SPLASH Introduction to

Poster Design

A poster is a visual communication of information. So as well as using text, include graphs, charts, tables and pictures. Your assignment will tell you the size and format of the poster, but you will need to think about who your poster is for. Who are your audience, what are the main points you wish to tell them. Your poster should NOT be a copy of your written paper glued onto poster board. The reader should understand it visually without any help.

* Use colours to attract attention
* Use graphs/tables to give information
* Use pictures where suitable (try image banks)
* Focus on major findings
* Summarise implications and conclusions in plain language
* For dissertations include major sections: abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion
* Sections should be in a visually clear order

# **General format**

Decide the main message you want to give your audience.

If the poster is about your project, check through your abstract again - is it still accurate?

Decide on the size of the poster (refer to the instructions in your project handbook).

You should be able to read all written information from 2 metres away.

A poster is read from left to right, check your sequence of visual and written text.

You can mix font sizes, hierarchy of size. But never mix font types.

Keep to three main colours.

# **Title**

Check your module guidelines but you will probably need to include: the title of the project, name(s), degree title, year of study and calendar year.

The title banner should be readable from 5–6 metres away. Use abbreviations where possible.

There are seldom rules about line justification of the title. Decide if you will justify the text of the title banner to the left or in the centre.

# **Title fonts**

Use a simple, easy to read font. A sans serif style, such as Verdana, Helvetica or Arial.

Use **bold** and/or CAPITALS for the title.

Use mixed upper/lower case for the authors’ names.

Place titles on images, graphs, and drawings

# **Poster text**

Double or 1.5 space all text, using left-justification; jagged right sides are easiest to read.

The text should be easy to read from 2 metres away.

Use plain text (no bold) for main text

# **Fonts**

Section headings (Introduction, Methods, and so on): use bold minimum size 30 point.

Supporting text (Introductory text, figure captions, and so on): use a minimum of 24 point.

Try not to use narrative but if you do keep it brief. This should be no smaller than 18 point in size, and printed in plain text. You can use larger size for the Conclusion text, and a smaller size for Methods text.

Be consistent. Choose one font and use it throughout the poster. Add emphasis by using bold, underlining, or colour; stay away from italics as they are difficult to read.

# **Illustrations/Visuals**

Since a poster is a visual communication of information its success depends on how clear the illustrations and tables are.

Use diagrams, flow charts, arrows, and other strategies to direct the viewer. Do not just use text.

The graphics should be self-explanatory and make up most of the poster design.

Text should be used minimally to enhance graphic materials.

Use empty space between text to separate and stress your ideas.

Graphic materials should be seen easily from a distance of 1.5 metres.

 Need further advice on how to improve the quality of your written work?

Go to the SPLASH website for more information: [www.surrey.ac.uk/splash](http://www.surrey.ac.uk/splash)

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