

# Accessibility across UK & IE Universities

## Introduction

Digital accessibility regulation is challenging to manage and is negatively impacting those for whom the rules should be assisting. Public sector bodies must deal with accessibility, against a timetable.

Now with a specific timeline in relation to the public sector achieving accessibility compliance for their websites, we have summarised our Q1 / 2020 results, reporting the position across the sector.

# In Summary.

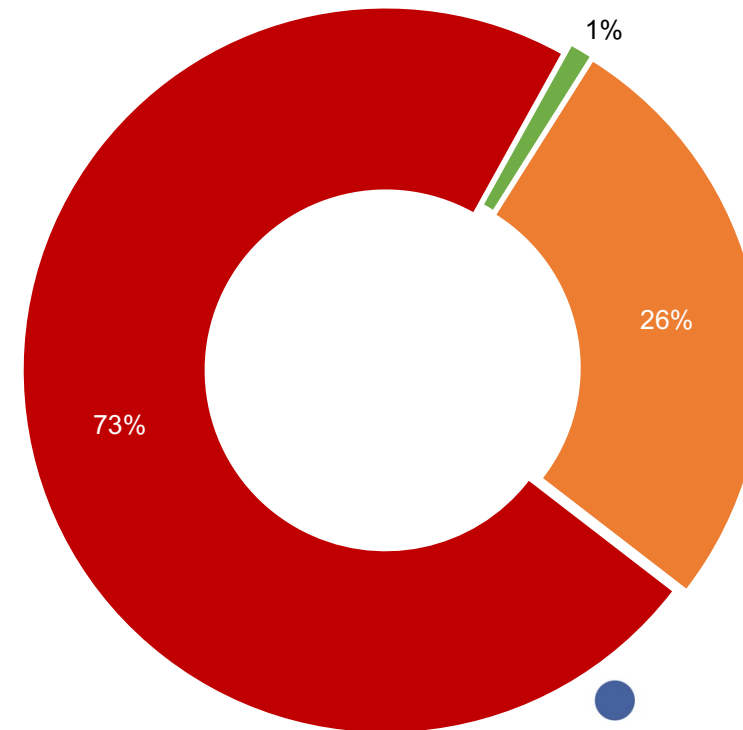
For the Sitemorse 2020 Q1 UK & IE Universities INDEX we assessed over 215 university websites for adherence to WCAG 2.1. The INDEX was compiled following some 220 million tests, checks and measures across nearly 675,000 URLs.

Comparing the 2020 Q1 to the 2019 Q4 results; 16 improved, 20 dropped, with the balance remaining the same.

The highest score for accessibility was 9 (out of 10), achieved by University of Derby with only one other university scoring 7 or higher.

Overall the top 10:

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1 University of Derby                | 6 University of Worcester                             |
| 2 Heriot-Watt University             | 7 Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) |
| 3 King's College London Maths School | 8 Birkbeck, University of London                      |
| 4 Easton College                     | 9 The Open University                                 |
| 5 Hull York Medical School           | 10 The Henley College                                 |



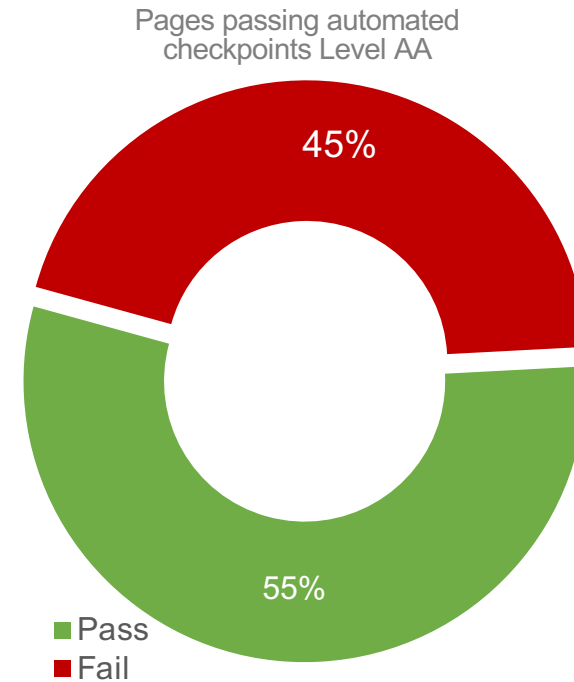
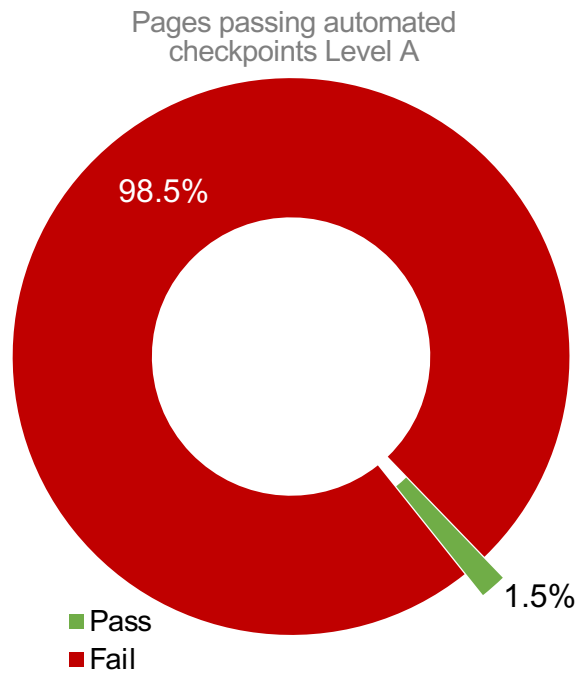
- Score 10 - 7
- Score 5 - 6
- Score 0 - 4

It is important to note that this score is for automated tests; there are still manual tests that need to be performed however, a score of 10 demonstrates a thorough understanding of what needs to be done and it is highly likely that the manual tests will pass too.

# Overall %

It's important to note that the INDEX covers the main website of each university. The law applies to all websites operated, directly or on behalf of the university.

- Pages passing accessibility level A: 1.5%
- Pages passing accessibility level AA: 55%



# What are the Regulations?

The EU Directive on the accessibility of public sector websites and mobile apps \*(Directive (EU) 2016/2102 using European standard EN 301 549 V1.1.2 (2015-04)), came into force for in the UK on 23 September 2018. The aim of the regulations is to ensure public sector websites and mobile apps can be used by as many people as possible.

The Directive lists 3 dates for compliance to be achieved:

- 22 September 2019
  - New public sector websites (*those published after 22 September 2018*)
- 22 September 2020
  - All other public sector websites
- 22 June 2021
  - Public sector mobile apps

## Clarification from the Cabinet Office:

“...any new content published after 23 September 2019 should be in an accessible format at the time of publishing.”

## Why digital accessibility is important – “imagine you are on a train”

Richard Morton, interim Head of Accessibility and Senior Accessibility Specialist at GDS)had this to say recently [Accessibility: why you should get on board](#)

# PDF documents.

Along with the compliance assessment of web pages, we also reviewed the PDF documents from each university's website.

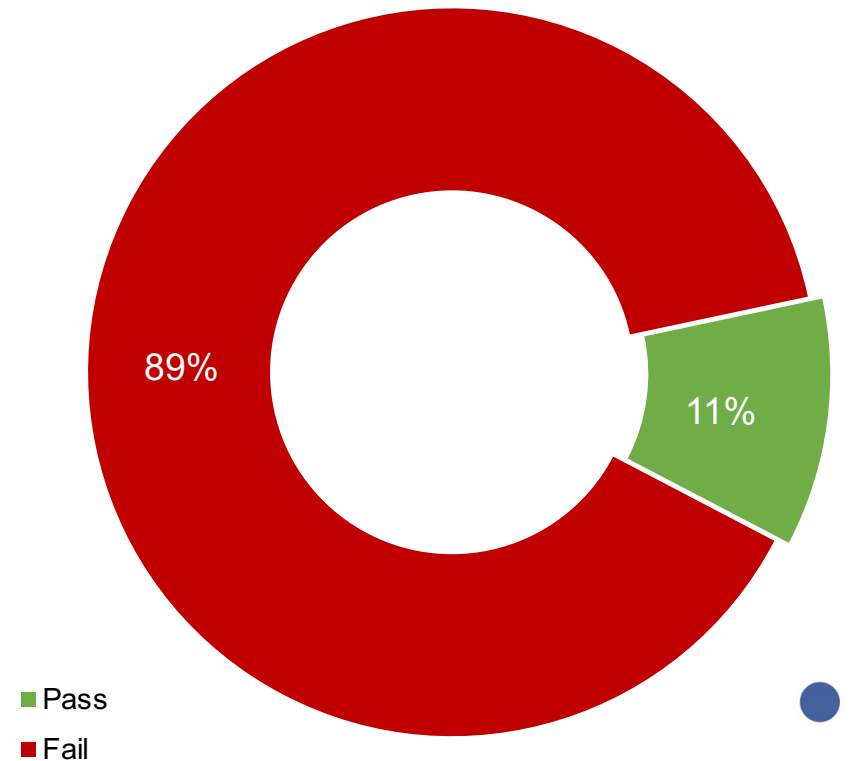
In total there were 1,879 PDF's assessed of which 11% passed all our WCAG accessibility checks.

Two of the most common actions required to improve levels of compliance;

- Content Tagging
- Document Titles

Ensuring accessible documents is an increasingly challenging task for public sector bodies, as it introduces new work procedures and requires extra attention during document creation.

The key to solving this challenge is supplying end users with tools that minimises the added workload and are easily adopted. We have found one such tool to be **accessibility**fixer by <sup>1</sup>dania software, which is covered later in this report.



<sup>1</sup> <http://www.daniasoftware.com>

# PDF management.

The \*regulation has allowances for historic PDF documents. The full text of the regulation can be viewed online, in relation to PDF's;

## Citation and commencement 1.—

(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

(2) These Regulations come into force on 23rd September 2018.

## Revocation 2.

The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018(1) are revoked.

## Application 4.—

(2) These Regulations do not apply to the following content of a website or mobile application of a public sector body—

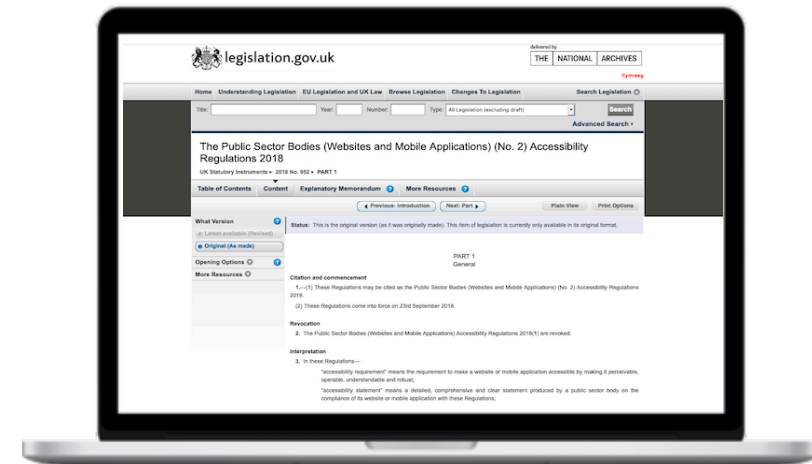
(a) office file formats published before 23rd September 2018, unless such content is needed for active administrative processes relating to the tasks performed by the public sector body;

(3) In this regulation—

(a) “archives” means a website or mobile application which—  
(i) only contains content that is not needed for active administrative processes; and  
(ii) is not updated or edited after 23rd September 2019;

.....

(d) “office file formats” means a document in a format that is not intended primarily for use on the web and that is included in web pages, such as Adobe Portable Document Format, Microsoft Office documents or their open-source equivalents.

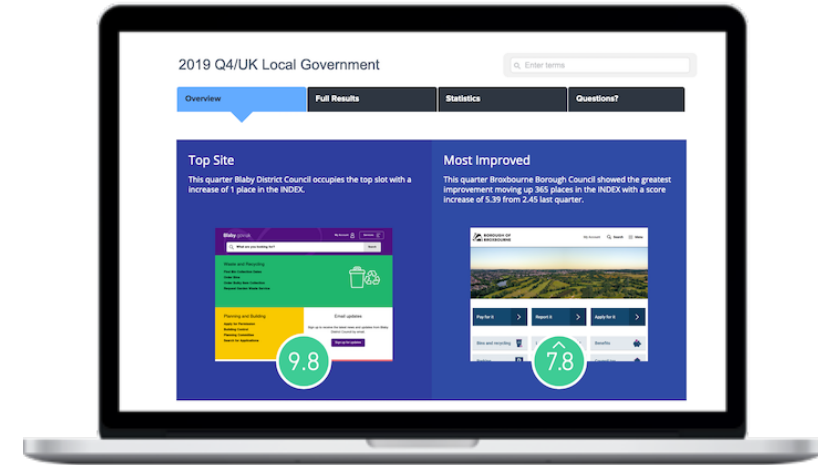
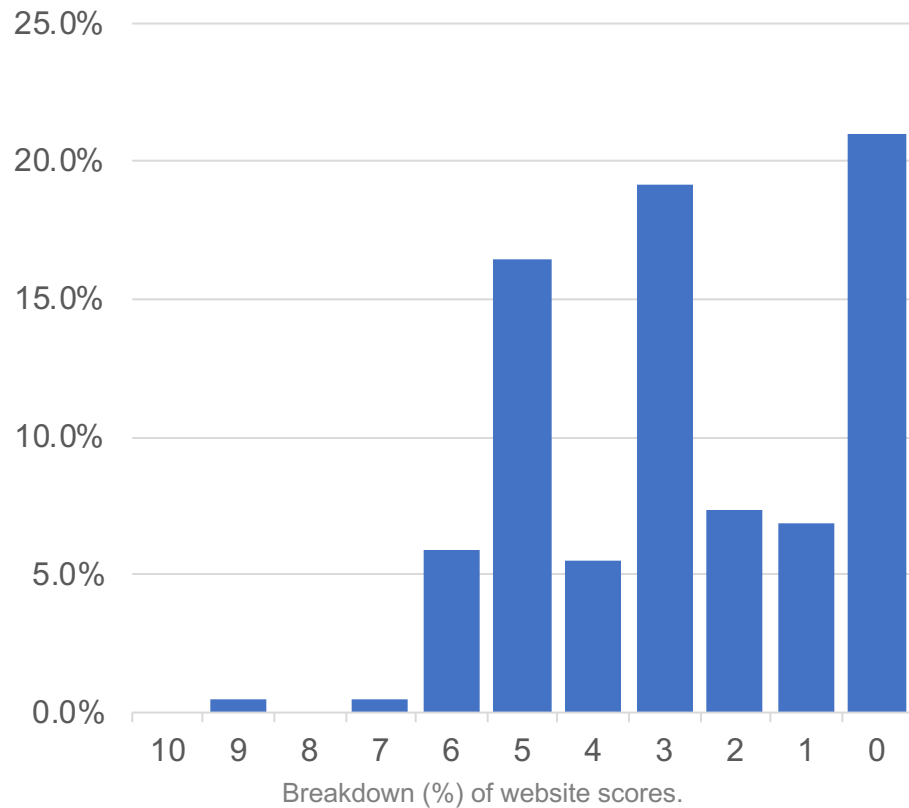


“standard” has the meaning set out in Article 2(1) of \*\*Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European standardisation

\*\*<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2012/1025/contents>

# Full Results – breakdown by university.

The score is based on assessing the first 125 pages of a website – those closest to the home (first) page of the website.



The full results can be seen at:

<https://sitemorse.com/index/uk-ie-universities/2020-q1>

Following sites were excluded;

- Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)
- Committee of University Chairs (CUC)
- BPP University
- University College Isle of Man

The detail of individual exclusions is available on request.

## UK & IE Universities Scoring 10 (out of 10) for Accessibility

### Scoring 9 (out of 10)

University of Derby

### Scoring 8 (out of 10)

### Scoring 7 (out of 10)

Heriot-Watt University

### Scoring 6 (out of 10)

King's College London Maths School

Easton College

Hull York Medical School

University of Worcester

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

Birkbeck, University of London

The Open University

The Henley College

University of Southampton

Unidays

Heythrop College

University of Brighton

The University of Manchester

University of Wales (Prifysgol Cymru)

Falmouth University

Regent's University London

Keele University

### Scoring 5 (out of 10)

Coventry University

Ashridge Business School

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Canterbury Christ Church University

Writtel University College

De Montfort University

Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE)

Newcastle University

University of Bolton

Glasgow Caledonian University

University of Bedfordshire

Manchester Metropolitan University

Teesside University

Leeds College of Art

University of Essex

New College of Humanities

University of Cambridge

The University of Buckingham

Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA)

Arden University (former Resource Development International)

Leeds Beckett University

The Northern School of Art

Association of Research Managers & Administrators (ARMA)

The Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE)



## UK & IE Universities Scoring 4 (out of 10) for Accessibility

London School of Economics and Political Science  
University of Birmingham  
Cass Business School

University of Bristol  
Associate of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)  
University of St Andrews

University of West London  
London Institute of Banking and Finance  
ifs School of Finance

## Scoring 3 (out of 10)

St George's, University of London  
University of Edinburgh  
HESA  
Royal Agricultural University  
Royal Northern College of Music  
Leeds College of Music  
University of Gloucestershire  
Anglia Ruskin University  
Norwich University of the Arts  
Royal Central School of Speech and Drama  
Central School of Speech and Drama  
University of Oxford  
Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance  
Queen Mary, University of London  
NUS  
British College of Osteopathic Medicine  
Brunel University London

Ravensbourne  
University College of Estate Management  
University of Northampton  
University of York  
Royal Holloway, University of London  
Cranfield University  
University of Reading  
Royal Veterinary College (University of London)  
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama  
Sheffield Hallam University  
University of the Highlands and Islands  
University of Dundee  
University of Nottingham  
Staffordshire University  
Edge Hill University  
Nazarene Theological College  
London School of Commerce

Glyndwr University (Prifysgol Glyndwr)  
Suffolk New College  
Cardiff Metropolitan University  
Bradford College  
Student Record Officers' Conference (SROC)  
Wilson Stuart University College Birmingham Partnership Trust  
Imperial College, London  
University of St Mark and St John, Plymouth  
University of Leeds  
York St John University  
Somerset College of Arts and Technology  
University of Chichester  
Richmond, The American International University in London  
Guildhall School of Music and Drama  
Liverpool Hope University  
University of Liverpool  
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

## Scoring 2 (out of 10)

University UK  
University for the Creative Arts  
JISC  
University of Central Lancashire

Loughborough University  
University of Exeter  
Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance  
AECC University College

The University of Salford  
Leeds Trinity University  
The Institute of Cancer Research  
Courtauld Institute of Art

## UK & IE Universities Scoring 1 (out of 10) for Accessibility

Coventry University  
Ashridge Business School  
University of Wales Trinity Saint David  
Canterbury Christ Church University  
Writtel University College  
De Montfort University  
Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE)  
Newcastle University

University of Bolton  
Glasgow Caledonian University  
University of Bedfordshire  
Manchester Metropolitan University  
Teesside University  
Leeds College of Art  
University of Essex  
New College of Humanities

University of Cambridge  
The University of Buckingham  
Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA)  
Arden University (former Resource Development International)  
Leeds Beckett University  
The Northern School of Art  
Association of Research Managers & Administrators (ARMA)  
The Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE)

## Scoring 0 (out of 10)

Manchester School of Architecture  
Leo Baeck College  
Swansea University (Prifysgol Abertawe)  
Royal College of Art  
University of Portsmouth  
Hartpury University  
European School of Osteopathy  
St Mary's University, Twickenham  
Bangor University (Prifysgol Bangor)  
Arts University Bournemouth  
University of Huddersfield  
University of Cumbria  
Aberystwyth University (Prifysgol Aberystwyth)  
University of Bradford  
Institute of Education, University of London  
Higher Education Strategic Planners Association (HESPA)  
University of Hull  
Cambridge Judge Business School  
Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen  
Association of Heads of University Administration (AHUA)  
University of East London

Durham University  
Russell Group  
University College of Osteopathy  
School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)  
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine  
London Business School  
University of Law  
University College London  
University of Westminster  
University of the West of Scotland  
University of Chester  
Kingston University  
Royal Academy of Music  
University of Strathclyde  
ALRA  
University of East Anglia  
London Metropolitan University  
University of Winchester  
University of the Arts, London  
University of Surrey  
University of Hertfordshire

Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh  
Northumbria University Newcastle  
South Essex College of Further & Higher Education  
Islamic College for Advanced Studies  
University of Leicester  
Queen's University Belfast  
British Universities Finance Directors Group (BUFDG)  
Liverpool John Moores University  
European School of Economics  
Royal College of Music  
FutureLearn  
Universities & Colleges Information Systems Association (UCISA)  
Academic Registrars Council (ARC)  
Buckinghamshire New University  
Universities Human Resources (UHR)  
Edinburgh Napier University  
The London College, UCK  
London School of Science and Technology  
Abertay University (former University of Abertay Dundee)  
City University London  
University of Wolverhampton

# More information?

Have a look at the results online: <https://sitemorse.com/index/uk-ie-universities/2020-q1>

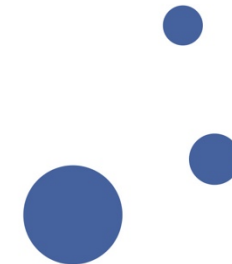
We have 2 webinars about the results:

- **18<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 10:30 am**
- **25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 2pm**

We also run 2 webinars, every Tuesday:

- The INDEX – a general introduction to the Sitemorse INDEX for universities
- Pragmatic Accessibility

<b>Webinars</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>
The INDEX	10:30am	4	3, 17, 31	14, 28
	2pm	11	10, 24	7, 21
Pragmatic Accessibility	2pm	4, 18	3, 17, 31	14, 28
	10am	11, 25	10, 24	7, 21



# Sitemorse

Sitemorse is a UK-registered privately-owned company, with no external investors – our shareholders are our staff. We provide Content Quality & Digital Governance automation to clients around the world.

Sitemorse was probably the first company to bring automation to the digital governance market (with our first services running nearly 15 years ago and our oldest current client joining us 13 years ago) along with being the first to introduce Data Science and Machine intelligence capabilities.

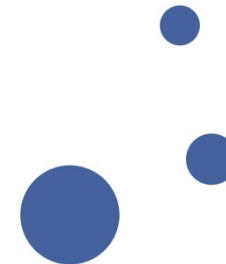
Most importantly we make compliance achievable for all with a proven 3 stage process – its principles being; understanding, prioritisation and continuous improvement.

For more information, visit [www.Sitemorse.com](http://www.Sitemorse.com)

# Sitemorse®



Join a webinar, request etc  
please email Adam Turner  
[aturner@Sitemorse.com](mailto:aturner@Sitemorse.com)



# danial software

danial software improves the quality of written communication with tools that frees end users of cumbersome tasks and eliminates error-prone manual processes.

## A digitalisation veteran

With more than 15 years of involvement in the digitalisation of the Danish public sector, danial software is an experienced supplier with unique insights into the inner workings of public organisations. With this knowledge, we are able to develop highly specialised tools to improve outbound communication and simplify work procedures in councils across UK and Scandinavia.

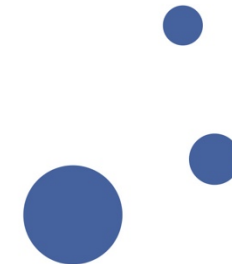
## Making accessibility easy

When the EU Web Accessibility Directive was announced, we were approached by a council wanting to collaborate on a tool to aid their document improvement. Our joint efforts resulted in **accessibility**fixer, a solution tailored to the specific needs of councils challenged with meeting the increased compliance requirements.

With **accessibility**fixer it is easy to create high quality, accessible documents and PDF files. The tool is plug and play and enables all users to make compliant documents directly from the Microsoft Office suite.



For more information;  
Kim Erbo Christensen  
[kec@daniasoftware.com](mailto:kec@daniasoftware.com)



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