Accessibility Tips

When setting up your online content, make it accessible for all people. Ensure that students using assistive technologies can access all the learning materials you include in a course. For maximum accessibility of your material to students of all degrees of ability, including those with a sensory or cognitive disability, keep all elements of your online course simple, concise and consistent within the course.

Downloaded document display

When including PowerPoint, Word or PDF documents in your course for students to download, set them up to display in a new window when they download.

Links and HTML

Annually test all links in your course to ensure that they are current and link to accessible content. If you want to ensure that the web pages you create are accessible, and will function as they should, you can check their markup validity using the **W3C Markup Validator**

Images

When including images in your course:

- Provide descriptions and Alt Text for all embedded images and graphs.
- Does an image convey a concept that is integral to the students' learning? Provide a detailed description that will act as an effective substitute for the image, so that students with a visual impairment receive all the information they need.

Audio or video content

When including audio or video content in your course:

- All publicly distributed videos must contain captions.
- Provide a transcript of audio content (including lectures) or video content (including YouTube videos), for those students who prefer to read, or who have a hearing impairment.
- Avoid the use of Flash, which cannot be interpreted by assistive technlologies or mobile devices. Use HTML5 instead.

Text

Students with a sensory or cognitive disability may need to be able to:

- use adaptive technologies such as screen readers to read text files
- accurately export text into PowerPoint, Accessible PDF, HTML, EPUB, DAISY and other formats.

Avoid the use of image files for textual course materials. Keep text materials in a Word or Rich Text Format file. That way, students can use assistive technologies to access them.

Within any text file, maximise accessibility by:

- choosing a clear **font**, such as Arial or Verdana
- avoiding the use of colour or italics to convey meaning
- keeping **paragraphs** small and consistent in size
- being consistent in the use of **bullet points**
- formatting **headings** by using style sheets
- placing line spaces between headings and body text
- **aligning text** on the left-hand side only
- minimising your use of **tables**
- tabbing through your created tables to ensure that they read horizontally from left to right
- **numbering** all pages, references, images, graphs and tables, using a consistent, logical sequence.

PDF (Portable Document Format) files

You can convert Word, Rich Text Format and PowerPoint files to PDF, using:

- Microsoft Office for Windows, 2007 or later, or
- the Print facility built into the Mac operating system.

To do so:

- In Windows, click the Windows icon at the top left-hand corner of the screen, and select **Save As > Adobe PDF**. In the *Save Adobe PDF File A*s window, select a location and click **Save**.
- On a Mac, in the menu bar select **File > Print**. In the *Print* window, click **PDF** and select **Save as PDF**. In the *Save To* window, select a location and click **Save**.

When converting a document to PDF, ensure that you create an accessible PDF, not an image PDF. Screen reading software can only be used on accessible PDFs.

How do you tell if a PDF file is accessible? Select text in the PDF file with your cursor, and copy and paste it. If this is not possible, the document is an image PDF and cannot be read by screen readers.

Most PowerPoint slides are not accessible. If you include PowerPoints in your online course, also include an

accessible-PDF or Word version of the content.

Tell users where to get help

Make contact details for accessibility support people quick and easy to find. Include their phone number, email address and hours of availability.