How To Use Speak Selected Text with Microsoft Office apps

Introduction
The Microsoft Office suite of applications (which includes Microsoft WORD) is available throughout the University and is the main tool to produce assignments, essays, documents and letters. For the academic year 2015/16, the version of Microsoft Office on both Student and Staff computer images is 2013. In this version of Microsoft office, there is a function called ‘Speak Selected Text’ that can be enabled so that a user can select text of an e-mail or WORD document, for example, and then get the computer to read the selected text.

This functionality is not very easy to find so it is best to put it on the customizable ‘Quick Access Toolbar’ at the top of each program so that it is always available and the student does not have to dig around to find it each time they want to use it.

More detailed instructions on how to use text-to-speech (TTS) can be found at this web page:

Microsoft text-to-speech

Accessibility options for all Microsoft products can be viewed at the following webpage:

Microsoft Office Accessibility

Finding the Icon
First click on the down arrow on the ‘Quick Access Toolbar’:

![Icon Image]

This will then show the appropriate window to add this icon to the ‘Quick Access Toolbar’:
From the ‘Choose Commands from’ drop down menu, choose ‘All Commands’. Then scroll down the window below this menu until you get to the icon called ‘Speak’. Choose this icon and then click the ‘Add’ button to put it in the right hand side window.
Press ‘OK’ and the icon will be added to the ‘Quick Access Toolbar’ as shown below:

Using Speak Selected Text
To use this function, just highlight text in an e-mail or document and then press this button. So long as the loudspeaker on the computer has been set up correctly, the computer will then read the text.

If you cannot hear anything, make sure the loudspeaker icon in the task bar does not show that it is on mute. Then check the volume of the loudspeaker and increase the volume if need be.

Note that this functionality is not just limited to WORD but is also available in Powerpoint, Excel and Microsoft Outlook too.