

AODA Compliance Reference

A guide to assist in creating and maintaining accessible websites

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What is the AODA?

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act is designed to provide standards on accessibility is designed to provide [framework of standards in accessibility](#) on accessibility in all areas of daily life. With respect to websites, all Universities in Ontario must comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level A by Jan 1, 2014 and Level AA (except for guidelines 1.2.4 and 1.2.5) by Jan 1, 2021.

The omitted guidelines deal with live captioning of video (1.2.4) and described video (1.2.5).

What is the difference between level A, AA, and AAA?

Level A

This level defines guidelines that **MUST** be done. Failure to meet these guidelines will result in some group of users being excluded from accessing your content. This is the minimum requirement for accessibility.

Level AA

These are guidelines that **SHOULD** be done. Failure to meet these guidelines will result in difficulties for some groups of users in accessing your content.

Level AAA

These are additional guidelines that **CAN** be done to improve accessibility. They are not required, but will improve the overall usability of your site.

What are the compliance dates?

Date	Compliance level
Jan 1, 2014	WCAG 2.0 Level A
Jan 1, 2021	WCAG 2.0 Level AA

This means that your site must be at least WCAG 2.0 Level A compliant by January 1st, 2014.

What steps can I take to make my site compliant to the legislation?

For your websites, the Drupal templates handle most of the heavy-lifting. The items listed in this guide will cover only the items that are within the control of content editors.

Images and Multimedia

1. For all **images**, ensure that you have sufficient **alt-text**.
 - o Alt-text should convey all the essential information conveyed by an image / the purpose of the image to someone who is unable to see the image;
 - o It should not begin with "an image of...", "a picture of...". Simply provide a description of the image as presented; and,
 - o If an image contains text that is important, ensure that the text is captured in the alt-text.

For example, consider the following image:



If the intended purpose for the image is...

... the actual contents of or action within the image

the following alt-text would be appropriate: "Spider-man carrying a criminal under his arm while swinging from a web on the cover of Amazing Fantasy #15."

... to display the particular issue - "Front cover of Amazing Fantasy #15."

... to give an example of a comic book cover purely for visual appeal.

In this case, the image could just as easily be any comic book cover and would not affect the context of the article - "A comic book cover."

Figure 1- Alt Text example

2. Any **videos** posted to your site from YouTube or some other method should have captions available. Below are some examples of commonly used tools for captioning videos:
 - o Amara - <http://www.amara.org/en/>
 - o CapScribe - <http://www.inclusivemedia.ca/services/capscribe.shtml>
3. Avoid **images of text**.
 - o When the image is zoomed to 200% or more, the text will become jagged and hard to read, text itself can be scaled cleanly to any size;
 - o Search engines will not be able to find the text within the images so people will not be able to find your content; and,
 - o If an image contains important text, always put the text from the image in the alt-text.

Text, Headings and Documentation

1. All **headings** should be used hierarchically. They **should not** be used to obtain a certain visual style.
2. Headings should only go down one level, or back up to a previous, higher level.
3. While **Heading 1** may be used multiple times within a page, it is advised that you restrict this to only the page title. As such, the heading 1 option has been removed; existing H1 tags will remain until the next time a containing page is saved.
4. Some users using assistive tools may be navigating your site by grabbing a list of headings. If your page is using bolded text instead of an appropriate heading tag, it will not be picked up on this list.
5. Using headings appropriately will help give search engines a better picture of how your site is structured and will improve your position within search results.

Probably the best way to think about this is to consider headings like sections of an essay, an assignment, or a legal document.

For Example:

1. Page title (Heading 1) [this one is automatic]
 - 1.1. Heading 2
 - 1.2. Heading 2
 - 1.2.1.Heading 3
 - 1.2.1.1. Heading 4
 - 1.2.1.2. Heading 4
 - 1.2.1.2.1. Heading 5
 - 1.2.2.Heading 3
 - 1.2.3.Heading 3
 - 1.2.3.1. Heading 4
 - 1.2.4.Heading 3
 - 1.3. Heading 2
- [...]

Figure 2 - An example describing proper use of headings

6. When describing things use multiple descriptors. Try to avoid describing by only size, colour, and shape.
 - o Example: "Click the button labelled 'Submit' at the end of the form." instead of "Click the large button."
7. You must have accessible alternatives of any document you post (word documents, power point presentations, PDF files, etc.).
 - o The easiest way to do this is to make the original document accessible.
 - o See [Adobe Accessibility](#) and [Accessibility in Office 2010](#) links in the Resources section of this document
8. Avoid capital letters, spaces and special cases in file names. Use a dash (-) instead of spaces.

Navigation and Links

1. Try to give all your pages a navigation link in the main menu.
 - o This will generate the breadcrumb trail that will allow users to go back to parent pages if they are on the wrong page.
2. Avoid having links open in a new window.
 - o This breaks the “Don’t break the back button” accessibility principle
3. Avoid link text like “click here”; instead, try to use text that would make sense out of context.
 - o Bad: To get more information [click here](#). In this example, “click here” is meaningless out of context.
 - o Good: Get [more information here](#). In this example, “more information here” could still make sense out of context.
 - o Best: Get [more information on accessibility](#). “More information on accessibility” makes sense out of context.
4. **Enter a title** for your links in the “Advisory title” field under the “Advanced” tab when creating a link.
 - o See: [Figure 3 - Example of title text for a link that opens in new window](#)
5. If you are opening the link in a new window, ensure that you make it clear that the link will open in a new window.
 - o This can be done by repeating the text of the link in the Advisory Title field described above and then stating that the link opens in a new window.

Link

Link Info Target Advanced

Id	Language Direction	Access Key
<input type="text"/>	<not set> ▼	<input type="text"/>
Name	Language Code	Tab Index
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Advisory Title	Advisory Content Type	
Learn more about titles (opens in a new window)	<input type="text"/>	
Stylesheet Classes	Linked Resource Charset	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Relationship	Style	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

OK Cancel

Figure 3 - Example of title text for a link that opens in new window

Tables

1. Avoid tables for non-tabular data.
 - o Screen readers will read cells left to right, top to bottom.

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	etc...

- o If you're using a table, you should be able to list the contents of the cells in the numbered order above and have your content still make sense. If it does not, a user with a screen reader will have trouble understanding what your information is
2. For tabular data, you should always include a table header row or column. Within the content-editor, this is defined when creating a new table.

- o Example:

Header cell 1	Header cell 2	Header cell 3	Header cell 4
Data cell 1	Data cell 2	Data cell 3	Data cell 4
Data cell 5	Data cell 6	Data cell 7	Data cell 8

Webforms

1. Try to use the appropriate field type for each piece of data you are collecting.
 - o Example: Use the **email** field type for capturing an e-mail address instead of a textfield
 - o For the time being, phone numbers and student numbers should be collected as a textfield. This is due to other usability issues with number fields which do not always work as expected on all browsers.

Resources

Tools

aChecker

<http://achecker.ca>

- Provides a report on the WCAG 2.0.
- Only checks a single page at a time.
- Can provide false-positives in some cases as it does not check against items loaded from javascript or certain layout options.

Webaim WAVE tool

<http://wave.webaim.org/>

- Useful for getting a rough idea of the accessibility level of your site.
- Subject to similar problems identified above with aChecker.

Contrast checkers

http://snook.ca/technical/colour_contrast/colour.html

<http://juicystudio.com/services/luminositycontrastratio.php>

<http://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>

- Checks the contrast between foreground and background.

Amara

<http://www.amara.org/en/>

- Tool for creating captions for YouTube video.

Capscribe

<http://www.inclusivemedia.ca/services/capscribe.shtml>

- Tool for creating captions for video files.

Other Resources

Council of Ontario Universities: Accessible Campus

<http://www.accessiblecampus.ca/administrators/iasr/information-communications/section-14/>

- Explains the responsibility of accessible websites in plain terms.

W3C – Understanding WCAG 2.0

<http://www.w3.org/TR/2010/NOTE-UNDERSTANDING-WCAG20-20101014/>

- Provides a breakdown of each of the criteria for all 3 levels.

Understanding Web Accessibility eCourse

http://courses.idrc.ocad.ca/go.php/1/index.php/p_course/1

- Goes through the accessibility guidelines and gives tips on how to correct them.

Adobe Accessibility

<http://www.adobe.com/accessibility.html>

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/pdf-accessibility-wcag-508-compliance-standards.html>

- Demos of creating accessible PDF files.

Accessibility in Office 2010

<http://office2010.microsoft.com/en-us/starter-help/accessibility-checker-HA010369192.aspx>

- Shows how to check the accessibility of your Office documents.