

**Athlone Institute of Technology**

**Policy on Accessible Examination Papers**

***Status:* Final**

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| **Document title: Athlone Institute of Technology Accessible Examination Papers Policy** | | | | | |
| **This policy document was compiled by the Learning and Teaching Unit of AIT. It was brought initally to ASQ in January 2013 & again in June 2014 and recommnedations were made by the ASQ committee for improvements to be made to the document in order to provide clarity and ultimately have an institute-wide policy document for accessible examination papers. This work has now been completed.** | | | | | |
| **Originator: Mr Michael McMahon, Ms Nuala Harding, Ms Bernie Langtry** | | | | **Status: Final** | |
| **Date approved at ASQ: Wednesday, 17 September 2014**  **Date approved at Academic Council:**  **Date approved at Governing Body:** | | | | | |
| **Date of next revision: 2016** | | | **Reviewer:** | | |
| **Revision Number** | **Revision Date** | **Summary of changes** | | | **Date approved at ASQ** |
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**Athlone Institute of Technology**

**Policy on Accessible Examination Papers**

**Introduction**

Athlone Institute of Technology is committed to providing equal opportunities to all staff and students as established in the Equal Status Act 2000-2011 and the Disability Act 2005.  Given the profile of learners in AIT and its agenda of widening access and participation, this policy will support and extend our commitment in this area.

**Purpose of the Policy**

The policy on Accessible Examination Papers aims to incorporate the principles of Universal Design in devising a template for examination papers which make these texts accessible to all students.  Therefore, although this approach will be of benefit to students with print disabilities it will also be of benefit to the full student body. This policy extends the provisions outlined in Section E1 (Module Terminal Examination Paper Design) of the Institute’s [Standards, Assessment and Awards document (2011)](http://www.ait.ie/media/athloneit/formsanddocuments/quality/Standards,-Assessments-&-Awards-4.3.11.pdf) and reinforces the institutes commitment to accessibility as outlined in its Access Policy (2008) which is currently under review.  This Policy is an initial step towards developing an overarching policy for AIT to incorporate accessibility of learning materials and information technology.

**Policy Statement**

Athlone Institute of Technology recognises its obligation under the Equal Status Act 2000-2011 and the Disability Act 2005 to provide information to learners in an accessible format and commits to preparing examination papers in an accessible format which can be easily transferred into alternative formats as required. This policy is supported by an additional guideline document entitled Guidelines to Preparing Accessible Examination Papers.  The institute commits to ensuring that all stakeholders involved in the examination process will adhere to this policy.

**Guidelines for preparing accessible examination papers**

**Guidelines for examination papers**

Font

1. Use a sans serif font preferably Arial[[1]](#footnote-1)
2. Font size should be 12-14 point.

**Headings and Emphasis**

1. Do not use underlined words.
2. Do not use italics unless required by academic or scientific convention.
3. Do not use text in block capitals.
4. Use bold text if you wish to emphasize something.
5. For headings use a larger font in bold lower case.

**Layout (appropriate to the discipline)**

1. All pages should be numbered.
2. Use left-justified with ragged right edge.
3. Lines should not be too long: 60 to 70 characters.
4. Use a line spacing of 1.5.
5. Do not start a sentence at the end of a line.
6. Use bullet points and numbering rather than continuous prose.
7. Do not use Roman numerals.

**Diagrams, graphs and pictures**

1. Diagrams, graphs and pictures should be on the same page as the question or part of the question that they refer to, and should be placed directly after the question or part of question so as to avoid confusion.
2. Any such information should be clearly labelled with the question number and question part given.
3. Any such labelling should be in text format not in photographic format i.e. Jpeg, Bitmap, gif, etcetera. (Use labelling in Microsoft Word to label rather than including the label as part of the photograph).

**Guidelines for writing examination papers**

**Text reading software**

1. Where possible exam papers should be proof read using text reading software, i.e. Texthelp Read & Write.

**Writing Style (appropriate to the discipline)**

1. Use short, simple sentences in a direct style.
2. Give instructions clearly. Avoid long sentences of explanation.
3. Use active rather than passive voice.
4. Do not use double negatives.
5. Be concise.

**Guidelines for printing examination papers**

Paper

1. Paper should be thick enough to prevent the other side showing through. The paper should weigh over 90 gsm.
2. Use matt paper rather than glossy or shiny paper.
3. Avoid white backgrounds for paper. Use cream or a soft pastel color.

**Bibliography**

British Dyslexia Assocation. (2010). *BDA Style Guide*. Retrieved September 18, 2012, from http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about-dyslexia/further-information/dyslexia-style-guide.html

Joint Information Systems Committee. (2010). *Creating Accessible Documents in Microsoft Word 2010 – a comprehensive guide.* London: JISC.

Rello, L. & Baeza Yates, R. (2013). Good fonts for dyslexia. *Proceedings of the 15th International ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility.* Belle Vue Washington: ACM.

The University of Edinburgh. (2013, October 14). *Creating accessible materials*. Retrieved September 9, 2014, from The University of Edinburgh: http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/help-consultancy/accessibility/creating-materials/word-documents

**APPENDIX**

**[Sample layout of exam paper]**

**Athlone Institute of Technology**

**School of (Insert School name here)**

**Semester X Examinations 20XX**

**(Insert) Session**

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**Insert Course name here.**

**Year x.**

**Insert module name here**

**External Examiner(s): Dr. Joseph Public.**

**Mr. Anyone Else**

**Internal Examiner(s): Dr. Jane Doe**

**Instructions to candidates:**

Read **all** questions carefully.

All questions carry equal marks.

Answer **Three** out of **Four** questions.

**Time Allowed: 2 hours.**

**No. of pages including cover sheet: 2**

Q.1. This is the type of font that should be used for writing your questions. It is also important that the text is left aligned.

**[20 marks]**

Q.2. This is the type of font that should be used for writing your questions. It is also important that the text is left aligned. This is the type of font that should be used for writing your questions. It is also important that the text is left aligned.

**[20 marks]**

Q.3.

(a) This is the type of font that should be used for writing your questions. It is also important that the text is left aligned. (8 marks)

(b) This is the type of font that should be used for writing your questions. It is also important that the text is left aligned. This is the type of font that should be used for writing your questions. It is also important that the text is left aligned. ` (12 marks)

**[20 marks]**

Q.4.

(a) This is the type of font that should be used for writing your questions. It is also important that the text is left aligned. This is the type of font that should be used for writing your questions. It is also important that the text is left aligned. (10 marks)

(b) This is the type of font that should be used for writing your questions. It is also important that the text is left aligned. This is the type of font that should be used for writing your questions. It is also important that the text is left aligned. (10 marks)

**[20 marks]**

1. Rello & Baeza Yates, 2013 (The University of Edinburgh, 2013) (Joint Information Systems Committee, 2010)

   (British Dyslexia Association, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)