# Creating accessible PowerPoint presentations

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

## Making text and structure accessible

* To ensure text is visible to all students in a lecture theatre, use a sans-serif font (eg Arial or Verdana) in **20-28 point size** for main text and **30-44 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 separate file 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](http://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/primo-explore/search?vid=SOLO&lang=en_US&sortby=rank)’. 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](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/change-the-background-of-your-slides-in-powerpoint-for-the-web-6927cd06-5a5b-483e-9d98-6e270df45700) (not white). Try to avoid contrasting red and green as these colours 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 in advance of teaching

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 (eg 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.

## 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](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25) 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, add ‘decorative’ to the ‘Alt text’ field.

## Displaying data accessibly

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](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25) (found in ‘Table Tools’) to indicate which information is needed to interpret the cells in the table
* Keep table headings short and specific

## 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](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25) are available.
* View the [Example PowerPoint Slides](https://www.ctl.ox.ac.uk/accessibility-teaching#collapse1852431) resource for two different samples of accessible slides.
* Check the accessibility of your presentation using the [Accessibility Checker](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/improve-accessibility-with-the-accessibility-checker-a16f6de0-2f39-4a2b-8bd8-5ad801426c7f). More details can be found via Microsoft Office’s [Rules for the Accessibility Checker](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/rules-for-the-accessibility-checker-651e08f2-0fc3-4e10-aaca-74b4a67101c1).

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

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

Use bold for emphasis (rather than colour or italics)

Avoid contrasting red and green

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