York College Accessibility Statement for Digital Content

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About York College and digital content

York College has various platforms on which it shares content with students, staff and the wider community in and around York.

When services and content are accessible, everyone benefits. The more accessible the content, the better it can be used across environments and devices by the largest number of users. This Accessibility Statement describes how we are striving to make York College platforms accessible and explains what to do if anyone has problems accessing any part of it.

The College platforms include:

- **York College Website**
  Documentation on here includes all publications and policies that are, by law, required to be made available to the general public. All of these need to be fully accessible.

- **Intranet**
  Although the intranet is intended only for staff and students within York College, content must be accessible or, if not, able to be made accessible upon request.

- **Blackboard**
  Blackboard provides learning materials to students on a course level. The Blackboard platform conforms to web content accessibility standards. Course tutors are responsible for course content and ensuring that current content is up to date and fully accessible.

- **Planet E-Stream**
  This is York College’s media server. It provides a platform for students and staff to upload recordings produced in-house or to access external content via a repository of recorded television programmes.

Each York College platform has its own issues relating to accessibility. York College is dealing with these issues as a matter of priority. They are itemised below:
York College Website
The York College website provides a huge range of data from course information for prospective students to annual reports and various policies and procedures. Anything that is not currently accessible can be made available in alternative formats on request. See Requesting website documents in an alternative format.

Web standards
Our website is developed using valid HTML5, CSS, and JavaScript to the standards laid out in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) – Level AA.

The College is committed to providing an accessible and inclusive website in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

Website content is usable with assistive technologies such as screen readers and text-only browsers.

Known issues concerning alternative tags for some images on the website are being corrected.

Links to other websites
Where the College intranet links to other sites that may offer benefits to our users, the College is not responsible for the accessibility of these or any other websites that we do not manage.

Requesting website documents in an alternative format
If there are documents on the College Website that you wish to have an alternative version of, please contact:

Email: marketing@yorkcollege.ac.uk
Telephone: 01904 770251
Write: Marketing Department (Accessibility)
York College
Sim Balk Lane
York
YO23 2BB
York College Intranet
The College intranet was first created in the early 2000s. Despite many updates, it contains legacy data going back many years and, as such, the College recognises that intranet navigation can be difficult and that documentation may not be easy to find.

York College is replacing the intranet with a SharePoint-based solution but it will take some time to replace the large and unwieldy original site.

Links to other websites
Where the College website links to other sites that may offer benefits to our users, the College is not responsible for the accessibility of these or any other websites that we do not manage.

Requesting intranet documents in an alternative format
If there are documents on the College intranet that you wish to have in an alternative version, please contact:

Email: marketing@yorkcollege.ac.uk
Telephone: 01904 770251
Write: Marketing Department (Accessibility)
York College
Sim Balk Lane
York
YO23 2BB
Blackboard

Overview

Blackboard Learn is York College’s centrally supported Virtual Learning Environment where tutors place learning materials for students to access and where students can upload their assignments.

York College is committed to ensuring Blackboard provides an accessible and inclusive learning environment in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 to give all its learners the opportunity to maximise their academic potential.

Blackboard has been in use at York College since 2005 and contains a lot of historical content and new content is being constantly added. There are currently thousands of courses on the system (not all in use) and hundreds of thousands of documents on Blackboard, which is managed centrally by the College’s E-Learning department.

The software supplied by Blackboard Inc meets internationally recognised Web Content Accessibility standards. The following accessibility features may currently be carried out on any computer or laptop:

- change colours, contrast levels and font size
- zoom in up to 300% without the text spilling off the screen except where content has been created by a user in such a way to not make this possible (for example within a non-responsive table)
- navigate the website using just a keyboard
- navigate the website using speech recognition software
- listen to most of the website using a screen reader

Information on specific accessibility features regarding Blackboard Learn can be found here:

Using Blackboard Learn with a visual impairment
Using Blackboard Learn with a hearing impairment
Using Blackboard Learn with a mobility impairment
Accessibility Features in Blackboard Learn
Display Options and content folders

Resources that are hosted on Blackboard are added by our user community of more than 500 College staff, who teach hundreds of courses each academic year. Accessibility of content may vary between courses and content creators. We are developing a strategy to support our content creators in the creation of accessible resources. Details are provided in the section What we’re doing to improve accessibility within Blackboard.

Courses may include links to third party content and resources outside of Blackboard. This Accessibility Statement refers only to York College Blackboard content rather than third party content or services accessed through the platform.

Issues with text, including hyperlinks, descriptions, labels, web pages
- Some link text may not make sense when read on its own (for example, ‘click here’)
- There may be colour contrast issues with some text
Issues with documents, including Word files, PowerPoints, PDFs

Many older documents may not meet accessibility standards. Issues with documents that are in current use will be fixed as they arise. When staff publish new content, they will ensure all text meets the required accessibility standards. For inaccessible documents, a request can be made for an accessible version. See Requesting Blackboard documents in an alternative format.

What we’re doing to improve accessibility within Blackboard

In order to ensure that as much documentation is as accessible as possible, the E-Learning team is currently:

- Offering accessibility training to all staff, thus ensuring awareness of the Government Regulations regarding accessibility. The training shows how to produce fully accessibility documents (e.g. Word documents and PowerPoint presentations)
- Producing an online accessibility training course for those tutors who are unable to attend face-to-face training
- In the case of historical documentation that has been online for a number of years, York College will make accessible versions of this documentation available to students on request within seven working days of receipt of that request.
- The E-Learning team is rolling out the Blackboard Ally accessibility tool (see below).

Ally for Blackboard

Ally is a plug-in for Blackboard that helps to build a more inclusive learning environment and improve the student experience, by helping students take control of course content with usability, accessibility and quality in mind.

The aims for Ally are to:

- Increase awareness of accessibility issues and the accessibility regulations among the Blackboard community at York College
- Provide tutors with an indication of how accessible their uploaded resources are
- Give students the tools to create more accessible formats of documents for themselves.

Ally enables students to save course materials in a range of accessible formats include PDF, audio, electronic braille, e-Pub.

Requesting Blackboard documents in an alternative format

If a student requires a document within their course in Blackboard to be in a different format, they may be able to convert it themselves using Blackboard Ally.

To do this, click on the “A” icon next to the document that requires converting
...then select the format to convert to.

- Tagged PDF
  Structured PDF for improved use with assistive technology
- HTML
  For viewing in the browser and on mobile devices
- ePb
  For reading as an e-book on an iPad and other e-book readers
- Electronic braille
  BRF version for consumption on electronic braille displays
- Audio
  MP3 version for listening

By downloading an alternative format, you agree with the Terms of Use.

If this facility is not available or a student requires further assistance, they should contact their tutor. It could be that content has come from an alternative format (eg an e-book) and that could be made available. If the tutor is unable to help please contact the Blackboard team, who will aim to provide you with the document in an alternative format within 5 working days.

Email: blackboard.admin@yorkcollege.ac.uk
Phone: 01904 770299
Write: E-Learning Department
       York College
       Sim Balk Lane
       York
       YO23 2BB
Planet eStream
This is the College’s media server. Content on this platform includes:

- Recorded television
- Original video recorded in-house
- Images
- Audio files

Planet E-Stream, as a web interface, produce their own white paper regarding accessibility:

**Planet-eStream Accessibility White Paper**

For content uploaded by staff and students at York College, users may come across some of the following issues:

- Images with no alternative text.
- Recorded videos with no captions.

If there is a video on E-Stream that you need captioning, please contact:

**Email:** blackboard.admin@yorkcollege.ac.uk

**Telephone:** 01904 770299

**Write:** E-Learning Department (Accessibility)
York College
Sim Balk Lane
York
YO23 2BB
Reporting accessibility and unresolved issues when obtaining accessible documentation
If you have not received a response from the relevant team within 5 working days, please email accessibility@yorkcollege.ac.uk, who will do their best to action your query. You can expect a response from them within 5 working days.

How to complain about York College
If you have followed the process above and have still received either no reply or an unsatisfactory response, you can complain about the College by contacting the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), who are responsible for enforcing the accessibility regulations.

York College will strive to assist with your enquiry but, if you are not happy with how we respond to your complaint, contact the Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS).

Last update
This page was last updated on 19 December 2019.