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Accessibility Glossary

A11Y – a common abbreviation of “Accessibility”. You take the A and Y from the beginning and end of accessibility, and 11 for the number of letters in between

Ally – A tool from Anthology. The solution integrates seamlessly into websites and with any learning management system, including Blackboard Learn, to make learning more accessible by offering alternative content formats that provide students with flexibility in choosing the most effective way to engage with digital content.

Access - The right or opportunity to use or benefit from something. In education, this often refers to the ways in which educational institutions and public policies ensure that learners have equal access to educational opportunities and learning resources.

Accessibility – “Accessibility involves designing systems to optimise access.” ([JISC](#) 2019)

Accessibility Statement – In Europe, by law, you must publish an accessibility statement on your website, detailing how accessible the website is, any areas that are not, and what you are doing to improve it.

Alternative Text (often referred to as “alt text”) - Text that is added to non-text content (like images, graphs and tables), which can be read by screen readers and other text-to-speech programs so that visually impaired or blind users are able to understand the purpose and function of the non-text content.

Anthology – A company providing a comprehensive ecosystem of EdTech solutions. Anthology was a result of merger of Blackboard, Campus Labs, Campus Management and Modules.

Assistive technologies - Technologies (software or hardware) that increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities when interacting with computers or computer-based systems.

Audio Description - An audio description is either a prerecorded human voice or a synthesized voice (recorded or generated dynamically) describing the key visual elements of a video or other animation. The audio description is synchronized with (and possibly included as part of) the audio track of the presentation, usually during natural pauses in the audio track. Audio descriptions include information about actions, body language, graphics, and scene changes

Brightspace – the Learning Management System sold by D2L

Captioning - The art of adding captions to a television program or movie.

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Captions - A textual representation of sounds--usually associated with television programming or movies; captions are meant to display in real time and to capture speech sounds and sounds beyond speech in some cases.

Closed Captioning - Captions that can be turned on or off by the user. Closed captions can be toggled on/off, whereas open captions are always on.

Cognitive Disability - Persons with cognitive disabilities may have difficulty with various types of mental tasks. Intellectual disabilities, also known as developmental delay or mental retardation, are a group of disorders defined by diminished cognitive and adaptive development.

Colour Blindness - A reduced ability to distinguish between certain colors, color blindness is usually classified as a vision disability.

Context-Sensitive Help - Help text that provides information related to the function currently being performed.

Contrast Ratio - In an accessibility context, this usually means the ratio between the colour of text (or other important visual information) and the colour of the background, which must meet minimum ratio levels to ensure legibility for visually-impaired/colour blind users.

Decorative Image - An image that does not add information or meaning to content, is used for visual interest only, and are exempt from certain accessibility guidelines like as alternative text.

D2L – A Global Ed Tech company like Anthology. D2L used to stand for Desire 3 Learn, but now uses its acronym only.

Digital Accessibility - Digital accessibility is the ability of a website, application, or electronic document to be easily navigated and understood by a wide range of users, including those users who have visual, auditory, motor, or cognitive disabilities.

Disability - A physical or mental condition or function that restricts an individual's movements, senses, or abilities relative to the typical standards of a group. The term is used to refer to individual functioning, including physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, intellectual impairment, mental illness, and various types of chronic diseases.

Focus Indicator - A visual indication of the currently selected element on a page, which enables users who are using keyboard access to know their location while navigating content.

JAWS - Job Access With Speech, is the world's most popular screen reader, developed for computer users whose vision loss prevents them from seeing screen content or navigating with a mouse. JAWS provides speech and Braille output for the most popular computer applications

LMS – Learning Management System, like Blackboard Learn or Moodle

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MathML - A form of XML used to describe the content and structure of mathematical notation on web pages and other documents. Using MathML enables complex equations to be more easily accessible to screen readers, and can help in the creation of alternative text.

Motor Impairment - Impairments that affect motor control, which refers to the capacity of the body, or of a body part to move, regardless of the goal and intended function of the movement produced.

NVDA – NonVisual Desktop Access is a free and open-source, portable screen reader.

Programmatic Focus - Where the computer's focus is on a Web page.

Reading Order - The order in which a screen reader reads content on a page. Note that the reading order is not always the same as visual order. The reading order is important in terms of navigation - screen reader users use keyboard commands to navigate around the content.

Responsive Design - An approach to web page creation that makes use of flexible layouts, flexible images and cascading style sheet media queries. The goal of responsive design is to build web pages or applications that detect the visitor's screen size and orientation and change the layout accordingly.

Section 508 – Section 508 Standards are established and maintained by the U. S. Access Board. Under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, agencies must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to the access available to others.

Screen Magnifier - A type of assistive technology that enables a user to enlarge all or part of the screen. Note that a screen magnifier is a separate piece of software and not the same as zoom functionality in user agents such as browsers.

Screen reader - A software program used to allow reading of content and navigation of the screen using speech or Braille output. Used primarily by people who have difficulty seeing. JAWS and NVDA are examples

Speech To Text (STT) - The translation of spoken words into text. It is also known as automatic speech recognition, computer speech recognition, or just speech to text.

Subtitles - On-screen text for videos/animations provided for (hearing) users who do not understand the language of the dialogue being spoken. Note subtitles are different from captions, which are intended for deaf/hard-of-hearing users.

Success Criteria - For each WCAG guideline, testable success criteria are provided to allow WCAG 2.0 to be used where requirements and conformance testing are necessary such as in design specification, purchasing, regulation, and contractual agreements. In order to meet the

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needs of different groups and different situations, three levels of conformance are defined: A (lowest), AA, and AAA (highest).

Text To Speech (TTS) – A form of speech synthesis that converts text into spoken voice output. Text to speech systems were first developed to aid the visually impaired or learning disabled by offering a computer-generated spoken voice that would "read" text to the user.

Transcript - A text only version of the same word-for-word content in an audio or video. It is presented in a separate document, whether it is a text file, word processing document, PDF, or web page.

UDL – Universal Design for Learning

Visual Focus - Where the user's focus is on a Web page; generally represented by a dashed box that appears around items on the page and associated with tabbing.

VLE – Virtual Learning Environment, like Blackboard or Moodle

Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) - A VPAT is a vendor-generated statement (using the required template) that provides relevant information on how a vendor's product or service claims to conform to the Section 508 Standards and European legislation.

WAI - Web Accessibility Initiative:

WAI-ARIA - Web Accessibility Initiative: Accessible Rich Internet Applications (WAI-ARIA) is a technical specification developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) to increase the accessibility of web pages, particularly those that feature rich interactive content and user interface components.

WCAG – Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 provide recommendations for making Web content more accessible

W3C - World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). This is an international community that develops open standards to ensure the long-term growth of the Web.