# Website Accessibility Statement

This accessibility statement applies to the Belfast Metropolitan College website (<https://www.belfastmet.ac.uk>), separate from the EBS Learner Portal (Ontrack Prospect).

This website is run by Belfast Metropolitan College (Belfast Met). We want as many people as possible to be able to use this website. For example, that means you should be able to:

* change colours, contrast levels – website offers greyscale options
* zoom in up to 300% without the text spilling off the screen
* navigate most of the website using just a keyboard
* navigate most of the website using speech recognition software
* listen to most of the website using a screen reader (including the most recent versions of JAWS, NVDA and VoiceOver)

We’ve also made the website text as simple as possible to understand.

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

We have procured Web Blackboard Ally to monitor the accessibility of web content. We have trained staff on accessibility standards, and Blackboard Ally to ensure that only accessible content is posted. Any issues identified by Blackboard Ally will be corrected before publishing. A plan is being developed to address older content. Compliance with accessibility standards is being monitored and reported on to our Executive Leadership Team. The Blackboard Ally tool is displayed on all pages and documents across the site, offering users various accessibility options to suit their needs including alternate versions, audio versions and translations.

# How accessible this website is

We know some parts of this website are not fully accessible. You can see a full list of any issues we currently know about in the ‘Non-Accessible Content’ section of this statement.

## **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:

* email [marketinganddesign@belfastmet.ac.uk](mailto:marketinganddesign@belfastmet.ac.uk)
* call 028 9026 5000

We will consider your request and aim to get back to you within 5 working days.

If you cannot view the map on our ‘Contact’ page, call or email us for directions.

## **Reporting accessibility problems with this website**

We are always looking to improve the accessibility of this website. If you find any problems not listed on this page or think we are not meeting accessibility requirements, contact marketinganddesign@belfastmet.ac.uk

## **Enforcement procedure**

The [Equality Commission for Northern Ireland](https://www.equalityni.org/Home) 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,you can also contact the Equality Commission’s Discrimination Advice Officers for further advice, email [ComplaintsOfficers@equalityni.org](mailto:ComplaintsOfficers@equalityni.org) or telephone 028 90500 600.

# Contacting us by phone or visiting us in person

You can contact us through our main switchboard on 028 9026 5000. You can also email us using a variety of email addresses. The ‘[Contact Us’](https://www.belfastmet.ac.uk/connect/) section of our website provides a list of all email addresses.

You can also drop into any of our campuses all of which have reception areas and you can be redirected to the most appropriate person on site. Most of our non-student facing, support functions are based in either Castlereagh Campus or Millfield campus. Before travelling to any campus, you can check out the accessibility of that location through the online [AccessAble site](https://www.accessable.co.uk/belfast-metropolitan-college). Details about parking, access routes and descriptions of the locations within each building are all listed there together with visual images.

# Technical information about this website’s accessibility

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

## **Compliance status**

This website is partially compliant with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1](https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/) AA standard, due to the non-compliances and exemptions listed below.

# Non-accessible content

The content listed below is non-accessible for the following reasons.

## **Non-compliance with the accessibility regulations**

The website cannot be adjusted to meet text spacing requirements. This may make some content harder to read for some users. This fails WCAG 1.4.12 Text Spacing

(AA). We cannot resolve these issues in the build and coding of the website as it currently stands, however as we are migrating to new Umbraco system, the site needs to be rebuilt. Therefore, during this process, the text spacing issues will remain until migration is complete. We aim to have this work completed and live by the 31 December 2023.

Some pages do not conform to best practice browser tab title layout. This should not significantly affect users. This fails WCAG 2.4.2 Page Titled (A). We are working across all pages to ensure they all follow an agreed browser title layout convention that will ensure all pages adhere to WCAG 2.4.2 and fix this issue by 31 December 2023.

Breadcrumb elements are described poorly for screen reader users that may make them hard to use. This fails WCAG 1.3.1 Info and Relationships (A). We cannot resolve these issues in the build and coding of the website as it currently stands, however as we are migrating to new Umbraco system, the site needs to be rebuilt. Therefore, during this process, the issues with the breadcrumb elements will remain but will be addressed in the rebuild. We aim to have this work completed and live by the 31 December 2023.

There are various HTML validation robustness issues across the website. This fails WCAG 4.1.1 Parsing (A). We cannot resolve these issues in the build and coding of the website as it currently stands, however as we are migrating to new Umbraco system, the site needs to be rebuilt. Therefore, during this process, these issues will remain but will be addressed in the rebuild. We aim to have this work completed and live by the 31 December 2023.

Carousel content across the website presents many difficulties to keyboard users. Carousels in some cases cannot be stopped from moving, content cannot be accessed by keyboard controls, carousel controls are not announced correctly to screen readers, carousel controls fail contrast requirements and carousels are not navigated in an appropriate order. These fail WCAG 1.4.11 Non-text Contrast (AA), 2.1.1 Keyboard (A), 2.2.2 Pause, Stop, Hide (A), 2.4.3 Focus Order (A) and 4.1.2 Name, Role, Value (A). We cannot resolve these issues in the build and coding of the website as it currently stands, however as we are migrating to new Umbraco system, the site needs to be rebuilt. Therefore, during this process, these issues will remain but will be addressed in the rebuild. We aim to have this work completed and live by the 31 December 2023.

A number of links say things like “click here” or give a URL rather than having useful descriptive text hyperlinks. This fails WCAG 2.4.4 Link Purpose (A). We are working across the website to amend links to descriptive text to meet this criteria, with an aim to be fully compliant by 31 December 2023.

Search filter categories are not announced to screen reader users when moving through filter options. This fails WCAG 1.3.1 Info and Relationships (A). We cannot resolve these issues in the build and coding of the website as it currently stands, however as we are migrating to new Umbraco system, the site needs to be rebuilt. Therefore, during this process, these issues will remain but will be addressed in the rebuild. We aim to have this work completed and live by the 31 December 2023.

Some content across the website such as the prospectus suite and other text content are meant to be headings to split text content on a page. These are not coded as headings and so do not support screen reader users that make use of headings for navigational purposes. This fails WCAG 1.3.1 Info and Relationships (A). We are working to ensure al headings are coded accurately as such. We aim to fix this issue by December 2023.

On all main pages, when viewed at 200% zoom or more, or using a keyboard to navigate, the submenu options cannot be accessed. This fails WCAG 1.4.4 Resize Text and WCAG 2.1.1 Keyboard. We cannot resolve these issues in the build and coding of the website as it currently stands, however as we are migrating to new Umbraco system, the site needs to be rebuilt. Therefore, during this process, the submenu being accessed in zoom, mobile view and via keyboard will be addressed. We aim to have this work completed and live by the 31 December 2023. In terms of the focus, JavaScript has been used to dynamically change focus to enable better tab ordering.

A number of formal documents such as minutes of meetings, equality screening forms and designed PDFs etc., which have been signed as a formal record, or have been designed for promotional purposes since the 23 September 2013, may not meet accessibility standards. We cannot change these already approved documents. This fails WCAG 2.1 web content accessibility. We have been working towards making formal templates accessible and are gradually phasing this in. New equality screening templates have been made accessible and we aim to have Committee templates accessible by June 2024.

The College will be required to post content which belongs to other bodies i.e. third-party content. This will entail content from awarding bodies, academic resources, the Department for the Economy, for example as well as links to websites, content on websites etc. Consequently, as we have not developed this content, nor have control over it, we cannot change it. While responsibility for this does not necessarily sit with the College, the College will identify if such content meets accessibility standards and if not, raise this with the content owner. If the content owner is unable to fix the content, or is unable to fix it within a reasonable time, the College will be required to post this content.

**Disproportionate burden**

At this time, we have made no claims of disproportionate burden.

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

### **Portable Document Format (PDF) and other documents**

Some of our PDFs and Word documents are essential to providing our services. We plan to either fix these where possible, or replace them with accessible HTML pages.

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. For example, we do not plan to fix historical meeting minutes or other documents published before 23rd September 2018 and are currently reviewing content to identify and remove or fix older content.

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

**Video content**

Existing pre-recorded video content that was published before the 23 September 2020 is exempt from the regulations. We continuously review all video content housed on the website and aim to include captions to all not exempt video content under the regulations or remove redundant video content. We aim to have this process completed by July 2023.

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

Belfast Met will continue to upload content and publish documents in line with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA standard.

We have procured Web Blackboard Ally to monitor the accessibility of web content. We have trained staff on accessibility standards, and Blackboard Ally to ensure that only accessible content is posted. Any issues identified by Blackboard Ally will be corrected before publishing. A plan is being developed to address older content. Compliance with accessibility standards is being monitored and reported on to our Executive Leadership Team. The Blackboard Ally tool is displayed on all pages and documents across the site, offering users various accessibility options to suit their needs including alternate versions, audio versions and translations.

An Accessibility Steering has been established to oversee the actions required to improve web accessibility and project teams are progressing actions identified by a website audit in 2019 and a further audit by the Cabinet Office in January 2023. We aim to close out on most actions by the 31 March 2024 and other actions will be closed out by August 2024.

While content is monitored as stated above through Blackboard Ally and reported on to the Accessibility Steering Group, we accept that accessibility checkers are not fully accurate, and that checkers do not also address website functionality. We will continue to work with our website providers to ensure that they meet W3C standards and will consider commissioning future periodic external compliance audits. We will continue to work with staff and service users who use various assistive technologies and use this feedback to improve accessibility. We will also avail of W3C digital accessibility courses.

# Preparation of this accessibility statement

This statement was initially prepared on 07/04/20 and subsequently revised on 14 March 2023.

This website was last tested by an external consultant in January 2020 and again on 25/11/2021 by [All Able Ltd.](https://www.allable.co.uk/) A representative sample of pages of the website were tested along with a sample of documents from each area of the website.

The site has been audited by the Cabinet Office Government Digital Service between 19 December 2022 and 6 January 2023 against the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA standard.