Clear Print Guidelines

Clear print design promotes inclusion across Ireland, supporting every individual, regardless of their vision, to participate in their community. By making the information we produce clear and readable, we are supporting every person to live an independent life.

Text:

- Choose a simple, monospaced, sans-serif font, for example, Arial, Calibri or Verdana.
- Avoid vertical or curved text
- Keep text size large – around 14pt. Consider your audience, some people may find a larger font size easier to read.
- Leading (the space between lines of text) should be around 25 – 30% of the total font size to help the reader move their eyes more easily to the next line of text.
- Avoid using hyphenation splitting a word across two lines.
- Try to keep sentence structure and keep the main text in upper and lower case.
- Avoid using CAPS, underlining or *italics* for emphasis.
- To create emphasis, **a small amount of colour**, **bold** or larger font size may be used to highlight key words, headings or titles.

Colour:

- Printed materials are most readable in black and white.
- For titles or to add emphasis, **limit coloured text** and chose to increase font size.
- High contrast colour combinations of dark text on light backgrounds (eg, black on white background, black text on yellow background), or light text on dark backgrounds (white text on black background , yellow text on dark blue background)
- Simplify your design and minimise background images or use of watermarks under text.

Spacing:

- Try to keep the document layout consistent and logical, with reoccurring features used to distinguish between chapters, titles, text, as appropriate.
- Keep page numbers in the same location.
- Try to keep all text left aligned as it makes it easier to track with magnification. Central alignment should only be used for titles.
- If organising the text into columns, ensure three is an adequate gutter between the columns of text.

Diagrams:

- If using diagrams or infographics, ensure they flow from left to right to support the reader to track across the page.
- Try to make all diagrams as simple as possible, and follow the guidance above on for text and spacing.
- Additionally, ensure all information found in a diagram can be found in the text, and images are not the only means of finding information.

Forms

- If the reader needs to write on the page, ensure there is adequate space to use a thick marker.
- If using tick boxes or tables, ensure the border is solid and bold.

Printed Materials:

- Select a matte or non-glossy print to reduce glare from the page.
- For printed materials, use wide binding margins or spiral bindings, if possible. Flat pages work best with vision aids, for example magnifiers.

Digital Documents

- When producing a document using Microsoft Word, make the document easy to navigate with a screenreader by using the 'Styles' function to tag Titles, Headings, Subheadings and Paragraph text.
- When producing a digital document in PDF, ensure it is an Accessible PDF. Guidelines on how to create an accessible PDF are available here: Create and Verify PDF Accessibility
- Provide Alt-Text on all photos and diagrams, explaining what is show in the picture.
- With regards to online webpages or documents, considerations should be made to colour contrast for to meet WCAG AA or AAA standards. A useful Contrast Checker is available here, WebAIM.

If you would like more information about our clear print advisory service, please contact us at:

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NCBI
Working for People with Sight Loss