brightspace™
by D2L

Accessibility

A partner in the future of education

It's about equipping a generation of inventors, dreamers, and creators to tackle the great challenges and opportunities of the future. We partner with our clients to bring a shared vision to life—one focused on improving the way the world learns.

Our commitment to accessibility is reflected in the ways that we...

Collaborate with clients, learners and instructors with disabilities, and community interest groups to offer the highest standards of accessible design.

Build these principles into our internal culture and design processes so that accessibility standards are considered a vital aspect in measuring the success of new implementations.

Report our achievements openly and in detail.

"D2L's attention to accessibility is an organization-wide mandate that we consider to be a critical element in all our research and development efforts. We are committed to ensuring that we are the industry leader in this very important field."
John Baker | President and CEO, D2L

Client collaboration

Our clients guide our development efforts by actively contributing. They help us identify accessibility issues, prioritize and plan projects, organize accessibility testing, and review our final designs. Their perspectives provide invaluable insight into the real needs of our users and the objectives of the wider educational community.

"I'm pleased with the fact that D2L is supportive of assistive technologies. Their product has even won awards, one of the reasons that Brightspace was selected by our evaluation team."
Director of Disability Services, College of Engineering | University of Colorado at Boulder

User testing

We regularly test our products by seeking input from individuals with disabilities. These sessions help us understand the problems they encounter and lead to design solutions that would not have been found through accessibility checkers alone.

"Our D2L Accessibility Interest Group has members from more than a dozen institutions of higher education. For the past four years, the group has met regularly with developers and accessibility specialists at D2L to discuss and review accessibility improvements. It is a very gratifying collaboration, and one that I think is virtually unique for a commercial company in the LMS space. It has been rewarding to watch our conversations, testing and advice get realized in tangible accessibility improvements that are honestly reported. The D2L VPAT is a living document for reporting these achievements concisely, but with a level of detail and honesty that is truly useful to |the customer."
Director | The Ohio State University

Community partnerships

Interest groups, such as the National Federation of the Blind, are ambassadors for change who offer an opportunity for organizations to take advantage of their deep, collective knowledge. D2L is appreciative of the chance to learn from such groups. Our work with the National Federation of the Blind is an example of how open communication and responsiveness result in better design.

"Year after year, D2L continues to demonstrate the importance they place on supporting equal access to education. For blind students to succeed in the modern education system, they must have access to the same technology and resources as their sighted peers. D2L's active and passionate participation in our nonvisual certification program shows their commitment to integrating accessibility within their core values and practices."
Dr. Marc Maurer | President National Federation of the Blind

Building accessibility into our culture and processes

INTERNAL EXPERTISE

An organization's commitment to accessibility can be measured by the steps it takes to ensure solutions remain accessible as new technologies and designs are implemented. D2L focuses on building a strong base of internal accessibility knowledge so that accessibility never becomes an afterthought or vague promise. We do this by:

- Making accessibility a core responsibility of all design and development teams, and not just a handful of internal or external experts

- Publishing clear guidelines, best practices, and test cases related to accessibility

- Ensuring all staff are aware of accessibility initiatives and how to communicate accessibility concerns and requests back to our design and development teams

CENTRAL PLATFORM

One of the key ways we integrate accessibility into our design and development processes is through our development platform. We build all of our core products and tools off a common architecture to ensure that they are scalable, extensible, and reliable. From an accessibility perspective, this makes it easier to:

- Consistently and efficiently apply best practices across our product suite

- Perform complex validation against accessibility standards

- Incorporate client feedback quickly and consistently across multiple tools

COMMITMENT TO RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

D2L is committed to developing tools that can improve teaching and learning opportunities globally. Significant effort is spent on research and development, including following global accessibility standards such as those produced by the W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative. Examples include:

- Early adoption of ARIA markup

- Keyboard-based designs to compliment Web 2.0 technologies, such as drag-and-drop

Reporting and measuring our successes

It is important that customers have the detailed information they need to accurately evaluate product accessibility. At D2L, we openly report our compliance with and exceptions to section 508 of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 so that decision makers and content creators have the information they need to work effectively with their instructors, facilitators, and learners.

VISIT OUR CORPORATE WEBSITE TO FIND:

- A Web Content Accessibility Checklist (WCAG 2.0) documents explaining our compliance and current exceptions with the W3C's international accessibility standards

- A Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) explaining our compliance and current exceptions with Section 508 of the United States Rehabilitation Act

- Resources for instructors who want guidance on creating accessible content within a Learning Management System

- Help materials for learners and instructors with disabilities

- Information on our client-led D2L Accessibility Interest Group

http://www.brightspace.com/about /accessibility/

"We believe that an accessible Virtual Learning Environment is an integral part of our overall eLearning strategy. Accessible eLearning should be normalized. With Brightspace we have been able to more fully fulfill our teaching and learning approach so that it is main stream and contributes to an enriched and innovative learning experience for all students."
Director of Libraries and Knowledge Resources | Nottingham Trent University
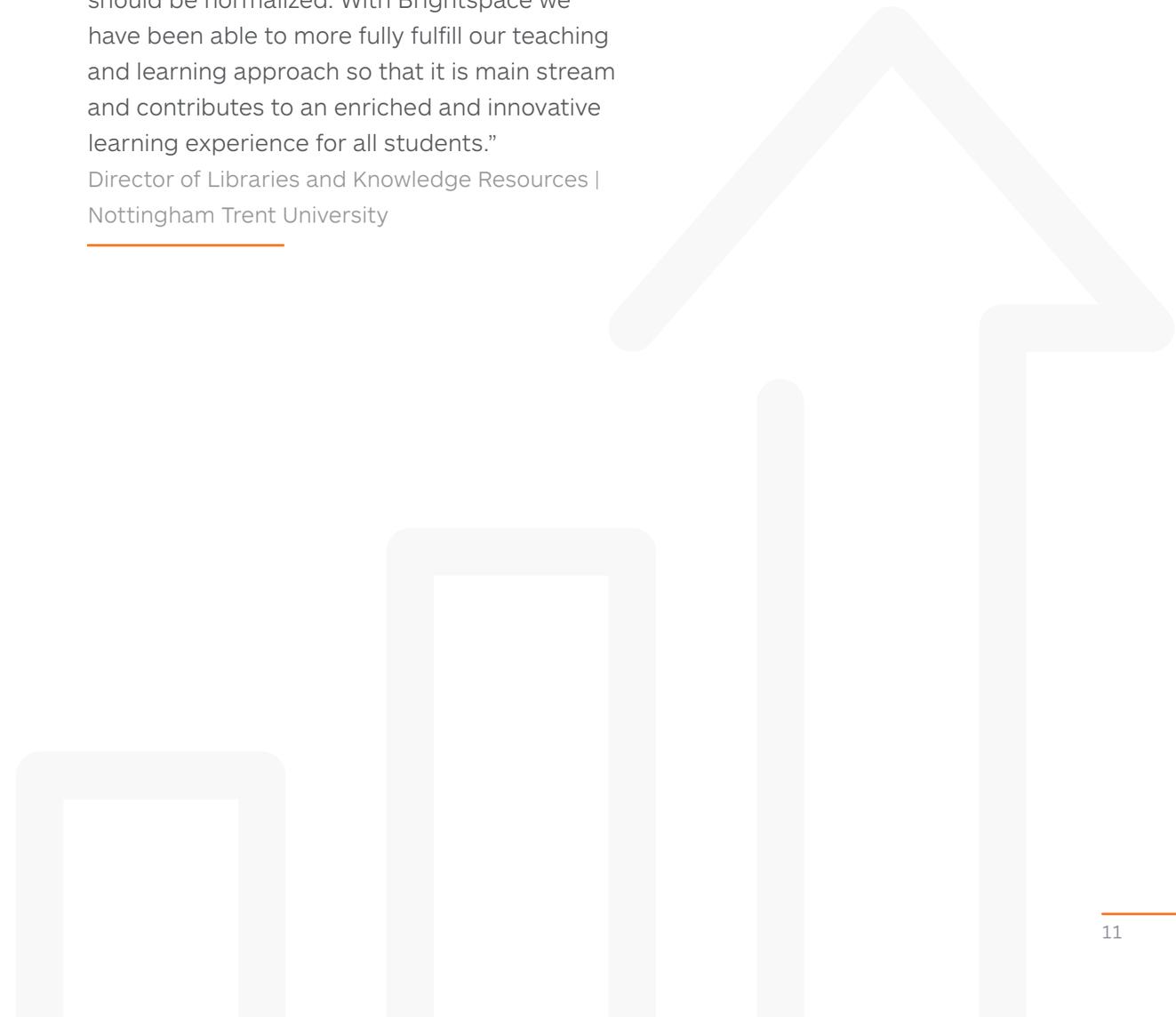
Key accessibility navigation

KEYBOARD-ONLY NAVIGATION

- Logical tab order and visible tab stops

- Ability to simplify page layouts and collapse secondary content

- Full keyboard accessibility, including our HTML Editor and Web 2.0 tools, such as drag-and-drop

SCREEN MAGNIFICATION, ZOOMING, AND COLOR CONTRAST TECHNOLOGIES

- Standard page design makes it easy to find similar functionality across tools

- Support for browser and assistive technology scaling (zooming), magnifying, and contrast options

- System information is not communicated by color alone

- Built-in preferences to adjust font size and style

SCREEN READERS

- Focus on standards-compliant designs to improve interoperability with assistive technologies

- Consistent and unique headings, links, buttons, and image descriptions

- Table row headings, column headings, and summaries

- Descriptive form field labels, including field sets

- Good indication of context changes, including new windows, expanded or collapsed content, and other dynamic page changes

- Wide adoption of ARIA landmarks and alerts

- Error messaging allows users to quickly find and correct issues

OTHER FEATURES

- Learner and course participant pages focus on lower, secondary, or earlier reading level

- Ability to accommodate different learning needs and time limits through special access and release conditions

- Screen reader-accessible spell checking

- Built-in prompts to add text alternatives

- Ability to author equations that can be read with assistive technologies

- Built-in color contrast checker

About D2L

A global leader in EdTech, D2L is the creator of Brightspace, the world's first integrated learning platform. The company partners with thought-leading organizations to improve learning through data-driven technology that helps deliver a personalized experience to every learner, regardless of geography or ability. D2L's open and extensible platform is used by more than 1,100 clients and almost 15 million individual learners in higher education, K–12, healthcare, government, and the enterprise sector—including Fortune 1000 companies. The company has operations in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, Brazil, and Singapore.

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