



## Making text accessible

*Achieving access for all*





## Making text accessible.

Most people who have a visual impairment, including the majority of those who are registered blind, can read text if it is presented in the right way. Advances in new technology have now also opened up more ways of presenting text to people who have no sight at all.

### Clear print.

- All text should be in a **minimum** of 12 point (preferably 14 point) and Arial font. This is accessible to the majority of people with visual impairments and therefore reduces the requirement for large print requests. This also meets RNIB guidelines.
- Ensure there is a good contrast between print and background paper. When using coloured paper or background tints these should be very pale with a dark print. Black print on white or yellow background is the most accessible because it gives the best contrast.
- Use matt paper. Glossy (art) paper reflects light and can make print difficult to read.
- Use uppercase letters sparingly. A couple of words for a heading are acceptable but not for body text.
- Reverse (negative) print can be used but the font type should be strong such as Ariel or Univers. Some people with specific visual impairments prefer this. However, always avoid “condensed” fonts.
- Align left for text, as this keeps spacing even. Don’t justify or split words at the end of a line.
- When using columns ensure the margins clearly separate the text or, where space is limited, use a vertical line between columns.





## **Clear text guide.**

- Always use plain language and where possible keep text as simple as possible.
- Explain any technical terms.
- Keep text clearly separated from graphics and/or artwork.
- Include picture or symbol formats where possible. This helps to make the information more accessible to people with reading difficulties.
- Keep sentences to one point of information. Avoid long sentences. This helps people with memory or concentration difficulties.
- Keep paragraphs short, about five to seven lines and to one subject.
- Do not use jargon, and when using acronyms ensure that the definitions are given when they are first used.

Further guidance on producing information in alternative formats can be found on Card 7.