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Web and Digital Accessibility Policy

Accommodations for individuals with disabilities in accessing these policies are available upon request by emailing accessiblepolicy@wcupa.edu

Purpose and Scope

West Chester University is committed to equal opportunity and freedom from discrimination for students, employees, applicants for admission or employment, and participants in University-sponsored activities, regardless of disability status. This includes ensuring that the technology and information the University creates or provides is accessible in accordance with applicable law.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (as amended) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, this Digital Accessibility Policy is established to enable digital access and improve the user experience for individuals with disabilities.

Policy Statement

All members of the University community who create, manage, or disseminate information and technology must ensure that such information and technology comply with this Policy and conform to 28 CFR § 35.200 Subpart H. Allowable exceptions are outlined in Appendix A.

Policy Framework

On April 24, 2024, the Department of Justice issued a final rule updating Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This rule requires that web content and mobile applications provided by public entities be accessible to individuals with disabilities. The rule takes effect for West Chester University on April 24, 2026.

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Version 2.1, Level AA constitute the current technical standard required by these regulations for all digital and web-based information, applications, and services, including curriculum content. WCAG is developed by the World Wide Web Consortium and outlines the standards necessary to ensure web and digital accessibility. To assist in these efforts, the University has made resources available. For information on current best practices, software, accessibility tools, and training, visit the [Web and Digital Accessibility website](#).

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Definitions

Accessible: When a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to obtain the same information, participate in the same interactions, and experience the same services as a person without a disability, with equivalent ease of use.

Digital Content: All electronic information created, produced, revised, or procured by a school, unit, or department for University programs or activities. This includes but is not limited to:

- Email communications (newsletters, marketing materials);
- Websites hosted on the University domain;
- Content on the University's learning management system (currently D2L);
- Digital course content and training materials;
- Official University social media accounts;
- Multimedia content (videos, animations, recorded audio);
- Electronic publications and e-books;
- Documents (text documents, spreadsheets, PDFs, presentations, etc.);
- Information kiosks, digital signs, and other electronic devices;
- WCU-created and third-party software, applications, and websites utilized by departments; and
- Desktop, mobile, and cloud-based applications.

Digital Content Creator: Any University employee, group, or third party who makes and shares things online (websites, D2L, videos, social media, newsletters, etc..) for the University.

Procurement: The assessment and acquisition of digital products from suppliers through IS&T or directly by University departments or units.

University Platforms: Any public-facing, faculty-facing, staff-facing, or student-facing website or web-based application that resides within a University-controlled domain and/or is used to conduct University business.

Responsibility

This Policy applies to all faculty, staff, and students engaged in the procurement, creation, production, or revision of digital content. The requirement applies to all web content and

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mobile applications that West Chester University provides or makes available, including third-party content or IT utilized on University platforms. All content must conform to WCAG Version 2.1, Level AA by April 24, 2026.

Non-Compliance

If an individual is unable to access University digital content due to non-conformance, the responsible unit must work in active partnership with the University to ensure that the content is either updated to conform to the Standards or made available in an alternative accessible format in a timely manner.

If remediation does not occur within a reasonable timeframe (not to exceed 60 days), the Office for Equal Opportunity and Compliance may require the removal of inaccessible materials until remediation is complete. Employees who willfully violate this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action. Contractors, vendors, and other service providers who violate this Policy may face termination of their business relationship with West Chester University.

References

28 CFR § 35.200 Subpart H

For questions about this policy, individuals should contact the Vice President for the Division for Access, Compliance, and Engagement or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance.

Reviewed by: Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance

Policy Owner: Vice President – Division for Access, Compliance and Engagement (ACE)

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracey Robinson", is written over a large, loopy, circular flourish.

Dr. Tracey Robinson, Vice President, Division for Access, Compliance and Engagement
February 4, 2026

Effective Date: February 4, 2026

Review Date: February 2030

Initial Approval: February 2026

Review Dates:

Amended:

Appendix A: Exceptions

Undue Hardship or Fundamental Alteration

Where conformance with the Standards would create an undue hardship or result in a fundamental alteration of the digital content, the employee responsible may request a temporary exception from the Vice President for Access, Compliance, and Engagement (ACE). This requirement does not apply to original student coursework.

Exception requests must include a detailed explanation of why conformance is not feasible and provide an alternative access plan describing how the information will be made available to individuals with disabilities until full conformance is achieved. All requests will be reviewed by the Vice President for ACE within 30 days. This may be in consultation with other University partners, including but are not limited to the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), Digital and Web Accessibility Task Force, Vice Presidents, Deans, Department Chairs, Provost, President, University Legal Counsel, etc. Documentation of exceptions will be retained by the Office for Equal Opportunity and Compliance.

35.201 General Exceptions

The requirements of §35.200 do not apply to:

- (a) Archived web content;
- (b) Preexisting conventional electronic documents not used for services or participation;
- (c) Content posted by third parties not under contractual obligation to the University;
- (d) Individualized, password-protected documents related to specific individuals; or
- (e) Social media posts made before the compliance date.

35.202 Conforming Alternate Versions

Conforming alternate versions are permissible only when direct accessibility is not possible due to technical or legal limitations.