

Guidance for accessible presentation and poster design

When creating PowerPoint presentations or posters for RCN events, it is important to consider the needs of neurodivergent members.

Around 20% of the population is neurodivergent, so designing inclusively ensures that everyone can engage with your content effectively.

1. Contrast

- Use high-contrast colour combinations to make text and visuals easy to read. For example: black on white, white on dark blue. Avoid using red for text (or using it behind text).
- **TOP TIP #1:** To check your contrast, try switching your page to grayscale or printing it in black and white. If the content is still clear, the contrast is sufficient.
- **TOP TIP #2:** To check colours for use on screen, you can use a contrast checker (such as <https://coolers.co/contrast-checker>)
- **TOP TIP #3:** Don't use a white background, change to a pale grey, or any other colour. A bright white screen can be too harsh for many.

2. Layout

- Keep your design logical and linear, with a clear flow of information.
- Break information into sections that make it easy for readers to follow.
- Left-aligned text is preferred.

3. Fonts

- Use:
 - Public Sans (the RCN house font) or
 - Trebuchet, which is available as standard in Microsoft Office.

- Avoid using Arial, as it does not meet accessibility requirements.

In a truly accessible font, the following characters should look different (number one, lower case i, upper case i, and lower case l):

Public Sans 1 i l l -all of these characters look different

Trebuchet 1 i l l - all of these characters look different

Arial 1 i l l - the last two characters are the same.

- Avoid italics and underlining –use **bold** if you need to emphasise.

4. Text size

- Use a minimum of 20-point font for PowerPoint slides to ensure readability.
- Use a minimum of 11pt on poster (for body copy). Attention-grabbing headings can be much larger.

5. Slide management

- **TOP TIP #4:** Avoid overloading a single slide with too much information. Try to stick to the 6x6 rule: slides should have no more than 6 lines of text, with no more than 6 words per line. This helps to reinforce your main points.
- Spread content across multiple slides –it’s just a mouse click to progress.
- Use the Notes function in PowerPoint to guide your verbal presentation or to expand on key points.

6. Creativity

- Accessible design does not have to be boring.
- Feel free to be creative while ensuring content is easy to read and follow.
- **TOP TIP #5:** Don’t be afraid of white space (also called negative space or breathing room). Instead of filling a page, use white space to establish a visual hierarchy which will make content clearer, more readable, and more focused.