What is SCULPT

SCULPT is guidance for staff to create accessible documents for clients, learners and the public.

SCULPT started life as a set of guidance for staff at Worcestershire County Council. It is an acronym of the six simple things you can learn to do correctly to make your documents meet basic accessibility requirements. These spell out the six letters of SCULPT. This document offers guidance in each of the SCULPT areas.

This takes you through each letter of SCULPT to understand:

- what to do
- how to find it
- why do it
- how to do it

The logo and the infographic are designed for people to recognise and remember the acronym of how to SCULPT content for accessibility

This document can be found at: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sculpt

S C U L P T

The basic six things to consider when creating accessible information

Structure (heading styles)	**Colour & contrast**	**Use of images**	**Links** (hyperlinks)	**Plain English**	**Table structure**
S	**C**	**U**	**L**	**P**	**T**
Use heading styles in your document such as H1, H2, H3	The colours you use and the contrast between text and background	Use alternative (alt) text on your images	Describe your link, never use click here	Use clear uncomplicated language with no jargon	Use simple tables without merged or split cells

Structure
(heading styles)

1
2
3

S

What to do

In Word use the built-in headings and styles

In PowerPoint create a reading order for content in your slides

Website designers use headings and styles to structure and organise content

How to find it

Heading styles are in the **Home tab** on the ribbon in Microsoft Word. Using these you can add a heading.

In PowerPoint you can use the 'bring to front' and 'send to back' options to create a reading order. You can then check the reading order by using the tab key to tab through the content order in each slide

Why do it

To make it easier for screen readers to read your documents in a logical order

Organize the information in your Word documents into small chunks with headings and sub-headings. Ideally, each heading would include only a few paragraphs so the information is better organised as well as easier to read and understand.

In PowerPoint a screen reader reads through content using the reading order. This also works when a PowerPoint is saved as a PDF

How to do it

Apply built-in heading styles

To check that the order of headings you have added are logical, you can use the navigation pane in Word.

Video: Improve accessibility in Word with heading styles

Video: Creating slides in PowerPoint with accessible structure and reading order

Content adapted from Microsoft Office: Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities

Colour and contrast

C

What to do

Ensure that colour is not the only means of conveying information.

Use sufficient contrast for text and background colours.

How to find it

To find insufficient colour contrast, use the Accessibility Checker.

You can also look for text in your document that's hard to read or to distinguish from the background.

Why do it

People who are blind, have low vision, or are colour-blind might miss out on the meaning conveyed by colours alone so use other distinguishing factors too.

If your document has a high level of contrast between text and background, more people can see and use the content.

How to do it

Use accessible text colour

Use accessible text format

Tools for checking colour and contrast

Google Chrome NoCoffee Vision Simulator

Colour Contrast Analyser

Content adapted from Microsoft Office: Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities

Use of images

What to do

Include alternative text (alt text) with all visuals.

Visual content includes pictures, SmartArt graphics, shapes, groups, charts, embedded objects, ink, and videos.

How to find it

To find any missing alt text, use the Accessibility Checker.

Why do it

Alt text is used to provide an alternative description of the image for those people who are unable to view it. This may include people with visual impairments who use screen readers as well as people using text only browsers. This is also useful if the image fails to load properly.

Avoid using text in images as the sole method of conveying important information. If you must use an image with text in it, repeat that text in the document.

How to do it

Add alt text to visuals in Office 365

Add alt text to visuals in Office 2019

Add alt text to visuals in Office 2016

Video: Improve accessibility with alt text

Video: Improve image accessibility in PowerPoint

Content adapted from Microsoft Office: Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities

Links
(hyperlinks)
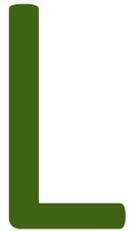
What to do

Add meaningful hyperlink text and ScreenTips.

How to find it

Instead of using 'Click here', include the title of the page your are linking to.

You can also add ScreenTips that appear when your cursor hovers over a hyperlink.

Why do it

People who use screen readers sometimes just scan the list of links in a document or web page.

Links would then be read on their own and out of context away from the full text. This means links need to be given a clear and accurate title about where the link is going to.

Do not use 'click here'

How to do it

Add hyperlink text and ScreenTips

Video: Create accessible links

Content adapted from Microsoft Office: Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities

Plain English

What to do

Try to avoid using long overly complex language, such as jargon, unexplained acronyms and long words.

Make sure you have written **with the reader in mind** and with the right tone of voice, that is clear and concise.

How to find it

Tip: To check if your text makes sense and is clear to understand read it out loud or to someone else.

Why do it

Complex language can be very difficult for some people, especially where English is not their first language or for those with learning difficulties or reduced cognitive abilities.

How to do it

Plain English Campaign

PDF: How to write in plain English

Content adapted from Plain English Campaign

Table structure

What to do

Use a simple table structure, and use column headers

How to find it

To make sure that tables don't contain split cells, merged cells, or nested tables, use the Accessibility Checker.

You can also visually scan your tables to check that they don't have any completely blank rows or columns.

Why do it

Badly created tables can cause difficulties for screen readers or for those tabbing through information on a web page or a document.

If a table is nested within another table or if a cell is merged or split, the screen reader can't provide helpful information.

Blank cells in a table could also mislead a screen reader into thinking that there is nothing more in the table.

Screen readers also use header information to identify rows and columns.

How to do it

Use table headers

Video: Create accessible tables in Word

Content adapted from Microsoft Office: Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities

SCULPT

The little things we can do that can make a big difference

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S C U L P T