Terms of Reference

The Further Higher Education Digital Accessibility Working Group (FHEDAWG)

This is a group that has been set up in response to the rollout of The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (henceforth, ‘The Public Sector Accessibility Regulations’) which are now law in the UK and implement the [EU Directive on the accessibility of public sector websites and mobile applications](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2016.327.01.0001.01.ENG).

Our aim is to develop shared resources to help Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) providers to adopt inclusive digital practices by meeting the requirements of the regulations and improve the experience of all stakeholders including staff and students.

The FHE DAWG will be led by practitioners in the FHE sector, working with sector organisations (e.g. Jisc), experts in relevant fields (e.g. digital accessibility, public policy, and public law), and student representatives (NUS).

The group builds on the [Accessible VLEs](http://bit.ly/2wVAS3O) report published by Policy Connect, and will also benefit from associated communications channels (e.g. [Jiscmail](http://bit.ly/2Mu5uQ0): digitalaccessibilityregulations) to coordinate sector efforts and limit the duplication of work by sharing good practice.

# Initial objectives for 18/19 academic year

## Objective one

1. Create a model digital accessibility statement template for Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) that can be used by any FHE.
	1. Consider similar statement templates for other relevant platforms widely used in colleges and universities.
	2. Identify common barriers and omissions in current accessibility statements.
	3. Draft model policy for maintaining an up-to-date and accurate accessibility statement and responding to student requests made via the statement.

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## Objective two

1. Collate guidance on creating content that meets the accessibility standards used by the regulations, e.g. checklists for lectures. (Where such resources already exist we will check them against the new standard rather than start completely afresh).
	1. examples of good guidance
	2. framework for what institutions should consider. For example, a checklist of the elements should be included in policies, training materials and a timeframe for implementation.

## Objective three

1. Provide good practice guidance on meeting the requirements of the regulators in key areas where the government’s official guidance is currently not detailed enough:
	1. The timetable for making different types of content accessible
	2. The types of learning materials and documents that are required to be accessible
	3. The kinds of third-party content and procurement professionals that are required to be accessible. Represent FHE obligations and concerns to suppliers in order to influence accessibility information available in procurement chains.
	4. Identify potential or perceived legal barriers such as copyright law and determine appropriate solutions to maximise accessibility.

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## Objective four

1. Liaise with government and regulators to help promote the group's outputs to the FHE sector, and encourage government and regulators to provide more detailed official guidance to support the sector. This will include participating in the Government Digital Service (GDS) research project on what further guidance is required by the public sector.

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