# Film transcript - Accessible presentations

**As part of the Responsible Support and Sustainable Development project, the Jagiellonian University in Krakow would like to invite you to a film from the series ‘Find out about learning support programmes and applications’.**

[Rhythmic, dynamic melody in the background during the film]

[Katarzyna Pyryt] Good morning, my name is Katarzyna Pyryt and I am an Assistive Technology Specialist at the Jagiellonian University Disability Support Service. Today, I will show you how to create accessible presentations in Microsoft PowerPoint.

In my work I often hear that an accessible presentation equals an ugly presentation. Nothing could be further from the truth. Modern technologies enable us to create presentations that are both visually attractive and accessible for people with visual impairments. You just need to remember to apply a few simple rules.

Rule number one. If you use graphics, make sure that they have an alternative text, i.e. a description of what is in the graphic, or that they are labelled as decorative graphics. I will show you how to do it. Let’s insert a graphic. I will go to the ‘Insert’ tab, click ‘Images’ (in my case, the option is ‘Device’) and select a logo for the project. And now, if I want to add a description of this graphic, I have to go to the ‘Image Format’ tab, then select the ‘Alternative Text’ option. On the right, a box will appear where I can enter a description of this graphic. I will type in ‘Logo of the Breakthrough Project’.

It is worth noting that this description will not be visible in the presentation. However, if someone, for example a blind person, uses a screen reader when they reach this graphic, the description you have entered in this window will be read out to them. If you have a typically decorative graphic without any additional content which is just supposed to look nice, select the option ‘Mark as decorative’. Then, when a blind person reaches this graphic, the graphic will simply be skipped.

Another thing to keep in mind is themes and slide layouts. PowerPoint offers us lots of different layouts to make presentations visually attractive. However, there are a few things you should keep in mind. Let’s say you want to prepare a presentation about dogs. I have opened a new PowerPoint window and in the title space I will simply type in ‘Dogs’. In the ‘Main tools’ tab in the top right corner there is the option ‘Project ideas’. I’m going to click this option and see what graphic suggestions pop up for me here. For example, let’s choose a layout like this.

PowerPoint has suggested a layout for the title slide where on the left there is a graphic with a doggie hanging from two balloons. On the right there is the title of my presentation. It’s important to make sure that the graphic from the title slide is labelled as decorative as in fact it has no other function. I will try to click on this graphic and check whether the ‘Alternative text’ option is there in the ‘Image format’ tab. I can see that there is the graphic description which reads as follows ‘A flipping dog associated with a balloon’. Well, for one thing, this graphic description is incomprehensible and does not reflect what the graphic actually represents. The second issue is that it is in fact a decorative graphic only. As a result, I do not need a description of this graphic. I will label it as decorative.

Let’s assume that I want to insert a new slide. I can choose the option ‘New slide’ on the tab ‘Main Tools’ and it would be good to choose one that is defined here in the programme. However, you may also need to apply your own slide layout. I will choose a blank slide now. There is no space here for the title or content.

I will insert an empty slide and start filling it with content. First, I’m going to draw a text box and put some example dog breeds in it. I can write, for example, ‘Dachshund, German Shepherd and pointer’. I will also add figure 1 in square brackets here, so that we know that this is the text field I created in the first place. Let’s assume that I would like to add something about the dog, e.g. a definition. So, I will insert another text field. And it would be only logical to provide this information first. For example, I can write ‘Dog - a mammal from the Canidae family’. Here, I will put figure 2 in square brackets, because I created this text field as the second one.

Since these are examples of dog breeds and the definition of the dog is short, maybe let’s describe what a dog looks like. So I’m going to insert another text field between the first one and the second one. For example, I can write that a dog has a head, tail and four paws. In square brackets I will put figure 3, because this is the text field I created as the third one.

And now please note that when I look at this slide, the first thing I can see is that the dog is a mammal from the Canidae family, then there is information on what a dog looks like, that it has a head, a tail and four paws, and finally there are examples of dog breeds. However, when this presentation is read out by a person who uses a screen reader, this text will not necessarily be read out to them in exactly the same order as I have said it here.

So, to make sure that the items on the slide are read out in a logical order, go to the ‘Review’ tab, ‘Check accessibility’, and then the ‘Reading order window’ option. On the right side, you will see a box listing the elements on this slide and you can check the order in which they will be read out. I’m going to click on the first element on this list. A box will appear on the text that I created in the first place, i.e. example dog breeds. This element will be read out to a blind person first. I will click on the second element of the list in the ‘Reading order’ window and the frame appears on the element ‘Dog - a mammal from the Canidae family’, which is visually the first element on the slide. However, it was created as the second one. And the last option from the ‘Reading order’ list is the frame which appears on the last element created - the description of a dog. The dog has a head, tail and four paws.

You can see that the reading order for a blind person is not quite logical. Therefore, this order should be changed accordingly. All I have to do is to grab the first element in the ‘Reading order’ window and drag it to the right place. So I will drag my example dog breeds to the end of the list. Now I can check what I have first. The first one on the list is the definition of the dog, the same as the visual item on the slide. The next one is the second item on the list, the description of a dog. And the third element on the list is example dog breeds. So, this is the order in which the text will be read out to a blind person.

The 'Check accessibility' tool can also help us to assess accessibility. It is in the 'Review' tab. The moment I click this option, a list of errors or potential errors that may affect the accessibility of my presentation appears on the right side. What the programme has detected at the moment is a missing slide title. This is the slide where I described the dog listing example dog breeds, and it would actually be good to add a slide title here.

To solve the problem of a missing title identified by Microsoft PowerPoint I can click on this error to expand the ‘Recommended Actions’ window. If I don’t want this title to be visible on the slide but I want it to be readable to a blind person, I can select ‘Add hidden slide title’. I will name this slide ‘Dog - basic information’. As I have said, this title will be invisible in the presentation. However, it will be readable for a blind person and it will be easier for them to find the slides they are interested in.

When preparing a PowerPoint presentation you should also remember about a few things regarding the formatting of the content. First of all, use sans-serif fonts. Make sure that the text is clearly visible against the background, for example it should not be in very light grey against a white background or yellow against an orange background. Another issue is colour. Do not use colour as the only source of information. If you want to highlight a particular word or a piece of information, along with colour you should also use bold print, for example. Try not to use animations and if they are necessary, choose the least complicated ones.

And for exporting to other formats, it would be good if this presentation was made available in the PowerPoint format. But if you want, you can of course export it to PDF, but then you need to remember about a couple of things. When you export to PDF, select the ‘Document structure tags for easy access’ and ‘PDF/A compliant’ options. A presentation saved in this way should not cause problems with accessibility.

If you are interested in the creation of accessible presentations and want to learn more, and you are an employee or student of the Jagiellonian University, contact an assistive technology specialist at the Jagiellonian University Disability Support Service.

[Louder, rhythmic music]

**The film has been made by the Jagiellonian University in Krakow as part of the project ‘Responsible Support and Sustainable Development’ co-financed by the European Union through the European Social Fund under Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development.**