Don't be scared:
TechDis - Making documents more accessible!

TechDis provides advice and guidance on technology and disability to promote an accessible and inclusive experience for students and staff. TechDis is a JISC-funded advisory service. For more information go to www.techdis.ac.uk

In each edition of the ESCalate newsletter from now on, TechDis will be providing practical advice on how to improve an aspect of your practice to benefit all learners.

For example, possibly the most important small change you can make to your practice is to utilise the Styles and Formatting Toolbar when using Microsoft® Word to create appropriate headings and structure your document.

> Ensure the Styles and Formatting Toolbar is shown (View>Toolbars>Formatting).

> From the 'Style' box in the formatting menu you can choose an appropriate heading and style for the structure of a document.

> When writing a document highlight the text required for the heading or sub-heading and select the appropriate heading style (from the formatting menu) for the location and level within the document.

You can then amend the look and feel of each type of heading, changing all examples of each type in one easy task:

> From the menu select Format>Styles and Formatting. This will open the styles and formatting menu on the right of your screen.

> Select the heading you wish to amend from the list, for example 'Heading 1' or 'Heading 2', and click the 'Select All' button.

> By clicking 'Select All' all headings in the document with that style will be amended in one step. Once the appropriate heading has been selected use the Format Toolbar, or the Format>Font dialogue box, to amend the style to one appropriate for the document.

Performing these tasks brings a number of inclusion benefits to your documentation:

1. The Document Map: Word has an inbuilt navigation system that can enable users to navigate a long document that has been appropriately styled.

2. Table of Contents: If a document has been created using the styles and headings options as noted above an automatic table of contents can be created.

The Document Map

> From the menu select View>Document Map. A dynamic navigation menu will appear on the left of the screen.

> Clicking the Document Map will allow the user to expand and contract headings or jump to the relevant section of a large document. It is also navigable by Screen Reading software.

Table of Contents:

> Move the cursor to the place in the document where you wish the Table of Contents to be inserted.

> Navigate to Insert>Reference>Index and Tables and select the 'Table of Contents' tab. Using the dialogue box displayed you can amend the look of the contents section.

> Depending on the number of headings and sub headings used within a document you can increase or decrease the number of levels shown by changing the 'Show levels' option.

> If the document is to be made available electronically you can choose to have the contents displayed as hyperlinks by ticking the 'Use hyperlinks instead of page numbers' option. This will only appear when the document is viewed in Web View.

> Once the appropriate options have been chosen select 'OK'. A table of contents will be inserted into the document. The font style, spacing and colour can be amended in the normal manner.

> The table of contents has been inserted as a field, and as such can be automatically updated. This can be useful if additional pages or headings have been inserted into a document as the update will incorporate any changes to headings and page numbers.

> To update the table of contents right click anywhere within the contents section and select 'Update Field' from the menu list. A dialogue box will be displayed providing two options. Depending on what amendments you have made to the document choose either 'Update page numbers only' or 'Update entire table'.

More hints and tips on making electronic documents can be found in two downloadable TechDis publications:

TechDis Accessibility Essentials 1: Making Electronic Documents More Readable

TechDis Accessibility Essentials 2: Writing Accessible Electronic Documents with Microsoft® Word