Guidelines for Accessible Word Documents

- Use Word's built-in formatting styles to create headings, page numbers, columns, tables, footnotes, and bulleted/numbered lists. Formatting styles help users using screen readers to navigate through a text.
- Use Styles to structure content hierarchically by heading, subheading, and paragraph.
- Use fonts that are at least 12 points in size.
- Make sure there is a 4.5 to 1 contrast ratio between the background and text colors.
- Try to limit fonts to Times New Roman, Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, Helvetica and Calibri. Standard fonts such as these are easy to read and render correctly in both Mac and Windows platforms.
- Avoid using text boxes.
- Make sure to include a header row when making a table. Test the table with a screen reader to make sure the screen reader reads the content in the correct order.
- Do not use color to relay important information. Users who are color blind or visually impaired might not be able to see or distinguish between colors.
- Include alt text for all images, graphics, charts or graphs that are informational. Screen readers read out alt text for users who are visually impaired.
- Multiple images or graphics that are meant to go together to form one object should be grouped.
- Include the full URL when creating hyperlinks.

Microsoft. (n.d.). Make your Word documents accessible. Retrieved 2018, from https://support.office.com/en-us/article/make-your-word-documents-accessible-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d