

Audit Scotland accessibility policy

September 2022

Introduction

Audit Scotland is committed to providing a website and online material that is accessible to the widest possible audience. We actively work to make sure that our published material and website are usable by people of all abilities.

This will also help make sure that we meet our legal requirements related to disability discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 and The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the clear accessibility principles that our website and online material follow.

Principles

The principles of this policy form a set of requirements that the website and online material are expected to follow:

1. The UK Government Cabinet Office gives guidelines for public sector website owners wishing to deliver inclusive, accessible websites. The Audit Scotland website should conform to the accessibility targets laid out in the Digital Service Standard at <https://www.gov.uk/service-manual>.
2. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is responsible for setting standards and specifications for the web. Through its Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), it has developed a set of guidelines and standards for website developers to follow, intended to make websites accessible by all. In relation to this, Audit Scotland's website should, as a minimum, conform to level Double-A of the WAI's Web

Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 (WCAG 2.1)
<https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>

Conformance with web and online accessibility standards

Online content on the website currently conforms to best practice web and accessibility standards and guidelines published by the:

- World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)
- Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)
- United Kingdom Government Cabinet Office
- Creators of propriety software (eg, Adobe, Microsoft etc.)
- BS 8878 Web accessibility.

In particular, Audit Scotland will continue to take all reasonable steps to make sure that its online content complies with:

- conformance levels A, AA or AAA of the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1](#)
- United Kingdom Government web standards and guidelines
 - Delivering inclusive websites
 - Minimum technical standards
 - Making PDF files usable and accessible
- [HTML5 hypertext markup language specification](#)
- [Cascading style sheets \(CSS\) Specifications](#)
- accessible authoring techniques available for all propriety software
 - Adobe PDF
 - Microsoft Office.

Checking conformance with web and online accessibility standards

Conformance checking against W3C/WAI and UK Government Cabinet Office guidelines and specifications is continuously carried out by Audit Scotland or third-party accessibility specialists, using:

- automated testing and validation
- manual checks
- assistive technology tool testing

- user testing with people from a range of disabilities, preferences and ages
- expert reviews and conformance inspections of representative samples of web pages.

User testing profiles

Disabilities considered during the development and redevelopment of online material/content on the website will include a mixture of mild, moderate and severe:

- vision impairment
- mobility problems
- cognitive and learning problems
- hearing loss.

Consideration is also given to other users who will benefit from improved accessibility online, including:

- people with slow internet connections
- people with low bandwidth quotas
- people using mobile or tablet devices
- people with English as a second language
- people from different generations.

User testing techniques and technologies

A combination of techniques and adaptive technologies that disabled users may employ are tested, including:

- screen reader and text-to-speech software
- keyboard only operation
- adaptive hardware and input devices
- changing text size and formatting
- website colours and contrast.

Accessibility across different operating systems, internet-enabled hardware and web browsers is also tested.

User testing tasks

Accessibility user testing involves completing core tasks that users should be able to achieve on the website. The criteria for determining the success of accessibility user testing of the website and online materials include:

- effectiveness

- efficiency
- satisfaction.

Web pages

The website pages are principally formatted using hypertext markup language (HTML) files that use cascading style sheets (CSS). CSS allows precise formatting of HTML code in a way that does not confuse screen readers and specialised browser software.

Exceptions

The Audit Scotland website also carries online content that is not provided in HTML. Reasons for use of non-HTML formats include:

- content in online databases and applications
- some PDF files may not be fully accessible, such as scanned and older PDFs. Every reasonable effort is taken to ensure that file sizes are as small as possible. Large documents may need to be published in several smaller sections
- Tableau and Shiny interactive data visualisations, which are provided through third-party software
- video and animations which are embedded from a third-party host.

Where non-HTML formats are used:

- all reasonable efforts will be taken to provide alternative accessible versions
- contact details will be provided for the supply of alternative non-web formats.

Conformance with accessibility guidelines for online reports

Report formats

Audit Scotland's published material is available for download on the website in a number of formats:

- Portable Document Format (PDF), which is a full-colour electronic reproduction of the native file.
- Rich Text File (RTF), which is a pure text version with no images and minimal formatting.
- Podcast Q & A sound files (mp3) for reports.
- Podcast transcript files (RTF).

- Comma-separated Value (CSV) files and Excel (XLA) spreadsheets, which provide data in tabular format.
- Multimedia files, such as those for animations and videos (mp4).
- Video transcript files (RTF).

Further alternative formats are available on request, such as braille, language translations and large-format text. We have a procedure in place to deal with requests and have details of providers kept on file.

Exceptions

Situations where content may not follow guidelines include:

- full colour designed report text. However, RTF versions are produced with text at 12pt (in line with Clear Print guidelines). On screen, the text can be resized in your browser. Future reviews of standard report design will consider the guidelines relating to design and layout (including type, size, leading, numbers, contrast and column size).
- complex charts
- graphics containing areas of medium contrast, such as charts with multiple colour tints and colour backgrounds used to highlight key information solely using colour for differentiation.

These issues are continuously being reviewed.

ReachDeck

The website provides ReachDeck, a software technology which can assist people with reading text from web pages and pdfs. It can be accessed by clicking the blue ReachDeck button in the bottom corner of each page of the website. It provides several features such as reading pages on the site aloud, providing large type on screen, translating text into other languages and converting text into an mp3 recording. More information is available on the [accessibility page of our website](#).

British Sign Language (BSL) plan

Audit Scotland has produced a BSL plan which includes details of how we make our website and online reports accessible for those who use BSL. Our plan can be downloaded [here](#). And it can also be viewed as a BSL video.

Continuous improvement

The website is audited each year by an accessibility agency and improvements made.

Audit Scotland will run regular in-house website accessibility checks and third-party website accessibility checks to ensure that these standards continue to be met.

Contacts

For further information about the Audit Scotland accessibility policy, contact: info@audit-scotland.gov.uk or telephone: 0131 625 1500.

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Review date for this policy

This policy will be reviewed in September 2023.