university of groningen



Digital accessibility

General guidelines for digital content

We want our digital content to be suitable for everyone who studies with us.

That is why we accommodate students with a functional impairment.

Such as:

 Autistic spectrum

 Visual impairment

 Dyslexia

 Physical or motor impairment

 Auditory impairment

 Anxiety disorder

It is our moral and social duty to make education accessible. There is also the legal context of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Dutch Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek), and the Government's Temporary Decree on Digital Accessibility (Tijdelijk besluit digitale toegankelijkheid overheid).

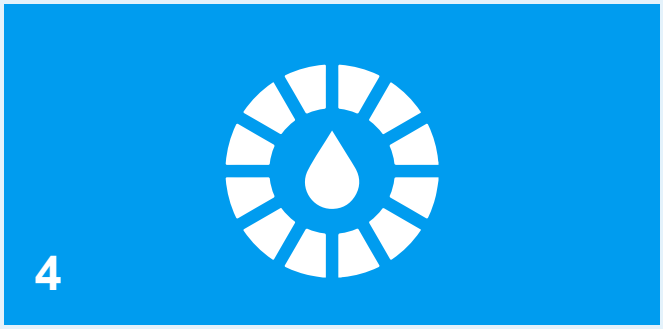
Do you have tips, suggestions or further points for improving digital accessibility at UG? Contact the hotline accessibility: accessibility@rug.nl

 What is legally expected from us

 What else you can do as an extra

Concrete tips

Discover per theme what you can do to make content (more) accessible.



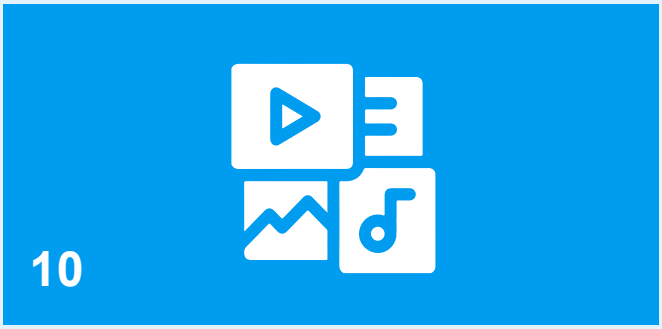
Use of colour



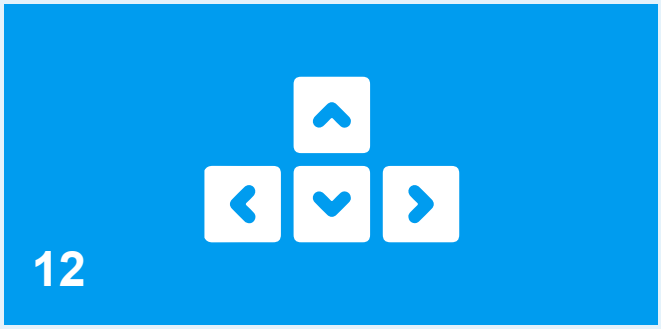
Layout



Language



Multimedia



Technology

Use of colour



What is **legally** expected from us:

Use simple colours with sufficient contrast. Avoid brightly contrasting colours (for instance, bright purple and bright yellow).

Combine colour with shapes and text. For example, do not just use a green square to signal that a step has been completed, but also use the word ‘Done’ or ‘Completed.’

Use of colour



What else you can do as an **extra:**

Use a soft yellow or soft blue background in documents. This makes it easier for people with dyslexia to read the text.

Layout



What is **legally** expected from us:

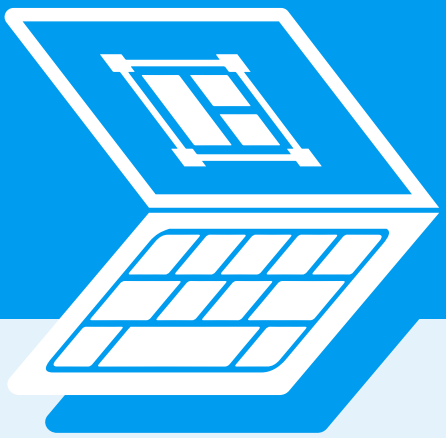
Keep the layout of pages simple and linear. Align texts to the left. Do not make text columns too wide. Prevent readers having to scroll horizontally to read a sentence.

Use headers to structure a text. Then a screen reader can understand and read out the hierarchy of a page. (Just adjusting the font size, or using bold and italics is not enough.)

Make sure that an action (such as a button or a field to fill in) is situated close to the explanation or context. This way, readers can link the action directly to the context.

Create tables in a word processing program. This ensures that a table always starts with a header and its cells are well-structured. Screen readers will be able to read out the tables.

Layout



What else you can do as an **extra**:

Keep content centrally on the page. Also when the page is enlarged. Prevent content ‘running off’ the screen.

Prevent a ‘wall’ of text. Put subheadings, images or videos between blocks of text.

Publish all information about one topic on one page. The most important information first, followed by less important information. Do not hide information in downloads.

Discuss one topic per paragraph. New topic? New paragraph. Keep paragraphs short and concise, no longer than five lines.

Publish texts with a minimum font size of 12 pt. Use a sans serif font (letters without small dashes at the ends), such as Arial.

Never write full sentences in capital letters. Avoid underlining or italicizing words.

Language



What is **legally** expected from us:

Give clear instructions that spur on to action. Always explain what a button or link will do. ‘Go to the next page’ of ‘Insert documents’ instead of ‘Click here’.

Language



What else you can do as an extra:

Use simple, clear language. Keep sentences short, preferably less than ten words. Use bullet points and simple punctuation. Also give synonyms to describe a topic.

Avoid idioms and colloquialisms. Write words and names in full. Avoid abbreviations. Not everyone will directly grasp the meaning of an abbreviation.

Write as if you are in conversation with the reader. Use ‘you’, ‘I’ or ‘we’. Write in the active voice.

Multimedia



What is **legally** expected from us:

Add ‘Alternative Text’ (Alt text) to informative images. Keep these descriptions short and clear. If you do this, people using a screen reader can ‘read’ the image as well. Is an image merely illustrative? Click ‘Mark as decorative’ in the Alt-Text box.

Offer lesson materials in various formats. Text combined with audio or video, or text with supporting images or diagrams.

Subtitle videos. Add subtitles, closed captions or give a transcript. Then people with an auditory impairment can follow the video as well.

Use web pages for general information. A web page has a clear layout and is accessible for screen readers. Is a web page not an option? Use a Word document or similar program instead.

Multimedia



What else you can do as an **extra**:

Offer handouts in PowerPoint and word documents in Word or a similar program. If you do this, users can adjust the font to a more legible format. Avoid PDFs: they are more difficult to adjust and often hard to read with a screen reader.

Put PowerPoint slides online before the lecture. This allows students to prepare mentally for the lecture. It also reduces cognitive load during the lecture.

If possible, record your lectures and put them on Brightspace. This prevents students worrying about missing something when attending the lecture. They can watch again later.

Technology



What is **legally** expected from us:

Make sure that a website can also be accessed just using a keyboard or voice control. Not everyone can operate a mouse or touch screen.

Offer multiple means of support. Make sure that users can easily get into contact through a channel that suits them.

Build in reminders and directions. Repeat reminders on several pages.

Give users ample time to complete an action. Avoid using time limits.

Make buttons large enough and easily clickable. Small buttons can demand too much precision of users with a physical impairment. Allow for enough space around the clickable elements.

Build in shortcuts. For instance: after the post code has been filled in, the system automatically adds the address.

Technology



What else you can do as an **extra**:

Build in moments for checking. Let users check their answers before sending them in.

Explain what will happen after a certain procedure has been completed. For instance: ‘You will get an email to confirm’ or ‘You can now close this window’.

Avoid dynamic content that requires many movements with the computer mouse. Such as drop-down menus with many sub-items.

Limit the number of required mouse clicks. Make sure a process can be completed with only a few clicks.


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