This accessibility statement applies to the Heart of Worcestershire College website.

This website is run by Heart of Worcestershire College (HoW College). We want as many people as possible to be able to use this website and we're committed to providing web accessibility for everyone no matter how they access the web content. We’ve also made the website text as simple as possible to understand.

We hope that our website it easy to access however if you would like further tools to enhance your experience we've installed the ReciteMe toolbar. Simply click on accessibility at the top of any of our pages to launch the toolbar where you'll have access to features such as text to speech, colour changes, different font styles and sizes and much more!

[AbilityNet](https://mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk/) has advice on making your device easier to use if you have a disability.

**How accessible this website is**

We know some parts of this website are not fully accessible but we’re working hard to improve the accessibility in accordance with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1](https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/)

**Feedback and contact information**

If you need information on this website in a different format like accessible PDF, large print, easy read, audio recording or braille please email accessreggroup@howcollege.ac.uk

We’ll consider your request and get back to you in 5 working days.

**Reporting accessibility problems with this website**

We’re always looking to improve the accessibility of this website. If you find any problems not listed on this page or think we’re not meeting accessibility requirements, contact: accessreggroup@howcollege.ac.uk

**Enforcement procedure**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is responsible for enforcing the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (the ‘accessibility regulations’). If you’re not happy with how we respond to your complaint, [contact the Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS)](https://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/).

**Contacting us by telephone or visiting in person**

Heart of Worcestershire College does not currently have a textphone. If you need to use this service we recommend that you contact the College via services such as Relay UK. To do so you will need to dial 18001 before the phone number you are calling. If you’re using a smartphone with the Relay UK app, 18001 is automatically included before the number you want to dial.

If you are visiting us in-person, please contact us via accessreggroup@howcollege.ac.uk with any requirements you may need and we will do our best to facilitate. Please note that we don't have induction hoops on-site.

**Technical information about this website’s accessibility**

Heart of Worcestershire College is committed to making its website accessible, in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

We are aware that this website is not fully compliant with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1](https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/) AA standard. The non-accessible sections are listed below and can be found following an audit conducted by the Government Digital Service here: [Accessibility report for www.howcollege.ac.uk (accessibility-monitoring.service.gov.uk)](https://reports.accessibility-monitoring.service.gov.uk/reports/53eb9529-93a3-435e-a065-8f8d5aa6da0e#report-section-3269)

**Non compliance with the accessibility regulations**

**Images**

Some images do not have a text alternative, so people using a screen reader cannot access the information. This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 1.1.1 (non-text content).

*We have added text alternatives for images used on our site and when we publish new content we’ll make sure our use of images and inclusion of alt text meets accessibility standards.*

**Contrast (WCAG 1.4.3)**

Poor colour contrast makes it difficult for someone with sight loss to see the content properly. If there is a big difference between the background and foreground colours it should be much easier to see the difference between them. This applies to links and buttons across the website.

*We have made changes to the majority of colours on our website and produced specific web accessibility brand guidelines to meet WCAG 2.1 AA guidelines. We are continuing to work through areas of the website where we know colour contrast still remains an issue, these include:*

* *Subject area overview pages*
* *Individual course pages*

**Keyboard (WCAG 2.1.1)**

Users should be able to use a keyboard to access all content and functionality of a web page. This means the page can be used by people with no vision as well as people who use alternative keyboards or input devices that act as a keyboard. Dropdown menus and the magnifying glass at the top of the webpage are not accessible.

*We have amended this feature on webpages tested during the government audit. However, we will continue to test other pages and rectify this in the same manner*

**Focus Visible (WCAG 2.4.7)**

A visible focus helps users know which element has keyboard focus and where they are on the page.

When an element gets focus there should be a visible border around it. Highlighting the element that has keyboard focus or is hovered over can provide information like whether the element is interactive or the scope of that element.

Operating systems have a native indication of focus, which is available in many browsers. The default display of the focus indicator is not always highly visible and may even be difficult to see especially on coloured backgrounds.

Currently there is no keyboard focus across the webpages and at 200% zoom the keyboard focus becomes lost and is not clear in the hamburger menu

*We have amended this feature on webpages tested during the government audit. However, we will continue to test other pages and rectify this in the same manner*

**Images of Text (WCAG 1.4.5)**

Images of text cause problems for users who need to adjust how visual content like font size, spacing or colours are displayed. The image quality can reduce and become blurry when users increase page magnification.

Images of text should not be used unless text cannot be formatted to the same effect, for example logos or branding. Text may be used in images where the text is part of an image that contains a lot of other visual content like graphs or diagrams that give important information through more than just text.

Currently there are images of the text in the featured carousel at the top of the webpage.

*We have removed these images from the website and have replaced them with images that now comply with WCAG 2.1 AA standards*

**Pause. Stop. Hide (WCAG 2.2.2)**

Content that moves, flashes or updates automatically can be a severe distraction for certain users, making it difficult to use the page. It can also cause problems for assistive technologies like screen readers.

Currently there is no pause button for the carousel articles

*This feature has been amended and users can now navigate through the carousel articles by clicking the arrows to the left and right of each slide.*

**Non-text Content (WCAG 1.1.1)**

Images must have alternate text. This currently applies to the image for the Strategic Development Fund, Media Gallery, Which course is for me, Frequently asked questions and Success Stories

*This has been amended where highlighted during the above audit. We are continuing to ensure all images have alt text on our website and working with web developers to make sure this is accessible for all images on the site, regardless of their functionality*

**Parsing (WCAG 4.1.1)**

IDs used in ARIA and labels must be unique.

*This has been amended where highlighted during the above audit. We are continuing to ensure all ARIA and labels are unique throughout our website*

**Bypass Blocks (WCAG 2.4.1) and Name, Role, Value (WCAG 4.1.2)**

Frames must have an accessible name. This refers to all maps on the website

*Maps on the contact us page of the website have been updated to have accessible name as per WCAG 2.1 AA requirements*

**Page Titled (WCAG 2.4.2)**

PDF documents should have titles that describe the topic or purpose of the page. Titles help users understand the topic without having to read the entire document. This applies to [https://www.howcollege.ac.uk/media/3573/agenda-audit-committee-30-november-2021.pdf](/media/3573/agenda-audit-committee-30-november-2021.pdf)

*We are continuing to update our documents to ensure they are accessible. Where documents may not initially be accessible users are aware of how they contact the College to obtain an accessible version*

Info and Relationships (WCAG 1.3.1)

In tables.

Information in tables must be shown in a way that maintains the relationships between the data even when a user cannot see the table. Assistive technologies like screen readers rely on correct markup within a table to understand and show the correct information to a user.

Tables in PDF documents should be tagged to give information such as row and column titles. This applies to [https://www.howcollege.ac.uk/media/3573/agenda-audit-committee-30-november-2021.pdf](/media/3573/agenda-audit-committee-30-november-2021.pdf)

*We are continuing to update our documents to ensure they are accessible. Where documents may not initially be accessible users are aware of how they contact the College to obtain an accessible version*

**Content that’s not within the scope of the accessibility regulations**

**PDFs and other documents**

Many of our older PDFs and Word documents do not meet accessibility standards - for example, they may not be structured so they’re accessible to a screen reader. This does not meet WCAG 2.1 success criterion 4.1.2 (name, role value).

Some of our PDFs and Word documents are essential to providing our services. For example, we have PDFs with information on how users can access our services, and forms published as Word documents.

The accessibility regulations [do not require us to fix PDFs or other documents published before 23 September 2018](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/952/regulation/4/made) if they’re not essential to providing our services.

Any new PDFs or Word documents we publish will meet accessibility standards.

**What we’re doing to improve accessibility**

Our Accessibility Regulation Group meet once a term to discuss improvements to cross-college accessibility functions. Terms of reference for this group can be found [here](/media/3644/terms-of-reference-accessibility.docx)

This statement was prepared on Friday 18th October 2019. It was last updated on Monday 16th January 2023.

This website was last reviewed on 13th February 2022. The reviewed was carried out by Heart of Worcestershire College focusing on the main touchpoints of the homepage and most frequently used services. This review will be conducted again on 28th February 2023.

From the review we found that 93% of respondents agreed that the website was fully accessible/user friendly to those with a learning difficulty or disability.

The Website has since been audited by the Government Digital Service on Thursday 27th October 2022. The full report can be found here: [Accessibility report for www.howcollege.ac.uk (accessibility-monitoring.service.gov.uk) (accessibility-monitoring.service.gov.uk)](https://reports.accessibility-monitoring.service.gov.uk/reports/53eb9529-93a3-435e-a065-8f8d5aa6da0e#report-section-3269)

Please note Heart of Worcestershire College is currently in the process of redesigning the current website prior to the start of the 23/24 academic year. The new website will be built, taking into account all accessibility regulations, to meet WCAG 2.1 AA standard.

**ReciteMe**

The Recite Me cloud-based technology toolbar is available at the top of all of our webpages giving you the option to customise the content to consume it in a way that works best for you.

For help on accessibility visit [**My Web My Way**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/accessibility/)

**Helpful contacts**

AbilityNet – provides free information and advice, individual assessment of technology needs, the supply of assistive technology with free support, a programme of awareness education, and consultancy for employers on system and workstation adaptations – [**http://www.abilitynet.org.uk/**](http://www.abilitynet.org.uk/)