



Accessibility Considerations in the World of Online Training & Learning

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Adobe Connect

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INTRODUCTION

When one thinks about accessible online training and learning, what comes to mind? For many instructional designers and trainers, “accessible” is synonymous with legal protocols such as Section 508 or WCAG 2.1. But true accessibility as it relates to learning involves far more than compliance box checking. It is more about removing barriers and creating an inclusive environment that assures effective learning for all.

Why does accessibility matter in the context of adult learning?

Imagine sitting in a meeting where everyone is speaking in foreign language, or you’re on a video conferencing call and the sound goes out. That’s what it feels like to be a learner with a disability trying to participate in a non-accessible, virtual training course. The experience is understandably frustrating and discouraging for the learner, but it is also a huge concern for organizations.

Everyone deserves the opportunity to learn, however, those with disabilities are sometimes unintentionally excluded from the same experiences their colleagues have. The ramifications are far-reaching. On a purely practical level, they may fail to fully absorb the learning material intended for them. Emotionally, they can exit their virtual training session(s) feeling resentful. Legally, the company could be held liable for non-compliance. In a worst-case scenario, the inadequately trained learner could put their own safety—or the safety of others—at risk.

How many people are affected?

According to the UN World Health Organization (WHO), [World Report on Disability: Summary, 2011](#), more than one billion people worldwide live with some form of disability; nearly 200 million experience considerable difficulties in functioning. But defining precisely what constitutes a disability is not an exact science. While those with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory [such as hearing or vision] differences fall under the umbrella, many individuals experience short-term challenges that disable or impair their ability to learn.

Consider the case of an employee with a broken wrist who can only use one hand to type. Or how about a worker who is on a prescribed, short-term medication that makes her dizzy when staring at a computer screen? What about an individual who successfully undergoes cataract surgery but has limited visual acuity during the healing process? These workers are dealing with temporary situations that certainly impair their ability to fully participate in online training and learning initiatives.

Some learners may not even be aware of the fact that they are living with a so-called disability! For years they may have coped with challenges related to dyslexia or ADHD, without ever recognizing or acknowledging their “disability.”

For example: [Color blindness affects 5 to 10 percent of the US population](#), impacting considerably more males than females. In its mildest form, an individual might not even realize that he has the condition! He might perceive colors but cannot distinguish nuances in shades. If in a virtual training he is presented with a choice of blue boxes and asked specifically to click on the teal one, he might have trouble discerning exactly which box the facilitator is referencing.

By the numbers

26%

Percent of adults in the United States that have some type of disability¹

61,000,000

Number of adults in the United States who live with a disability¹

13%

Percent of adult Americans who are blind or “have trouble” seeing, even when wearing glasses or contact lenses²

300,000,000

Number of colorblind people worldwide³

5.9%

Percent of people with a disability who are deaf or have serious difficulty hearing¹

10.8%

Percent of people whose disability is cognitive, meaning they have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions¹

¹<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/infographic-disability-impacts-all.html>

²<https://www.afb.org/research-and-initiatives/statistics>

³<https://enchroma.com/blogs/beyond-color/interesting-facts-about-color-blindness>

The business value of inclusion

Many businesses today are focused on inclusion. **Much has been written** about the need to embrace diversity and inclusion, and the value that a corporate culture of inclusion offers. Experts agree that diversity fosters a more creative and innovative workplace, and can give organizations a competitive edge in a globalized world. On a purely practical level, a diverse and inclusive workforce helps companies attract and retain talent, thus mitigating the high cost of turnover. An inclusive environment helps learners reach their potential and contribute their best to the organizational goals. Ethically, it is the right thing to do.

Advances in technology have played a big role in driving inclusion. New apps and services, combined with cutting-edge assistive technology, allows accommodations that might never be in place otherwise. Today it is easier than ever for trainers to automate and adapt universal design principles into all learning deliverables—face-to-face as well as virtual.



The **Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion** (EARN) is a free resource that helps employers tap the benefits of disability diversity by educating public- and private-sector organizations on ways to build inclusive workplace cultures. EARN offers information and resources to empower individuals and organizations to become leaders in the employment and advancement of people with disabilities.

EARN assists employers through online support and a range of education and outreach activities, including free webinars and training videos. Its award-winning **Inclusion@Work Framework for Building a Disability-Inclusive Organization** outlines seven core components of a disability-inclusive workplace, along with a menu of strategies for achieving them.

Image from Inclusion@Work: A Framework for Building a Disability-Inclusive Organization

Why should enterprises care about accessibility?



It's creates equal opportunity

Companies that prioritize accessibility enable individuals with disabilities to be more independent and provide them with the same opportunities as their colleagues.



It's the law

Legal mandates for accessibility currently exist globally in some shape or form, and are only expected to further mature in scope and standardization. .



It embraces and incorporates innovative technology

Accessible design ensures that training materials can be viewed by users who rely on screen readers, braille displays, or head pointers. They are enabled with closed captioning, automating transcripts, reader support, keyboard shortcuts, and color customizations.



It's good for business

Organizations that prioritize accessibility improve their ability to reach new customers and penetrate new markets.

Regulatory considerations

Although web technologies have broken down many traditional barriers to communication, accessing digital information is often still problematic for millions with disabilities. Established legal guidelines such as WCAG 1.0 and Section 508 were enacted to help rectify this.

The most updated guidelines, **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1** from the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), were published in June 2018. WCAG 2.1 consists of 12 guidelines, each with three checkpoint levels for individual success criteria for web developers to meet: Level A, Level AA, and Level AAA. Many countries including Australia, Canada, Germany, and Japan, base their standards on WCAG 2.1 or its precedent, WCAG 1.0

In the United States, **Section 508** of the US Rehabilitation Act is based on WCAG 1.0 checkpoints. It sets standards for web pages designed or maintained by federal agencies. State and local governments, as well as educational and nonprofit institutions, may have their own accessibility policies in place.

Challenges specific to virtual learning environments

It is clear that people with disabilities face obstacles when it comes to traditional instructor-led training. Organizations today accommodate for their needs; making handouts available in larger print or providing adaptive hearing devices. While the virtual classroom removes the barrier of traveling to a physical location, it requires specialized accessibility considerations, much like traditional ILT programs.

One that becomes immediately apparent as a growing number of instructors pivot to virtual platforms is the need for closed captioning. This is true for both live and on-demand virtual training. But closed captioning is important not just for those with disabilities. It is a valuable aid for ESL (English as a Second Language) viewers, as well as people who process information slowly. In fact, more than 100 [empirical research studies](#) document that closed captioning (also called subtitles) improves comprehension and retention for ALL viewers.

Designing VILT to be more accessible

Before training

Facilitators can be more prepared to provide accommodations if they know in advance what is required. A best practice is to proactively send out a short survey right after registration. Provide an overview of what is expected to happen in the class, and ask learners to identify any challenges that would impair their ability to access the event or content. Assure participants that the goal is to make sure everyone can fully participate in the training.

Many individuals with visual challenges rely on screen readers to help them decipher written material. When preparing VILT sessions, a best practice is to load supplemental documents and slides into the platform as early as possible so those who depend on adaptive devices have sufficient time to preview the supporting material prior to the designated start time. Similarly, trainers who intend to show video snippets during a virtual training class should make them available in advance to learners with special needs so they have the opportunity to consume them beforehand with accessibility features turned on.

During training

If a video training includes film clips, those with limited vision abilities may need scaffolding or closed captioning to describe the scenes, as hearing the dialogue alone may not be sufficient for them. Although those with hearing limitations often have their own transcription tools that rely on machine learning to transform speech to text in real time, in some cases those with hearing impairments might also benefit from the inclusion of sign language interpreters in VILT.

It is common practice for virtual trainers to foster engagement by launching polls or asking attendees to use status indicators to signal agreement or disagreement with a particular point. In a traditional classroom, participants can simply raise their hands or use their voices to weigh in. However, response options are different in a virtual classroom. When designing for VILT, it is important to make sure that those with motor impairments can complete such tasks using standard inputs such as a mouse or touchpad, or keyboard commands.

After training

When doing assessment, consider providing alternative formats to accommodate special needs. A multiple choice test can be read to a student using a screen reader, but allowing the student to respond verbally bypasses visual limitations. Similarly, mastery can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. If there are mobility limitations, a 1-on-1 conversation can serve the same purpose as an essay.

After training, facilitators routinely distribute links to the session recordings. To assure that VILT training is truly accessible, be sure that transcripts of such recordings are made available to those who need them.

In general:

- Take advantage of tools that offer accessibility checks, such as Adobe **Acrobat Pro**, **Accessibility Checklist** by Elsevier, and **Color Contrast Checker** by Monsido. While they may not catch every error, they can be helpful as part of a framework for evaluating the accessibility of eLearning projects and virtual training initiatives.
- Use yourself as a guinea pig. Close your eyes and think about the learning experience you have designed. Turn off the volume. Does the message still come across clearly? Try navigating without a mouse, or while wearing gloves. Use insights you gain to design accessible virtual training. It is MUCH easier to do that as you go than try to retrofit corrections after a product is ready.

Assistive technologies that help the disabled

Users with disabilities frequently rely on assistive technology tools. These may include:

Screen readers. Those with visual impairments use screen readers to read the contents of a web page out loud, however since the units only read text, images and animations should be assigned text descriptions, also referred to as alt text.

Magnification software. Users with low vision often depend on magnification software, which can increase a portion of the user's screen, or the entire screen.

Keyboard navigation. Those with mobility issues due to nerve damage, arthritis, or repetitive motion injury can use the keyboard instead of a mouse to navigate web pages. They navigate primarily using the Tab and Enter keys.

Touchscreen. Allows an individual to navigate a page using their hands without the fine-motor control required by a mouse.

Head pointer. A stick placed in the mouth or mounted on a head strap that an individual uses to interact with a keyboard or a touchscreen..

11 quick tips to make your virtual training more accessible

1. Don't hesitate to ask students what they need. Often they will share helpful insights.
2. For those who have challenges processing information, create an agenda in advance and provide graphic organizers to help structure information.
3. Proactively release supplemental material prior to training so those with disabilities have ample time to access it.
4. Add closed captioning to all assets.
5. Reduce the amount of information on single slides.
6. Slow down speech.
7. Check contrast to make sure all text is clear and legible, and distinct from backgrounds. Be careful with gradients.
8. Incorporate inclusive images and language.
9. Edit, edit, edit, and edit again—each time with a different lens. Consider: Does this data presentation work for someone with a small screen? Does this picture have a text description that accurately captures what I am trying to portray? Is this page too busy? Am I using example language that is inclusive?’
10. User test, user test, and user test again. Examine both hardware and software, and solicit feedback from different users.
11. If need be, hire a third party consultant or QA specialist with accessibility expertise to run an audit to make sure you did not miss anything.

What about the platform?

A robust platform can help a facilitator deliver truly accessible virtual training. When choosing a virtual training platform, learning leaders should focus on solutions that offer a broad array of accessible features such as closed captioning, subtitles, multiple audio tracks, keyboard commands, color & contrast controls, enhanced navigational features, and compatibility with screen readers. Regardless of the platform they select, L&D teams must continually test and evaluate to assure accessibility and compliance.

Adobe's commitment to accessibility

For Adobe, accessibility is not just a mandated requirement. The **company's commitment** is evident across all its product lines. Adobe provides product support and reporting on standards compliance; maintains relationships with assistive technology vendors to ensure that its software works well with end-user tools; supports developers/authors to meet accessibility standards; and provides resources for end users with disabilities.

Adobe Connect 11

The new **Adobe Connect 11** offers cutting edge accessibility features—screen readers, menu navigation, keyboard shortcuts, support for closed captioning, and customizable displays—so everyone can participate in virtual training.

Accessible audio: Provides support for embedded MP4 subtitles, descriptive audio for the hearing impaired, and second language audio tracks.

Accessible documents: Shared PDFs can now be made available to screen readers, enabling sight-impaired participants to hear the text.

Accessible chats: Choose the color and size settings of text in Chat Pods.



 Adobe Connect



Introducing Adobe Connect 11

Welcome to the Real Virtual

[Learn More >](#)

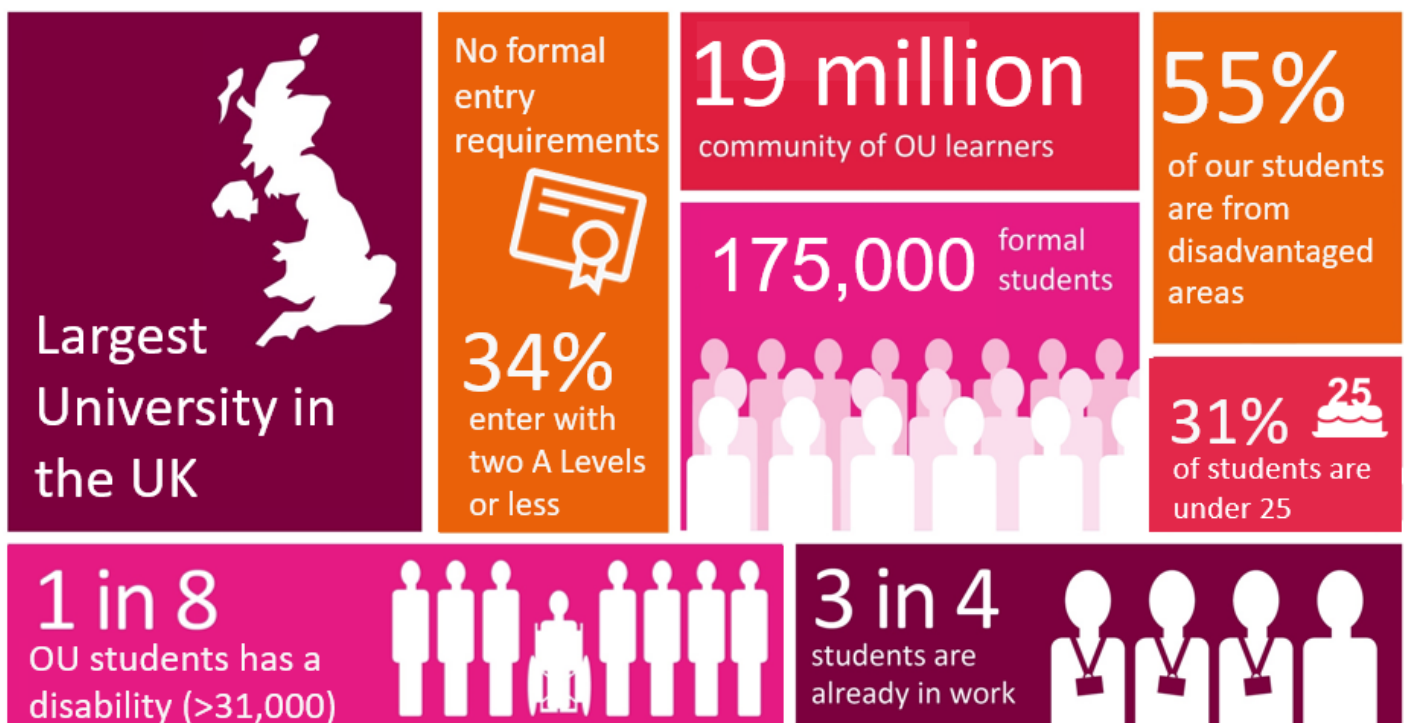
Case study

The Open University: An Inspirational Model for All

By Zoe Gibson, Senior Product Development Manager in Learning Experience & Technology

The Open University (OU) occupies a unique position in UK higher education, being the largest provider of part-time and distance learning and operating across all four UK nations and internationally. The OU's vision is "to reach more students with life-changing learning that meets their needs and enriches society"; the **OU mission** is to be "open to people, places, methods, and ideas."

As the largest university in the UK, the OU has the **highest proportion of students declaring a disability**. Over 31,000 students studying at the OU in October 2020 have declared a disability. Accessible learning material, with embedded figure descriptions, transcripts, and alternative formats, is available for any course that a student might register for. OU students study in all sorts of environments where the ability to adjust visual or auditory settings can be invaluable. The philosophy at the OU is that everyone benefits from improved accessibility, not just those with a declared disability.



Graphic courtesy of The Open University

Accessible platforms

Students have two sets of challenges when interacting with online materials. The first is navigation to get to the materials they need; the second is the interaction with the material when they have arrived. This is true for all students, but for those with additional needs the challenges are significantly greater, and the OU does what it can to make the journey easier.

The OU Virtual Learning Environment (VLE – a heavily customized version of Moodle) is at the heart of the University’s learning systems, which represent a mature and highly integrated ecosystem of platforms, tools, and services. External benchmarking reviews are regularly conducted to evaluate provision and inform improvements.

The 2018 review demonstrated that OU VLE is a highly successful digital learning platform, better than commercial offerings in many areas, and it delivers a unique and competitive online student experience. The operating model for managing the learning systems and continued investment in these services was recognized as one of the OU’s significant strengths in the review.

The VLE is also routinely evaluated using the [System Usability Scale](#), which provides a global measure of system satisfaction, perceived ease-of-use, and sub-scales of usability and learnability. The OU measure this regularly for course sites, which are rated as above the industry average by all students. The OU VLE is updated through an iterative process, based on continual improvement utilizing user experience research and testing, ensuring the VLE innovates based on evidence.

Moodle Core and OU VLE conform to industry accessibility standards. The OU accessibility guidelines are slightly more rigorous than the W3C WCAG AA level (i.e., they correspond to AA, plus some of the AAA requirements), and are regularly reviewed and enhanced. The OU has made significant enhancements to accessibility in Moodle Core by directly implementing enhancements, as well as by reporting issues and participating in the Moodle Accessibility Group.

In OU VLE, browser and operating system settings (such as high contrast mode) are respected and the OU Moodle themes enable browser add-ons such as Stylish to be used to attain necessary or preferred color and display changes.

Users can set personal preferences in OU Moodle that enable:

- The option not to use the WYSIWYG text editor when posting messages (using plain text instead).
- The ability to receive plain text emails (instead of HTML) e.g., for forum subscriptions.
- The selection of a preferred file type such as PDF, which will then be surfaced in the OU Moodle interface if available for a specific piece of OU content.

SeGA initiative

The Securing Greater Accessibility (SeGA) initiative at the OU provides an established process that ensures that all curriculum is accessible for disabled students. An expert team works with the course teams to test software, materials, and websites in a dedicated, in-house usability and accessibility lab. Since 2014, the OU has provided alternative formats for audio recordings, for printed versions of online items, as well as for individual requests, such as additional binding, print on colored paper, large print, and enlarged text. The OU works to improve the experience of people with visual impairment, hearing impairment, restricted movement, cognitive impairments such as dyslexia, hidden disabilities such as mental health, isolation, and how easy it is to dropout or disengage.

Online tutorials

What's true of the whole online offering is also true for tutorials in online rooms—the OU's very own virtual classrooms, delivered by **Adobe Connect**. Typically there are over 45,000 scheduled online events per year, with over 4500 staff running events. Recording views reached 1 million early in 2020. The OU online tutorials vary in delivery and number of participants. They can be anything from a tutor-to-student pastoral session; a tutor delivering an interactive tutorial with multi-person discussion and activities planned to support the core learning material; to a large course presentation with polls and chat and depending on numbers, use of breakout rooms. The majority of OU online tutorials are an interactive learning experience rather than a lecture format. This inevitably means greater complexity so accessibility is even more important.

When we think about accessibility in an online tutorial, it is easy to think of a lecture-style presentation with some questions and answers. A lecture may be more scripted and easier to caption, for example. However, often online tutorials are far from this—they offer safe spaces for students to ask questions, be vulnerable and not to know the answer, and debate complex topics, possibly interacting with various activities the tutor has prepared. When you unpick accessibility in this context, it is complex and there are many strands.

It is important for users to easily find and access the virtual rooms. To be accessible, users should be able to navigate to the right rooms and access them using keyboard shortcuts and screen reading software. The OU manages this via the OU VLE and then hands over to Adobe Connect. Once in the room, the platform used should also be navigable using keyboard shortcuts and a screen reader. Other considerations are that any contrast changes or fonts sizes should be honored to provide a seamless experience.

MST124-20J Online module-wide room

Audio Conferencing session for online module-wide activity.

Room opens: Tuesday, 8 Sep 2020, 01:00
Room closes: Thursday, 30 Sep 2021, 23:59

To enter a room

- Connect your headset and set it to be the default speakers and mic on your computer.
- Close non-essential software/apps that may also compete for broadband.
- Check your connection and software settings. Hosts (tutors) should install the application on first use when prompted. Participants (students) are recommended to do so.
- Enter 5–10 min in advance by clicking on the 'Join room' button below. For most rooms, if you enter before a Host is present you will go to a waiting page and enter when the Host arrives.
- In the room, select 'Meeting' at the top left. Choose 'Audio Setup Wizard' and follow the steps. This allows you to set up your headset and should be done every time you enter a room.
- Issues entering a room or using Adobe Connect, contact the Computing Helpdesk: +44 (0)1906 653972 or computing-helpdesk@open.ac.uk

[Join room](#)

Online rooms advice

- Conduct and content online
- Online rooms guidance
- Online rooms accessibility guide

MST124-20J Online module-wide room

Recordings advice

Recorded events have to be made visible by the Host before you can view them. The Adobe Connect interactive recording will be available first and the mobile version will appear within 24 hours of making the recording visible.

There are two ways to view recordings:

- Select the recording name link and this will open an interactive recording in a new window. This is only viewable on a computer, but will allow full use of features, such as download files in the file pod.
- Select the mobile version to playback the recording on a mobile device.

Any official recording(s) shared via the module website should only be used for personal study and should not be reproduced or passed to anyone else. Unauthorised sharing of recorded material is covered by the Code of Practice for Student Discipline. The contents of tutorials remain the intellectual property of The Open University, and access to recordings should be via The Open University's websites.

As a student, unless you have recordings as a reasonable adjustment, you should not make any unofficial recording of a tutorial. For more information on the recording of online tutorials policy please visit the Student Help Centre.

Name	Date	Duration	Description
MST124-20J MST124-20J Online module-wide room_26	Tuesday, 17 Nov 2020, 17:59	1 hour 6 mins 53 secs	
Mobile version			
MST124 unit 5 - coordinate geometry and vectors - scheduled online with the joint MST124/MST125 study calendar	Monday, 16 Nov 2020, 19:30	1 hour 35 mins 42 secs	mid points, lengths of line segments, equations of circles, perpendicular bisectors
Mobile version			Component forms of vectors, finding magnitude and direction and resultant vectors

Graphics courtesy of The Open University

Accessing Adobe Connect room and recordings from the OU VLE

The recording of online tutorials should be made clear to students beforehand, and there should be options to attend without recording. This provides choices for those that want a recording and can't attend, or can attend but don't want to be recorded. Remember, in a learning and teaching space there should be opportunities for students to feel safe and have privacy to explore key concepts. Some of this will depend on the subjects being covered, and the OU provides a recording policy to cover all use cases. It is important to be clear about what is recorded, who can access these recordings, and what the purpose of the recordings is for. Recordings are of great importance to many students, not only because they may not be able to attend the live event, but also because for many a recording can be revisited in their own time to take notes, recap, and revise. Depending on your use cases, it may also be a requirement to have extended features such as the ability to make the recordings anonymous to protect the identity of those in the recording.

Live captioning

The live captioning feature may be utilized, however capturing the spoken words of tutors and students in a teaching and learning environment, with multi-person lively discussion, raises certain considerations:

- The captions need to be timely; teachers need to pace their delivery and speak slowly and clearly.
- They can be distracting, so participants need to be able to switch them on/off as they prefer.
- Data protection. Where are the captions held and for how long? This is particularly important if full names are captioned.
- Tutors reserve the right not to be captioned. This may align with the recording policies; for example, a tutorial stated as not recorded should not be automatically captioned.
- The privacy rights of students; some students may not want to be captioned.
- The willingness of students to participate. Some students may be anxious or uncomfortable having their spoken words captioned.
- The accuracy of automation, particularly if it is relied upon for key concepts and assessment.

In some instances, manual captioning may be more appropriate. In this circumstance, having the ability to invite guests into rooms to provide this extra support is key. A student with a hearing impairment may not require captions—they may prefer sign language or lip reading. Again, the guest access can be used for sign language translators to enter rooms, and tutors can use their webcam so that the student can read their lips. Text chat and polls are a great way to engage all here and include hard of hearing students; open mics may need to be controlled to make the discussion manageable.

Screen reader considerations

Students with a visual impairment are likely to need larger text or rely on a screen reader. Any content a tutor is planning to share in the tutorial should be provided in advance to the student. This allows them to read the content with their screen reader and familiarize themselves with the content to be used in the tutorial.

There may be many things shown in an online tutorial—from slides to text chat, and video and polls. It is important for a tutor to focus students on what is needed at the time. Screen reader users need to navigate the room in order for each area to be read out. Directing student focus is helpful here; it may even be advised to read your slides out loud. Reading out what you are showing not only helps those with visual impairments, but can support students who have dyslexia or anxiety. The use of mics is a great way to engage everyone and include visually impaired students. Draw tools for collaborative activities may not be ideal; alternative activities may be needed such as speaking or polls.

Tips for delivering accessibility

Accessibility means different things to everyone. Initiate personal conversations to understand student requirements that cannot necessarily be solved by technology. Tutors can make online tutorials more inclusive by thoughtfully preparing the content to be shared.

Preparing online tutorials and content

- Give clear descriptions of tutorials to ensure students are prepared for the activities tutors plan
- Pre-empt problems by asking students what adjustments they need
- Choose an accessible off-white background
- Choose clear fonts and a minimum of 18 point size
- Structure your slides or pages with headings, paragraphs, images
- Add alt text to images and do not overload with images that add no value to the learning point
- Avoid the use of color as the only distinguishing factor
- Add slides or pages that are blank to collaborate on or add cues for other activities you want to bring over the top
- Add supportive notes for key concepts
- Provide materials in advance to students

In the online tutorial

- Pace tutorials, leaving thinking time and reaction time
- Control participation
- Describe the activity and slides as part of your narrative
- Provide supportive notes for key points and offer content as handouts during the tutorial
- Speak slowly and clearly, repeating or rephrasing what you have said
- Consider the accessibility of any external resources, i.e., URLs, videos, etc.
- Design activities with accessibility in mind, providing alternatives such as audio and text chat
- You may need to explain the reason for sudden noises or mute all mics on occasions
- Stay calm if things don't go to plan—we cannot control all user internet connections!

Ultimately there are many areas where technology can support online learning, especially in a static or one-to-many environment. To some degree this extends to multi-person and interactive tutorials, but one size does not fit all, and minor adjustments in content shared and delivery styles can make a difference to many.

Zoe Gipson leads product development management for online rooms at The Open University. She has extensive experience in providing accessible online content in a teaching and learning environment.

In conclusion

Accessible design is not just intended for those with disabilities. The truth is ... inclusive design makes the learning experience better for everyone. This is especially true when it comes to live virtual training. In order for live virtual training to be impactful for both the learner and the organization, content must be delivered in an interactive, engaging manner. Designing and delivering virtual training with accessibility in mind provides a way for ALL learners to access and master content, regardless of limitations. This, in turn, contributes to improving overall learning outcomes in both enterprise and academic settings. For modern organizations interested in best practices, this is the ultimate goal.

Resources

To access some of The Learning Guild resources listed below, individuals must [sign up for a Learning Guild membership](#). Registration is free.

PUBLICATIONS

[“Enhancing the accessibility of web conferencing with Adobe Connect”](#)

This Adobe white paper explores web conferencing and real-time collaboration technology for people with disabilities, and explains the benefits of Adobe Connect vs. other web conferencing platforms.

[“Creating Accessible eLearning: Practitioner Perspectives”](#) (March 20, 2019)

In this research report, Jane Bozarth, PhD interviews four practitioners about their experiences with accessibility, and illuminates what misconceptions and mistakes to avoid when designing eLearning.

[“Accessibility from the Ground Up: A Guide to Making eLearning Barrier-Free”](#) (August 31, 2017)

A commitment to creating accessible content stems from reframing disability from defining it as something that is wrong with an individual person to seeing it as barriers placed in a person’s way. In this eBook, Pamela S. Hogle offers dozens of tips for building eLearning content that is accessible for everyone.

WEBINAR

[“Say Hello to the New Adobe Connect!”](#) (September 16, 2020)

In this webinar, Adobe Connect senior product enablement manager Alistair Lee and Adobe Connect evangelist Peter Ryce unveil the new rich features and tools that can be found in version 11, the latest release of Adobe Connect.

LEARNING GUILD CONFERENCE ARCHIVE

[“eLearning Accessibility: How Changing Section 508 Laws Can Impact Your Design”](#)

DevLearn 2017 Conference & Expo (October 25, 2017)

At this conference, Tanya Seidel, VP, Finance & Technology at Artisan E-Learning, discussed updated Section 508 accessibility standards and how the revised law relates to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Her handout offers links to government documents about accessibility.

LEARNING GUILD ONLINE EVENTS ARCHIVES

“Accessibility: Designing Learning Experiences for All”

eLearning Accessibility Summit (May 17, 2017)

Brian Dusablon, founder of Learning Ninjas, examines real-world scenarios and stories about accessibility and shows how thoughtful design can benefit everyone. In this recording and handout, learn how to start the accessibility conversation with stakeholders, how to create accessibility standards in your organization, and how to teach others in your organization about designing universal solutions.

“Panel: Ask the Accessibility Experts”

eLearning Accessibility Summit (May 18, 2017)

In this recording, experts examine the challenges that exist in creating accessible content, as well as the emerging opportunities that enable organizations to better support all learners. Learning Ninjas founder Brian Dusablon, Artisan E-Learning and E-Learning Uncovered co-founder Diane Elkins, Penn State University user experience designer Robin Smail, and Simply Accessible director of strategy Elle Waters field questions from the audience and from moderator David Kelly, executive director of The Learning Guild.

“Lean Accessibility: Building Inclusive Design into Your Agile Workflow”

eLearning Accessibility Summit (May 18, 2017)

Just as agile-minded thinking can transform a company’s culture, accessibility integration can actually serve as a catalyst for innovation and continuous improvement. In this recording, Elle Waters, director of strategy at Simply Accessible, discusses how to successfully incorporate inclusive design into digital projects.

LEARNING SOLUTIONS ARTICLES

“Get Managers on Board with Benefits of Accessible eLearning”

Pamela Hogle (May 22, 2019)

Results matter. Better on-the-job performance and improved KPIs are among the benefits of accessible eLearning.

“Design for Access to Enhance Accessibility—and Engagement”

Pamela Hogle (May 2, 2017)

Using UDL (Universal Design for Learning) can save time and improve engagement by providing learners with choices and control over how, when, and where they access eLearning.

“Accessible eLearning Benefits All Learners”

Pamela Hogle (October 3, 2016)

Many individuals who prefer large type, enhanced contrast, or captioning on videos do not regard themselves as disabled, yet they benefit tremendously from accessible eLearning content; addressing those issues can make using eLearning easier, more convenient, and less frustrating. And if eLearning is easier to use, learners are likely to be more engaged and willing to complete the training.

“Nuts and Bolts: It’s Not Just About “Compliance”: Accessibility in eLearning”

Jane Bozarth (July 7, 2015)

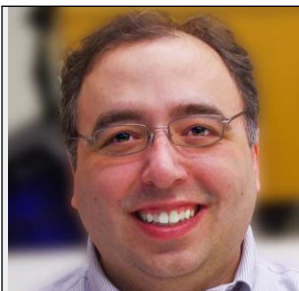
Accessibility in eLearning may be something that’s just isn’t on your radar—yet. Your eLearning materials should be accessible to everyone, including those with challenges like low vision and blindness, hearing loss and deafness, learning disabilities, and mobility problems. Here is a quick rundown on things you should be addressing in your design standards, and some help getting started.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



JANE BOZARTH

Jane Bozarth, the director of research for The Learning Guild, is a veteran classroom trainer who transitioned to eLearning in the late 1990s and has never looked back. In her previous job as leader of the State of North Carolina's award-winning eLearning program, Jane specialized in finding low-cost ways of providing online training solutions. She is the author of several books, including *eLearning Solutions on a Shoestring*, *Social Media for Trainers*, and *Show Your Work: The Payoffs and How-To's of Working Out Loud*. Jane holds a doctorate in training and development and was awarded the Guild Master Award in 2013 for her accomplishments and contributions to the eLearning community.



NICK FLORO

Nick Floro, a co-founder and learning architect at Sealworks Interactive Studios, has over 25 years of experience developing learning solutions, applications, and web platforms. Nick is passionate about how design and technology can enhance learning and loves to share his knowledge and experience to teach, inspire and motivate. He has worked with start-ups to Fortune 500 companies to help them understand the technology and develop innovative solutions to support their audiences. Nick has won numerous awards from Apple and other organizations for productions and services.



ZOE GIPSON

Zoe Gipson is a senior product development manager for online rooms in Learning Experience and Technology at The Open University. She has been at the OU for over 14 years; first working as an editor for maths, computing, and technology modules before moving on to development of collaboration tools. Her focus is providing online rooms for the University's online tutorials and various learning events, exploring different use cases, and promoting inclusive tutorials.

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Susan Jacobs is publications editor of The Learning Guild. She has a deep-rooted interest in and passion for education and technology. Prior to this position, she was a senior content producer at Bright Business Media, a leader in the meeting and events industry. Susan is a graduate of Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.



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Jean Marrapodi PhD, CPTD is a passionate educator and lifelong learner. With over 20 years in corporate training in insurance, banking, retail, printing, non-profits, healthcare and higher education, she understands trends and needs in a variety of settings. Today, she leverages her expertise with the web content and strategy team at MassMutual. Trained as a teacher, she has taught preschool, special, elementary and adult ed, and currently teaches graduate courses in elearning and organizational development at two universities. Jean is a frequent conference speaker, presenting workshops at the local, regional, national and international level on training, elearning, and low literacy.



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Rachel Michael is a Certified Professional Ergonomist (CPE) & Certified Health Care Safety Professional (CHSP) and President Emeritus of the Board of Directors for the Board of Certification in Professional Ergonomics (BCPE). Rachel ensures systems leverage their human components for safe, productive, and efficient outcomes and has over 20 years of experience implementing successful ergonomics controls and programs in diverse industries. An energetic and engaging trainer, she is a frequent speaker at industry events and is currently the Administrator of the Ergonomics Practice Specialty under the American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP) and co-chair of the National Ergonomics Conference.

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