Department for Education

Title:	**Digital Accessibility Standards**
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Find out what standards your school or college should meet on digital accessibility.

Digital accessibility means making digital products, content and services accessible and usable for all.

Everyone should be able to access the same information and use equipment, regardless of their needs and situation.

These standards address wider digital accessibility rather than personalised assistive technology, which needs to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

You can also see more details on how to use the standards to help your school or college meet their digital technology needs.

Standard 1

Include digital accessibility in relevant strategies and policies

Why this standard is important

Schools and colleges should provide equity of access for as many people as possible.

When digital accessibility is included in policies and strategies, this can help you:

- remove barriers to teaching and learning
- make better buying decisions on technology
- meet legal requirements on equality and access

Who needs to be involved

When reviewing your policies and strategies, the senior leadership team (SLT) and digital lead should work with relevant groups such as:

- Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) leads
- curriculum leads
- admin staff
- governors
- IT support
- wider school and college community

How to meet this standard

Include accessible digital technology in your wider policies and strategies.

These could be your:

- digital technology strategy
- curriculum policy
- SEND policy

Work with students, staff and parents to identify their digital accessibility needs.

SLT should identify which strategies and policies you need to review and how you'll include digital accessibility in them.

When you next review those strategies and policies, include: To meet this standard you must:

- the accessibility needs of the school or college community
- how you intend to meet these needs - this could include using accessibility features on existing systems or implementing new tools and services
- how you'll make all communications and content, including your school or college website, accessible.

Make sure everyone knows how to use accessibility features to meet their needs and those of others. You should refer to: Hardware and software should support the use of accessibility features.

When to meet this standard

Digital accessibility should be actively addressed and included in your next policy and strategy review.

Related Standards

Consider these standards when reviewing your digital technology.

Digital leadership and governance

Keep registers relating to hardware and systems up to date

Schools and colleges should have a 2-year digital technology strategy in place

Laptops, desktops and tablets

Devices should meet educational needs and support the digital technology strategy

Standard 2

Hardware and software should support the use of accessibility features

Why this standard is important

1 in 5 people have a disability in the UK, but accessibility applies to all. Students, staff, parents and carers needs will vary depending on their situation.

Digital accessibility features are often included in existing devices and operating systems. These features should include:

- text-to-speech and dictation
- caption settings
- zoom and adjustment settings
- translation and language tools

Hardware and software used by students and staff should have these features available and support provided for those who use them.

These features will remove barriers to accessing teaching, learning and school or college operations.

Who needs to be involved

The senior leadership team (SLT) should work with those responsible for:

- IT support and your digital strategy – as key decision makers they should include digital accessibility in their technology strategy, procurement and support
- special educational needs and disabilities – to make sure any assistive technologies used are compatible with chosen hardware and software
- procurement (including digital licensing) – to make sure that any hardware and software bought has digital accessibility as part of their design or features
- curriculum planning and delivery - to make sure all students can access the curriculum with the help of digital accessibility tools, when needed
- supporting student welfare - to make sure students' needs are understood and used for procurement and training

How to meet this standard

SLT should make sure new and existing hardware, software and digital services:

- are accessible or have accessibility features included
- can provide equity of access
- are set up to work with assistive technology and audio-visual equipment
- remain safe and secure when accessibility features are enabled – accessibility features should not be blocked by generic security policies
- consider accessibility needs when using IT in exams

You should provide training for staff when required to do so.

Talk to your digital and content service suppliers if you have specific accessibility requirements. Ask them about their products and services accessibility statements.

When to meet this standard

If your current hardware and software do not have these features, you will need to make sure they are included when you buy new equipment or services.

Related standards

Consider these standards when reviewing how your hardware and software can support accessibility features.

Laptops, desktops and tablets

Devices should meet educational needs and support the digital technology strategy

Devices should be safe and secure

Filtering and monitoring

Your filtering system should block harmful and inappropriate content, without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning

You should have effective monitoring strategies that meet your safeguarding needs for your school or college

Standard 3

Communications should be accessible to all

Why this standard is important

Making communications accessible can support students, staff, parents, and carers. It can assist those with additional needs like special educational needs, disabilities, and English as an additional language (EAL).

It can help:

- parents and carers to support their children's learning
- staff to meet student, parent and carer needs and concerns
- support staff in their administration and teaching tasks

Who needs to be involved

SLT should lead and include staff involved in digital communication and its content.

How to meet this standard

Websites should be accessible for everyone. Consider accessibility when commissioning or building a website.

You could look at alternative formats for all communications, including email attachments, text messages and social media.

Find out more about accessible communication formats on GOV.UK.

Additionally, you should make sure that:

- there is understanding of accessibility and its importance throughout the school or college
- staff are trained on accessibility and can write and access content in an accessible format
- staff know who to contact to help them make things accessible – this may be the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), IT support or the SLT digital lead

When to meet this standard

Once training is complete, communications and content should be accessible.

When reviewing your strategies and policies, include how you will provide accessible communications for students, staff, parents and carers.

Related standards

Within this standard topic review, <u>Digital accessibility should be included in your strategies and policies</u>

Also consider these standards when reviewing how to provide accessible communications.

Laptops, desktops and tablets

<u>Devices should meet educational needs and support the digital technology strategy</u>