

Accessibility Checklist for Web Content and Online Courses: A Self-Assessment Tool

Element	Accessibility Concern	Suggestions and HTML Code Examples	✓
Formatting	Give web pages, word documents and presentations structure (page title, headings, lists).	Use built-in styles in WYSIWYG html editors, MS Office or Open Office. Convert (Save As) to a PDF.	
Navigation	Establish consistent navigation throughout the site or course.	Predictable navigation is helpful to all users. Try navigating through the site without using the browser “back button.”	
	Use clear and concise links.	Example: Elements of a Good Research Paper Instead of: Click here to see a good research paper or Elements of a Good Research Paper	
	If images (such as buttons or icons) are used for navigation, be sure to include meaningful and simple alt text.	See “graphics” section below.	
	Build your site so that it can be navigated using a keyboard or through the use of assistive technology.	To test this, use the <code>tab</code> and <code>enter</code> keys on your keyboard to navigate through your site and make sure each link can be accessed in this way and that the order is correct.	
	In some courseware, if you use an image other than the default image for a particular function, such as “e-mail” or “chat,” a screen reader will read it simply as “link” instead of including the name of the link.	Use default icons or inform students of this problem. Or ask for technical assistance to add alt text to the icon.	
Graphics (that are important to page content)	Include alt tags and/or long descriptions (if the graphic element provides detailed information).	<code></code>	
Graphics (that are purely aesthetic)	Include a “blank” alt tag so that the screen reader does not read the image name.	<code></code>	

Element	Accessibility Concern	HTML Code or Resources	✓
Video clips	<p>Include captions for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and preferably a script of video for students who are blind or have low vision.</p> <p><i>Best Practice:</i> Also make a 56k bitrate version of video clips available for users with slow connections.</p>	<p>Use an application that will assist you in creating captions or audio descriptions of your video clips. For technical assistance, refer to the following resource: http://www.pcc.edu/resources/instructional-support/access/captions.html</p>	
Audio clips	<p>Include a link to transcripts of any audio clips that you use.</p>	<p>Example of link: <code> Transcript of Lecture #4</code></p>	
Tables for layout	<p>Make sure a screen reader will read the table in an order that makes sense to the user.</p> <p>Use a validation tool that will show you the order that the cells will be read by a screen reader.</p>	<p>Install the WebAIM toolbar from: http://wave.webaim.org/ This will allow you to test pages within Desire2Learn.</p>	
Tables for data	<p>So that the relationship of data cells to each other is clear to students accessing the site with a screen reader, data cells must be associated with header cells.</p>	<p>Use built-in styles to indicate what row or column is the header of the table. See http://www.pcc.edu/resources/instructional-support/access/tables.html</p> <p>In addition, keep tables small. Break large tables up into multiple smaller tables.</p>	
	<p>Since tables of more complexity may not be read correctly, we recommend including a text alternative.</p>	<p>Include a description of the table in the page content.</p>	
	<p>Include a table summary and a caption for the table.</p>	<p><code><table summary="This table contains data that shows the relationship between sunlight exposure and growth of plant"><caption>Table 1. Effect of sunlight exposure on plants</caption></code></p>	

Element	Accessibility Concern	HTML Code or Resources	✓
Color and Contrast	Make sure text is on a background with good contrast.	Black text on a white or a light background is ideal.	
	Avoid using color only to convey meaning.	If you use color as a method for categorizing topics or coding items, make sure there are other designations. Use shapes and color or text and color.	
Flashing/ Flickering Objects	Avoid flashing and flickering graphics and text. Flickering items trigger seizures for people who have seizure disorders.	If you have a graphic that you must use that flickers, create a separate link to it with a warning that it flickers.	
Related Links	Make sure the sites that you recommend to students are accessible or be prepared to provide the content in an alternate format.	<p>Check the sites using an accessibility validator.</p> <p>WAVE 2.01: www.wave.webaim.org</p> <p>Bobby: www.cast.org/bobby</p> <p>WAI: http://validator.w3.org</p>	
Exams	<p>Most exams and practice exams designed for online courses are set up as forms. Forms can be made accessible to screen readers, but there are too many accessibility fixes to list them all here.</p> <p>Best Practice: Create a practice test and allow students to take this exam prior to the first exam. Students with assistive technology will have the opportunity to test their technology with your test format.</p>	<p>Tutorials on making forms accessible can be found online.</p> <p>For a tutorial on making forms accessible, visit: http://webaim.org/techniques/forms/</p>	
	If you use pre-packaged exams and practice exams, the feedback the student gets after submitting the exam may not be accessible.	Be prepared to provide this feedback in an alternate format, include a statement somewhere on the site that instructs the student how to handle this accessibility concern.	

Adapted with permission from Project PACE, a program of the Disability Resource Center at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, #P333A990056).

Resources

Web Accessibility Guidelines and Support Services

<http://www.pcc.edu/access>

Instructional Support

<http://www.pcc.edu/is>

Disability Services

<http://www.pcc.edu/resources/disability/>

Google Accessibility Features

<http://www.google.com/support/a/bin/answer.py?answer=1631886>