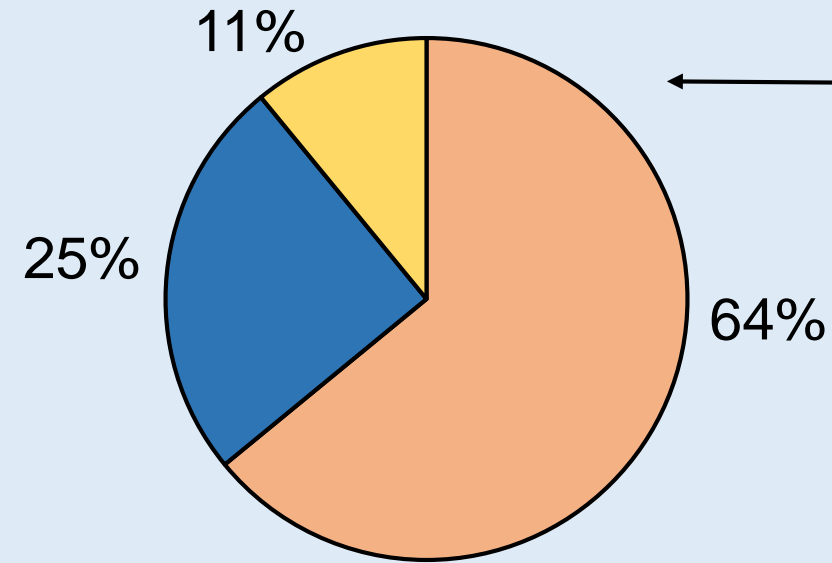
1. Student engagement during presentations

Minimal text in simple layout

- Keep it simple – use bullet points
- **Always** minimise text
- Use handouts if text does not fit on a slide

Use bold for emphasis (rather than colour or italics)

Student engagement levels



Alt text reads: 'This chart shows that 64% of students felt engaged by Presentation 1, 25% by Presentation 2, and 11% by Presentation 3.'

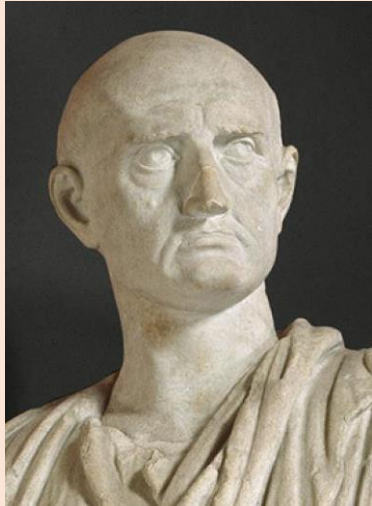
■ Presentation 1 ■ Presentation 2
■ Presentation 3

Size 22 font for text in Veranda font - including text used in image – so all text can be read from a distance.

Avoid contrasting red and green

- a) Is the image decorative? If so, it may not be essential to provide Alt text.
- b) If image is essential, what details need to be included in Alt text – e.g. is ‘Roman bust of a man wearing robes’ sufficient, or is further detail needed?
- c) Do students need to analyse the image? If so, provide it as a handout for students to view more clearly.

Writing Lectures



Sometimes it is necessary to include larger amounts of text, such as quotations or detailed explanations. If this is the case:

1. Consider which information **needs** to go on the slide (i.e. essential information that needs to be conveyed to students in the lecture)
2. Identify if any information is additional and could instead be provided:
 - orally by the speaker
 - in the notes section of the slide (if shared online)
 - in a handout

If asking students to read or analyse additional information in a handout, set aside ample time for students to do this.

Large amount of text has been broken up to increase readability. Numbering and bullet points assists navigation.

All text in size 22 sans serif font (Arial). This means the slide can be read from a distance.

Image: © Ashmolean Museum

Slide 4

Week 2 Trinity Term

In addition to the slide number, consider including useful information (e.g. date, name of lecture or lecturer)