

Tasklist to support the recommendations of addressing the accessibility regulations in the VLE

Developed by attendees at the BLE event on 20th May 2019

Recommendation 12:

Colleges and universities should establish multi-departmental working groups, with student representation and participation from the leadership, to develop/review and oversee a strategy for improving digital accessibility.

- Identify key roles and responsibilities including representatives from TEL, management team, quality team and pedagogical support.
- Identify relevant groups/committees e.g. senior management, Equality and Diversity, student groups, staff and students with disabilities.
- Identify senior champions.
- Create new group with dedicated resources.

Recommendation 13:

Colleges and universities should develop a digital accessibility strategy. The objective of the strategy should be to improve teaching and learning across the board, recognising that this can be achieved through meeting or exceeding the requirements of the new regulations.

- Digital accessibility strategy - will need to be a new one to later be articulated with and/or embedded into core institutional strategies/policies.
- Understand where we are at now with regard to our expectations of how the content in the VLE is designed. Promote this to staff; audit materials and from this identify what work needs to be done to meet the standard required.
- Clarify who is responsible for and owns the strategy.
- Build digital accessibility considerations into process for new course approvals, purchasing of new resources and systems.
- Determine process to test for accessibility e.g. the use of a tool such as Blackboard Ally or staff/students to check.
- Provide human and information resources to support implementation.
- All staff should have training in digital accessibility should be part of the strategy. A compulsory component of induction for new staff.
- Process for reporting and resolving issues with non-compliant resources - this will be handled centrally/locally/combination of both.
- Build compliance of the strategy into staff contractual obligation.

Recommendation 14:

Colleges and universities should audit the accessibility of their VLE and make a public timeline and plan for addressing different types of preexisting inaccessible content.

- Identify the audit team and ensure they are diverse, mix of voices and experts, and adequately trained and supported.
- Develop a strategy for different content types e.g. text within Moodle pages, uploaded content in files, video, etc.
- Audit the content in the VLE, how it's created, where it's hosted.
- Prioritise:
 - content that needs to be accessible by Sept 2019.
 - compulsory/core programmes/modules.
 - programmes/modules where there is a greater need for accessible resources e.g. if a student with a disability is on the course
 - quick wins e.g. colours, fonts, heading styles in Word.
- Research the accessibility of the VLE itself and understand any limitations of the platform.
- Teams need to review their content in relation to set parameters, categories and WCAG guidelines.

Recommendation 15:

Colleges and universities should set targets for training and raising awareness among content creators, including academic staff. In order to reach all content creators within the required timeframe, this programme may need to be mandatory for some staff.

- Consistency of training is important, that all staff are trained to the same standards, ways.
- Drop-in sessions (online and face to face).
- Email bulletins - key dates listed, alongside links to Government Digital Services (GDS) and other Policy websites.
- Awareness campaign: online, email, attendance at programme meetings.
- Building into professional development and appraisal processes.
- State that attending training etc is mandatory up to a certain point.
- Equip teams with written documentation.
- Support and championed by Senior Colleagues.
- Get support from large companies such as Microsoft (training).
- Consider non-mainstream software e.g. LaTeX and coding software.

Recommendation 16:

Colleges and universities should raise awareness of the Accessibility Statement and make it public and easy to navigate to. Accessibility Statements should also provide guidance on how to use the VLE's accessibility features.

- Ensure that the VLE is included in the Accessibility Statement.

- The link to the Accessibility Statement should appear on the landing page for the VLE.
- Since the Statement will include resources that are not accessible, this may encourage departments to modify as this will not appear well to potential students.

Recommendation 17:

Colleges and universities should design an effective procedure responding to students' requests and notifications relating to inaccessible content. The procedure should be clear to students and focused on both helping them get the content they need and in parallel improving the VLE for the next student. Colleges and universities should minimise the need for students to make such requests and notifications, by designing content to be accessible from the start.

- Consider other institutional places in addition to the VLE that students might access content e.g. Teams, OneDrive, student Intranet/portal.
- Student induction should highlight the procedure, which will indicate how to self-help.
- Adding information/contact details to course handbook/information pages.
- Embedded online form in Moodle to make it easier to report and collate information.
- Generic email address to avoid single point of failure; also face-to-face and phone alternatives to request help.
- Training/awareness raising for staff who have to deal with requests so they know to use the procedure; to be included alongside Recommendation 15.
- Creation of flow diagrams for staff and students for where to go to solve different requests.
- Requests should be collated and analysed at institutional level to look for trends, recommend improvements etc.
- Clearly state how long it takes for request fulfillment.