

## Harper Adams eLearning Accessibility Statement

Harper Adams University College is committed to the development of on-line learning resources for all of its students, potential students and applicants, staff, parents and carers. It is the policy of Harper Adams University College to provide full accessibility to all, regardless of disability. Web browser based eLearning resources are delivered via an accessible virtual learning environment (VLE) – [WebCT CE](#).

Harper Adams University College [aims](#) to make both inclusive and reasonable adjustments so that all learning resources are accessible to all users, including those with disabilities such as those who are blind or partially sighted those with colour blindness, those with dyslexia or lack of fine motor control skills. People with disabilities may need to use various assistive technologies such as screen readers, voice recognition software and alternative mice/keyboards, etc. Web based eLearning content should be made accessible to these users. Harper Adams [Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy for Students with Disabilities and Guidance for Staff, students and Applicants](#) states that "the College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) will be constantly monitored by the eLearning Development Officer to ensure that resources are accessible to all. Guidance on Accessible VLE's will be given to those designing eLearning resources and activities."

The eLearning department is constantly reviewing and revising all resources held on the VLE. This adherence to the [SENDA standards](#) and legislation ensures we are primarily converting all resources to HTML and Flash based formats. We are also changing the way we create the resources to take advantage of advances in web site construction. We are using style sheets to control layout and style. As all users will be able to access the content of these pages, there will be no need for a text only version. Users with newer browsers will be able to print a version formatted for printing directly from the browser, and we will continue to provide an Adobe Acrobat (pdf) version for our learners whose browsers don't have this capability. We are referencing the World Wide Web consortium's [W3C/WAI's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines: UK](#), the UK [e-governments handbook](#) and [techdis guidelines](#) to guide us in this process.

It is our aim to ensure all new eLearning resources conform to, at least the minimum level of compliance (Priority 1: Level A: [WAI guidelines](#)) from the outset. Existing VLE eLearning resources be gradually amended to conform as they are periodically updated. It is the aim of the eLearning department that all VLE held resources will be compliant by August 2005. We will be utilising web based tools to assist with checking our content against the current standards, such as [webxact](#) and [bobby](#). Furthermore, we are also employing web usability design rules to ensure eLearning materials are both accessible as standard and usable by design.

We are working towards to include methods for user customisation of the online learning environment and also be able to make provision for individual learning styles. By adopting user centred design principles, we will be able to deliver resources tailored for the exact needs of our students. We aim to continually improve our services to all our users.

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Other guidelines and policies we are referencing are as follows;

- Harper Adams' [Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy for Students with Disabilities and Guidance for Staff, students and Applicants](#) provides further information concerning assistive technology and software available for use by disabled students.
- The [Quality Assurance Agency \(QAA\)'s Code of Practice](#) for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education. Section 3: Students with Disabilities.
- [The Disability Discrimination Act](#) (1995) states that "service providers have to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled people, such as providing extra help or making changes to the way they provide their services". This includes information and services provided through the Web.

- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act \(2001\)](#)

"not to treat disabled students less favourably, without justification, for a reason which relates to their disability"

"to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that people who are disabled are not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to people who are not disabled in accessing further, higher and Local Education Authority-secured education."

- [IMS Global Learning Consortium](#)

The AccessForAll Meta-data specification is intended to make it possible to identify resources that match a user's stated preferences or needs. These preferences or needs would be declared using the IMS Learner Information Package Accessibility for LIP specification.

The needs and preferences addressed include the need or preference for alternative presentations of resources, alternative methods of controlling resources, alternative equivalents to the resources themselves and enhancements or supports required by the user. [The specification](#) provides a common language for identifying and describing the primary or default resource and equivalent alternatives for that resource.