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

Kent Individual adjustment	Number of Inclusive Learning Plans (ILPs) featuring adjustment	Percentage of ILPs
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%
Total	**2674**	

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](#)

tools to work and study
Smarter
kent.ac.uk/tools

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

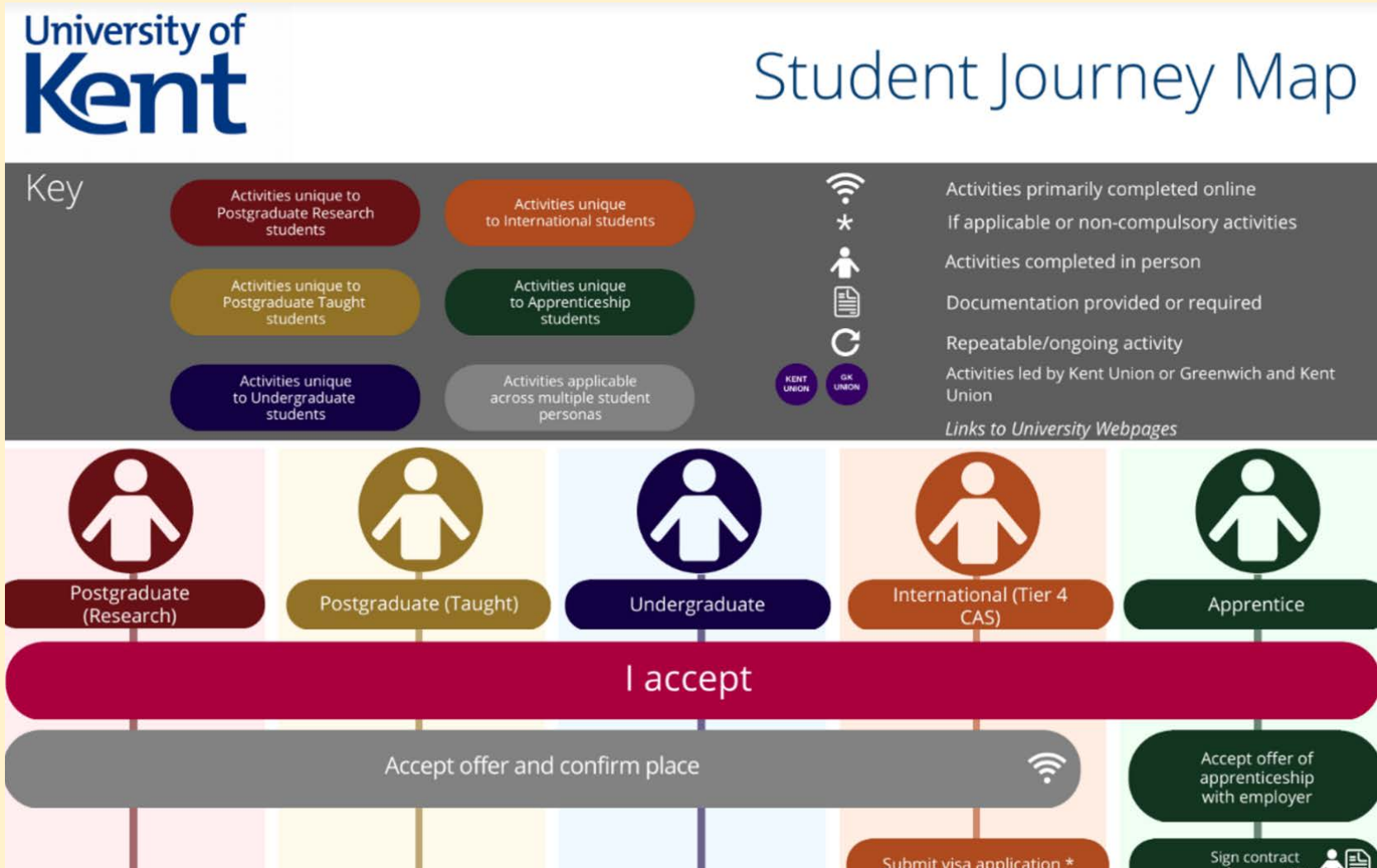 - [Contributed to guidance now published by GDS nationally](#)

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

Blackboard Ally: business as usual accessibility

Accessibility of documents in Moodle

With Blackboard Ally score
Without Blackboard Ally score
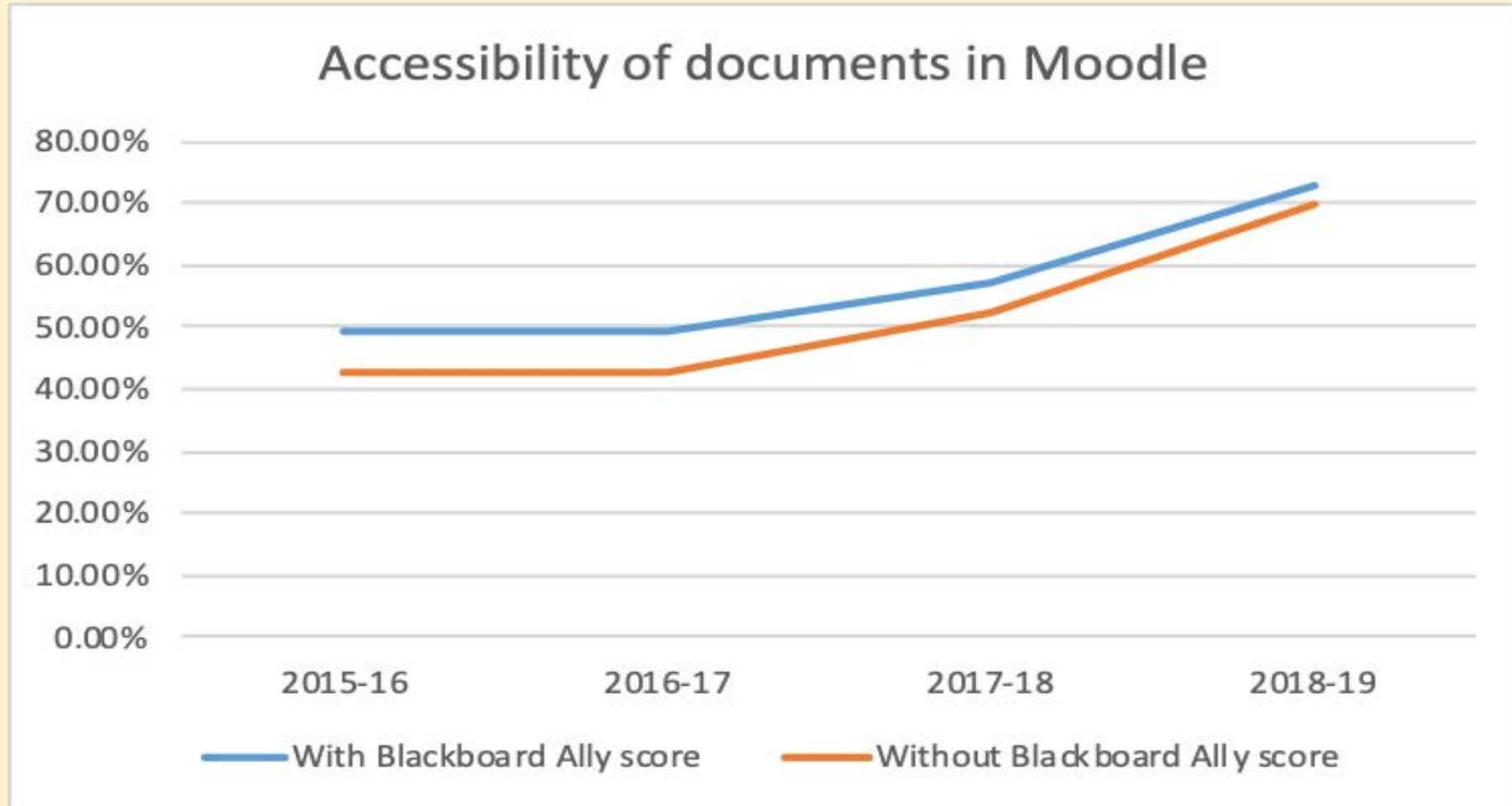
Current Moodle progress for this year

2019-20

Total courses

780
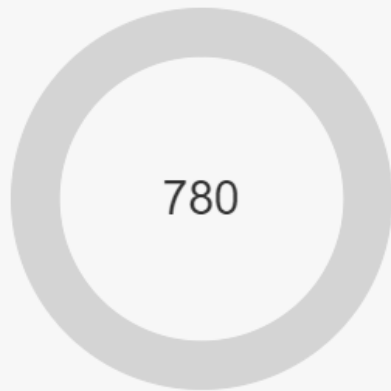
74% ↓

Total content created

8,904
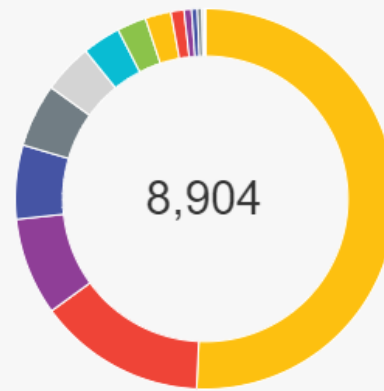
94% ↓

Overall accessibility score

Without Ally: **83%**

85%
With Ally
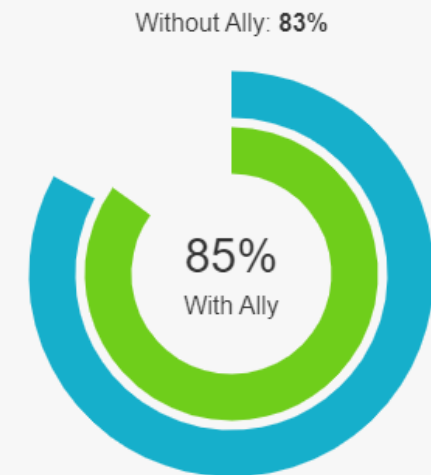
14% ↑

Top accessibility issues

All	ⓘ Severe	⚠ Major	⚑ Minor

⚠ 1. **HTML:** The HTML's heading structure does not start at the right level — 1,189

⚠ 2. **Document:** The document has contrast issues — 775

⚠ 3. **HTML:** The HTML content has empty headings — 660

⚠ 4. **Document:** The document contains images without a description — 612

⚑ 5. **Document:** The document does not have a language set — 579

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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Accessibility Statements UK Perspective

George Rhodes & Ben Watson

What do the regs say?

The accessibility statement must include—

- an explanation of those parts of the content that are not accessible and the reasons why;

- where appropriate, a description of any accessible alternatives provided;

- a description of, and a link to, a contact form which enables a person to—
    - notify the public sector body of any failure of its website or mobile application to comply with the accessibility requirement; and
    - request details of the information excluded under **regulation 4(2)** and **regulation 7(4)**; and

- a link to the enforcement procedure set out in Part 5 of these Regulations to which recourse may be had in the event of an unsatisfactory response to the notification or the request.

When and What?

- All **new websites created after the 23rd September 2018** or existing websites that have been "substantially revised" must have a statement by the **23rd September 2019**.

- All **existing websites** created before the 23rd September 2018 must have a statement by the **23rd September 2020**.

- Public facing websites, extranets and intranets are affected by the regulations and must have a statement.

UK Statements Research

Looking at the presence and quality of Accessibility Statements across the UK.

| Compliant | Partial Statement | | | No Statement | Total |
	Good Attempt	Partial	Poor Attempt		
23	39	109	258	172	601
		406			

Total per section percentages

| Compliant | Partial Statement | | | No Statement |
	Good Attempt	Partial	Poor Attempt	
3.8269551	6.489184692	18.13644	42.92845258	28.61896839
		67.55407654		

Total WebAIM stats

Avg per section

Compliant	Good Attempt	Partial	Poor Attempt	No Statement
133771.39	167677.72	199561.95	243873.16	241464.54

Avg Total WebAIM score

225989.35

University Results

Looking at the presence and quality of Accessibility Statements across the UK.

Compliant	Partial Statement			No Statement	Total
	Good Attempt	Partial	Poor Attempt		
6	5	21	56	43	131
	82				

Universities per section percentages

Compliant	Partial Statement			No Statement
	Good Attempt	Partial	Poor Attempt	
4.5801527	3.816793893	16.03053	42.7480916	32.82442748
	62.59541985			

University WebAIM stats

Avg per section

Compliant	Good Attempt	Partial	Poor Attempt	No Statement
207735.00	246123.20	282966.62	331514.36	367283.33

Avg University WebAIM score

326544.37

The Good

Your Statement must:

- Include specific legal wording stating the level of compliance against the new regulations

- Include contact and escalation / enforcement information

- Include known issues and accessibility alternatives

- Include information on how you have measured compliance

- What you are doing to improve accessibility

- Any exemptions and disproportionate burdens

GDS has a good [Sample Accessibility Statement](#) that contains the building blocks for creating your own statement.

The Bad

- Lack of "get in touch" information

- Lack of any mention of standards

- Lack of any guidance or assistance

- Mentioning WCAG 1.0 (1999)

- Mentions of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

- Difficulty in finding accessibility information, have to dig for it

- Heavily focussed on browser / OS tools eg; zoom, font size, colour changes.

Bad Examples

Example 1

"We're constantly working to make our website as accessible and usable as possible.

The website doesn't have a separate accessibility statement. This is because we've tried to design our website to be as accessible and usable as possible for every user.

Please get in touch if you have any trouble in using our website. This will help us to make improvements which benefit you and potentially everyone else."

Bad Examples 2

Example 2

"All modern browsers allow you to change colours and font sizes. We've tried to create a site which doesn't get in the way when you change these settings."

Example 3

"The team behind this web site hope that whoever needs to use it, can do so easily."

The Ugly

I am blind

If you are blind, we would highly recommend navigating our website using a screen reader for full accessibility and easier navigation. Test

If you do not have a screen reader, you can still navigate our website using our Browsealoud tool, which can read the contents of the webpage out to you. However, a friend/family/member of staff will need to help activate the option for you first.

On the Browsealoud toolbar, you have two options:

- Click on the "play selection" option to have the current page read out to you (Image)
- Click on the "MP3 maker" option to download an audio version of the page so you can take it away with you on an external storage device or download it to your computer to listen to it later. (Image)

English - UK (Default)

Find out more

You can find out more information about this research including the available maps, spreadsheets and our thought processes along with information about so much more as part of our Digital Accessibility Toolkit available at:

[LexDis Digital Accessibility Toolkit](#)