Web Accessibility

Enabling technologies

Enabling technologies (e.g. screen audio readers, text magnifiers, braille converters) can improve accessibility of web sites and many operating systems have add-ons which can be installed. However, these additions can also present their own difficulties. For instance, it may be impossible to test web sites with the enabling technologies, performance and functionality may be compromised if web pages are adapted to work with these technologies and delays in setting up the adaptation may still disadvantage the disabled student. Thus, where possible, reliance on these technologies should be avoided.

Where can you find support?

1. The Higher Education Academy
The UK Physical Sciences Subject Centre can advise on web design

<www.heacademy.ac.uk/physsci>

2. World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)
This consortium promotes web accessibility and produces guidelines for web developers
<www.w3.org/WAI>

3. Campaign for a non-browser specific WWW - Accessible site design guide
This site gives guidance on how to design web sites from an accessibility point of view
<www.anybrowser.org>

4. Web-accessibility
Web-accessibility is run by Epsilis Ltd a website design and development company in Hertfordshire and covers standards, guidelines, types of disability, assistive technolgies, legal issues and more
<www.web-accessibility.co.uk/default.asp>

5. Technology for Disabilities Information Service (TechDis)
The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) have set up this service to support institutions wishing to ensure compliance with the legislation
<www.techdis.ac.uk>

6. The JISC Legal Information Service
This service was set up to respond to the issues and concerns generated by the legislation
<www.jisclegal.ac.uk>

The Higher Education Academy

UK Physical Sciences Centre

Further information

1. Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
<www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995.htm>

2. Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.
<www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2001.htm>

3. Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities.
A national charity promoting opportunities for young people and adults with any kind of impairment in post-16 education, training and employment.
<www.skill.org.uk/page.aspx?c=94&p=174>

4. Code of Practice - Students with Disabilities.
This document, from the Quality Assurance Agency, relates to the quality of learning opportunities for students with disabilities in UKHE institutions.
<www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section3/default.asp>

5. RNIB Web Access Centre.
The Web Access Centre provides information and advice on making a website accessible to everyone. This includes people with sight problems, hearing, mobility and cognitive impairments, as well as those using older browsers and slow, dial-up connections, or newer technologies such as mobiles and PDAs.
<www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/code/public_rnib008789.hcsp>