Audit Scotland accessibility policy
September 2014

Introduction

Audit Scotland is committed to providing a website and printed material that is accessible to the widest possible audience. We actively work to make sure that our printed 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.

Purpose

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

Principles

The principles of this policy form a set of requirements that the website and printed 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 Delivering Inclusive Websites guidance. http://digitalstandards.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/delivering-inclusive-websites

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 2.0 (WCAG 2.0) http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/

3. Printed material is produced with consideration to the Seeing it My Way – Clear Print guidelines set out by the RNIB.

   http://www.rnib.org.uk/about-rnib-what-we-do-uk-vision-strategy/seeing-it-my-way

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)

- The newly formed BS 8878.

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

- conformance levels A, AA and AAA of the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0](#)
- [United Kingdom Government web standards and guidelines](#)
  - [Delivering inclusive websites](#)
  - [Minimum technical standards](#)
  - [Making PDF files usable and accessible](#)
- [XHTML 1.0 the extensible hypertext markup language (second edition) specification](#)
- [cascading style sheets level 2 revision 1 (CSS 2.1) specification](#)
- accessible authoring techniques available for all propriety software
  - [Adobe PDF and Flash](#)
  - [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 printed 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 and in print, including:

- people with slow internet connections
- people with low bandwidth quotas
- people using hand-held mobile internet-enabled 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.

Various user-testing exercises are provided for printed material and feedback collected.

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 printed materials include:

- effectiveness
- efficiency
- satisfaction.

Web pages

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

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

- content with technical restrictions or legal requirements
- content with specific requirements for specific audiences
- time-critical content
- older, archived legacy content
- content in online databases and applications
- online versions of hard copy publications. 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.

Where non-XHTML 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 printed reports

Report formats
Audit Scotland's printed material follows the RNIB's Seeing it My Way Clear Print guidelines where possible. 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 hard copy version.
- Rich Text File (RTF), which is a pure text version with no images and minimal formatting.
- Podcast Q&A sound files (mp3) for reports.

Our statistical download evidence indicates that alternative formats, such as RTFs are popular.

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:

- the annual reports and standard full colour dtp'd report text. However, RTF versions are produced with text at 12pt (in agreement with Clear Print guidelines). Future reviews of standard report design will consider the guidelines relating to design and layout (including type, size, leading, numbers, contrast and column size).

  http://www.rnib.org.uk/about-rnib-what-we-do-uk-vision-strategy/seeing-it-my-way
- 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.

Continuous improvement

A timetable for improving the accessibility of new, existing and legacy online content, and printed material has been adopted:

- Audit Scotland will run a monthly in-house website accessibility check and a third-party website accessibility audit each year.
- All new online content will comply with online accessibility standards (as set out in the principles stated previously).

- All reasonable efforts will be taken to make sure that the current online content complies with online accessibility standards – priority will be given to improving key documents and popular (highly visited) sections of the website.
- Older, archived legacy online content will not be prioritised for compliance with online accessibility standards unless specifically requested by visitors to the website.
- Accessibility for printed material is reviewed annually (or sooner if deemed necessary).

E-publications

A separate working group will be set up to look at the implications of the growing trend towards mainly online-only publishing.

Contacts

For further information about the Audit Scotland accessibility policy, contact: the publications team: info@audit-scotland.gov.uk
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Note: In producing this policy we consulted with the Shaw Trust. This policy supports our online accessibility statement http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/utilities/access.php