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USW Universal Design for Learning

Text based resources e.g. slides, word documents, webpages, etc.

“UDL is a framework to guide the design of learning environments that are accessible and challenging for all. When environments are intentionally designed to reduce barriers, all learners can engage in rigorous, meaningful learning.” (CAST, 2021)

These UDL guides have been adapted by the CELT team and Disability Service to outline how the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) can be applied in different teaching and learning situations in order to help make learning accessible to as many students as possible.

There are 3 guides, this guide focuses on text based resources. The other two guides cover synchronous and asynchronous learning.

The guides do not set out how to design the learning activities/resources themselves. You should still refer to DEAL and other USW guidance and policies for more information about requirements for teaching, learning and assessment.

All university employees have legal responsibilities around different areas of accessibility and inclusion. The following information is provided for guidance only. More detailed information and guides for inclusive practice can be found on the following sites:

* CAST – [Learn more about the UDL framework.](https://www.cast.org/impact/universal-design-for-learning-udl)
* CELT - [Inclusive practice webpage](https://celt.southwales.ac.uk/developing/inclusive-practice/).
* CELT - [Accessibility and technology webpage](https://celt.southwales.ac.uk/tel/inclusive-tech/).
* [Disability Service – Inclusive practice guidance for staff](https://universityofsouthwales.sharepoint.com/sites/Student_Services/SitePages/en-GB/disability-support.aspx) (internal only).
* [Disability Service website](https://disability.southwales.ac.uk/).
* [USW DEAL site](https://universityofsouthwales.sharepoint.com/sites/USWDEAL/SitePages/en-GB/Learning-Teaching-and-Quality.aspx).
* [UK Accessibility Regulations](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/accessibility-requirements-for-public-sector-websites-and-apps#:~:text=The%20accessibility%20regulations%20came%20into,accessibility%20statement%20on%20your%20website.).
* [DEAL and the UK Accessibility Regulations](https://southwales.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=f84957f5-c688-4f33-90e4-ac0200ec9e6f) [video 6m52s].
* [USW Strategic Equality Plan](https://hr.southwales.ac.uk/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/strategic-equality-plan/).
* [USW Module/Course Baseline Expectations](https://universityofsouthwales.sharepoint.com/sites/USWDEAL/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FUSWDEAL%2FShared%20Documents%2FVirtual%5FLearning%5FEnvironment%5FCourse%5FOrganisation%5F%5FModules2020%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FUSWDEAL%2FShared%20Documents).

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# Welsh Language

Many documents will need to be available bilingually, in Welsh and English, under the Welsh Language Regulations and Standards.

Find out more:

* [Welsh Language Unit at USW.](https://uso.southwales.ac.uk/welsh-language-unit/)
* [The Welsh Language Standards (No. 6) Regulations 2017](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/90/introduction/made).

# Writing Style:

* Give the full explanation of an acronym the first time it is used. Thereafter just use the acronym.
* A glossary of unfamiliar terms (including acronyms) should be provided as part of the document or a link to a central glossary must be given.
* Avoid using gendered pronouns where they are not strictly necessary ie when not referring to a specific person. Use the singular “they” rather than saying “he or she”.

# Font and Background:

* Keep the background plain and use a dark coloured font to ensure good contrast.
* Avoid using red, green or yellow text as this can be difficult to read. Colour should not be the only means of differentiating text (or any object).
* Use the Styles features in Word to identify titles and headings for screen readers and accessibility software.
* Use a sans serif font (Arial or other if not available) with a minimum size of 12 for documents and 16 for slides.
* Use the style features to create bold text for emphasis but keep it to short lengths of text.
* Do not use italics if possible.
* Underlining should only be used to indicate hyperlinked text.
* Left align all text. Do not justify.

# Numbers and measurements:

* When discussing large units it is acceptable to use k, m, bn as a shorter way of writing 1000/1,000,000/1,000,000,000 or one thousand/one million/one billion, as long as you are consistent throughout the text.
* When writing for the web, numbers are preferred to the text version of a number (99, not ninety-nine) but either is acceptable.
* When writing long numbers make sure to use commas (1,000,000 not 1000000).

# White space and paragraphs:

* Make use of white space to increase the readability of a document. Use shorter paragraphs rather than a few very long ones and break longer documents into sections (and subsections) using headings.
* Paragraphs should be separated by white space. Do not indent the first line of new paragraphs.
* Create headings using the style features available in most word processing software rather than by just increasing the font size/using bold to help screen readers identify them as such.
* In very long documents headers should be numbered/ordered and a contents page created to help navigation. This can be created automatically if you use the style features to create headings.
* Use bullet points for lists or numbers where ordering is required. Avoid using roman numerals where possible.
* Use a semi-colon or a full-stop (as appropriate) at the end of each bullet-point.

# Quotes and referencing:

* Referencing should be done according to the USW Harvard Referencing Guide. This is maintained by the library and is available at:  <https://library.southwales.ac.uk/collections-subject-guides/referencing/>

# Links and email addresses:

* Hyperlinked text should be meaningful – link text which describes what is being linked to rather than simply linking “click here”.
* Where embedded content is used a link to the original content location should be provided (in full).
* Email addresses should be written out in full and hyperlinked.

# Images and tables:

* Provide alt-text for all images, tables, and embedded content that meaningfully describes or duplicates the information provided within the item.
* If a spreadsheet or table must be used it should be created within the document itself rather than using an image of a table taken from another document. If this is not possible a link/guidance to the original should be provided or the contents of the table explained in alt-text.
* Table headers must be identified to differentiate them from the data cells.

Webpage guidance:

* Webpages should adhere to guidance for written style but **must, by law,**also comply with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidance (WCAG) 2.1](https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/) set out by the W3C (World Wide Web Consortium) Accessibility Initiative.

# Formatting guide – slides:

* An off-white background is preferable but not currently available using the USW templates. Either use the template or, if desired, use a cream background and manually add the USW logo.
  + Font: Arial
  + Main title (first slide): 54-60
  + Slide title/header: 44
  + Paragraph/normal: 26
* These are a guide only and can be modified as appropriate, but font should generally be no smaller than size 16.

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| Version | Date | Review due | Author | Department |
| 1 | 06/10/2021 | 06/10/2022 | Sophie Meace | CELT |
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