

## Accessibility Guidance

### Printed Information

Literature for general use should be available in a readable size for all anticipated users. Anything smaller than 12 point is difficult to read by the majority of people. Where large print is required, this should be 16 to 18 points. However, some people may request ‘giant’ print which is 24pt. It’s worth noting that print that is too large is often as difficult to comprehend as that which is too small. However, it’s also important to ensure there is flexibility in what people may require and ensure appropriate systems are in place to create print sizes to their requirements.

Braille versions or audio versions of information should be made available upon request.

It is relatively easy to produce digital information without needing professional help and it is encouraged that suitable digital media for communicating all kinds of information such as how to find your premises (whether by car, or public transport) and such services and procedures as how to make a complaint or obtain information.

The following guidelines might prove useful to keep in mind when developing printed literature:

- Go for maximum contrast e.g., bold black print on white or lightly coloured paper.
- Do not print text over a design or photograph and keep print bold, clear and well-spaced
- Upper and lower-case print is easier to read than block capitals
- Keep sentences short and use bullet points
- The smallest print to use is 12pt, and 14pt. may be preferred in some cases
- 18-24 pt in sans serif font for large print
- 24+ pt for Giant Print
- The easiest typefaces to read are sans-serif such as Arial, Helvetica
- Use matt rather than glossy paper and avoid paper that is semi-transparent
- Don’t overuse colours or designs
- Always use plain language
- A LOT OF INFORMATION GIVEN IN BLOCK CAPITALS IS DIFFICULT TO READ. BLOCK CAPITALS DO NOT GIVE THE WORD SHAPES PROVIDED BY UPPER AND LOWER-CASE PRINT AND THE GENERAL APPEARANCE IS UNINVITING.
- Avoid placing information in plastic pockets or glossy laminate which can cause surface reflection and difficulty in decoding.
- Don’t increase the size of the laminate by creating an enlarged photocopy, as it reduces clarity.

## Layout

- Use even spaces between words and don't split words at the end of lines
- Headings should be left hand justified
- Leave enough space between lines so that each line of the print can be clearly seen
- Use unjustified right-hand margins
- Leave one line of space between paragraphs
- Clearly separate columns.

## Making it easier to find things in long documents

- Break information into sections
- Give each section its own title or subtitle
- Number the headings, paragraphs, etc
- Always provide a contents list using both numbers and the headings/sub- headings
- Put the page numbers in the same position on each page.

## Plain language

Always use plain language:

- Write as you would speak
- It is understood by your employees, visitors and clients
- It stops misunderstanding and reduces complaints
- It saves time and money
- Use images to support the text
- Avoid jargon.

## References

- UKAAF (UK Association of Accessible Formats), Clear Text Guidance by RNIB and BDA Dyslexia Guidance via <https://www.musedcn.org.uk/2017/01/12/accessible-text-standards-uk/>

## Digital Information and Social Media

Organisations across all sectors should follow a good practice approach to website or mobile app accessibility by making it 'perceivable, operable, understandable and robust' known as the 'POUR' principle.

Any web developers or web content managers should also familiarise themselves with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and be striving to meet AA standard.  
[www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG21/quickref](http://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG21/quickref)

This short, captioned video explains more about the role and standards of WCAG and the POUR principle of Accessibility: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=20SHvU2PKsM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20SHvU2PKsM)

Government Digital Service (GDS) have a number of blogs, films and tips to create accessible websites online. The films are particularly useful as part of an overall strategy. Government Digital Service: <https://gds.blog.gov.uk/category/accessibility/>

## Using images

Ensure that everyone has access to the images especially people who are Blind or visually impaired and using assistive technology and need the content of the image described to them.

An ALT text site behind an image on a webpage or a social media feed describes what the image is. It allows web images to be 'searchable' and is said to increase search engine optimisation (SEO).

The RNIB provides helpful guidance on how to correctly add ALT text: [www.rnib.org.uk/accessibility-guidelines-alt-text-what-you-need-know](http://www.rnib.org.uk/accessibility-guidelines-alt-text-what-you-need-know)