

# 5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

## ▶ **Who might find this checklist useful?**

All staff involved in Publicity and Marketing Departments and staff delivering teaching and supporting learning, e.g., lecturers, technicians, research students, etc., and new staff on induction.

## 5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

### ► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

**5.6 Responsible bodies should not wait until a disabled person applies to do a course or tries to use a Service before thinking about what reasonable adjustments they could make. Instead they should continually be anticipating the requirements of disabled people or students and the adjustments they could be making for them (to):**

- teaching, including classes, lectures, seminars, practical sessions
- independent learning opportunities such as e-learning
- learning equipment and materials such as...class handouts
- information and communication technology and resources. (3.14)

#### **Example 5.2F**

A tutor in Zoology delivers one of his modules through a computer-based learning environment and awards marks for students' participation in online discussion. The system does not work with a visually impaired student's software. The student is likely to be placed at a substantial disadvantage.

#### **Example 5.6E**

A university encourages its lecturers to put lecture notes on the institution intranet. It introduces new procedures to ensure that all notes put on the intranet meet established guidelines to ensure there is no conflict with specialist software or features that students with dyslexia may be using. It therefore anticipates reasonable adjustments that it might need to make for certain disabled students.

## 5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

### ● **What the QAA Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities recommends**

#### **Precept 10**

The delivery of programmes should take into account the needs of disabled people, or, where appropriate, be adapted to accommodate their individual requirements. Institutions should consider making arrangements which ensure that all academic staff and technical staff:

- plan and employ teaching and learning strategies which make the delivery of the programme as inclusive as possible;
- know and understand the learning implications of any disabilities of the students whom they teach, and are responsive to student feedback;
- make individual adaptations to delivery that are appropriate for particular students, which might include providing handouts in advance and/or in different formats (Braille, disk)

Institutions should consider implementing IT and computer arrangements which maximise disabled students' access to learning, including:

- IT strategies and procedures that pay due attention to the needs of disabled students.
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## 5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

### What students say about current practice

#### **Donna - Science - dyslexia**

Knowing what lectures are about in advance is really important to me. Some lecturers will give just a title but no detailed information about what a lecture might involve. For lecturers where I have known in detail what was going to be involved, I've been able to read a little first. That's helped a great deal and would help other students too and not just those with a disability. Whenever there is a lack of information it's disastrous for me.

#### **Josh - Arts and Humanities - hearing loss**

There is a big contrast between lecturers who make a real effort to produce good quality handouts and those who just do things like making lists of the slides they've shown. Actually you can see some of the differences in the grades I get. My best marks seem to be in areas where the quality of info is good.

#### **Tajinder - Technology - visual impairment**

I often can't read what the staff have written on the whiteboards and even what note takers write down may not be accurate. Sometimes when a lecturer is making a diagram and describing it, by the time my note taker has enlarged the diagram and passed it to me later in the week, I can't remember the discussion at all.

#### **Alan - Science - visual impairment**

There are some staff members who give me A3 paper despite being asked umpteen times not to. Enlargements on A3 are hopeless. I don't have an A3 file. Where do you punch the holes? Anyway they take up too much space for filing. A4 to A3 often doesn't make the print much larger anyway. Given that most materials are produced in Power Point or Word it is extremely easy for staff to upsize a copy. It just takes a few extra sheets of paper.

#### **Sandra - Arts and Humanities - multiple sclerosis**

One lecturer made assumptions and gave me a lot of stuff that was in very very large print. I mean very large print. She was speaking slowly to me and making copies of the overheads that were enormous. I had all this paper and after the lecture I said, "Excuse me I don't understand why you have given me all this large print stuff".

"Well, you need it," she said.

I'd never met her before and she had never met me, but she knew I had MS. She must have read up about it and read up about every symptom, one of which can be failing eyesight. But what she had done was assumed that I had all of it, the whole lot.

## 5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

### \* What staff say about current practice

- Like many staff I make all my course presentation materials on my PC. That way I can store and retrieve them and modify them quite easily to satisfy the requirements of most students. For my own benefit I work in Ariel 13 point and when I have a student with a disability who might require something a little different I simply ask them and produce what they want. I don't see it as a big problem actually as long as I know who the students are.
- My first experience of students with disabilities was when the department enrolled several students with dyslexia a few years ago. It quickly became obvious that two of them in particular were really struggling with some of the specialist subject-specific terms. This prompted me to start making short glossaries that could be handed out to them in advance of lectures and now it is routine for all the students.
- All my lecture notes are available through the university intranet. I also put all my Power Point and OHT material there and several of the students have told me that they find it a good resource, and they're not just students with disabilities. I know it has proved to be particularly useful for a deaf student, who was having difficulty with the academic language of the course.

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## ◆ Checklist

### Pre-course preparation

What is the overall procedure for ensuring that staff are aware well in advance of the presence of a disabled student on their course?

**Action  
Comments**

By what method do the staff become aware of the implications of a particular disability on an individual student's teaching and learning needs, and in particular the "reasonable adjustments" required to make course materials accessible?

Is the course documentation, e.g., summaries, course handouts, bibliographies, key readings, etc., made available well in advance of teaching sessions? Is sufficient time available for students to obtain texts on audio tape or Braille?

Have accessible materials also been produced for activities such as:

- fieldwork
- laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments
- placement learning?

➔ **Go to Fieldwork; Laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments; Placement learning.**

### Document layouts

Will documents be printed on pastel coloured matt paper, e.g., buff, as glossy paper can cause glare?

Will documents be presented in black and/or blue typeface but avoiding a proliferation of typeface colours, especially those which can be less distinguishable for some people, e.g., red and green?

Will the font style be limited to one only, and be Sans Serif font, e.g., Arial, Times New Roman, Universe, etc?

Will the point size be a minimum point 12?

Will the numbering and symbol protocols be kept simple and take cognisance of the fact that some characters are difficult to differentiate or are easy to transpose, e.g., 3 and 8, 6 and 9, O and 0, S and 5, iv and vi?

Has care been taken to avoid, where possible:

- words split over lines
- italics
- underlining

# 5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

## ◆ Checklist

### Action Comments

- the capitalisation of whole sentences
- narrow line spacing, narrow margins and dense text
- faint print?

Will the typeface be set horizontally to avoid text set on curved lines and at angles?

Have text documents been generously spaced with a left-justified margin, e.g., not right justified as this can cause word elongation and irregular spacing?

Has centre justification been avoided except for main title headings?

Will enough space be left between columns to make sure that text flows easily from column to column?

If the option is that a reader might need to write on a page, has enough space been left for this, e.g., in a circumstance where a student has visual impairment or dexterity difficulties?

### Documents with images

If the document includes images has attention been given to:

- ensuring that typeface is not superimposed over images
- avoiding putting text around images which produces a ragged left-hand edge
- placing photographs suitably to the right of text
- using only high contrast images with clean backgrounds?

### Reproduction and reading

Have the necessary enquiries been made of students to ensure that the format of the documents produced meets their needs?

➔ **Go to Appendix I: Positive communication.**

Does the documentation clearly flag up the key points, using plain language to explain subject specific terminology and does it use bullet pointed summaries rather than dense passages of text?

Have document binding methods and the number of pages contained in a document been considered as access issues for those readers using scanners and magnifiers?

Are the photocopies being made of good quality? Are measures being taken to avoid reducing document sizes, e.g., A3 reduced to A4 and of making copies from copies?

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Have arrangements been made to make large print copies for those students who might need them?

For transcribing purposes have written form versions or audio cassettes of graphs, charts and diagrams, etc. been made?

### Materials for Visual Displays

Has consideration been given to the accessibility issues involved in the use of OHP transparencies, slide projection, audio video recordings, electronic presentation packages, DVD and virtual learning environments?

When producing visual displays have the caveats governing the production of printed and printable materials set out above been explored?

Have the different protocols involved in visual presentations been considered:

- size of projected image
- the length of time for the display of each image
- the overall length of time of the presentation
- the relative strengths and weakness of still versus animated images
- viewer positions and distances, etc
- other light sources that might be intrusive?

Has the text display been simplified, enlarged and given more space than a paper-based format, e.g., does it conform to the word count protocol that the maximum number of words on an OHP transparency should not exceed 25?

For still displays has a suitable background been chosen that is a solid colour to avoid patterns, textures and images, e.g., by using high contrast images such as black on yellow?

Have measures been taken to avoid text over image and other visual clutter?

### Alternatives to audio visual elements

Have arrangements been made to make available written form versions or audio cassettes of screen text, graphs, charts, overhead transparencies and electronic presentation packages, etc. for transcribing purposes?

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### ◆ Checklist

	Action Comments
Where an audio element is present have arrangements been made to provide alternative visual displays and captions to augment sign language interpretation?	
When a virtual learning environment is deployed, have text alternatives or sub-titles been generated for the sound clips?	
<b>Electronic dissemination</b>	
What arrangements have been made to make paper-based and visual materials available in electronic formats using intranet and e-mail?	
Does the institution's web site comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines?	
<b>See Additional sources of information below.</b>	
Have arrangements been made for access to chat rooms and on-line discussions from the student's personal computer?	
When students are users of assistive technologies have arrangements been made to ensure that electronic format material is readable via screen enlargement software, text-to-voice output, etc?	
Have discussions taken place with disability support service to explore issues of accessibility in cases where assistive technologies are to be employed for document retrieval and/or reading?	
If assessments are undertaken through CAL have accessibility issues been addressed? ➔ <b>Go to Assessment.</b>	
<b>Student evaluation</b>	
In pursuing a successful system for the production of printed, visual and electronic learning, assessment and information materials, what arrangements have been made for on-going student evaluation?	

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### + **Additional sources of information**

#### **Accessibility Guidelines for Web Authors**

Available at: [www.demon.ac.uk/access](http://www.demon.ac.uk/access)

#### **The Disability Discrimination Act Part 4. Learning and Teaching Good Practice Guide, (2002)** Disability Rights Commission, London.

Available at: [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)

**Inclusive practices for students with disabilities: a guide for academic staff, (2000)**, Universities Disabilities Cooperative Project, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, New South Wales, Australia.

#### **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.**

Available at: [www.w3.org/WAI/](http://www.w3.org/WAI/)