UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Creating Posters using **PowerPoint**

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Introduction

Microsoft PowerPoint is an accessible and effective tool for creating research posters. During our hands-on, tutor led workshop, you will have the opportunity to create an A0 poster using PowerPoint.

We will also give you a hand out with general design advice on layout, fonts and font size, and use of colour and visuals to help ensure your poster creates a lasting impression. We will give you a scaled down copy of the final poster. Use this for reference as you work through the workbook exercises.

Prerequisite knowledge

Although no previous knowledge of PowerPoint is required, you should be familiar with Microsoft Word and the Windows environment, including file management. Tutors will be on hand to help. Please ask!

What you will learn

By the end of this workshop, you will be able use MS PowerPoint to:

- set up poster size
- use guides and grids to help align text boxes and images
- manage backgrounds
- insert text from Word and work with text boxes
- insert charts from Excel
- insert images

Exercises

To get the most from this workshop session, please work sequentially through the workbook exercises. The steps you need to take to work through each exercise are clearly marked with bullet points.

Approximate time

It should take you around 1 hour to complete these exercises; however, we have designed the workbook so that you can continue to work at your own pace, away from the workshop.

Hints and warnings

Look out for hints and warnings throughout the workbook, used to bring various points to your attention.

	Hints		Warnings

Workbook files

To save you time, we provide you with ready prepared text, images, charts and tables. You will use these to create your workshop poster.

The files you will require are in the folder called **2 - Files** which was part of the course pack you downloaded and extracted to your computer:

- bead_count.xlsx
- fig_captions.docx
- food_intake.xlsx
- UoA-Primary_Logo-RGB.png
- growth_rate.xlsx
- poster_text.docx
- trout.tif

If you have any problems during the workshop, please ask a tutor for help.

Getting started

Start PowerPoint

1. Launch **PowerPoint** from the shortcut on the desktop (classroom PCs only).

OR

2. Click **Start** > and type **PowerPoint** to search for the application in the Start menu.

Resize your poster

Today you will create **a portrait A0 poster**, which measures **118cm by 84cm**.

Always check size and layout requirements for assessed posters.

For future reference, common poster sizes include A0, A1 and A2.

Paper size:	A0	A1	A2
Width (cm)	84	59	42
Height (cm)	118	84	59

For landscape posters, swap the width and height values e.g. a landscape A0 poster measures 84cm (height) by 118cm (width).

1. Click the **Design** tab at the top of the window, then click **Slide Size**, and **Custom Slide Size**.

2. Set the size and orientation for your poster:
   - Width: **84cm**
   - Height: **118cm**

3. Click **OK** – if prompted, click **Ensure Fit**.

Remove default text boxes

It's best to start laying out your poster content on a blank presentation slide.

To change the layout to a blank slide:

- Click the **Home** tab> **Slides** > **Layout** to display a list of layouts.
- Scroll through the list of layouts and click **Blank**.

You can also **right-click** the slide and choose **Layout** from the shortcut menu. Be careful not to right-click inside a text box or you won't see the correct shortcut menu.

Zoom in and out of your work area

Working with such a large page size is challenging. To help you position and edit elements accurately, you will need to zoom in and out frequently.

There are many ways to do this – use the method that suits you best.

The Zoom box

To change the zoom value, locate **Zoom** under the **View** tab on the ribbon. To view your poster at its actual size, change the percentage in the Zoom box to 100%.

Work at 16 or 25% when laying out the poster content.
Zoom in to 33 or 50% when adding detail, or to accurately line up content.

The Zoom Slider

As with other Office applications (e.g. Word) you can also use the **Zoom Slider** at the bottom right of the screen.

If the Zoom Slider is not already visible, right-click anywhere on the status bar at the foot of the PowerPoint window and select Zoom Slider from the pop-up menu.

Mouse scroll button

You can also zoom in and out by holding down the **Ctrl** key on your keyboard and using the scroll button in the centre of your mouse.

Save your poster

Save your poster on your H: drive, in the same location you saved the workshop files. Name the file **workshop.pptx** and save it as file type **PowerPoint Presentation (*.pptx)**.

Avoid losing hours of work - save your poster frequently!

Poster backgrounds

If you don't want a plain white background for your poster, then PowerPoint offers many alternatives - from applying a simple change of colour, to applying gradient, patterned, or textured fills. It is even possible to apply a background image.

However, PowerPoint is primarily a screen presentation program and problems can occur when printing custom backgrounds at such large sizes.

For this reason, it is advisable to avoid using complex patterns and background images. Your poster background may look fine on screen, but it may not print properly on the final output.

Bear in mind that the background should never detract from the poster content. Keep colours pale and soft, and if you do choose to use a textured or patterned background, keep these subtle to ensure poster text is still legible.

Applying a Colour Background

You can change the background colour at any stage during the creation of your poster.

1. Right-click your poster and select **Format Background...** from the menu.

2. The **Format Background** pane will appear at the right of the window.

   – Select **Solid fill**, then click the **Color** paint pot icon.

   – Click **White, Background 1**.

3. Close the **Format Background** pane and save your poster presentation, leaving it open.

Quick save with the keyboard shortcut **Ctrl + S**.

Working with guides

Use PowerPoint's drawing guides and grid to help you align text boxes and other objects. Guides appear as thin dotted lines on your poster – you can move them around and create as many as you need. The grid divides your slide into multiple columns and rows, much like graph paper.

Although you can see the guides and grid on-screen, they will not print out on your final poster.

Display drawing guides

By default, PowerPoint displays two guides, horizontally and vertically centred.

Switch guides on:

– Hold down the **Alt** key and press **F9** (or click the **View** tab and click the **Guides** checkbox in the **Show** section).

Switch guides off:

– Press **Alt + F9** again (or click the **View** tab and click the **Guides** checkbox in the **Show** section to remove the tick).

Create a new guide:

– To create a new guide, **right-click** an existing guide and choose **Add Vertical Guide** or **Add Horizontal Guide** from the shortcut menu or **hold down the Ctrl key** while clicking and dragging an existing guide.

Move an existing guide:

– To move an existing guide, simply click on it and drag (**without holding Ctrl**). As you drag a guide, its position (measured from the centre guide in cm) is displayed alongside. The centre guide's position is 0.00.

Create 2 new horizontal guides

1. Zoom in to **40%** - this will give you greater control when creating your guides and allow you to place them accurately.
2. **Right-click** an existing guide and choose to add a new horizontal guide using the shortcut menu. Drag the new guide upwards until it reads **56.00**. This will be your poster's top margin.
3. **Right-click** an existing guide and choose to add a new horizontal guide using the shortcut menu. Drag the new guide upwards until it reads **55.00**. This will be your poster's bottom margin.

Remember- you can also **hold down** the **Ctrl** key and click and drag an existing guide to create a copy. Once it appears, click and drag it into the position you want.

Create 4 new vertical guides

1. **Right-click** an existing guide and choose to add a new vertical guide using the shortcut menu. Drag the new guide to the left until it reads **39.40**. This will be your poster's left margin.
2. **Right-click** an existing guide and choose to add a new vertical guide using the shortcut menu. Drag the new guide to the right until it reads **39.40**. This will be your poster's right margin.
3. Now create a further **2** new **vertical guides**, **1.40** from either side of the centre vertical guide. This will be the centre margin.
4. **Save** your poster, leaving it open.

Display the grid

You may also like to use PowerPoint's **grid** to help align text boxes and other objects.

– Click the **View** tab on the Ribbon

– Click the checkbox for **Gridlines** from the **Show** section.

You can also **right-click the slide** and choose **Grid and Guides** from the shortcut to fine-tune the settings for the grid.

Adding a Poster title

The poster title is your first communication with your audience and should clearly convey the essence of your poster. It should be clear and concise – aim for 15 words or less. It should be interesting and attention grabbing – studies show that your audience will decide whether to continue reading in as little as 3 seconds! It should be readable from 4.5 metres away – we recommend a minimum of 60pt in size.

Create a text box

You should create your poster title using a text box. This allows you to use subscript or superscript text in your title (e.g. H_2O) or to individually italicise words (e.g. when using Latin names), if required.

1. Click the **Insert** tab on the ribbon, locate the **Text** group and click on **Text Box.**

2. To create a text box, place the cursor on the left margin and click and drag across your poster to the right margin.

3. Type the following title text into the box, making sure you press the **Enter** key after the word 'of' so that the text appears on 2 lines as shown below:

   – **Protein Growth Efficiency in 210 families of**
     Rainbow trout assessed by x-radiography

> If your poster title runs onto two or more lines, think carefully about where to insert line breaks. Remember you can press Enter to add a line break manually, as above.

4. Select all the text within the text box by clicking and dragging with the mouse.

5. Right-click on the selected text and select **Font…** from the pop-up menu.
6. Change the font options as follows, then click **OK**:

   – Latin text font: **Impact**

   – Size: **90 pt**

   – Font color: **Blue, Accent 5, Darker 25%**

> You can use the **Font** dialog box at any time to apply subscript or superscript to individually selected letters or figures.

Resize and move the text box

All text boxes have handlebars on them that allow you to adjust their size and shape.

To resize:

– With the text box still selected, grab the handlebar on the bottom right corner and drag it towards the left, resizing the text box until it is just wide enough to allow the title to appear on 2 lines.

To move:

1. First make sure the text box is still selected, then click once on its border (the cursor will change to a cross and its border will change from a dashed line _ _ _ _ to a solid line ____) then drag the box into position.

2. Drag the title text box until the top of it snaps to the top margin.

Once you have selected a text box, you can also use the arrow keys to move it up, down, left and right

3. Save your poster presentation, leaving it open.

Inserting text from a Word document

You can type text directly into your poster using text boxes, as in the previous exercise, or you can paste it in from an existing Word document.

> First, make sure to de-select your poster title text box by clicking on an empty area of your poster. If you don't, any new text you paste into your poster will go directly into the selected Text Box, overwriting your poster title!

Insert the authors' names

1. Using This PC, browse to your **H: drive**, and the location you where you saved the workshop files.
2. Open the Word file **poster_text.docx**.
3. Select the first paragraph containing the list of authors and associated institutions, then go to the **Home** tab and select **Copy** from the **Clipboard** group (or use the keyboard shortcut **Ctrl + C**).

4. Return to **PowerPoint** and click on your poster.
5. From the **Clipboard** group on the **Home** tab, select **Paste Special** from the **Paste** drop-down menu.

6. Select **Formatted Text (RTF)** from the list of options.

7. Click **OK**.

> Paste as Formatted Text (RTF) to retain Word formatting options such as bulleted lists, and subscript and superscript text.

Format the authors' names

1. Select all the text within the text box by clicking and dragging with the mouse, and change the font to **Arial** and the size to **40pt**.
2. Select the **author names** and make them **Bold**.

3. Use the **handlebars** to widen the text box so that its left side lines up with the left margin and its right side with the right margin.
4. Drag the text box and position it so that it sits a little below the title.

5. **Save** your poster presentation, leaving it open.

Insert and format 'Introduction', 'Materials and methods', 'Results', and 'Discussion' text

1. Use the same method, as described for the authors' names, to copy and paste the **Introduction**, **Materials and methods**, **Results**, and **Discussion** text from Word and into text boxes on your poster.

> You will need to copy and paste each of these blocks of text **separately**, creating one text box at a time – this gives you more flexibility by allowing you to move each text box independently. Make sure you deselect each new text box before copying and pasting the next!

2. Select all the text within each text box and make the font **Arial** and the size **32pt**.
3. Click **OK**.
4. Select the heading within each text box and make it **Bold**, **40pt**, and colour it the same **Blue, Accent 5, Darker 25%** as the poster title.
5. Position and resize each text box so that your poster resembles the printed example provided.

Insert the References

1. Repeat the same procedure to copy and paste the **References** text into a text box.
2. Select all the text within the box and make the **Arial** and the size **25pt**.
3. Make the heading **Bold**, **40pt**, and colour it **Blue, Accent 5, Darker 25%**.
4. Drag this box to the foot of the poster, lining it up with the bottom margin, and resizing it so that it spans the width of the poster from left to right margin.

References

Jobling, M., Covès, D., Damsdgård, B., Kristiansen, H. R., Koskela, J., Petursdottir, E., Kadri, S. and Gudmundson, O., 2001. Techniques for Measuring Feed Intake. In: *Food Intake in Fish*. Houlihan, D., Boujard, T., Jobling, M., (Eds.). Blackwell Science. pp. 49-87.

Gjedrem, T., 1992. Breeding plans for rainbow trout. *Aquaculture* **100**, 73-83.

Talbot, C & Higgins, P.J., 1983. A radiographic method for feeding studies on fish using metallic iron powder as a marker. *Journal of Fish Biology* **23**, 211-220 .

McCarthy, I.D., Houlihan, D.F., Carter, C.G. and Moutou, K., 1993. Variation in individual food consumption rates of fish and its implications for the study of fish nutrition and physiology. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society* **52**, 427-436.

Ricker, W.E., 1979. Growth rates and models. In: *Fish Physiology vol* VIII. Hoar, W.S., Randall, D.J. & Brett, J.R. (Eds.) Academic Press, New York, pp 667-743.

5. **Save** your poster presentation, without closing.

Inserting and resizing images

Insert the University logo

1. Go to the **Insert** tab, locate the **Images** group and select **Pictures**.

2. Browse to your **H: drive**, and the location where you saved the workshop files.
3. Click on the image file **UoA_Primary_Logo-RGB.png** to select it, then click on **Insert**.
4. Click and drag the **University logo** so that it sits in the top right hand corner of your poster, lining it up with the top and right guides.

5. De-select the University logo.

> You can obtain good quality, high-resolution copies of the University logo, suitable for large format posters, from the University's UniPrint Graphics Service (reprographics@abdn.ac.uk), or from Medical Illustration (g.stables@abdn.ac.uk).

Insert and resize an image

1. Repeat the above procedure to insert the image **trout.tif**.
2. With the image still selected, select the **Format** tab on the ribbon, underneath **Picture Tools**.
3. Locate the **Size** group and expand it to open the **Format Picture** pane.

4. Ensure the **Lock aspect ratio** checkbox is ticked and change the **Height** to **15cm**.
5. Close the **Format Picture** pane.

6. Position this image below the **Growth** paragraph of the **Materials and methods** text box.

7. **Save** your poster presentation, leaving it open.

Try to avoid scaling up images in PowerPoint by more than 120% as this may distort them. Wherever possible, resize your poster images before inserting them into PowerPoint using image-editing software, e.g. Microsoft Photo Editor, Adobe Photoshop, or JASC Paint Shop Pro.

For the best results, start with an image larger than required, and scale it down. If your image editing software allows you to set image resolution, anything between 200-300 dpi (or ppi) should be sufficient.

It is not advisable to use Logos and images captured from the Web. Such images may look fine onscreen, they will seldom be of a high enough quality for print.

Copyright

For general guidelines on copyright, see:

https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/support/copyright-216.php

Inserting charts and captions

In most cases, by the time researchers are putting together a poster presentation, they will have already created graphs and charts to support their research findings using spreadsheet software such as Excel. It is possible to copy and paste these graphs and charts directly from Excel into PowerPoint.

Copy a Chart from Excel

1. Using My Computer, or Windows Explorer, browse to your **H: drive**, and the location where you saved the workshop files.
2. Open the Excel file **bead_count.xlsx**.
3. Click once on the **Chart** in the centre of the Excel spreadsheet.
4. On the **Chart Tools Format** tab, locate the **Current Selection** group.
5. Select **Chart Area** from the chart elements drop-down menu – this will ensure the entire chart is selected before copying.

6. Still in Excel, go to the **Home** tab and select **Copy** from the **Clipboard** group (or use the keyboard shortcut **Ctrl + C**).
7. Return to your **PowerPoint** poster.
8. Click on the **Home** tab, locate the **Clipboard** group and select **Paste Special…** from the **Paste** drop-down menu.

9. From the **Paste Special** dialog box, select **Picture (Enhanced Metafile)** and then click **OK**.

This imports the file as a graphic that will retain any formatting styles you applied in Excel and allow you to resize the chart without losing quality.

10. Move the pasted **Bead Count** chart alongside the **trout** image, and then use its handlebars to scale it to approximately the same height.

11. De-select the chart.
12. **Save** your poster presentation, leaving it open.
13. Exit **Excel**.

Insert a caption

1. Using My Computer, or Windows Explorer, browse to your **H: drive**, and the location where you saved the workshop files.
2. Open the Word file **fig_captions.docx**.
3. Click and drag to select the first paragraph containing the caption for **Figure 1**, then go to the **Home** tab and select **Copy** from the **Clipboard** group (or use the keyboard shortcut **Ctrl + C**).

4. Return to **PowerPoint** and from the **Home** tab select **Paste Special** from the **Paste** drop-down menu.

5. From the **Paste Special** dialog box, select **Formatted Text (RTF)** and then click **OK**.

6. The caption appears in a text box on the poster.
7. Select all the text within the text box by clicking and dragging and make the font **Verdana** and font size **20pt**.
8. Drag the text box and position it so that it sits below the trout image and the bead count chart.
9. Use the handlebars to reduce the width of the text box if necessary.

10. De-select the caption.

Copy further Excel charts and Word captions

1. Insert the Excel charts **food_intake.xlsx** and **growth_rate.xlsx** and their **associated captions** using the same method, placing and scaling them as shown on the sample poster.

2. **Save** your poster presentation, leaving it open.

Insert a table

You can use Word, Excel or Access to create tables and then copy and paste them into PowerPoint.

1. Return to the Word document **fig_captions.docx**.
2. Select the **Growth efficiency** table and copy it (**Ctrl + C**).

	Growth efficiency	
Diet	May 2002	September 2002
NP	2.20	1.31
HP	1.51	1.22

3. Return to PowerPoint and from the **Clipboard** group on the **Home** tab, select **Paste Special**, then **Microsoft Word Document Object** and **OK**.

4. The table appears in your poster.
5. With the table still selected, drag the table and position it below the **Discussion** paragraph.
6. Use the handlebars to resize it until the text inside appears roughly the same size as the text in the Discussion paragraph, as shown on the sample poster.

7. Copy and paste the table caption from **fig_captions.docx** as in the previous exercise.

8. Place and scale the caption as shown on the sample poster.

End the workshop session

1. Save your poster.

Protein Growth Efficiency in 210 families of Rainbow trout assessed by x-radiography

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

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Introduction

Materials and methods

Feed Intake

Growth

Results

Discussion

Growth efficiency

References

   – Remember you can use the built-in spell checker to proof your poster. Click the **Review** tab, then click **Spelling** from the **Proofing** group.

2. Exit from PowerPoint.
3. Close any other open applications, e.g. Word, Excel, Internet Explorer, etc.
4. Log off the classroom PC.