Most of the time when we present, we use a slideshow to support what we're saying. In this section we will look at using PowerPoint (or other presentation software) effectively.

Think about your slides after you've planned your main message, structure and supporting points. Your presentation should stand on its own; just use the slides to complement and support what you're saying.

- When considering font, text and colour, aim to create a consistent look and feel by using the same or related typography, colours and imagery across all your slides.
- Think about topic transitions. Using a slightly different design for slides which indicate you're moving onto a new topic gives the audience a visual cue its time to move on.
- With text, less is always more. If you speak and have text on PowerPoint at same time, it will be difficult for the audience to take it all in. Using short bits of text and an image is effective. but if you need to have a lot of text on a slide, try to progressively reveal text (like unveiling bullet points one by one) as you need it.
- Stick to one message per slide – more than this splits focus
- Use a clear, easy-to-read font
- Use size to emphasise your points. The most important part of the slide should be the biggest. Your audience's eyes will often be drawn to the headline, as this is the largest font, but is it the most important part of the PowerPoint?

- When using images and charts in your presentation, consider these points:
- Use high quality photos that enhance meaning. Look for photos that speak strongly to the concept you're talking about and aren't too complex. Your photo could be a metaphor or something more literal, but it should be clear why the audience is looking at it, and why it's paired with what you're saying.
- Use masking to direct attention in images. Here's an example, which draws the audience's focus to researcher development menu of the doctoral college webpage. You could use this technique anytime you want your audience to focus on something specific in an image, graph or screenshot.
- Try panning large images. This is really useful if you want to show a webpage, for example, which doesn't often fit on the whole slide at once.
- Reproduce simple charts and graphs so they fit with the theme of your slide deck. You could redraw it in the native presentation application. This might sound pointless, but it can really make your presentation feel consistent and thought-through.
- Use a maximum of 6 'objects' per slide – the amount of slides in your presentation isn't a problem, it's the amount of objects per slide that is important.
- Finally, try to project your presentation onto a large screen before you present, sometimes colours and images which look great on a laptop don't translate well to

a large screen.

- Go easy on the effects and transitions in your presentation, though if used sparingly, they can be really effective at supporting your content.
- If you are embedding a video, don't use auto-play. Setting the video as click to play gives you more control over when the video starts, and makes it less likely that you'll accidently move onto the next slide before showing the video.

Check out the podcast below for some top tips on using PowerPoint and visual aids effectively, from some of our University of Exeter PGRs.