

Guidelines for preparation of visual aids

General guidelines

Do not create visual aids by directly copying your own paper.

Do not copy figures, tables, graphs or text from other publications.

Have specific objectives to communicate to your audience and design your presentation to achieve these.

Do not crowd a visual aid with information.

Use ample margins around edges of a visual aid.

Use colour coding for clarity only, and then no more than 3 or 4 easily discriminable colours.

Minimize the use of headings, borders or affiliation logos on visual aids.

Keep background colour consistent throughout the presentation.

Avoid blue colours on a dark background.

Do not write text by hand on a visual aid.

Use easy-to-read fonts: Times Roman Arial

Type text in mixed-case letters. Do not use text in all capital letters except for titles or isolated words.

Format text to contain a maximum of 7 words per line and 10 lines per frame.

Double or 1½-space all lines of text.

Use key words and bullet statements rather than complete sentences.

Draw lines in graphs and figures with high contrast and label axes in a horizontal fashion.

Avoid unfamiliar graph types.

Adjust the number of slides to the allotted presentation time (not more than 8 – 10 slides for a 15 min presentation)

Overhead transparencies

Format transparencies in a horizontal fashion using 2.5 cm margin all around.

Use dark lettering on a light background.

This is 22-point Times Roman, which is the smallest type allowable for overhead transparencies.

This is 28-point Times Roman which is the preferred type size for transparencies - use this for important text.

Do not use overheads for information so basic that constant transparency switching is necessary.

Computer projection (PowerPoint)

Due to lower image quality, computer projections require larger fonts than do overhead transparencies.

Avoid highly stylistic backgrounds, use legible fonts and symbols and limit animation to essential uses.

Avoid using cross-hatch or dot patterns to shade objects.

Use simple colour or pattern schemes to code objects.

Do not use rapidly moving objects in visual aids as they may appear blurry.