

York Accessible Information Printed Guidelines

Not having access to information in a format you can read is a barrier to independence. From bus timetables and appointment cards to websites and text books, this is a basic human right. We all want and need information, but many people face challenges in getting the information they need. Changing the way we write and present information can make it easier for everyone to understand.

These guidelines have been developed with reference to other standards, including the RNIB and the Plain English campaign. They are not meant to replace these, but provide a helpful summary for producing printed materials:

1. Use a plain font like Arial, Tahoma, or Verdana. Avoid ornamental fonts like Times New Roman;
2. Font size should be at least 14 point. (But be aware fonts are different sizes so check the font is at least as big as Arial 14);
3. Headings font size should be at least 4 points bigger than the main text;
4. Use ragged right margins, justified on the left, (do not centre justify text, which creates extra spaces between words);
5. Do not hyphenate words at the end of lines. Try to have gaps between paragraphs;
6. Use **bold** for emphasis instead of words in capital letters. Many people recognise words by their shape. Words made up of capitals create a

block, which is more difficult to read. Use bold sparingly and only highlight a few words rather than a whole paragraph.

7. Don't use italics or underline words, as this also makes the words more difficult to read;
8. Make sure there is a big difference between the text colour and the background colour. Use beige, cream or yellow coloured paper to reduce glare;
9. Don't print over images. This will confuse the eye and reduce contrast between text and background;
10. Avoid printing on very glossy paper - select matt or semi-matt. Make sure that it is thick enough to prevent show through. When laminating items, use matt laminate pouches;
11. Avoid using abbreviations (like e.g. or i.e.) or jargon. Make sure everything is spelled correctly and the punctuation is correct. Avoid long sentences.
12. Do not use capital letters where they are not needed. Write in sentence case (with a capital letter at the beginning and then no other capitals unless it is a proper noun, such as a name)
13. Avoid using columns as these can be hard to read. The page layout needs to be clear, simple and consistent. Use page numbers and make sure they are in a large font and appear in the same place on each page.

14. Be prepared to make written information available in a range of accessible formats. Most commonly requested are:

1. large print (at least 18 point like this line but some people may request larger such as size 24)
2. Braille
3. audio tape / CD / mp3
4. Easy Read (with pictures and symbols)
5. Translations