

# Accessibility Lab

*CONSULTANCY, DESIGN & TESTING FOR ACCESSIBLE WEBSITES AND E-LEARNING*

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## Removing the barriers to access

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 it is unlawful to provide a service that is not accessible to everybody. Organisations that fail to take accessibility seriously will face at best, naming and shaming – at worst, a costly legal bill!

### What you need to do:

- Test your websites and e-learning programmes for a variety of browsers and text-to-speech screenreaders (e.g. Jaws, Outspoken)
- Design to conform to **W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)** guidelines
- Set up processes and procedures to ensure and maintain accessibility

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## A unique track record in accessibility

Epic's Accessibility Lab is a complete service to help you achieve greater accessibility:

**Advice** – Our highly experienced consultants will help determine your organisation's strategy for accessibility – or advise on creative solutions to the challenges you face.

**Accessible design of websites and e-learning** – Epic's work on behalf of clients in government and education (where accessibility is often a priority) has been cited as a best practice benchmark of accessible design.

**Testing** – our dedicated facility, EpiCentre, has been testing for accessibility compliance since the late 1990's - longer than any other accessibility testing service.

## Accessibility requirements

Epic can advise on compliance with any of the following standards and guidelines:

- W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)
- Disabilities Discrimination Act, 1995 (DDA)
- Bobby
- Office of the e-envoy 'Guidelines for UK Government Websites'
- IMS 'accessibility for e-learning' guidelines
- RNIB guidelines

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## Accessibility testing at EpiCentre

The most popular of the standards and guidelines is the **W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)**, which has become the de facto standard for web accessibility.

Each guideline is broken down into a set of checkpoints, associated with a priority level (1,2 or 3). Our conformance test validates against each of these checkpoints, and gives a conformance rating:

- Conformance level A – all Priority 1 checkpoints are satisfied
- Conformance level AA – all Priority 1 and 2 checkpoints are satisfied
- Conformance level AAA – all Priority 1, 2 and 3 checkpoints are satisfied

In addition to testing against standards and guidelines, EpiCentre also performs the following tests as standard.

### **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY TOOLS**

A manual test is run through a screen reader (EpiCentre uses **Jaws** for PC and **Outspoken** for Mac). Screen readers are an assistive technology used by blind users and use an integrated voice synthesizer to output the content of a computer screen to audio.

### **ACCESSIBILITY AND BROWSER VALIDATION TEST USING BOBBY**

Bobby is an automated accessibility tool that navigates and analyzes web pages. The Bobby tool maps to W3C guidelines, identifying issues by priority level and providing hyperlinks to more detailed explanations. Bobby output reports tend to be too technical for most project managers, so we write a management summary and provide the detailed report for developers' use only (NB: Bobby's owners, Watchfire, stress that the program is not an exhaustive accessibility testing program and must be supported by more extensive testing techniques).

### **SYNTAX VALIDATION TEST - W3C HTML VALIDATION**

The HTML Validator tool shows how well your page conforms to the HTML standard - important because assistive technology products such as screen readers tend to be designed to interpret standardised language.

### **STYLE SHEET VALIDATION TEST - W3C CSS VALIDATION**

The CSS Validator will be used if the site uses Cascading Style Sheets. The tool provides advice on how to meet the CSS standard - again, assistive technology products tend to be designed around standardised language.

### **TEXT-ONLY BROWSER TESTS - THE LYNX BROWSER**

EpiCentre will test the site through the Lynx text-only web browser. Other tests are also available on request.

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## Free White Paper on Accessibility – *order today!*

'..Extremely well written... nice to see a company looking deeply at the issues.'

*Peter Rainger, accessibility specialist within TechDis (the UK's Technology and Disability service for HE and FE)*

Epic Group plc  
52 Old Steine  
Brighton BN1 1NH  
[www.epic.co.uk](http://www.epic.co.uk)

email: [marketing@epic.co.uk](mailto:marketing@epic.co.uk)  
tel: +44 (0)1273 728686  
fax: +44 (0)1273 821567

