

# Guidelines for Dyslexia

- Use Sans Serif Fonts (Arial, Verdana).
- For Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle, Brightspace, Blackboard):
  - › Provide description when labelling files. For example, a file named “unit6Grammar.ppt” is better than “abcdfe.ppt”.
  - › Ensure that the layout of materials is consistent across different modules to help students navigate more easily.
  - › Provide clear and step-by-step instructions for accessing and completing online activities.
- For slides:
  - › Use bullet points to break down information into manageable chunks.
  - › Keep the structure of slides consistent throughout the presentation to reduce cognitive load. This does not mean the same type of slide, but there should be a consistent layout (same margins, same types of fonts, consistent colours).
  - › Make sure every bullet point has a full stop “.” to make it clear the sentence has ended and avoid confusion when reading.
  - › Use alt text <sup>1</sup> for images. In MS Word, you can add alt text by right-clicking on any inserted image and selecting the 'Edit Alt Text' option.
  - › Use high contrast but avoid black and white (opt for off-white and off-black colours).

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<sup>1</sup> Alt text, or alternative text, is a brief description added to images in digital content to provide information about the image's content and function. It can help students with dyslexia better understand the material if they struggle with visual processing or interpreting complex visuals. Alt text works well with screen readers and other assistive technologies that many students with dyslexia use to help with reading and comprehension. Clear and concise alt text can help students focus on the essential information presented in the visuals without being overwhelmed by unnecessary details.

- › Prioritise pastel backgrounds as they reduce the glare effect caused by projectors.
- › Font size must be at least 21 points and 1.5 line spacing.
- For word files:
  - › Size 12 at least, 1.5 spacing.
  - › Avoid underlying or italicising. Use bold instead.
  - › Avoid justifying text. Align text left or right depending on the language standard. For example, English to the left; Arabic, to the right.
  - › Use numbered lists for steps or sequences to provide clear order and structure.
  - › Use clear headings and subheadings to organize content and help students quickly find information.
  - › Use the accessibility checker available on MS word.

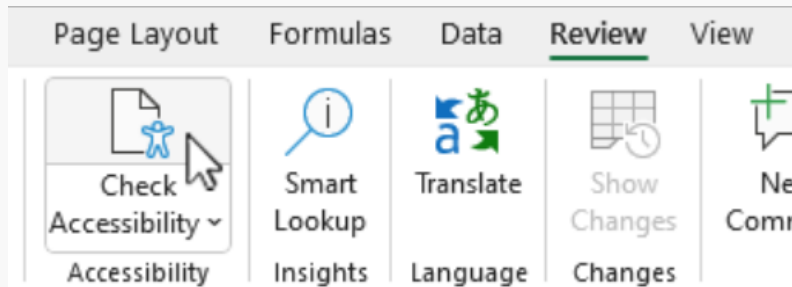


Figure 1 Accessibility Checker in MS Word desktop app

- › Check contrast for font and background with online tools. ([Click here for tool](#) or search for “colour contrast tool” online).

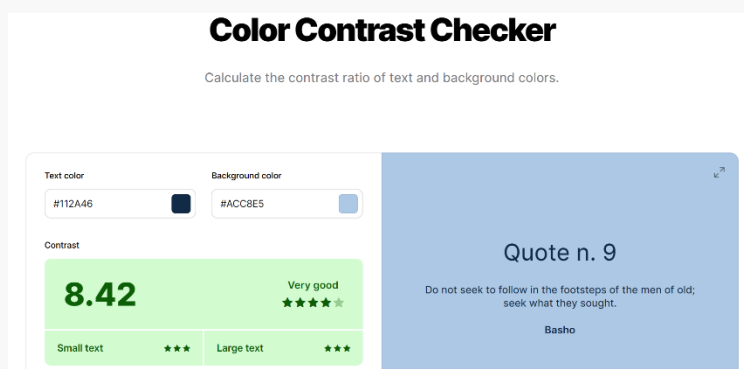


Figure 2 Coolers. co Colour Contrast Checker

- Labs / practical work
  - › Give them the lab document a few days before the lab, if possible.
  - › Provide clear, step-by-step instructions for practical tasks.
  - › Don't penalise them for spelling errors.
- › Providing sentence starters to show how to begin a written response. For example:

**Sentence starters for a question about interpreting data:**

"The data indicates that..."

"From the data, we can infer that..."

"A possible trend shown by the data is..."

- Examination
  - › Use new paragraphs and bullet points to break things up, and leave plenty of space for handwritten answers.
  - › Use clear formatting with ample spacing between questions and sections.
- › Avoid examples that use single letter pairs, such as: pq,pd,bd,bq.

**Example avoiding similar looking letters:**

Original: "Calculate the net profit where  $p$  is the revenue and  $q$  is the expenses."

Revised: "Calculate the net profit where **rev** is the revenue and **exp** is the expenses."

- During class
  - › Keeping oral instructions concise and reinforcing them with brief cue words.
  - › Incorporate frequent breaks to help maintain focus and reduce fatigue.
  - › Provide instructions in alternative formats. For example: slides + speaking (visual + auditory).

- › Use images and diagrams where possible – using alternative text if it is in digital format OR describing it verbally if presenting it.
- › Repeat and rephrase key points throughout the class.
- › Speak clearly and use gestures to emphasise key points.
- › Explain the keywords first before they are used when discussing that topic in class.
- › Breaking a longer sentence into a few shorter ones (sometimes students are so focused on understanding each word they can miss the meaning of the sentence).
- › Read aloud any material that is written on the blackboard, included in handouts, or displayed on transparencies.
- Before class
  - › Give students the lesson notes a few days before the class, if possible.
  - › Encourage students to submit questions or topics they find difficult before the class.
  - › Provide documents in DOC or PPT format instead of PDF, so students can change the font and background colour as needed.
  - › Keeping oral instructions concise and reinforcing them with brief cue words; providing them in alternative formats.
  - › Offer review sessions to address any pre-class materials and clarify doubts.