

Accessibility in eLearning

Design Standards and QA Checklist (WCAG-aligned)

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Why this matters

Accessible courses are a legal expectation, an ethical baseline, and simply better design. In healthcare and frontline settings the audience is wide and varied, so I design every course to be usable by people who rely on screen readers, keyboards, or captions. These standards align with WCAG 2.1 AA.

Design principles

- **Perceivable.** Alt text on meaningful images, captions and a transcript for audio and video, sufficient color contrast, and information never conveyed by color alone.
- **Operable.** Everything works by keyboard, focus order is logical, interactive targets are large enough, and there are no timing traps.
- **Understandable.** Plain language, consistent navigation, and clear instructions and feedback.
- **Robust.** Built to standards so the course works reliably with assistive technology and across devices.

In the authoring tools

Storyline and Rise provide accessibility features such as alt text, focus order controls, closed captioning, accessible text, and an accessibility checker. The author is responsible for the parts the tool cannot judge, so I write accurate captions and meaningful alt text myself and verify them, rather than trusting defaults.

QA checklist (run on every course)

- Meaningful images have accurate alt text; decorative images are hidden from assistive technology.
- Audio and video have synchronized captions and a transcript.
- Color contrast meets AA, and no instruction or feedback depends on color alone.
- Every interactive element is reachable and operable by keyboard, with a visible focus indicator.
- Focus order on each slide follows the reading order.
- Instructions, feedback, and results are available as text a screen reader can announce.
- The course is tested with a keyboard, and where possible with a screen reader, on desktop and mobile.
- The accessibility checker is run and all flags are resolved.