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# Accessibility Webinar 4: Introduction to making a Word Document Accessible

## Simple skills to apply to a document that can make life easier for everyone.

### Does Accessibility have anything to do with UDL (Universal Design for Learning)?

In udl we provide multiple means of representation and this involves ways of customising the display of information and more. Go to the [udl guidelines webpage from cast](http://udlguidelines.cast.org/representation) to learn more.

**Tip**: Change case of letters from upper to sentence case. Go to the ‘Home’ Tab and click on the ‘Aa’ icon.

### Heading Structures in a Word Document

Section headings reveal how the information is organized and make the document easier to scan. Properly marking up section headings with styles also improves navigation for screen reader users.

Best Practices: Select the desired heading text and choose an appropriate heading style (H1, H2 and so on) from the styles menu in your authoring tool. Make sure headings are nested in a logical order (e.g. H2 does not come before H1)

Go to the ‘Home’ Tab and click on the appropriate Heading Style.

Modify the Heading Style by right clicking the Heading type in the ribbon above.

### Design Is perceivable and predictable

Through good design, you can reduce the amount of effort it takes your readers to process the information in a document, allowing them to focus on the meaning conveyed by the content rather than its presentation.

### Recommendations:

Ensure enough contrast **between** text and the background. This can be confirmed with the [free Colour Contrast Analyser tool for Mac and Windows](https://developer.paciellogroup.com/resources/contrastanalyser/).

Choose a sans-serif font (one without extra ornamentation) for your body text.

Use left alignment rather than fully justified text. Full justification can add extra spacing between words that can be distracting to some readers.

Avoid *italics* and underline for emphasis – use **bold** if you must as underline can mean a link

Avoid ALL CAPS as this can be read as shouting and it is more challenging to read.

Avoid using the space bar repeatedly and use the Tab button instead.

Add page numbers. Go to ‘Insert’ and then ‘Page number’.

### Make Meaningful Links

Screen reader users can use a shortcut to bring up a list of the links in a document. Links need to be unique and descriptive for them to make sense when they are accessed as a list, without the surrounding text for context.

Recommendation: Instead of “click here” or “learn more” select meaningful text (text that is descriptive and unique) and make that text the link.

<https://www.ahead.ie/>

[Go to the AHEAD website for more information about Universal Design for Learning](https://www.ahead.ie/conference2020)

[Visit the AHEAD website](https://www.ahead.ie/conference2020)

### Images, Images and more Images.

Screen readers can only describe an image to someone who is blind if a text alternative is provided. Text alternatives can also make complex images easier to understand for other learners.

Best Practices: After considering the purpose of the image and the context for its use, provide a concise description that focuses on the information the image conveys. If the image is only used for decoration, mark it as decorative (if your authoring tool has that option) or use “decorative” as the alternative text.

### Three types of images and what to consider when we use Alt Text.

Can we use bullet points here?

1. Decorative: indicate it should be skipped by screen readers.
2. Functional: (included in a link – describe the destination or action).
3. Informative: provide a concise description

Using the Accessibility Checker

Go to the ribbon above and click on the tab called ‘Review’ and then click on the button called ‘Check Accessibility’.

The Accessibility Checker can detect some accessibility issues but not all.

### How to add Alternative Text to an image

* Right-click on image and choose Edit Alt Text.
* Enter your description manually or select “Generate a Description for Me” to use Artificial Intelligence.
* Alternative: Select “Mark as decorative” if the image is not required for understanding.





[](https://www.ahead.ie/index)

<https://www.ahead.ie/index>

### Useful Alt text resources

* [WebAIM: Alternative Text](https://webaim.org/techniques/alttext/)
* [An alt Decision Tree](https://www.w3.org/WAI/tutorials/images/decision-tree/) (WAI)
* [DIAGRAM Center](http://diagramcenter.org/table-of-contents-2.html) (more complex images)

### Making a Table of Contents

Go to the start of your document to place the contents page at the beginning of the document. Then go to the References Tab in the ribbon above. Then click on the ‘Table of Contents’. Select the appropriate type of contents.

### Task

Take a Word document and [use this webpage to convert it into an audio file](https://ally.ac/covid19/). Now your document is an audio file. Can this help students and staff? Can you hear how the heading styles make a difference?

### Transferability of these accessibility skills

* PowerPoint
* Social Media.

### Resources used to inform this Webinar came from Cast and Ability.net.