Product and Vendor Accessibility Checklist

Software products considered for procurement must be readily usable and accessible and provide, at a minimum, functionality outlined in the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level A and AA[1]. If no product exists that meets this criteria at time of purchase, the candidate vendor must demonstrate a willingness to provide a timely road-map for correcting each accessibility issue found during formal assessment and must make meaningful progress toward meeting that time-line. Each vendor's claim of accessibility must be verifiably true.

Software used for high-impact services that are not accessible at the time of deployment will create a high level risk for litigation and will likely prevent some campus constituents from successfully using the software. Such software should be fully accessible at the time of deployment.

1. Minimum Functional Accessibility Checklist

The following six items constitute the minimum accessibility assessment requirements necessary to determine if a software candidate is likely accessible or if it can be made accessible. Software products under serious consideration should be formally assessed by an IT accessibility professional at the University prior to purchase.

1. **KEYBOARD SUPPORT:** Necessary tasks can be completed without a great deal of difficulty by using only the keyboard (tab, arrow keys, spacebar/enter). **Yes / No**

2. **CLEAR VISUAL FOCUS INDICATOR:** When tabbing through the interface, it is easy to see where the focus is going. **Yes / No**

3. **LOGICAL STRUCTURE:** The tab key moves focus through the application in a way that makes sense for the application's visual layout. **Yes / No**

4. **MULTIPLE WAYS:** The application displays error conditions and other status indicators in multiple ways, e.g. color, worded messages, etc. **Yes / No**

5. **SUFFICIENT VISUAL CONTRAST:** All essential interface elements (e.g. text, form fields, icons, etc.) are easy to read. **Yes / No**

6. **CAPTIONS AND AUDIO DESCRIPTIONS:** Multimedia content is captioned and has audio descriptions (where appropriate). If multimedia content is supplied by the University, an accessible method of enabling captions and audio descriptions is present. **Yes / No / N/A**

> Failure to meet the criteria above indicates that the vendor either has little understanding of IT accessibility issues or is not motivated to make their application accessible. Choosing a product from another vendor may be indicated.

---

1   The Federal Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has stated that software cannot be considered accessible unless it is actually usable by disabled users, regardless of conformance to accessibility standards and guidelines.

2. Vendor Assessment Checklist

1. **Has the vendor supplied a name and contact info for a person in their company to handle accessibility issues?**
   Note: If vendor does not have accessibility staff, the product is likely not accessible and the vendor may not be able to correct any issues found.
   Yes / No

2. **Was the vendor responsive regarding any issues found from the minimum functional accessibility check performed in Step 1?**
   Yes / No

3. **Did Vendor supply a thorough and accurate Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) for the purchase candidate?**
   Yes / No

4. **Have the VPAT claims been verified by an accessibility specialist at the university?**
   Yes / No

5. **If this software is under serious consideration, was the vendor responsive to the results of a formal accessibility assessment performed by an accessibility specialist at the university?**
   Yes / No

6. **Has the vendor agreed or indicated willingness to agree contractually to correct identified accessibility issues in an appropriate, mutually agreed upon time frame?**
   Yes / No

> Failure to meet the criteria above indicates that it will be difficult to work with the vendor to remediate accessibility issues in their product.

3. Determination of Candidacy

A software product can be considered a strong candidate for procurement if it meets most or all of the minimum accessibility requirements of the Minimum Functional Accessibility Checklist and requirements 1-6 of the Vendor Assessment Checklist. Please note, meeting these requirements may not mean that the product is fully accessible. The software product that is most accessible or that can be made most accessible must be chosen.

If the above conditions cannot be met and no accessible alternative exists, the software product may be obtained under an Undue Burden exception. The university must be able to demonstrate proper due-diligence when justifying an Undue Burden exception.

Undue Burden and Non-Availability Exemption

The following conditions may qualify a product for an undue burden and non-availability exception to accessibility requirements:

1. **Compliance with accessibility laws and guidelines is not technically possible.**

   OR

2. **Extraordinary measures would be required to make the application compliant due to the nature of the intent of the application.**

A lack of funding required to correct a software product's accessibility issues or to purchase an accessible alternative is not sufficient to qualify for an undue burden exception (Office of Civil Rights).