Dyslexia-friendly formats

When producing documents and worksheets, it is important to focus on the presentation and layout to ensure that information is easily accessible. The following suggestions may be helpful:

- Use pastel shades of paper (cream is a good alternative to white).
- Matt paper reduces ‘glare’.
- Avoid black text on a white background and light text on a dark background.
- Use text at font size 12 or above.
- Use fonts which are clear, rounded and have a space between letters, such as:

  Century Gothic
  Comic Sans
  Arial
  Verdana
  Tahoma

There are also fonts that are similar to a handwritten style, or ones that might be more ‘dyslexia friendly’ such as:

  DK Cool Crayon
  Dyslexie font

(You can find free or low costs fonts like these in Microsoft Word or online)
• Use 1.5 or double line spacing.
• Use wide margins.
• Use lower case rather than capital letters.
• Use numbers or bullet points rather than continuous prose.
• Avoid the use of background graphics with text over the top.
• Use text boxes or borders for headings or to highlight important text.
• Avoid underlining and italics which can make words ‘run together’.
• Use bold text for titles, sub-headings or to draw attention to important information or key vocabulary.
• Colour-code text – for example, information in one colour, questions in another.
• Include flow charts, illustrations and diagrams to break up large sections of text or to demonstrate a particular procedure.

• Ensure that data, charts and diagrams are logical and easy to follow.
• Sentences and written instructions should be short and simple.
• Keep paragraphs short – dense blocks of text are difficult to read.
• Avoid too much text on the page. Make sure that it isn’t too cluttered.
• Remember to leave plenty of space for people to write their responses.

If in doubt, ask the person what they prefer.

Everyone is different but relatively simple changes can make a big difference, not just to people with dyslexia.