A Guide for Creating Accessible Documents

2012

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Seneca

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Background/Introduction

Seneca College embraces the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and is committed to expanding access and support to all students, employees and visitors with disabilities, by having as its goal a barrier-free learning and working environment to enable academic and employment success.

In 2005, Ontario introduced its first legislation, designed to create a province of inclusion for people with disabilities - the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The AODA sets out the structure by which we can make Ontario accessible to all people by 2025.

The purpose of the AODA is to develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards so businesses and organizations that provide goods and services will have rules to meet to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility. The Accessibility standards will apply to five key areas of daily living. Four standards have already been made into law:

- Customer Service

- Transportation

- Information and Communication

- Employment

The fifth standard – Built Environment – is being developed.

The standards apply to Seneca College and as such we are obligated to meet the requirements of these standards.

To find out about what is a 'disability', what is a 'barrier', and what an 'accessibility standard' is, and much more – go to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act website (Ministry and Community and Social Services).

Seneca has provided a number of resources to assist faculty and staff in developing accessible materials. These resources are available through Seneca Human Resources at https://inside.senecac.on.ca/hr/aoda/

Seneca College Accessibility

Seneca College has processes and offices established to provide services to persons with disabilities. The office of Diversity and Equity within the Human Resources department works with other College departments to develop and implement accessibility, diversity and equity initiatives, as well as adherence to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act*, ensuring that the College provides a respectful, accessible, safe and inclusive environment by supporting and communicating to people of all abilities. The Student Conduct Office is the College's resolution centre for student related issues and provides students with a respectful, impartial and safe environment where complaints can be heard. Student Health and Accessibility Department is a student service which provides academic accommodations and support to students of all abilities who have a documented learning, physical, sensory, mental health disability or medical condition.

Legal and Policy Background

There are three "guiding principles" for creating accessible documents:

1. The Ontario Human Rights Code
2. Reasonable and Appropriate Accommodation
3. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Ontario Human Rights Code

The Ontario *Human Rights Code* is a provincial law that gives everybody equal rights and opportunities without discrimination in specific social areas such as jobs, housing, services, facilities, and contracts or agreements. The "*Code*'s" goal is to prevent discrimination and harassment because of race, sex, disability, and age, to name a few of the fifteen grounds. All other Ontario laws must agree with the *"Code"*:
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/ohrc-elearning-your-elearning-source-human-rights

All service providers must provide equal treatment to all persons without discrimination because of a disability (includes temporary and permanent disabilities, being in receipt of Workers Safety and Insurance Benefits in the past or at present, learning disabilities, visible, invisible and perceived disabilities). All reasonable measures must be taken by service providers to accommodate a person with a disability, short of "undue hardship" (subsection 24(2)). The Code defines "disability" (section 10(1)) broadly, to include physical disabilities, infirmities, malformations, disfigurement or illness, as well as mental impairment, developmental or learning disability, language dysfunction or mental disorders.[1]

Reasonable and Appropriate Accommodations

What are "reasonable and appropriate accommodations" and what does "short of undue hardship" mean in the academic context? What constitutes reasonable measures will vary depending on the circumstances. In other words, different types of disabilities require different accommodations and each student must be assessed on an individual basis in the context of the particular course and its academic requirements.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act[1], 2005 (AODA) became law on June 13, 2005. Under this landmark legislation, the government of Ontario developed mandatory accessibility standards that will identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living.

Five key areas have been identified by the Legislation:

1. **Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.** The standard states what businesses and other organizations in Ontario must do to provide good customer service in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities.

2. **Accessibility Standard for Transportation.** This standard is the only one that is sector specific, that is, it relates specifically to modes of transportation that will make it easier for everyone to travel in Ontario. Come under the jurisdiction of provincial and municipal governments.

3. **Accessibility Standard for Employment.** The goal is to help employers create equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities. To help to make accessibility a regular part of finding, hiring and supporting employees with disabilities.

- **Accessibility Standard for Information and Communication (which includes digital/course content).** Outlines how businesses and organizations are required to create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities. Education and training institutions must provide educational and training resources and materials in accessible formats upon request; provide educators with accessibility awareness training related to accessible program or course delivery.

4. **Accessibility Standard for Built Environment.** The goal is to break down barriers in buildings and other structures for people with disabilities by proposing accessibility requirements.

Plain Language Definition and Guidelines

Plain Language is accessible for many persons with disabilities. When producing a document you may want to consider incorporating some of the basic principles of plain language or plain English.

There are many definitions for Plain English or what is sometimes referred to as Plain Language. The goal is always to use language in a way that is user friendly, clear, direct and natural.

As a starting point, the writer should:

- Always consider who the target audience is.
- Make it your goal to convey the ideas with the greatest possible clarity.
- Do not make the document sound formal and omit unnecessary details.
- Scale back the information to what your reader needs to know and use examples as needed to help explain the text.
- Remember whenever possible to write in active voice. The active voice emphasizes the doer of an action, and it is usually briefer and clearer.

Design

Consider these design elements: hierarchy of information, typography, layout, graphics and color.

A typical hierarchy may include, document title, section headings, subsection headings, paragraph headings and general text.

- Divide your information into short sections.
- Make a table of contents for long documents.
- Use lots of headings.
- Structure your writing by putting the main message first.
- Typefaces (fonts) come in two varieties: serif and sans serif.
- Minimize the mixing of typefaces as not all typefaces work well together. As a general rule, do not use more than two typefaces in a document.
- Use at least 10 to 12 point type for text.
- Use a maximum of 70 characters in a line. Any longer and readers will lose their place when they read from line to line.
- Columns should contain a maximum of 40 characters. Remember to use ample white space between columns.
- Use techniques such as boldface, bullet dots – but do not over use.
- Avoid using all-capital letters.
- Graphics such as diagrams, tables or charts should be used in explaining text. Make sure they have informative headings and try to place them on one page.

- Keep the design of any graphic simple and drawn to scale.
- Be consistent when grouping graphics.
- Use white space in margins, around headings and between sections.
- Justifying the right margins decreases readability. The easiest text to read is left justified, ragged right text. This document is set left justified, ragged right.
- The majority of the document should be produced in black and white. Colour elements in your document should not overwhelm or distract the legibility of your text.

Organizing the document

- Use descriptive headers and sub-headers to break documents up into manageable pieces.
- Make sure your headings tell the reader what the upcoming sections will cover. Headings like "general" or "background" are not very helpful.
- Use short sections or subdivide the longer ones.
- Always group related material. This helps you eliminate repetitious information.
- Use vertical lists to identify the important material.
- Order the information. Put the more important information before the less important and the general before the specific.
- Use lots of headings.
- Minimize cross-references.

Sentences

- It is best to use short and medium-length sentences with an average length of about 20 words.
- Try and keep paragraphs under 10 or 12 lines.
- Whenever possible put the subject and verb near the beginning.
- Use concrete, familiar words and no surplus of words.
- Use Active voice with strong verbs.
- Keep the subject near the verb, and the verb near the object.
- Use examples to make complex information more understandable.
- User parallel structure for parallel ideas. State related ideas in similar grammatical form.
- Don't use unnecessary qualifiers or double negatives.
- Avoid redundancies.

Words

- Use simple, direct words.
- Omit needless words.
- Avoid legal jargon.
- Explain technical terms that you cannot avoid using.
- Never use "shall". This is an ambiguous word.
- Use the word "must". It is the clearest way to convey to the reader they have to do something.
- Be consistent with the terms you use to mean the same thing.
- Use personal pronouns. Helps readers relate better to documents. Personal pronouns clarify what applies to your reader and what applies to you.
- Find nouns and try to make it the main verb of the sentence. As you change nouns to verbs, your writing becomes less abstract. Example: Instead of ..."We made an application"...use..."We applied".
- Omit superfluous words. For example: Instead of….."In order to"…use... "to". Instead of…."because of the fact"....use…."because, since".
- Use positive sentences.
- Replace negative phrases with a single word that means the same thing. For example: Instead of..."not able"…use…"unable".

Fonts and Font Sizes

It is more important to use a standard font and consistent font size rather than try and identify which font or font size "is best." While some people with or without visual or print disabilities find Arial or Veranda fonts are easier to read, others depend on the ligatures or little hooks on the letters to decode what letter they are looking at and predict what word they are reading.

The keys for fonts and font sizes are:

1. Use standard font types/styles.
2. Be consistent in the font and font size used in your documents.
3. Avoid complicated, decorative or cursive fonts.
4. Sans serif fonts have been reported to be more legible when the character size is small.

Sans serif fonts are characters that do not have small strokes at the ends such in Verdana or Arial.

Serif fonts have decorative strokes at the end of the characters such as in Times New Roman.

Colour Contrast

It is important to have good contrast between foreground and background colours in your documents. This includes any shaded text such as table headers or cells.
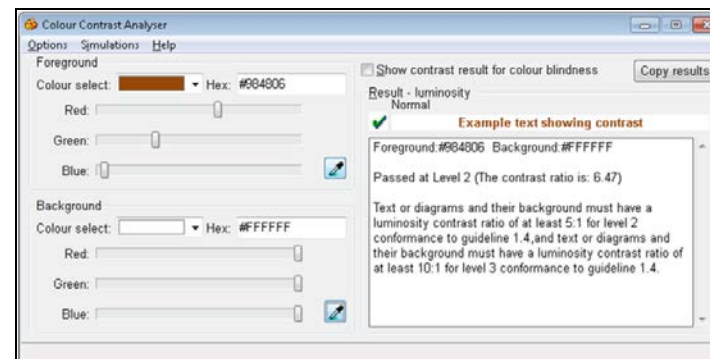

Figure 1: Results from the Colour Contrast Analyzer

The Web Accessibility Tools Consortium has developed a Color Contrast Analyzer Text[2] for the web. The following illustration shows that it will work on Word documents. The colours checked were the colours for the foreground and background of the headings in this document. This is a free tool!

Creating Accessible Documents

It doesn't matter what application or program you use to create documents for staff or students, there are some basic principles that you can use to ensure that the documents have the structural elements necessary for people using adaptive technology; for example such as screen readers.

By creating documents to be inherently accessible there is no need to create "differently accessible" documents as the documents can be readily converted to alternate forms or accessed by persons who use adaptive technology.

Below are some key elements to accessible documents that will be the focus in this document:

- The use of templates for specific documents.
- The use of heading styles.
- Creating a custom style, based on an existing one for headings.
- Adding Alt Text for images or links.
- Using captions for images in print or digital documents.
- The use of fonts: San serif fonts, such as, Frutiger, Arial, and Verdana are preferable.
- Use good colour contrast.
- Consider using plain language.
- Do not use tables for design layout.
- Identify table header rows.
- Do not use Text Boxes in Word documents.
- Do not use single cell tables to isolate important information in a Word document.
- Create one image out of grouped objects and add Alt Text to one image.
- Where there are complex images, provide a descriptive document in addition to the source document or ensure that the complex image is explained in the body text.

Word 2007

When working with Word 2007 it is best to use a template for all of your documents. This will ensure that each document that you develop will have the features that you want as well as a consistent look and feel.

Templates

To create a template in Word:

1. Open a blank document.
2. Select the **Office Button**, Hover your cursor over "**Save As**", and then select "**Word Template**".
3. Name your template in the "**File Name**" field.
4. Press Tab or move to the "**Save as Type**" field.
5. Choose "**Word Template**" from the listing.
6. Select **Save**. Make sure that the template is going to be saved in the **Trusted Templates** folder. In most cases it will be saved in a Trusted Templates folder automatically.
7. Add any static content to the document such as logos, contact information, disclaimers and so forth.
8. Change the fonts, add or modify styles. Create the look and feel you want for the document.
9. Re-Save the template and close it.

To use your template:

1. Select the **Office Button** and choose **New**.
2. Choose the **My templates**.
3. Your new template will be in the list of available templates.

4. Select the template you would like to use and select **OK**.
5. Add any content you would like.
6. Save the Document.

Styles

Styles are formatting instructions, such as "Title" for the title of your document, "Heading 1" to indicate a top-level heading, "Heading 2" to perhaps indicate a sub-heading and the "Body Text" style to indicate the body text. These features help your readers to make sense of your document.

If a heading style is not used to identify changes in the subject matter or topic, every piece of text in your document will have the structural element of a paragraph. This means that people with disabilities who are using technology to navigate your documents to read specific content will not be able to so.

In addition to these formatting instructions (Styles) making your document easy for your readers, it can also save you time in formatting and editing your documents. Styles are used to structure your document and it is best to use the built-in styles that are provided by Microsoft and modify those rather than create your own. Not all assistive technologies will be able to understand styles that have been created on your own.

If you have created a template then you can easily change the default heading styles to look the way you want.

How to modify the existing heading styles in a template:

1. Open the template you want to Modify.
2. Select the **Office Button**, Choose **Open**, Select the **Trusted Templates** folder, Select the **Template**, and Click **Open**.

   *Do not use **Office Button**, **New**, **My templates...** as this will open a new document based on your template.

3. Select the **Arrow** in the lower right corner (Figure 2) of the **Styles Group** to open the **Style Pane** (Figure 3).
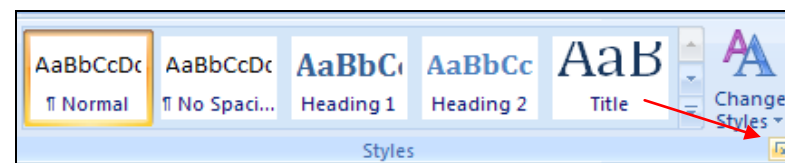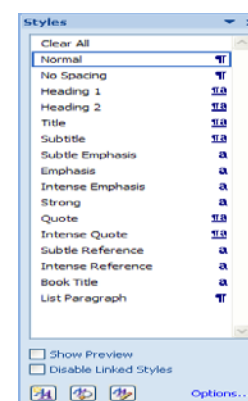

Figure 2: Styles Group

Figure 3: Styles Pane in Word

4. **Right Click** the mouse on the **Style** you want to modify and choose **Modify**.
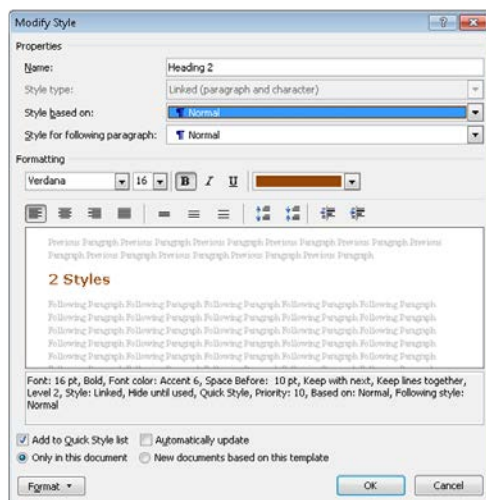5. A dialog box opens with the options for formatting the style (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Modify Styles dialog box in Word

6. Make any changes to the colour, font (such as to Arial or Verdana) size, or alignment (such as centre aligned).
7. There are other options related to borders and paragraph alignment under the **Format** button in this dialog box.
8. Once you've finished modifying the style, choose to either apply the changes to this document only **or** other documents based on this template.
9. Click **OK**.

Creating a New Heading Style

Remember the following tips for creating a new heading style:

1. Whether you choose to **Modify** an existing style or to **Create** a new style, a dialog box opens with all of the elements that you can modify.
2. If you are creating a new heading style with a different look and feel, it is important to base it on an existing heading style to ensure that the structure of headings is maintained in the document.
3. If you don't base the new heading style on an existing heading style it will look like a heading but the underlying structure will be a normal paragraph.
4. It is a good idea to include the heading level number in the new style name so that you remember what level it is when creating other documents based on this template.
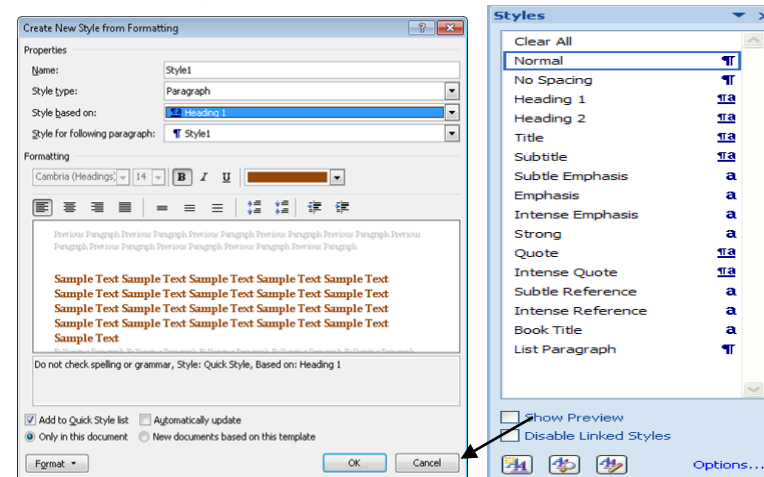

Figure 5: Create New Style dialog box in Word 2007

Alt Text and Captions for Images

Pictures and other non-text elements can be inserted into word documents. These graphics should support the content and will need to be formatted with alternative text descriptions because the visual objects will not be understood by those who use screen reading technology.

Alt Text - is a brief and concise description of what the image is. For people with disabilities who are using reading technology to access your documents, using Alt Text will give them the information you want them to have about an image in your document. Without Alt Text someone who is blind would hear something like "graphic image452.gif."

In Microsoft Office for Mac 2004 or 2008 you cannot add Alt text to images. If you are using an Office for Mac version of Word it is important to use captions for images.

To add Alt Text to an Image or Object:

1. Select the **Image** or **Object**.
2. Right Click.
3. Select the **Size...** link.
4. In the **Size** dialog box choose the **Alt Text** tab.
5. Type or Copy and Paste the Alt Text into the edit area.
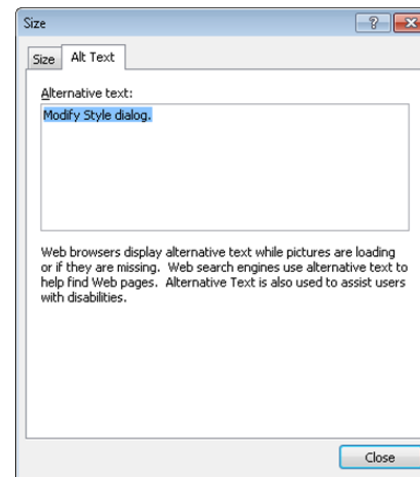6. Select **Close**.

Figure 6: Alt Text dialog in Word

Captions for Images, Tables and Equations

Captions are useful if the document is being printed and the image or object isn't clear on the printed page. Someone reading the document will then have access to the description of the graphic in the caption.

To add a caption for images:

1. Select the **Image** or **Object**.
2. **Right Click** the mouse.
3. Choose the Insert Caption.... link.
4. A Caption dialog box opens with the figure number already in place. Type out the caption you would like to include. You can also Copy and Paste information into the Caption field.
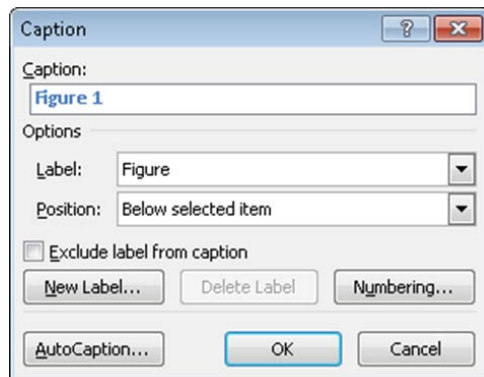5. Select **OK**.

Figure 7: Caption dialog box in Word

To add a caption for table and equations:

1. Follow the same instructions.
2. **Remember** that the table or equation captions need to go before the table so that someone who can't see the table would know what type of data they are about to encounter.

Tables

Ensuring that a uniform table is used for data is essential to a well-structured document. In Word 2007 the Table Gallery will also add an accessible table to your document. Always remember that tables should be inserted into a document and not drawn and tables should not be used for the design layout.

To add a table to a Word document:

1. On the **Insert** tab, in the **Table** group, choose 1 of the 2 ways.

a. Visually select the number of rows and columns from the grid provided in the **Insert Table** (Figure 8).

b. Click the **Insert Table** (Figure 8)... link, this will open the **Insert Table** dialog box (Figure 9) and select the number of rows and columns.
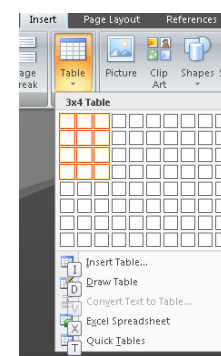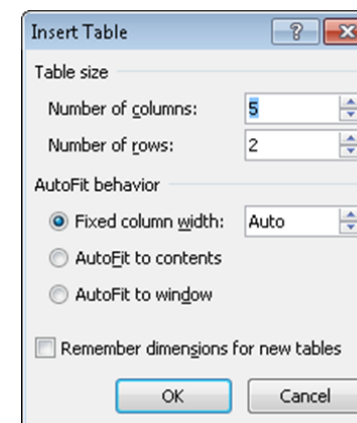

Figure 8: Insert Table via Table Gallery

Figure 9: Insert Table dialog box

Header Rows Repeat

A Heading Row should be added to tables to differentiate the heading text from the data area of the table. If your table spans more than one page it is also important to have the header rows repeat at the top of each page.

To have table header rows repeat:

1. Select the **First Row or Cell** within the table.
2. **Right Click** the mouse to open the Context Menu.
3. Choose the **Table Properties...** link and then select the **Row tab** at the top of the dialog box.
4. Check the Check Box to have the **Header Rows Repeat** (Figure 10).
5. Uncheck the "Allow row to break across pages" check box, as this improves the readability of the information in your tables.
6. Close the Table Properties dialog box by either Clicking the **OK** button or Tabbing to the **OK** button and Pressing **Enter**.
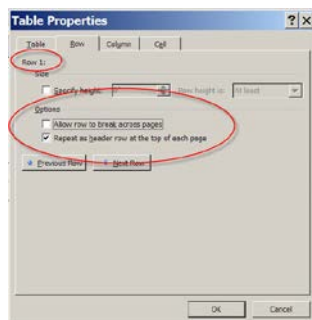

Figure 10: Table Properties

Text Boxes and Single Cell Tables

Often when we want to identify important information to someone reading content, we use either a single cell table or a text box. Single cell tables are **not** a good use of tables and using them this way is contrary to a well-structured document.

Text boxes sort of float over the text of the document and if one moves the cursor down a page when they encounter a text box the cursor remains at the left margin and doesn't move to the text box. This means that someone using reading technology will never see this important information.

The **most accessible way** to identify important information visually and accessibly is to **use paragraph formatting**.

This paragraph uses a style created by the document author called "Important." It has a border and is indented left and right from the margin. It is completely accessible AND makes the text stand out visually for someone reading the document on screen or in print. Same visual effect but completely accessible.

To create the paragraph style for important information:

1. Select the **Paragraph** you want to **Format**.
2. Select the **Arrow** in the lower right corner of the **Styles** group (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Styles group in Word 2007

3. Select the **New Style** button.

    You'll be able to see how the changes you make look in your document as you add them (Figure 12).
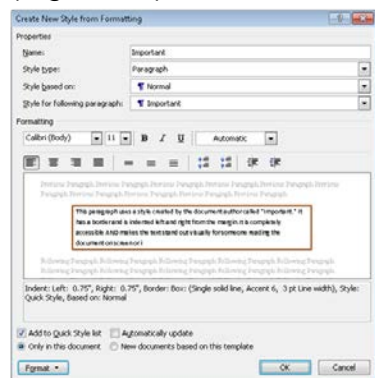

Figure 12: Creating a Paragraph Style using the Create New Style dialog box

4. Change the **Font**, **Font Size**, and the **Alignment** if you want.
5. To double indent the paragraph as in the example above, Click on the **Format** button while in the New Style dialog box. This opens a drop-down menu.

6. Choose **Paragraph**. This opens the Paragraph dialog box.
7. In the area that identifies the Indentation for the Paragraph - make the Indentation **Equal** for Both **Left** and **Right**.
8. Close the Paragraph dialog box by clicking the **OK** button or tabbing to the **OK** button and Pressing **Enter**.
9. While in the **New Style** dialog box Click on the **Format** button or Press **Alt + letter O** and this time choose **Border**. This opens the Borders and Shading dialog box.
10. Choose the **Border** you want and apply it to the paragraph. Make sure the border will be applied to the **Paragraph** and not text.
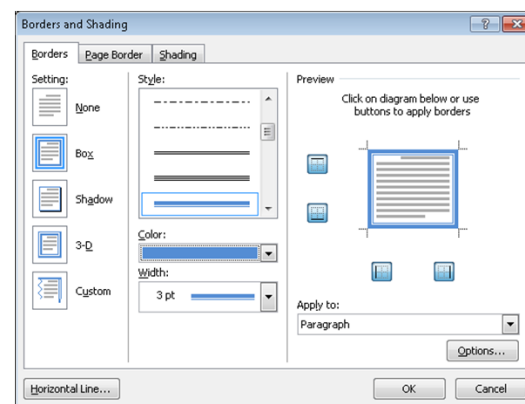

Figure 13: Borders and Shading dialog box in Word 2007

11. You can change the Padding or Margins between the Text and Border if you need a bit more space. Select the **Options** button in the Borders and Shading dialog box.

12. Once you have the Borders and Shading the way you want click the **OK** button or Tab to the **OK** button and press **Enter** to close it.

13. You can then decide whether to add this style to the template or use it only in the current document.
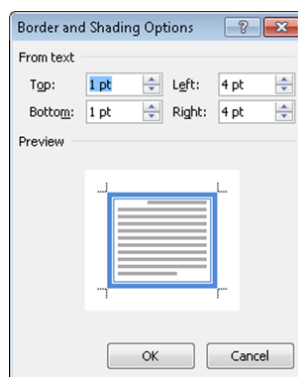

Figure 14: Borders and Shading Options dialog box

Bulleted and Numbered lists

If you need more space between bullets or numbers in a list, don't use the Enter key to create the space. This method breaks the list structure and for someone who is using technology to read your document each bulleted or numbered list item will be identified as an individual list.

This means that there is no relationship between the listed items even though visually the relationship may be identifiable.

To add space between bulleted or numbered list items select the list and:

1. Select the **Arrow** in the lower right corner of the **Paragraph** group.

2. Uncheck the Check Box: Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style. The default spacing is 10pt after each bulleted or numbered list item.

Figure 15: Paragraph dialog box in Word

3. Close the paragraph dialog box once the spacing is adjusted.

Word 2010

When working with Word 2010 it is best to use a template for all of your documents. This will ensure that each document that you develop will have the features that you want as well as a consistent look and feel.

Templates

To create a template in Word:

1. Open a blank document.
2. Select File > Save As.
3. Name your template in the "**File Name**" field.
4. Press Tab or move to the "**Save as Type**" field.
5. Choose "**Word Template**" from the listing.
6. Select **Save**. Make sure that the template is going to be saved in the **Trusted Templates** folder. In most cases it will be saved in a Trusted Templates folder automatically.
7. Add any static content to the document such as logos, contact information, disclaimers and so forth.
8. Change the fonts, add or modify styles. Create the look and feel you want for the document.
9. Re-Save the template and close it.

To use your template:

1. Select **File** > **New**.
2. Select the template file and click **Open**.
3. Add any content you would like.
4. Select File > Save As.
5. Name your template in the "**File Name**" field.

6. Save your document as a **Word Document (*.docx)**.

Styles

Styles are formatting instructions, such as "Title" for the title of your document, "Heading 1" to indicate a top-level heading, "Heading 2" to perhaps indicate a sub-heading and the "Body Text" style to indicate the body text. These features help your readers to make sense of your document.

If a heading style is not used to identify changes in the subject matter or topic, every piece of text in your document will have the structural element of a paragraph. This means that people with disabilities who are using technology to navigate your documents to read specific content will not be able to so.

In addition to these formatting instructions (Styles) making your document easy for your readers, it can also save you time in formatting and editing your documents. Styles are used to structure your document and it is best to use the built-in styles that are provided by Microsoft and modify those rather than create your own. Not all assistive technologies will be able to understand styles that have been created on your own.

If you have created a template then you can easily change the default heading styles to look the way you want.

How to modify the existing heading styles in a template:

1. Open the template you want to Modify.
2. Select **File** > **Open**. Select the **Trusted Templates** folder, select the **Template**, and click **Open**.

   *Do not use **File** > **New** and select the template as this will open a new document based on your template and will not allow you to modify the template itself.

3. Styles are located in the **Styles** group on the **Home** tab. Right click on the style you want to modify and choose **Modify**.
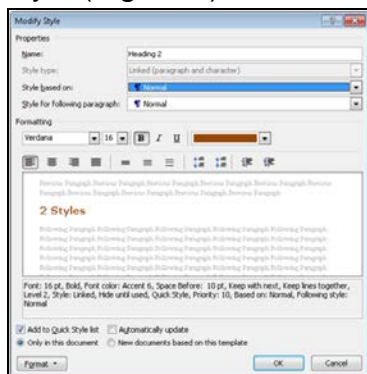4. A dialog box opens with the options for formatting the style (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Modify Styles dialog box in Word

5. Make any changes to the colour, font (such as to Arial or Verdana) size, or alignment (such as centre aligned).
6. There are other options related to borders and paragraph alignment under the **Format** button in this dialog box.

7. Once you've finished modifying the style, choose to either apply the changes to this document only **or** other documents based on this template.
8. Click **OK**.

Creating a New Heading Style

Remember the following tips for creating a new heading style:

1. Whether you choose to **Modify** an existing style or to **Create** a new style, a dialog box opens with all of the elements that you can modify.
2. If you are creating a new heading style with a different look and feel, it is important to base it on an existing heading style to ensure that the structure of headings is maintained in the document.
3. If you don't base the new heading style on an existing heading style it will look like a heading but the underlying structure will be a normal paragraph.
4. It is a good idea to include the heading level number in the new style name so that you remember what level it is when creating other documents based on this template.

Alt Text and Captions for Images

Pictures and other non-text elements can be inserted into word documents. These graphics should support the content and will need to be formatted with alternative text descriptions because the visual objects will not be understood by those who use screen reading technology.

Alt Text - is a brief and concise description of what the image is. For people with disabilities who are using reading technology to access your documents, using Alt Text will give them the information you want them to have about an image in your document. Without Alt Text someone who is blind would hear something like "graphic image452.gif."

If you are using an Office for Mac version of Word it is important to use captions for images.

1. Right click on the **Image** or **Object**
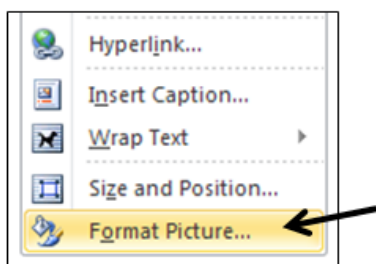2. Select **Format Picture** (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Selecting Format Picture in Word 2010.

3. Select **Alt Text** from the pane on the **Format Picture** window.
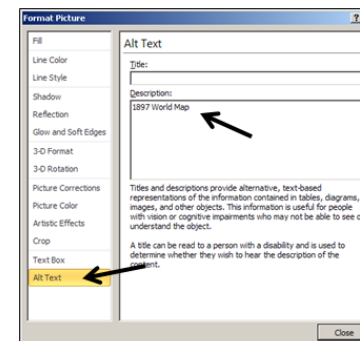4. Enter alt text in the **Description** field (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Adding alt text in Word 2010

5. Select **Close**.

Captions for Images, Tables and Equations

Captions are useful if the document is being printed and the image or object isn't clear on the printed page. Someone reading the document will then have access to the description of the graphic in the caption.

To add a caption for images:

6. Right click the **Image** or **Object**.
7. Select Insert Caption.
8. A Caption dialog box opens with the figure number already in place. Type out the caption you would like to include. You can also Copy and Paste information into the Caption field.
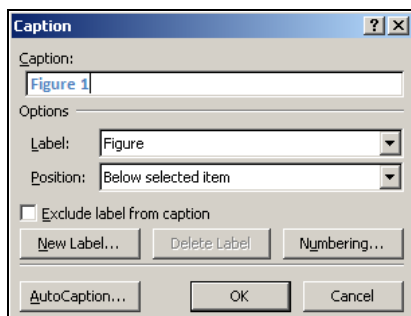
Figure 4: Adding a caption in Word 2010

9. Select **OK**.

To add a caption for table and equations:

10. Follow the same instructions.
11. **Remember** that the table or equation captions need to go before the table so that someone who can't see the table would know what type of data they are about to encounter.

Tables

Ensuring that a uniform table is used for data is essential to a well-structured document. In Word 2010 the Table Gallery will also add an accessible table to your document. Always remember that tables should be inserted into a document and not drawn and tables should not be used for the design layout.

To add a table to a Word document:

1. On the **Insert** tab, in the **Table** group, choose 1 of the 2 ways.
   a. Click the **Table** icon in the **Tables** group. Click and drag to select the number of rows and columns you want in the table (Figure 5).
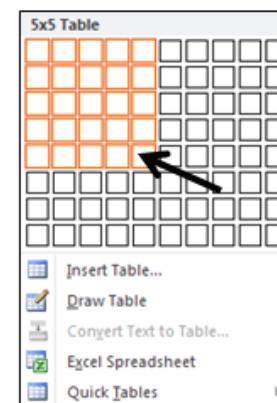

Figure 5: Inserting a table in Word 2010 (method a)

b. Click the **Table** iron in the **Tables** group. Select **Insert Table**. This will open the **Inter Table** dialog box (Figure 6). Select the number or rows and columns you want in the table.
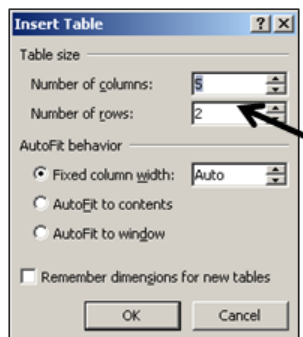

Figure 6: Inserting a table in Word 2010 (method b)

Header Rows Repeat

A Heading Row should be added to tables to differentiate the heading text from the data area of the table. If your table spans more than one page it is also important to have the header rows repeat at the top of each page.

To have table header rows repeat:

2. Right click on the first row or cell in the table.
3. Select Table Properties.
4. Select the **Row tab** at the top of the dialog box.

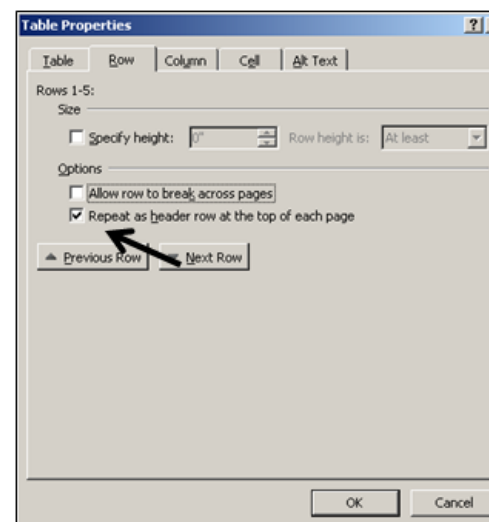5. Check the Check Box to have the **Header Rows Repeat** (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Having header rows repeat in Word 2010.

6. Uncheck the "Allow row to break across pages" check box, as this improves the readability of the information in your tables.
7. Close the Table Properties dialog box by either Clicking the **OK** button or Tabbing to the **OK** button and Pressing **Enter**.

Text Boxes and Single Cell Tables

Often when we want to identify important information to someone reading content, we use either a single cell table or a text box. Single cell tables are **not** a good use of tables and using them this way is contrary to a well-structured document.

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Text boxes sort of float over the text of the document and if one moves the cursor down a page when they encounter a text box the cursor remains at the left margin and doesn't move to the text box. This means that someone using reading technology will never see this important information.

The **most accessible way** to identify important information visually and accessibly is to **use paragraph formatting**.

> This paragraph uses a style created by the document author called "Important." It has a border and is indented left and right from the margin. It is completely accessible AND makes the text stand out visually for someone reading the document on screen or in print. Same visual effect but completely accessible.

To create the paragraph style for important information:

1. Select the **Paragraph** you want to **Format**.
2. Click the arrow in the lower right corner of the **Styles** group (Figure 8).
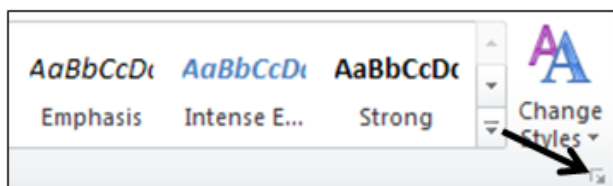

Figure 8: Opening the Styles pane in Word 2010

3. Select the **New Style** button (Figure 9). This will open the **Create New Style from Formatting** dialogue box (Figure 10).
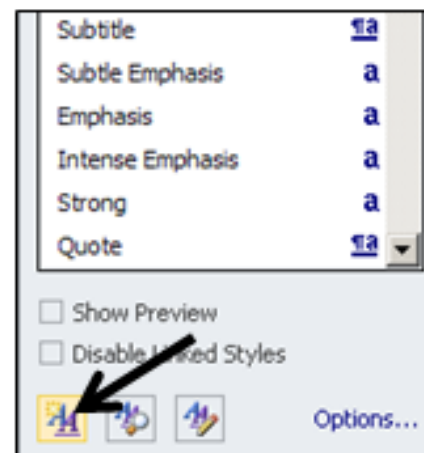

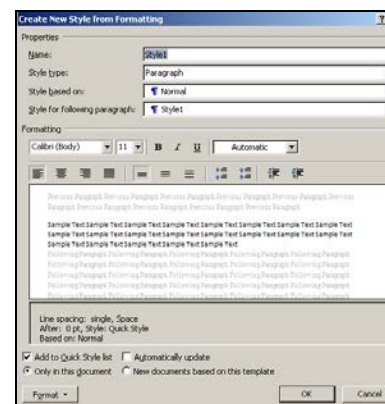**Figure 9: Creating a new style in Word 2010**

Figure 10: Creating a New Style dialogue box in Word 2010

4. Change the **Font**, **Font Size**, and the **Alignment** if you want.
5. To double indent the paragraph as in the example above, click the **Format** button while in the **New Style** dialog box. This opens a drop-down menu.
6. Choose **Paragraph**. This opens the **Paragraph** dialog box.
7. In the area that identifies the **Indentation for the Paragraph,** make the indentation **Equal** for both **Left** and **Right**.
8. Close the **Paragraph** dialog box by clicking **OK** or tabbing to the **OK** button and pressing **Enter**.
9. While in the **New Style** dialog box click on the **Format** button or Press **Alt +** letter **O** and choose **Border**. This opens the **Borders and Shading** dialog box.
10. Choose the **Border** you want and apply it to the paragraph. Make sure the border will be applied to the **Paragraph** and not Text.
11. You can change the padding or margins between the text and border if you need a bit more space. Select the **Options** button in the **Borders and Shading** dialog box.
12. Once you have the borders and shading the way you want click the **OK** button or Tab to the **OK** button and press **Enter** to close it.
13. You can then decide whether to add this style to the template or use it only in the current document.

Bulleted and Numbered lists

If you need more space between bullets or numbers in a list, don't use the Enter key to create the space. This method breaks the list structure and for someone who is using technology to read your document each bulleted or numbered list item will be identified as an individual list.

This means that there is no relationship between the listed items even though visually the relationship may be identifiable.

To add space between bulleted or numbered list items select the list and:

1. Select the **Arrow** in the lower right corner of the **Paragraph** group (Figure 11).
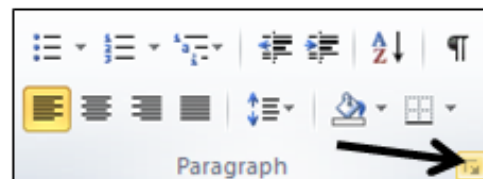

Figure 11: Adding space between list items in Word 2010

2. Uncheck the **Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style** check box. The default spacing is 10pt after each bulleted or numbered list item.
3. Click **OK**.

Outlook

Microsoft Outlook 2010 is a personal information manager that includes email, a calendar, a task manager, a contact manager, note taking capabilities, a journal, and a web browser. Most commonly, Outlook is used to send and receive email. It is important for emails written in Outlook be AODA compatible and easy to read.

To modify the default type settings of your email:

1. Select **File** > **Options**.
2. Select Mail from the left pane on the Outlook Options window (Figure 12) and click the Stationery and Fonts button.
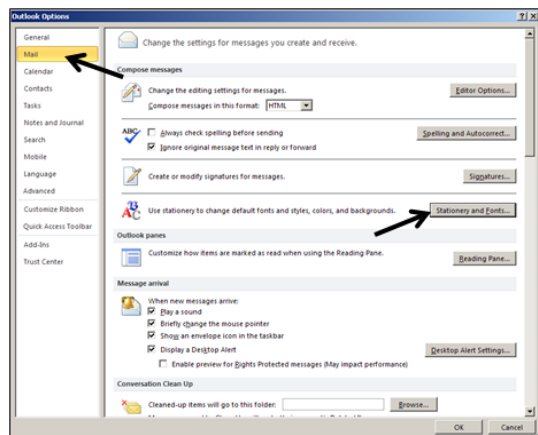
Figure 12: Modifying default type settings in Outlook 2010

3. Click the **Font** button for **New mail messages**. This action will open the **Font** dialogue box (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Setting font attributes in Outlook 2010

4. Set the **Font** to Arial or Verdana and set the font **Size** to at least 12 and click **OK**.
5. Repeat steps **3** and **4** to adjust the font for **Replying or forwarding messages**.
6. Click **OK** to close the **Outlook Options** window.

PowerPoint

Power point presentations are visual tools to depict information. It is important to remember that as the design layout and conten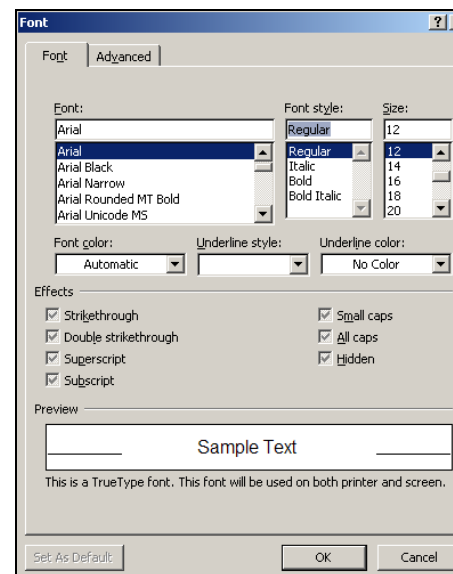t in the presentation become more complex with the addition of graphics, animation, tables and charts – the less accessible the presentation will be.

Some key elements to consider are:

- Create a text-only version of your PowerPoint. This will make it easier for persons using adaptive technology such as screen readers.
- Ensure your presentation has a high colour contrast between the foreground and background.
- Use the largest possible font size, a minimum of 16 points.
- Avoid backgrounds.
- Avoid Grouped Objects as they are inherently inaccessible.
- If using audio and video content, please note that only captioned videos can be used in course content. Seneca's Libraries handles captioning of our streaming videos through the digital library systems and new media services. Videos that are offered on a vendor platform (FilmsOnDemand, NBC Learn, NFB) are handled by the vendor / distributor. For our in-house made library videos, the Library creates caption files manually through either Camtasia or a text editor, using our scripts as a content

base.For details on captioning, please contact Seneca Libraries.

- Minimize the use of images and objects.
- Must provide Alt Text on all images and objects.

To provide Alt Text for images and objects on a PowerPoint slide:

1. Select the **Image** or **Object**.
2. **Right Click** the mouse.
3. Select the **Size...** link.
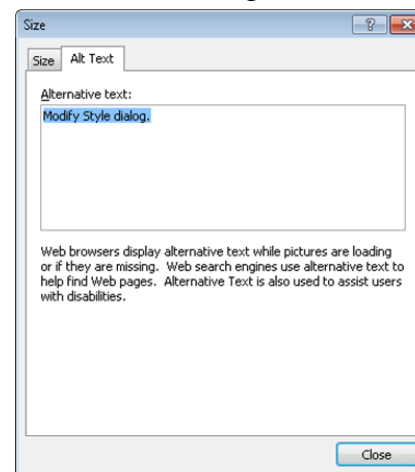4. In the **Size** dialog box choose the **Alt Text** tab (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Size dialogue box in PowerPoint

5. Type or Copy and Paste the Alt Text into the edit area.
6. Select **Close**.

PDF Document Accessibility

Adobe has produced a comprehensive guide for creating accessible Adobe files[3]. This guide has talked about tagged PDF through all of the topics. What do we mean by this and how do you do it?

The ability to "Tag" a PDF document provides the accessibility to the document content. A Tag is much like the information you would see in the Reveal Codes of WordPerfect or the code used to write HTML or web documents. For each piece of content in your document there should be a corresponding Tag in the PDF document.

If you've built the structure and accessibility into your documents as illustrated in this guide, the Tags in a PDF document converted from your source document should provide a "logical reading order" for someone using adaptive technology.

There are several programs that can create PDF files, but very few of them produce tagged PDF files. If you are using Microsoft Word or PowerPoint, you can often create accessible, tagged PDF files, keeping in mind that the accessibility of the PDF will depend on the accessibility of the original document.

If you have followed the steps in this document when creating your Word document or PowerPoint presentation, then the accessibility and conversion settings are essentially the same. You can follow the instructions below for Word to convert the PowerPoint files to PDF as well.

You can create accessible PDF files in Office, as long as the following requirements are met:

1) The file is accessible. This includes providing alternative text for images.

Course Packs

The goal is to make accessible course pack material available to students with disabilities at the same time it is available to students without disabilities.

The solution to providing course packs in accessible formats is to have the course pack available in a CD containing the course pack content in tagged PDF format. If you've followed the guidelines in this document when creating your Word documents, the structure will be carried through to the tagged PDF version of your work.

You can create a tagged PDF from Word, PowerPoint or Adobe InDesign. The key is to add the document structure as you create the course pack material.

If your course pack is compiled using articles from the library's electronic databases, you must ensure that the digital versions of the articles are available so that they can be converted to an accessible format.

As a Professor once you have permission to compile a course pack you will need:

- To contact Michael Cripps, Grenville Management & Printing at the Newnham campus (ext. 22558, room B1091) who will complete all copyright registrations and assist you with the production details
- To place a course pack adoption with the bookstore, follow the same steps as you would in doing a textbook adoption. You can access this information at https://www2.senecacollege.ca/estore/fbr/index.jsp

Copyright Compliance & Course packs

Seneca Libraries has produced a library guide on course packs and copyright compliance. Visit http://Seneca.libguides.com/content.php?pid=83762&sid=3107648

Resources

The following resources are organized by application. The first set of resources is generic and includes best practices tips and techniques.

General Document Accessibility

These resources contain common elements of accessible documents that can be applied to any document created.

Adobe Accessibility Resource Centre[4].

Best Practices for Creating Accessible Microsoft Word Documents from CalPoly[5].

Creating Accessible Documents from Accessible IT @ NC State[6] .

Creating Accessible Documents from Empire State College New York[7].

WebAIM Microsoft Word article on creating accessible documents[8].

Accessible Course Packs

These resources are a combination of course pack and general accessibility tips for instructors for students with disabilities.

Accessible Instructional Material by Poly[9]. This is a tagged PDF document so it is accessible but it does not have links or headings so is difficult to navigate if you are using adaptive technology.

Word 2003

These resources are for Word 2003 but you can learn techniques for Word 2007 or 2010 from them.

Creating Accessible Word 2003 Documents from CalPoly[10].

This is a tagged PDF document so you can see what a well tagged and structured PDF looks like while finding out how to create accessible Word documents.

Creating Accessible Word 2003 Documents from California State University ENACT[11].

Word 2007

These resources are specific to word 2007 but you can use the techniques in other versions of Word.

Making Documents Accessible from Humbolt University[12]. A note about the video on using Word styles: a person using a screen reader will only know that you've used intense emphasis if they have a verbosity setting chosen to announce style changes and they are reading the document word by word. If someone is reading through the document or reading paragraph by paragraph, sentence by sentence or line by line changes in style are not identified. For those of us using screen readers having every style change announced is annoying and distracting from comprehension. That aside, this is a good visual resource and is captioned.

Making Word 2007 Documents Accessible from the University of Bradford[13]. This is a tagged PDF document so you can see how a well structured and tagged PDF documents works.

Microsoft Word 2007: Creating Accessible Documents from[14] .

Logical Document Structure Handbook: Word 2007[15], ISBN 0-9738370-9-8 by Karen McCall, M.Ed.

Creating Microsoft Word to PDF Documents from Adobe[16]. This is a tagged PDF quick reference card.

Word 2010

Making Word 2010 Documents Accessible from the University of Bradford[17]

Authoring Digital Office Document (ADOD) Project from OCAD University[18]

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Web Addresses for Cited References

[1] Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act provincial home page: http://www.mcss.gov.on.ca/en/mcss/programs/accessibility/

[2] Web Accessibility Tools Consortium Color Contrast Analyzer: http://www.wat-c.org/tools/CCA/1.1/

[3] Creating Accessible Adobe PDF Files: http://www.adobe.com/enterprise/accessibility/pdfs/acro6_pg_ue.pdf

[4] Adobe Accessibility Resource Centre: http://www.adobe.com/accessibility/

[5] Best Practices for Creating Accessible Word Documents from CalPoly: http://accessibility.calpoly.edu/instmaterials/document_creation/best_practices.html

[6] Creating Accessible Documents from Access IT @ NC State: http://www.ncsu.edu/it/access/tutorials/

[7] Creating Accessible Documents from Empire State College New York: http://www.esc.edu/disability-services/community-resources/creating-accessible-documents/

[8] WebAIM Microsoft Word article on creating accessible documents: http://www.webaim.org/techniques/word/

[9] Accessible Instructional Material from CalPoly: http://access.sdsu.edu/pdf/InstructionalChecklist.pdf

[10] Creating Accessible Word 2003 Documents from CalPoly: http://accessibility.calpoly.edu/instmaterials/document_creation/Creating_Accessible_Microsoft_Word_2003_Document.pdf

[11] Creating Accessible Word 2003 Documents from California State University ENACT: http://www.csub.edu/ati/documents/Accessible_MS_Word_documents.doc

[12] Making Documents Accessible from Humbolt University: http://x.dc-uoit.ca/accessibledocs/

[13] Making Word 2007 documents Accessible from the University of Bradford: http://www.bradford.ac.uk/lss/documentation/making-word2007-documents-accessible/making-word2007-documents-accessible.pdf

[14] Microsoft Word 2007: Creating Accessible Documents from California State University: http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/access/docs_multi/documents/2007WordCSUv2_Final.pdf

[15] Logical Document Structure Handbook: Word 2007 by Karen McCall: http://www.karlencommunications.com/products.htm

[16] Creating Microsoft Word to PDF Documents quick reference card from Adobe: http://blogs.adobe.com/accessibility/assets/WordToPDFReferenceCard_v1.pdf

[17] Making Word 2010 documents accessible from the University of Bradford: http://www.brad.ac.uk/lss/documentation/making-word2010-documents-accessible/making-word2010-documents-accessible.pdf

[18] Authoring Digital Office Document (ADOD) Project from OCAD University: http://adod.idrc.ocad.ca/