**Creating Accessible Documents**

## Creating an accessible Word document

Microsoft Word is currently the most common program used to create files.

There are some very simple ways to make your documents accessible.

1. Use a standard format with a basic black font colour
2. Use Headings

This helps people using screen readers to jump between headings and sections easily

Using headings and paragraphs of text will also provide the document structure.

3. The layout of the document should not contain multiple characters for formatting e.g. returns, spaces or tabs as these are perceived as blanks by people using screen readers. Use paragraph settings, page breaks or column breaks to control spacing and format. Columns are formatted using section and column breaks, not tables or text boxes. Text boxes are inaccessible and should not be used. A similar effect to a text box can be generated using paragraph borders.

1. If the Style Set of your document includes a Bullet List and/or a Numbered List create an ordered and unordered list then use the bullet or number function.
2. Hyperlink text should provide a clear description of the link destination and not just provide the URL. Hyperlinks should contain meaningful text, that is, they do not contain ‘click here’ or ‘at www…’.
3. Provide text alternatives for images, graphical objects and tables.

Alternative text should describe the meaning of an image or table rather than its appearance. If an image is too complicated to concisely describe in the alternative text alone (artwork, graphs, flowcharts, etc.), provide a short text alternative for the alt text box and a longer description.

1. Avoid the use of colour
2. Use plain text and avoid lots of images
3. Avoid PDF documents where possible