Creating Accessible Emails

Microsoft Outlook

Table 1: Accessible Email Checklist

| # | Checklist Item | Status |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | **Format:**   * Use HTML format as the default for all email messages. |  |
| 2 | **Subject:**   * Use a brief, meaningful subject. * Avoid unfamiliar abbreviations. |  |
| 3 | **Text:**   * Use a sans-serif typeface such as Helvetica, Arial, or Tahoma. * Use at least 12-point font size (best practice). |  |
| 4 | **Color:**   * Ensure sufficient text to background contrast; use a contrast ratio of 4.5:1 for standard text and 3:1 for large text. * Avoid stationary with shaded backgrounds that decrease contrast. * Ensure that color is **not** the only means of conveying information. |  |
| 5 | **Heading Structure:**   * For long emails, use semantic headings. * Ensure that headings appear in a logical, hierarchical order. |  |
| 6 | **Hyperlinks:**   * Create meaningful display text for all hyperlinks. * Avoid using the full URL (best practice). |  |
| 7 | **Lists:**   * Create bulleted or numbered lists using built-in tools. |  |
| 8 | **Images:**   * Add descriptive alternative text (“alt text”) to all meaningful images. Use alt=”” for decorative images. * Position images in-line with text. |  |
| 9 | **Signature:**   * Follow text guidelines for signatures. * If handwriting script is used, also include name in sans-serif text. * Avoid using v-cards and signature image. * Ensure images (e.g. logos) have alt text. |  |
| 10 | **Attachments:**   * Ensure that all attached documents are accessible. * If an image file is attached, include a text alternative for the image in the body of the email and ensure that the image has a descriptive filename. |  |