# PowerPoint Accessibility Checklist

This checklist, guided by the [Equality Act (2010)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents) and [Digital Accessibility Regulations 2018](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/952/made), will help staff design and deliver teaching in accordance with the University of Glasgow’s [Equality & Diversity](https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/equalitydiversity/policy/equalitypolicy/) and [Accessible & Inclusive Learning](https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/apg/policies/studentsupport/ailp/) policies. We are committed to ensuring all learning spaces are supportive and inclusive, so that ‘all participants can be at their best’.

This checklist will help you ensure your PowerPoint presentations reflect these principles. Please use this along with the PowerPoint slides called ‘Accessibility Guidance Presentation’, whose slide numbers are indicated in brackets.

Please also check the University’s general guidelines [THRIVES](https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/digitalaccessibility/), as well as other resources listed below, as any single institution will not have all the answers.

Accessible PowerPoint slides with the University logo are available from [Brand Toolkit](https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/staff/brandtoolkit/resources/promotionalmaterials/powerpoint/).

## 1 - Layouts, animations and transitions (Slides 9-10)

### Use template layouts

* These layouts will come in an appropriate reading order for screen readers.
* If you want to make your own layouts, your best bet is to create a custom layout in ‘master slide’ view instead of working directly on a template layout. ([In this guide](https://24slides.com/presentbetter/ultimate-powerpoint-template-guide), steps 4 and 5 teach you how to do it.)

### Don’t use complicated animations or transitions

* Animations can be useful or they can be distracting. Keep them simple (e.g. ‘Appear’ or ‘Fade’ with logical blocks).
* Transition effects can be distracting. Don’t use any, or use subtle ones.

## 2 - Fonts (Slide 11)

### Follow universal font design

* Use sans-serif fonts: Helvetica, Tahoma, Calibri, Verdana or Arial are some of the most popular.
* Avoid cursive, underlining and strikethrough (use **bold** for highlighting).
* For presentations, font size should be at least 28pt for titles and 24pt for body.

## 3 - Backgrounds (Slide 12)

### Don’t use gradient backgrounds

* It is more difficult to ensure colour contrast falls within accessibility ranges this way.
* Avoid harsh colour contrasts between background and text.
* You can check text/background colour contrast using [this online checker](https://www.achecks.org/wcag-2-accessible-colour-contrast-checker/).

## 4 - Colour combination (Slide 13)

### Check colour combination

* If you want to use different colours, use colourblind accessible colours.
* Blues and reds (including oranges and browns) are the two main colours used in colourblind-friendly palettes.

## 5 - Wordcount, titling and slide numbering (Slides 14-15)

### Don’t overcrowd your slides

* Crowding your slides with lots of images or text can be time-consuming for you and more difficult for your audience to digest.
* The text in your slides is meant to prompt you as you speak and serve as pointers for your audience to keep track of your talk, or to review their notes afterwards.
* Remember that for oral presentations, the audience will have to read the text and/or process the visuals while listening. Simple slides can avoid a cognitive overload.

### Write your text as lists

* Using bullet points for the content of your slides increases readability and comprehension and helps screen reader users.

### Title every slide and add slide numbers

* Titles help your audience keep track of your topics, and they are essential for those who use screen readers.
* If you need more than one slide per topic, you can give them the same title, accompanied by a number.
* Insert slide numbers.

## 6 - Links, images and tables (Slides 16-18)

### Describe your hyperlinks

* Avoid writing ‘click here’ or ‘read more’. Make sure that the link text makes sense in its own context.
* It will assist screen reader users if the link title gives information about the link destination.

### Add image descriptions

* Screen readers can read these out loud.
* A good image description is succinct but contains the most important details of an image, including its potential symbolism. Include captions for videos as well.
* A good image description does not say ‘this is an image’. [Here is a guide to alt text good practice](https://uxdesign.cc/how-to-write-an-image-description-2f30d3bf5546).

### Don’t overuse images

* Avoid using only images to convey ideas, and don’t clutter your slides with decorative images.
* You can also mark images that do not add anything to your points as ‘decorative’, so screen readers skip them.

### Don’t use incorrectly implemented tables

* Tables, charts and graphs can’t be processed well by screen readers.
* If you do use them, use the PowerPoint tool to create one, and specify the header row.
* Provide a text description of the figure, and make sure tables do not contain merged or split cells, or nested tables.

## 7 - Slide organisation (Slide 19)

### Check slide reading order

* Check and re-organise the reading order of the components of your slide. This is particularly important when you add new elements (e.g. images) or if you have created your own layout.
* You can also group your slides into sections. This can help both you and your students to find information quickly.

## 8 - Reminders

### Don’t use elaborate language

* Your presentation has been created to support your audience in following and understanding your talk, so the information in it should consist of short sentences in [plain English](http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/free-guides.html).

### Use inclusive language and terms

* Avoid talking about minority groups, or any group, in an abstracted, othering way.
* Please read the Teaching Inclusion Guidelines to learn principles, tips and resources.

### Don’t aim for perfection

* It’s not possible to make a presentation that is accessible for every single person. For example, underlining a hyperlink can help colourblind people, but hinders screen readers.
* It is better to create your presentations with your specific audience in mind, and/or provide different versions of your slides to your audience to look at on their own time.

### Don’t forget to use the Accessibility Checker

* Check accessibility of your slides before use.
* Both PowerPoint and Word have this handy feature.

### Share slides, not PDF

* Don’t convert PowerPoint presentations to PDF when sharing (e.g. via Moodle). Share them as slides, so that they can be processed by a screen reader.

## 9 - Useful resources

Check, for example,

### Microsoft

* + [Accessibility tools for PowerPoint](https://support.microsoft.com/en-gb/office/accessibility-tools-for-powerpoint-2b7a387c-bc02-408f-8c49-59534665850f) (tools to make presentations accessible for everyone)
  + [Make your PowerPoint presentations accessible to people with disabilities](https://support.microsoft.com/en-gb/office/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25) (step-by-step instructions to make presentations accessible)

### AbilityNet

* + [Creating Accessible Documents](https://abilitynet.org.uk/factsheets/creating-accessible-documents-0?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjw8MG1BhCoARIsAHxSiQlWyQNE9cFtTXSqTu--5pFlpH91ifjTaWGOQjub4Vb8tpVaVIvq0TsaAs5CEALw_wcB) (helpful tips on improving the accessibility; while the focus is Word, the principles can be applied to other software)