

## Breaking the Design Barrier

**Make it easy for students to get around your site. Help them by following some simple design principles that keep the screen uncluttered, easy to read and easy to download from.**

### **Some Steps:**

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#### **1. Make it readable.**

- ◆ Use a sans serif font such as Arial, Verdana, Helvetica or Comic Sans MS.
- ◆ Make sure the font size is appropriate for the ECU student hardware and software specifications.
- ◆ Limit the number of fonts to no more than three.
- ◆ Limit the number of colours you use.
- ◆ Avoid capitals and underlining.
- ◆ Avoid borders around text.
- ◆ Use a dark coloured font on a white or pale background for contrast.
- ◆ Avoid strongly textured backgrounds.
- ◆ Use only essential graphics.

#### **2. Make it easy to download.**

- ◆ Avoid large graphics that take a long time to download via modem, or lower the resolution of essential graphics.
- ◆ Put texts that students need to work with, such as tutorial questions, readings and case studies, in a downloadable format (.e.g., word, pdf).

#### **3. Make it useable.**

- ◆ Make the same essential links available from each page, e.g., course outline, assessment details, discussion board, library, lecture notes, tutorial questions, helpful resources.
- ◆ Consider using menus to organise the content.
- ◆ Make a page of helpful resources links. These might include links to the library tutorial ("Liberty"), study skills, school information, and technical information.
- ◆ Divide longer texts up by using headings and subheadings. Use a table of contents at the top of the document that links to these headings and subheadings from the top of the page.