

Guidelines for Poster Preparation

Thank you for your interest in the first national conference on The First National Conference on Teaching English, Research, Linguistics and Translation (RTETL2013): Challenges and Innovations.

When you arrive, please deposit your poster with the conference organisers at the registration desk. Posters will be displayed on the day of your presentation session and it is intended that they be put up before your session. You will be offered further information at the registration desk.

The poster venue will be the Conference Hallway B & C; *this should ensure the maximum exposure*. You are encouraged to bring handouts, CDs, or any other instructional materials so that interested delegates have something to refer back to. Please note that **poster presenters themselves are responsible** for having their posters printed before the conference.

We hope that you will enjoy the experience and look forward to seeing you and your poster at the conference.

In preparing your poster, please note the following points:

- **Poster boards** will accommodate in size 120*90cm. Please ensure that your display will fit within these parameters. You are free to choose landscape or portrait orientation.
- **The poster** does not necessarily have to fill the entire working area.
- **Title** should be in bold. Author's affiliations and e-mail addresses should be included.
- **Text:** a poster should be easily readable from a distance of 1 – 2 metres, and 1.5 or 2 lines of spaces should be used between each line. Font size should fit the display.
- **Headings** should be 25% larger than normal text. Bold or other colours may be used.
- **The amount of text** should be kept to a minimum, and each block of text should include no more than a few sentences.
- **Visual impact** is important so you **are encouraged to include colour images** and background. **Figure 1** displays a sample layout for the posters.

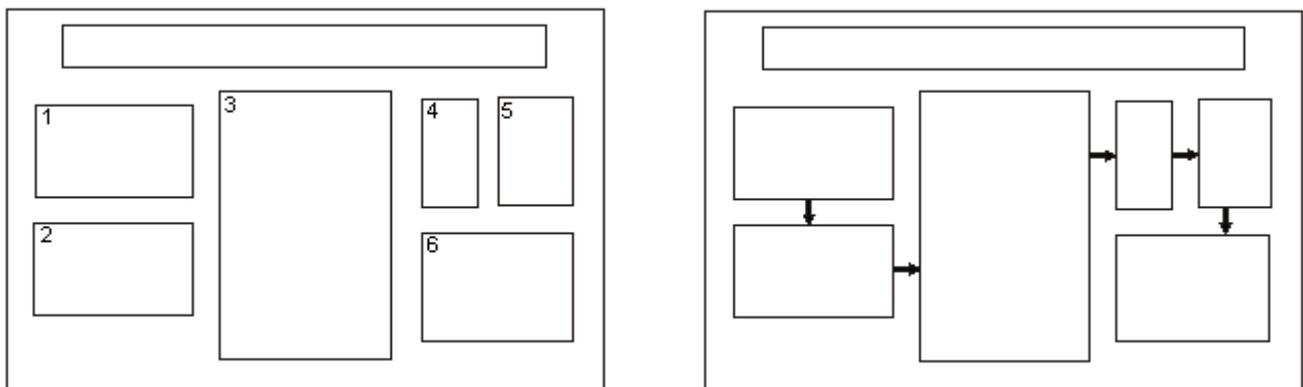


Figure 1: Conventional layouts for a poster. Long panel at top-center is title/author banner. Individual panels can be connected by numbers and arrows.

Further information

There is lots of advice on what makes an effective poster presentation available on the Internet. Here follows an example, based on an article by Sven Hammarling and Nicholas J. Higham, slightly amended to reflect the ‘house style’ of the CA conference.

How to Prepare a Poster (by Sven Hammarling and Nicholas J. Higham)

Poster presenters should take posters seriously, giving thought to their preparation and display and to their role in a conference.

Poster sessions are an increasingly important part of academic conferences, and many of us are rather inexperienced in their preparation and presentation. Having been involved in organizing and judging poster sessions, however, we have given some thought to what we consider to be desirable features of a poster.

What Is a Poster?

A poster is very different from a paper or a talk, and so different techniques need to be used in its preparation. In particular, a poster is not a conference paper, and simply pinning a paper to a poster board usually makes a very poor poster. Cardiff CA poster boards will be approximately 4 feet high and 3 feet wide, raised from the floor to be visible. A poster itself is a visual presentation comprising whatever the contributor wishes to display on the poster board. Usually, a poster is made up entirely of a single sheet (preferred) or sheets of paper. These are pinned or attached with velcro strips to the board. The pins or velcro are provided with the board by the conference.

The purpose of a poster is to outline a piece of work in a form that is easily assimilated and stimulates interest and discussion. The ultimate aim is a fruitful exchange of ideas between the presenter and the people reading the poster, but you should not be disappointed if readers do not stop to chat—a properly prepared poster will at least have given useful information and food for thought.

A Poster Tells a Story

In preparing a poster, simplicity is the key. A typical reader may spend only a few minutes looking at the poster, so there should be a minimum of clutter and a maximum of pithy, informative statements and attractive, enlightening graphics. A poster should tell a story. As always in an academic presentation, the broad outline includes a statement of the problem, a description of the method of attack, a presentation of results, and a summary of the work. But within that format, there is much scope for ingenuity. A question-and-answer format, for example, may be appropriate for part of the poster.

A poster should not contain a lot of details—the presenter can always communicate the fine points to interested participants. Keep in mind that the poster will be one of many in the exhibition area: You need to make sure that it will capture and hold the reader’s attention.

The poster should begin with a definition of the problem, together with a concise statement of the motivation for the work. It is not necessary always to write in complete sentences; sentence fragments may be easier to comprehend. Bulleted lists are effective. An alternative is to break the text into chunks—small units that are not necessarily paragraphs in the usual sense. Graphs and figures are sometimes effective, and images which are eye catching and relevant are essential. Legends should be minimal. A brief description of the implications of a graphic, placed just above or below it, is helpful.

Designing Your Poster

Suggestions on the physical design of a poster range from the obvious to the not so obvious. First, as we mentioned earlier, it is definitely unacceptable to post a copy of a paper!

A poster is usually printed on a single piece of paper, which is the most straightforward for the organisers to set up. But it might be formed from multiple sheets of smaller paper. The number of pages should be minimized—for the A0 space a suggested maximum is 9 sheets of A4 (Europe) or letter sized 8 × 11 inches (U.S.). But a single sheet, or even sheets of differing sizes within one poster, can also be very effective.

Whatever the size of the sheets, the typeface chosen should be considerably larger than standard. Because not all readers will have perfect eyesight, and because the crowd of readers around a popular poster may be several people deep, the type should be easily readable by a person standing a few feet away. In particular, the title of the poster and the author's name should be large and prominent. Good use can be made of colour, both to provide a more interesting image and for colour coding of the text. A coloured backing card for each sheet can be effective. For added interest, try including an appropriate cartoon, photograph, or quotation. There is plenty of scope for creativity.

The CA organisers would prefer a single A0 sheet, which can be put up by the organisers without the chance of confusing the progression of your ideas. However, if using smaller sheets include a diagram of the preferred layout, with title of the poster clearly marked on the diagram and each paper clearly numbered according to the diagram. In either case you might consider subdividing the poster into blocks of information and argument. If such information is arranged as a matrix, two layouts are possible: horizontal (reading across the rows) and vertical (reading down the columns). While the horizontal ordering is perhaps more natural, it has the potential disadvantage of requiring the reader to move to and fro along the poster; if there are many readers, congestion can result. A vertical ordering might be preferable, although other possibilities should be considered as well. If you are comparing three methodological approaches, for example, you could display them in parallel form, in three rows or columns, perhaps as a 'display within a display.' Consider the possibility of arranging the poster to represent some feature of the problem. If there is any doubt about the order in which the 'blocks' or sheets should be read, guide the reader by numbering them clearly or linking them with arrows.

Transportation and the Poster Session

Transporting a poster can be a problem if it contains large sheets of paper. Rolling the paper into a cylinder and storing it in a tube is the most common system. If the work presented in the poster has been described in more detail in a paper, consider making the paper available as a handout at the poster session. The alternative is email the poster to the in-house illustrators at Durham to print for you. This is a convenient solution, particularly if travelling by public transport, but note that there will be a production cost and an early submission deadline.

Once the session starts, stand near the poster but not in a position that obscures it from view. Be prepared to answer the questions that a good poster will inevitably generate. But keep in mind the advice of one expert: 'A presenting author at a poster session should behave like a waiter in a first-class restaurant, who is there when needed but does not aggravate the guests by interrupting conversation every ten minutes to inquire whether they are enjoying the food'.

The poster will be left up all day, so after your presentation, you may wish to leave contact details for those who were unable to attend the session, in any case include your email details on the poster itself.