

Drupal Web Accessibility Checklist

Last reviewed and updated: July 22, 2025, by Julia Anderson

Seattle Colleges uses Drupal to manage website content. The platform is designed for accessibility and tested regularly by the web development team, and editors are responsible for maintaining content that is built and updated in an accessible way. This checklist supports content editors working on webpages using the Rich Text Editor.

Note: When working in Drupal, it is best to avoid using custom CSS, as this can bypass accessibility features (e.g. color contrast, readable fonts) and unintentionally create access barriers.

Content Language and Tone

- ☐ **Language use:** [Use plain language](#) that is clear and easy to understand. For example, instead of "utilize," use "use."
- ☐ **Active voice:** Write in an active voice to make sentences more direct and easier to understand. For example, "The team completed the project" instead of "The project was completed by the team."
- ☐ **Capital letters:** Avoid using all capital letters. For example, use "Important Notice" instead of "IMPORTANT NOTICE."
- ☐ **Consistent terminology:** Use the same terms, abbreviations, and capitalization throughout your webpages.
- ☐ **Abbreviations and acronyms:** Spell out abbreviations and acronyms on first use, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. For example, "World Health Organization (WHO)."
- ☐ **Jargon:** Replace technical terms with plain language or provide definitions. E.g., instead of saying, "The campaign leverages omnichannel strategies," you can say, "The campaign reaches customers through multiple platforms, like email, social media, and ads. This is also known as 'omnichannel' outreach."
- ☐ **Numbers:** Write out numbers one through nine and use numerals for 10 and above. For example, "three participants" and "15 students."

Content Structure

- ☐ **Title:** Provide clear and descriptive titles for your pages, announcements, and calendar events. By default, the title serves as Heading 1 for the page.
- ☐ **Rich Text Editor (RTE):** Use the built-in styling tools in the [Rich Text Editor](#) in Drupal to add, edit, and format content. These tools are set to automatically follow Seattle Colleges' [Web Design Standards](#).
- ☐ **Headings and styles:** Use built-in [headings in Drupal](#) to organize lengthy content. The page title is Heading 1 by default, so your content starts with Heading 2.
- ☐ **Lists:** Use [lists](#) to create a clear structure for information. To [make lists accessible](#) in Drupal, use the Rich Text Editor to create numbered lists for sequential items and bulleted lists for non-sequential items.
- ☐ **Alt text:** If you include images, charts, or other graphics on your webpage, add [alternative text](#) to describe the visual. Mark all non-relevant images and graphics as "decorative." [Learn how to add alt text in Drupal.](#)
- ☐ **Descriptive hyperlinks:** Use the Rich Text Editor in Drupal to create [descriptive text for links](#) that indicates the link's destination or purpose.
 - ☐ When linking to content, avoid generic phrases like "click here" or "read more," and instead use meaningful text. Ex: "Explore course resources."
 - ☐ If a link leads to a downloadable file, include the document type and approximate size so users know what to expect. Ex: "Download IT Accessibility Checklist (PDF, 1.4 MB)"
 - ☐ Tell the user if the link will open a new tab or window. Ex: "Visit Seattle Public Business Program Services (Opens in New Tab)"
- ☐ **Adjacent Links:** It is best practice to not have adjacent links navigating to the same destination. In this instance, elements should be combined into a single link, or one link should be removed.
- ☐ **Linked external content:** [Manually test the accessibility](#) of external linked content, unless the link is only used as a citation. [Expanded guidance available in the Digital Accessibility Training Hub.](#)

- ☐ **Tables:** [Review table accessibility best practices for Drupal](#) and include these items:
 - ☐ Use tables for data only, not for visual layout. Alternatively, present data in paragraphs with headers whenever possible.
 - ☐ Use simple structures and avoid merged or split cells.
 - ☐ Add table column and/or row headers when using tables in Drupal.
 - ☐ Create a table caption that provides a brief description of the table's purpose and contents.
- ☐ **Auto-playing audio:** Video with audio or audio-only files that auto-play and are longer than 3 seconds must be pausable OR have an independent volume control. Ensure there is a control to mute, pause, or disable the audio source. The control must be accessible via keyboard and screen-reader, and it also must be a button.
- ☐ **Captions:** Provide accurate (manually reviewed) captions for all multimedia and pre-recorded video content. [Audio descriptions](#) may also be needed.
- ☐ **Transcripts:** Provide accurate (manually reviewed) transcripts for pre-recorded video with audio and audio-only content. [Expanded format guidance available in the Digital Accessibility Training Hub.](#)
- ☐ **Attachments:** Provide accessible versions of all attachments that you add to your webpage. Use the accessibility checklists for reference with [Word documents](#) and [PowerPoint Presentations](#).

Fonts, Spacing, and Color

- ☐ **Font and typeface:** Use readable sans-serif [typefaces and fonts](#).
- ☐ **Font size:** Use the default font size defined by our website administrators. These are set to ensure readability across devices, browsers, and user settings.
- ☐ **White space:** Allow for breathing room or empty space to avoid visually crowded pages.
- ☐ **Color:** Do not use color as the only way to convey information.
- ☐ **Color contrast:** Use [high-contrast color schemes](#), and always check your contrast with a tool. A good option is [WebAim's Contrast Checker](#). Be cautious with highlighting text or using unique CSS.

Time, Dates, Months, and Years

- ☐ **Time format:** Use either the 24-hour clock or 12-hour format with AM and PM consistently.
- ☐ **Time AM/PM:** Capitalize AM and PM without punctuation. When all times listed are the same, do not repeat the use of AM and PM. Only use AM or PM once after the last time listed. For example, "The party is from 2:00 until 5:00 PM."
- ☐ **Date format:** Use a clear and consistent date format, such as "month day, year" or "day month year." For example, "January 15, 2024" or "15 January 2024." Avoid formats like "01/15/2024" that can be confusing due to different regional formats.
- ☐ **Time and date symbols:** Instead of dashes, use the words "to" or "through" or "and" or "until". For example, "The party is from 2:00 until 5:00 PM."
- ☐ **Names of days and months:** Write out days of the week and names of months fully. Screen readers are unpredictable as to whether they read abbreviations correctly. For example, "The party is Thursday, September 4, 2024, from 2:00 until 5:00 PM"

Checking for Accessibility

- ☐ **Drupal Accessibility Checker:** [Check accessibility while you work in Drupal.](#)

Learn More and Practice

- ☐ Learn more about Drupal resources and training from our [Web Development Team](#) or in the [Drupal Content Editor Tools](#).
- ☐ All Drupal Web Content Editors must complete an Accessible HTML in Drupal training. Request a spot at the next available session by emailing dist.accessibility@seattlecolleges.edu.
- ☐ Visit the [Seattle Colleges Digital Accessibility Training Hub](#) for accessibility best practices and skills training.