

# University of Kent Digital Accessibility

Ben Watson



# Steps



# It all began at the OPERA...

- The OPERA (Opportunity, Productivity, Engagement, Reducing barriers, Achievement) project
- Implementing accessibility initiatives to raise awareness of inclusive design and assistive technologies
- Shifting towards anticipatory reasonable adjustments and inclusive practice by design to tackle accessibility barriers at source

# Why anticipate students' needs?

- Equality Act, 2010 (EA)
- Changes to Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA)
- Public Sector Web Accessibility Regulation (2018)
  
- It's the right thing to do...

# The beginning...

- Wouldn't it be better if we just made things work for everyone from the start?

# Working in partnership with Jisc

- Enabling collaborative development of a practice-based model for inclusive information delivery applying Jisc theoretical approaches



# What is inclusive practice?

- Being inclusive is about offering services that are designed to work well for everyone

# How do you practice inclusively?

Three key vehicles to achieve inclusive learning:

- Individual reasonable adjustments
- Anticipatory reasonable adjustments
- Inclusive practice
- [Kent Inclusive Practices \(KIPs\)](#)



# Kent Inclusive Practices (KIPs) data

<b>Kent Individual adjustment</b>	<b>Number of Inclusive Learning Plans (ILPs) featuring adjustment</b>	<b>Percentage of ILPs</b>
Use of Enabling Equipment (Permitting lecture recording for personal use).	972	62.2%
Provision of Class Resources (Providing lecture outlines before class).	945	60.5%
Direct Book Lists (Prioritised reading lists).	757	48.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2674</b>	



# Kent Inclusive Practices (KIPs)

- Maximise electronic resources
- Make documents easy to navigate and understand
- Make presentations meaningful
- Provide alternative media but make it accessible
- Make assessments accessible
- Promote productivity tools

# Raising awareness of the potential for inclusive design and assistive technologies

- Quite early on we incorporated [Sensus Access](#) into our processes for information delivery to enable everyone at Kent
- As we explored new assistive technologies we made them available to everyone through our [productivity tools pages](#)



# Kent Digital Accessibility Working Group (KDAWG)

- If everyone does their little bit, the institutional impacts can be huge:
  - [Online accessibility literacy module \(in partnership with the University of Southampton\)](#)
  - [Digital accessibility eLearning module \(in partnership with Kent County Council\)](#)



# The Kent Digital Inclusion Alliance

- Developed Accessibility Statements that meet compliance:
  - [KCC Accessibility Statement](#)
  - [UoK Accessibility Statement](#)
    - [Technical accessibility statement](#)
    - [Known issues](#)
- Procurement guidelines
- [Contributed to guidance now published by GDS nationally](#)

# Kent Digital Accessibility Conference



# Kent's approach

- Extensive user testing (UX) sessions with students to review the new university website template
- Migrating websites to new accessible template – tested to be compliant with WCAG 2.1 AA
- [Training and Digital guidelines](#) developed
- Auditing framework with Kent IT Consultancy (KITC)
  - [School of Engineering and Digital Arts](#) [KITC audit feedback](#)
  - Dip test of web pages

# Student journey map – making the journey accessible





# Blackboard Ally: practicing what we preach

The screenshot displays the Blackboard Ally interface. At the top, a navigation bar shows 'Page 24 of 34' and a download icon. The main content area features a slide with the following text:

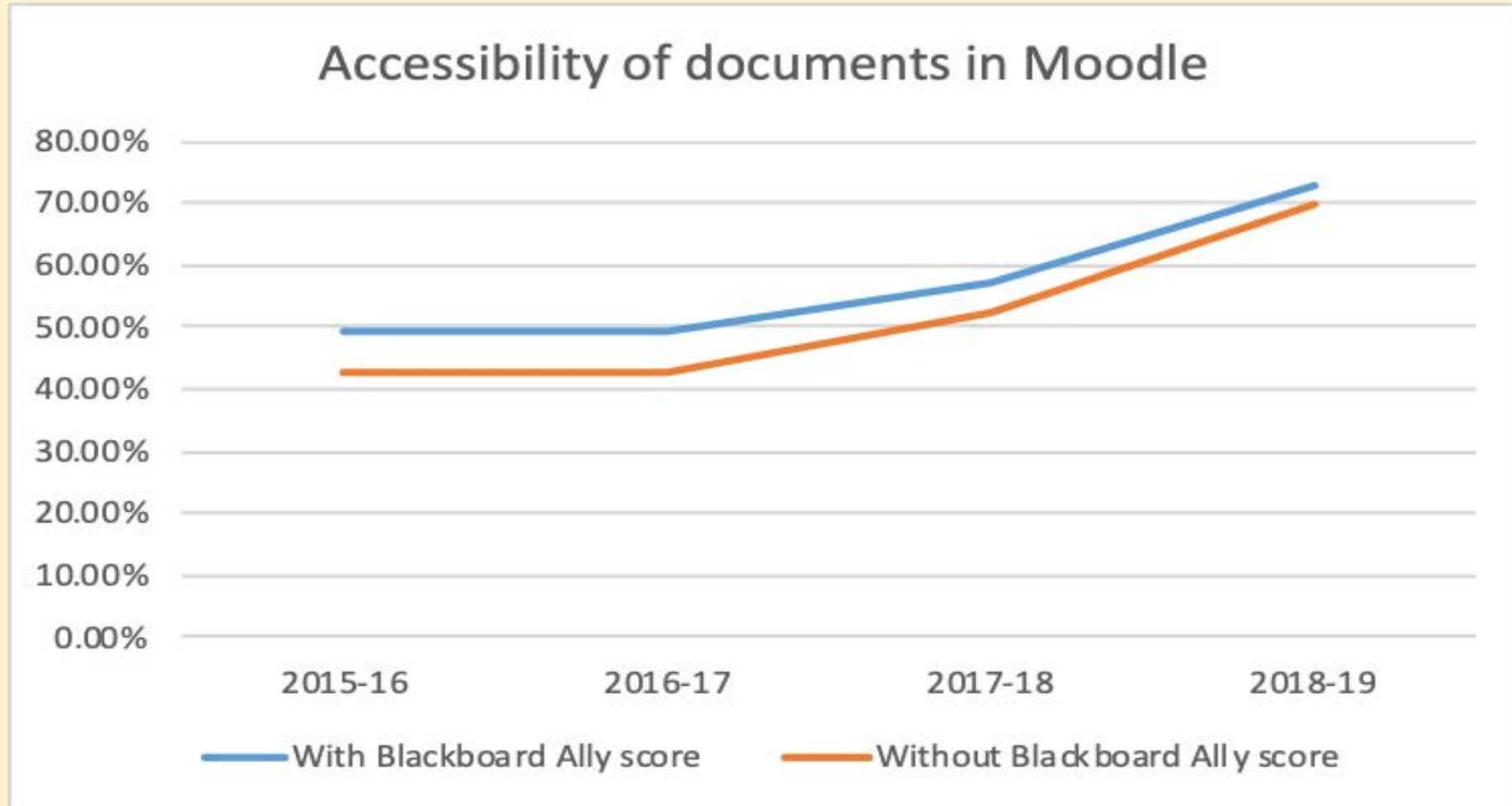
## Accessibility Statements

### UK Perspective

George Rhodes & Ben Watson

On the right side, there is a vertical list of 'Edit' buttons, each with a checkmark. Overlaid on the right is a dark-themed panel titled 'Accessibility score for: GRBWUCISAslides.pptx'. This panel contains a green gauge showing '100%' and the text 'Perfect! This presentation has a perfect accessibility score. Keep up the good work!'. A 'Close' button is located at the bottom right of the panel.

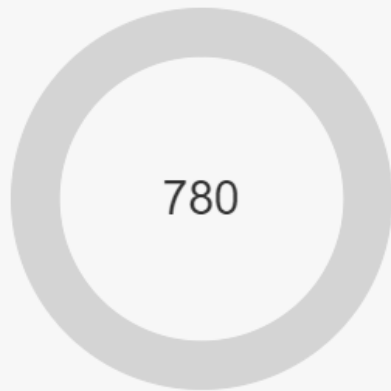
# Blackboard Ally: business as usual accessibility



# Current Moodle progress for this year

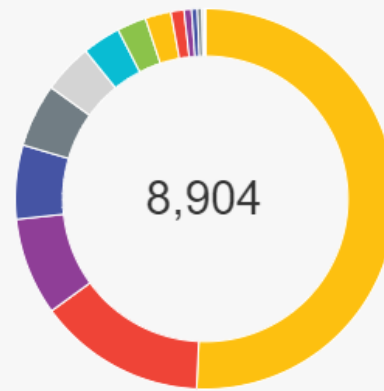
2019-20 ▾

Total courses



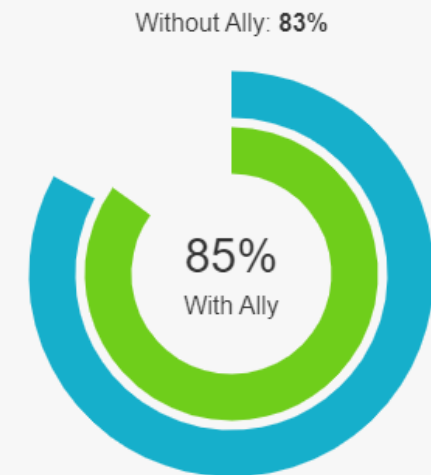
74% ↓

Total content created



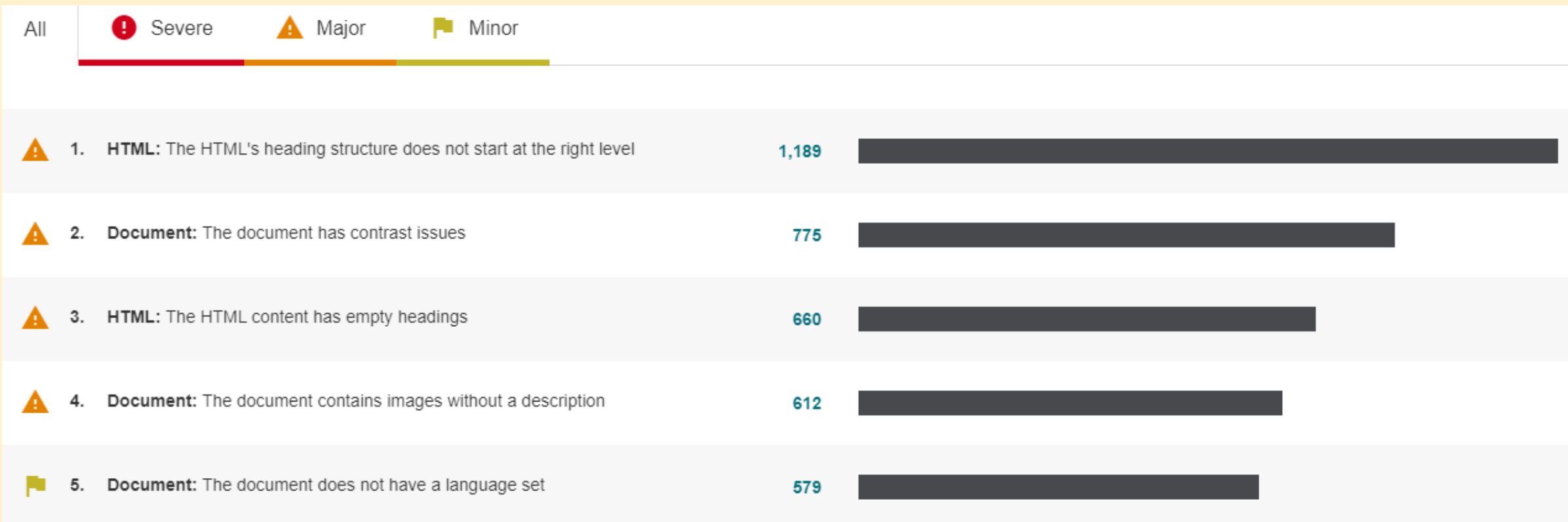
94% ↓

Overall accessibility score



14% ↑

# Top accessibility issues



# Why is this important?

A Kent student talks about why accessibility is so important

30:20 – 32:10

# Accessibility as graduate attribute

I was fortunate to be able to complete my quantitative research placement with OPERA and help to analyse the data from Blackboard Ally, and learn a lot more about web accessibility.

Many people have degrees, and many people have had part time work, volunteered their time and have work experience on their CV. It's time to find a new edge, and I truly believe accessibility is the new edge.

# Contact

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