Simple Steps to Digital Accessibility and Inclusivity

Accessibility refers to an individuals ability to access digital tools and systems.

Online meetings:

1. Share documents and files in advance.

2. Enable captions and live transcript, or ensure you understand how an attendee switches these on for themselves.

3. Use headphones with a mic to block out background noise and improve the quality of captions.

4. Use hands-up and avoid multiple people speaking at once.

5. Read aloud and describe text and images in documents and presentations, as you refer to them.

6. Record the meeting.

Developing digital accessibility and inclusivity skills is a journey. It is important to keep learning and developing your practice. Ask when you don't know and find out how to improve. If you spot something that could be better, be kind and support others to learn.

Learn more:
LinkedIn Learning course Digital Accessibility for the Modern Workplace
LinkedIn Learning course Creating Inclusive Content
University of Hertfordshire guidance for students
University of Hertfordshire guidance for staff

Inclusivity refers to the extent to which individuals feel like they belong or are valued; it is an authentic invitation to engage and contribute.

Documents and online content:

1. Use Review-Check Accessibility in Microsoft 365 to review Outlook content, Word, PowerPoint, Excel and OneNote files. Follow the guidance to insert Alt-text, order items on slides and make tables or charts accessible.
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2. Familiarise yourself with the Assistive Technology your audience might be using in Microsoft 365 or other platforms, like Canvas. Review your documents and content in the features of Immersive Reader to read aloud and highlight different features of text, and the dictate feature to voice type.

3. Leave a ragged edge on the right hand side of text.

4. Number bulleted lists, these are clearer when read aloud by a screen reader. They also help with cognition.

5. Underline hyperlinked text. Avoid generic text like 'Click here' or 'Download' on link text. Link text should summarise where the link takes you or what you can do by following the link.

6. Use minimum size 12 font. Use fonts like Arial or Calibri and maintain consistent use of the same font throughout.

Using digital tools for accessibility and creating content that is accessible is one element of digital inclusivity.

Design and communication:

1. Avoid communicating information using only colour. Use labels and the size of font to communicate how information is connected.

2. Use a palette of no more than four colours in a document or webpage. Choose contrasting colours like black text on a white background.

3. Ensure any video has captions and a transcript available.

4. Include imagery that includes diverse representation of race, ethnicity, gender expression, age, body size and shape, people using assistive technology and socioeconomic markers. Avoid tokenism of one person who looks drastically different to everyone else in the image, video or document. Avoid stereotyping by showing underrepresented people doing stereotypical things.

5. Share your preferred pronouns on the platforms that you use. Take notice of other people's preferred pronouns and use them accordingly.

6. Avoid use of gender, mental health related or ableist metaphors or synonyms in text, video or imagery.

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