Higher Education Provision of Accessible Information for Learning: Guidelines

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Questions

Are your information literacy products e-accessible?
Do they include tips for producing e-accessible information for learning?
Why should they?
People with Disabilities

15% of the world’s population

1 billion people

World’s largest minority

The figure is increasing through population growth, medical advances, and ageing process

Source: UN Enable Factsheet on Persons with disabilities
Students with disabilities in HE are under-represented (even if improving)

A very small percentage (1%?) of teachers and academics have a disability

Source: Cornell University
Estimates are for NY State working age (21-64) in 2010
e-Learning

ICT (and assistive technologies) and e-Learning are often used to support the provision of education to people with disabilities.

The European Commission forecasts that 90% of all jobs by 2020 will demand digital literacy, e-Learning will no longer be an alternative for students who are unable to participate in traditional classrooms but integrated to mainstream education.

See: e-Learning – from alternative to norm - Alastair Creelman, VP EFQUEL (21/08/14)

Source: EU4ALL Project (Accessible Lifelong Learning for Higher Education)
Access to e-learning for all?

But are all e-Learning materials accessible to people with disabilities?

Technologies are evolving, assistive technologies are making progress but can people with disabilities keep pace with both, financially and technically?

Who is to tell them what to use and keep them informed of changes (digital literacy)?
Access to e-learning for all?

Moreover
Is technology enough?
What about pedagogy?

Producers of information for learning and people with disabilities should be given the opportunity to go beyond the technology
Non-fully accessible information (1)

Text justified. More than a single space after a full-stop

No logical reading order

No alternative text to describe meaningful images

No systematic high contrast of colours between text and background

No specification of the language of the document under « properties »
Non-fully accessible information (2)

Headings are not given a logical structure (H1, H2, H3)

There is no « skip to content » link on the website
How to become fully accessible?

Not simple

Tools to check accessibility (Adobe, Adds-on Mozilla, Chromevox, etc.)

Specific accessible formats (Adobe, e-PUB)

W3C – Web accessibility initiative (WAI) guidelines and tutorials
How to become fully accessible?
How are we addressing the issue?

Disability should not be considered a difficulty.

It is our belief that to be really fully accessible the best way is to address all accessibility issues when writing the original document.

And in order to help information providers to draft simple and user-friendly guidelines for being e-accessible from the start.
Who are we?

Daisy Consortium

European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education

European Schoolnet

Global Initiative of Inclusive ICT

International Association of Universities

UNESCO
The Guidelines (1)

First draft of the guidelines: Lisbon (Portugal) Meeting

The guidelines comprise 2 steps:

**Step 1:** Making different types of information accessible

**Step 2:** Making the media used for the delivery of information accessible
The Guidelines (2)

Step 1: Types of information
Gives tips and provides resources for further details (links)

The types of information described in the guidelines are:
Text
Image
Audio
The Guidelines (3)

Step 2: Media used
Gives tips and provides resources for further details (links)

The media described in the guidelines are:
Electronic documents
Video
Web resources
Printed materials
The Guidelines (4)

Audit tool: For existing information products including requirements for Text and Images/ Audio

Check lists for:
- Slideshows and presentations
- Online or e-learning tools
- PDF documents
Next Steps

Finalizing the Guidelines based upon comments from:

1. IAU (including feedback from the Open University of Catalonia and IAU Reference Group on Higher Education and Education for All) for the higher education sector
2. European Schoolnet for school teachers
3. European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education for specialized organizations

Presenting the Guidelines in May 2015 in Tallin, Estonia
Event of the Estonian Presidency of the Council of the European Union
Interactive – do-it-yourself- workshop
Project’s website

ICT for Information Accessibility in Learning

The ICT4IAL project is a multi-disciplinary network of European and International partners that represent both learning and ICT communities. The aims of this network are to raise awareness and increase the visibility of the issue of accessible information provision and its relevance for equitable lifelong learning opportunities and to support accessible information provision within organisations through the development, trialling and evaluation of guidelines.
Thank you

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