Accessible Word Document Checklist

Styles
☐ Edit Styles in order to format document;
☐ Style elements have a different look from the others (i.e. Heading1 looks bigger than Heading2 etc.);
☐ Headings levels are correctly ordered;
☐ Do NOT use font formatting to style text.

Fonts
☐ Use 12 point or larger;
☐ Be consistent with the fonts used in the document;
☐ Use a sans serif font – such as Arial, Helvetica or Verdana;
☐ Using italics or upper-case letters for emphasis is not recommended.

Colors
☐ Use appropriate colour contrast (e.g. black and white);
☐ Make sure that all information conveyed with colour can also be conveyed without colour;
☐ For print documents use a matte/non-glossy finish.

Spacing
☐ To start a new page use the Insert tab then Page Break. Don’t press Enter repeatedly to start a new page;
☐ Adjust spacing through the Paragraph formatting menu;
☐ Space between the lines should be at least 25 to 30% of the point size.

Images
☐ Set wrapping style of non-text elements as “In line with text”;
☐ Add alternative text to graphics and images;
☐ Avoid text boxes and Word Art as they may be inaccessible to screen readers;
☐ Avoid using watermarks and background images as they can make documents illegible.
Columns
☐ To properly insert a column use Page Layout tab then Columns;
☐ Avoid using spaces and tabs, it will not be recognized as a column by assistive technology.

Tables
☐ Use the Insert tab then Table to properly insert;
☐ Use proper Table Headings and check the Header Row check box;
☐ If a table is longer than a page; Heading Rows must be repeated at the top of the table on each of the following pages.

Hyperlinks
☐ Ensure that the Hyperlink has context and describes where it leads;
☐ Avoid using “Click here” or “More info” as a link title.

Graphs and Charts
☐ Add a short caption preceding the chart or graph that describes their content;
☐ Provide an alternative presentation of any findings. For many charts, the best alternative format in which to present data is a table with the original figures.

Headers & Footers
☐ Do not manually type the page numbers. Use the Insert tab then Page Number.

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Please contact the Accessibility Coordinator, Andrew Ashby, in one of the following ways:

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