Template for Institutional Web Accessibility Activities

Institutions who wish to document web accessibility efforts as part of continuous improvement for reaffirmation may benefit from a template to collect institutional data and information. This template provides a guide for doing so. This template can be used in conjunction with the [*Best Practices for Institution-Wide Web Accessibility Document*](http://ncdae.org/goals/accreditation/bestpractices.php) to help provide a structure for including web accessibility efforts in reaffirmation reports or quality improvement outlines.

Ensuring that your institution’s web presence is accessible to all, including those with disabilities, is not only the right thing to do; it also provides a number of benefits to your institution:

* It reflects institutional mission, leadership and values.
* It affects constituents at every level of your institution: including students, faculty and staff, prospective students and staff, and alumni and community members.
* It promotes sound fiscal policy: It is more efficient than after-the-fact fixes; assists in recruitment and retention of students and faculty with disabilities that affect computer and internet use; enhances collaborative possibilities in both the US and abroad; protects the institution from some legal complaints; supports public relations and development work and; satisfies the expectations of funding agencies that have begun to require accessible information communication for some grants and contracts.
* It adds value: It assists students for whom English is a second language; it supports multi-modal learning; it allows access by those using older equipment, slow modems, or in places where sound is not allowed and; it is likely to help your website continue to work as technologies evolve (forward compatible). Furthermore, accessible content tends to have a higher return on prominent search engines (e.g., Google) and is more robust. This means it should work more reliably across different browsers and devices, such as netbooks and mobile phones.
* **Finally, it can also provide a value-added benefit: the** [**foundation for web accessibility is present in the existing guidelines of all regional accreditation agencies’ standards, criteria and principles**](http://ncdae.org/goals/accreditation/mapping.php)**. Your institution’s accessibility work may be useful in helping make your case for compliance as you prepare for reaffirmation. You may even be able to** [**use your efforts as a component in quality improvement plans**](http://ncdae.org/blog/accredibility-using-your-web-accessibility-efforts-as-evidence-during-reaffirmation/)**.**

While each institution is different and you will have to look at your web accessibility efforts in terms of your own academic venue, you may find a multitude of opportunities to use your digital accessibility efforts as evidence of compliance for your regional accreditor or as part of your quality enhancement schemas.

These templates are provided to help you to organize and outline your evidence. Some examples of evidence are provided for each benchmark. However, they do not represent the full spectrum of evidence that may be appropriate for your institution.

Please feel free to use and adapt the templates to best suit your institutional needs. Depending upon the conventions of your accrediting agency, you may choose to highlight your web accessibility efforts as a whole, describing how each benchmark is applicable to the requirements of your agency; you may choose to embed specific benchmarks into the narrative of your evidence for a given principle, criteria or standard; you may choose to embed web accessibility into your quality improvement plans and use the templates to structure your impact or, you may adapt the template in any other way that makes sense for your venue. You can cut and paste the pieces into other reports, add additional columns and outlines, mix and match, or consolidate the information as you see fit.

**Please note**: The template format is the same for all benchmarks ***except*** the templates for *Indicator 2, Benchmarks B and C*: (An Accessibility Policy and A Written Accessibility Plan). These templates are set up to indicate the robustness of the documents based on important components that should be included in comprehensive policies or plans.

# Indicator #1: Institutional Vision and Leadership Commitment

## Benchmark A: The Commitment of Administrative Leadership

Evidence of Administrative Leadership can include:

* A posted statement of vision or commitment
* The creation and maintenance of a web accessibility task force or institution-wide accessibility group
* An official institutional policy on web accessibility
* An institution-wide accessibility action plan
* Resources that are available for web accessibility efforts
* Activities to promote the visibility, endorsement and communication of web accessibility efforts

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| ***This benchmark specifically supports requirements or plans by:*** |
| **Evidence** | **Description** | **Supporting Documentation** | **Additional Notes** |
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| ***Describe any evidence that is currently in development***  |

## Benchmark B: Relevant Stakeholder Participation

Evidence of Stakeholder Participation can include:

* The participation of individuals who represent the full range of stakeholders in institution-wide planning and continuous improvement
* Engagement by personnel in professional development that includes or is focused on web accessibility
* Faculty, staff and students who take responsibility for web accessibility outcomes within their purview
* Available systems for individuals to provide feedback on the implementation and outcomes of web accessibility

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# Indicator #2: Planning and Implementation

## Benchmark A: The Inclusion of Key Personnel

Evidence of the Inclusion of Key Personnel can include:

* Involvement of key accessibility personnel and those they represent in policy development
* Involvement of key accessibility personnel and stakeholder groups in the development of an institution-wide web accessibility plan
* Involvement of key accessibility personnel and stakeholders in the implementation of an institution-wide web accessibility plan

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| **Evidence** | **Description** | **Supporting Documentation** | **Additional Notes** |
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| ***Describe any evidence that is currently in development***  |

## Benchmark B: A Comprehensive Accessibility Policy

Accessibility Policy Checklist\*:

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| ***This benchmark specifically supports requirements or plans by:*** |
| **Policy Element** | **Yes/No** | **Key Points** | **Supporting Documentation** | **Additional Notes** |
| A summary statement of the policy  |  |  |  |  |
| Effective date(s)  |  |  |  |  |
| The scope of the policy  |  |  |  |  |
| A technical standard for Web Accessibility |  |  |  |  |
| A provision for procurement  |  |  |  |  |
| Consequences for non-conformance to the policy  |  |  |  |  |
| Mechanisms for ongoing review  |  |  |  |  |
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| ***Describe any work that is currently being done to develop a Comprehensive Policy***  |

\*Put any additional elements of the policy in the spaces provided

## Benchmark C: A Comprehensive Written Accessibility Plan

Written Accessibility Plan Checklist\*:

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| ***This benchmark specifically supports requirements or plans by:*** |
| **Plan Element** | **Yes/No** | **Key Points** | **Supporting Documentation** | **Additional Notes** |
| An executive summary of the plan or statement of concept |  |  |  |  |
| A provision for benchmarking and market evaluation  |  |  |  |  |
| A provision to gather baseline information  |  |  |  |  |
| Identification of existing institutional challenges and risks  |  |  |  |  |
| Identification of existing institutional priorities  |  |  |  |  |
| A process to communicate and market the accessibility plan to the campus and other communities  |  |  |  |  |
| A provision for budget items appropriate to accomplish the plan  |  |  |  |  |
| Metrics, milestones and measurable steps  |  |  |  |  |
| A comprehensive timeline  |  |  |  |  |
| Assignment of specific responsibilities  |  |  |  |  |
| An education plan for staff, faculty and students  |  |  |  |  |
| A plan to obtain and use feedback institution-wide  |  |  |  |  |
| A plan to monitor the progress of accessibility outcomes  |  |  |  |  |
| An explicit strategy to evaluate and revise the plan in an ongoing way  |  |  |  |  |
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| ***Describe any work that is currently being done to develop a Comprehensive Policy***  |

\*Put any additional elements of the plan in the spaces provided

##  Benchmark D: The Implementation of the Written Plan

Evidence of the Implementation of the Written Plan can include:

* Meeting minutes of the accessibility team/task force
* Baseline information on the Institution’s web accessibility
* An Institution-wide budget committed to sustaining web accessibility
* Campus communications and marketing of the accessibility plan.
* Data on training personnel
* Tracking and documentation of implementation progress
* Data and feedback from end users and those involved in implementation of the plan
* Indications of actions taken for nonconforming web content
* Web accessibility outcome data

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| ***This benchmark specifically supports requirements or plans by:*** |
| **Evidence** | **Description** | **Supporting Documentation** | **Additional Notes** |
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| ***Describe any evidence that is currently in development***  |

# Indicator #3: Resources and Support

## Benchmark A: A Focus on Personnel

* The presence of incentives and motivators for participation in accessibility efforts

* Data on retention rates for personnel key to accessibility implementation

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| **Evidence** | **Description** | **Supporting Documentation** | **Additional Notes** |
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| ***Describe any evidence that is currently in development***  |

## Benchmark B: Sufficient Time and Effort Allocated to Personnel

* Accessibility work that is recognized in job descriptions and role statements
* Personnel time and effort reports that recognize accessibility work
* The collection and use of feedback and data on the sufficiency of personnel allocation

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| **Evidence** | **Description** | **Supporting Documentation** | **Additional Notes** |
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## Benchmark C: A Budget Sufficient for Institution-Wide Efforts

* Feedback and data on the sufficiency of budget allocation
* Budget allocations and spending that is in line with the accessibility plan

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## Benchmark D: Training and Technical Support

* The training of faculty, staff and students on accessibility practices occurs in conjunction with their expected accessibility roles
* Technical assistance and support that is available to, and used by, faculty, staff and students
* The presence of the materials necessary to support training, technical assistance and implementation

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## Benchmark E: The Procurement, Development, and Use of Technologies That Will Result in Accessible Web Content

* Accessibility procurement language that is included in contracts and is consistent with the institutional standard
* Accessibility requirements are present for courses or course resources that originate from other institutions or organizations
* Products developed by the institution are required to meet the accessibility standard
* Products developed by the institution do meet or exceed the accessibility standard

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# Indicator #4: Assessment

## Benchmark A: The Evaluation of Implementation Progress

* Data or information on institutional progress within the implementation process
* Formal reports on the progress of the intended implementation plan
* Informal summaries or communications on the progress of the implementation plan

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| ***Describe any evidence that is currently in development***  |

## Benchmark B: Evaluation of Web Accessibility Outcomes

* Institutional web accessibility data
* Institutional reports that contain web accessibility data or summaries
* Reports from external evaluations of web accessibility outcomes
* Correspondence describing outcomes

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## Benchmark C: Assessment Results Are Used To Improve Institutional Accessibility

* Reports that reflect data-based recommendations for change
* Documentation that describes how data sources inform institutional efforts

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| ***Describe any evidence that is currently in development***  |