

FREE RESOURCE — COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

Accessibility Compliance Checklist

Score your website against WCAG 2.2 Level AA across the four POUR principles — Perceivable, Operable, Understandable and Robust. Identify the barriers that exclude disabled users, expose your organisation to UK Equality Act 2010 claims, and damage your search visibility.

4

POUR
PRINCIPLES

WCAG 2.2 AA

28

AUDIT ITEMS
TO CHECK

EQUALITY ACT 2010

/10

SCORE EACH
SECTION

SCREEN READERS

Fillable

TICK & TYPE
IN ANY VIEWER

KEYBOARD & FOCUS

PREPARED FOR

Cloudswitched Knowledge Library
Cloudswitched Ltd.

PREPARED BY

VERSION

2026 Edition

FORMAT

Interactive PDF

00

How to use this checklist

Work through the four POUR sections — **Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, Robust** — with whoever owns your website. Tick every checkpoint that is **fully in place** on the page or template being tested, not partially and not on the backlog. Then award each section a score out of 10 based on how many checkpoints you can confidently tick.

A score **below 6 in any section** indicates accessibility barriers that put you at risk under the **UK Equality Act 2010** and exclude disabled users from your service. Use the action items page at the back to capture your top three priorities. This is an **interactive PDF** — tick the boxes and type your scores, severities and notes directly in any modern PDF viewer.

WHY ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS

One in five UK adults has a disability. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on organisations to make reasonable adjustments — including accessible websites. Beyond compliance, accessible design improves SEO, conversion, and usability for every user, including those on mobile networks, in bright sunlight, or using voice control.

SCORING GUIDANCE

Award one point per checkpoint where you have direct evidence — a screen reader pass, an axe DevTools report, a contrast ratio screenshot, a keyboard-only walkthrough video. Half measures do not score. Mark a severity for every failed item (H/M/L) so the remediation queue can be prioritised in the summary table on page 7.

Test record

Fill in the page, date, tester and tools used so each completed checklist is traceable. Re-run on every significant template change and on a rolling quarterly audit cycle.

PAGE URL TESTED

TEST DATE

TESTER NAME & ROLE

TOOL(S) USED

The four POUR principles

- **01 Perceivable** — alt text, captions, transcripts, contrast, resize, text spacing.
- **02 Operable** — keyboard access, focus indicator, skip links, descriptive titles, touch targets.
- **03 Understandable** — lang attribute, labelled inputs, helpful error messages, consistent navigation.
- **04 Robust** — valid HTML, ARIA, custom components, status messages, semantic markup.

01

Perceivable

Information and interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive — with eyes, ears, or assistive technology. Tick a checkpoint only when the page being tested actually meets the WCAG 2.2 Level AA success criterion. Mark a severity (H/M/L) for every item that fails.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------|
| ☐ | All images have alt text that describes the content or function — decorative images use empty alt (alt=""). | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | Video content has captions — closed captions for pre-recorded video, live captions for live streams. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | Audio content has transcripts available, with speaker labels and meaningful non-speech information. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | Colour is not the sole means of conveying information — error states use icons + text + colour. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | Text contrast ratio is at least 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text (<i>18px+ or 14px+ bold</i>). | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | Content can be resized to 200% without loss of content or functionality on any supported viewport. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | Text spacing can be adjusted (line height, letter spacing, word spacing) without breaking the layout. | SEV _____ |

QUICK CONTRAST CHECK

Run the page through axe DevTools or Lighthouse and screenshot every contrast failure. A grey "subtle" label on a white background is the most common AA failure on UK marketing sites — aim for #595959 or darker against pure white.

SECTION 01 SCORE _____ / 10

Aim for 8+. Below 6 = perceivability barriers.

02

Operable

Interface components and navigation must be operable by every user — mouse, keyboard, touch, voice, switch device. Test each interaction with the keyboard alone first, then with a screen reader, then on touch. A control that only works with a precise mouse hover is a barrier.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------|
| ☐ | All functionality is accessible via keyboard alone (Tab, Shift+Tab, Enter, Space, Arrow keys, Escape). | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | A visible keyboard focus indicator is present on every interactive element (<i>do not remove the default outline</i>). | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | Users can skip navigation with a "Skip to main content" link as the first focusable element. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | No keyboard traps exist — users can always navigate away from modals, carousels and embedded players. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | Pages have descriptive, unique titles that identify the page purpose (<i>used by tabs and screen readers</i>). | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | Link text is descriptive — not "click here" or "read more" without surrounding context. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | No content flashes more than three times per second — seizure risk for photosensitive users. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ | Touch targets are at least 44×44 CSS pixels on mobile devices, with adequate spacing between adjacent targets. | SEV _____ |

SECTION 02 SCORE _____ / 10

Aim for 8+. Below 6 = operability barriers.

03

Understandable

Information and the operation of the user interface must be understandable — plain language, predictable navigation, helpful error recovery. The single biggest understanding failure on UK forms is requiring users to guess what a red border around a field actually means.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| ☐ The page language is declared in the HTML lang attribute (<i>e.g. lang="en-GB"</i>). | SEV _____ |
| ☐ Form labels are associated with their input fields using the for/id attribute pair — placeholders are not labels. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ Error messages clearly identify the field that failed and describe the error in text. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ Required fields are identified before submission (<i>not communicated by colour alone</i>). | SEV _____ |
| ☐ Form validation provides clear, helpful messages with concrete suggestions for correction. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ Navigation is consistent across all pages — same order, same location, same labels. | SEV _____ |
| ☐ Instructions do not rely solely on shape, size, visual location, colour, or sound (<i>"press the green button"</i>). | SEV _____ |

WATCH OUT FOR

Placeholder-only forms — the placeholder disappears the moment the user starts typing, leaving someone using a magnifier or voice control with no idea which field they are in. Always pair every input with a visible, programmatically-associated <label>.

SECTION 03 SCORE _____ / 10

Aim for 8+. Below 6 = comprehension barriers.

04

Robust

Content must be robust enough to be reliably interpreted by a wide variety of user agents and assistive technologies — today and as those technologies evolve. Pair valid, semantic HTML with appropriate ARIA only where native semantics are insufficient.

- ☐ HTML **validates** without significant errors (*W3C validator — unique IDs, valid nesting, closed tags*). SEV _____
- ☐ All interactive elements have **appropriate ARIA roles, states and properties** when native HTML cannot express them. SEV _____
- ☐ **Custom components** (dropdowns, modals, tabs, comboboxes) follow the ARIA Authoring Practices patterns. SEV _____
- ☐ **Status messages** are announced to screen readers using aria-live regions (*polite for hints, assertive for errors*). SEV _____
- ☐ The site works with **screen readers** — NVDA on Windows, VoiceOver on Mac/iOS, TalkBack on Android. SEV _____
- ☐ **Semantic HTML** is used — headings (h1–h6), nav, main, aside, footer, lists and tables instead of styled divs. SEV _____

THE GOLDEN RULE

If a native HTML element does the job — <button>, <a>, <label>, <select> — use it. The first rule of ARIA is "do not use ARIA". Bespoke divs with aria-role bolted on are the most common source of screen-reader bugs.

SECTION 04 SCORE _____ / 10

Aim for 8+. Below 6 = assistive-tech risk.



Score summary & sign-off

Transfer the score for each WCAG principle into the table and set a severity for the gap. Translate the total into a risk band, then commit to the top three priority actions on the next page.

#	WCAG PRINCIPLE	SCORE / 10	SEVERITY
01	Perceivable	_____ / 10	_____
02	Operable	_____ / 10	_____
03	Understandable	_____ / 10	_____
04	Robust	_____ / 10	_____
Σ	TOTAL SCORE	_____ / 40	—

Score interpretation

32–40 **Excellent.** Strong WCAG 2.2 AA conformance. Maintain with quarterly re-tests and template reviews.

24–31 **Good foundation, gaps exist.** Address any principle scoring below 6 with owners and deadlines before next release.

Below 24 **Significant accessibility risk.** Seek a specialist accessibility audit and a remediation plan before further marketing spend.

EQUALITY ACT 2010 REMINDER

UK organisations have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people, including making digital services accessible. Document this checklist as part of your audit trail and review on every significant template or content change.



Priority actions & sign-off

Commit to a small number of next steps and sign the page off — the goal is one page of decisions, not a wish list. Re-test the same page URL after each remediation cycle and compare scores side by side.

Top 3 priority actions

01

02

03

Additional notes

AUDIT COMPLETED BY

DATE

NEXT REVIEW DUE

Need an accessibility audit?

Cloudswitched runs full WCAG 2.2 AA audits and remediation for UK businesses — from contrast and keyboard fixes to ARIA-correct custom components and screen-reader certification.

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