MARK: Hi everyone and welcome to this webinar, this is the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations – November 2019 Update. My name is Mark Gaddes, I’m from AbilityNet and I’m joined today by Abi James also from AbilityNet and Richard Walker of the University of York.

So just a bit of information as per the title of the webinar we're providing an update on how public sector bodies accessibility regulations are being implemented by universities and other higher education institutions. Just a few bits of house coping so live captions are available during the webinar but you have to toggle them on or off, so if you have want to have live captions and joined by a computer, my colleague will drop something in the chat pane how you turn them on or off. The slides, transcript and recording will be made available after the webinar ends, so if you need to leave after a half an hour, don't worry you will receive automated e‑mail that links to the recording, slides and transcript.

Depending how you joined us, if you joined on a desktop computer, you should be able to see in your Zoom menu bar, a Q&A window and chat window, ideally please use the Q&A window to ask questions and chat window for more general conversation, perhaps you want to make a comment on something Abi or Richard say or maybe you're having an issue, my colleague Annie is in the chat pain pane and she’ll help you out. The last thing before we get started is to say Host webinar there will be a feedback form to ask if you have follow-up questions, any comments about the webinar, did you enjoy it, did you not enjoy it?

And we really do appreciate that feedback, because, we do listen to your comments about what you would like us to discuss next, future topics, et cetera.

So, just to remind ourselves a bit about what we'll be speaking about today, so I'll start off by handing to Abi and she's going to give us an update about the public sector bodies, accessibility regulations, what's happened recently. Then we'll have Richard speaking how the University of York is meeting the accessibility regulations head on and then a question and answer session where you be able to join the discussion and as per the request of previous attendees, we've extended that so, we are aiming to have half an hour of question and answer so as I said, please use the Q&A window if you have any questions that you really want to hear answered by our panellists.

And then there's just the single slide at the end of the presentation just about next steps.

And with all that housekeeping said and done, really grateful for everyone who joined us and I'm going to hand over to Abi who will give us an update about the regulations.

ABI: Thank you Mark, if we move to the next slide, this is one I've shown many times before, always seems to be the one that is out in the time lines in terms of the regulations because last time we gave a webinar we were in September, and we were at the beginning of this time line which was the first requirement under the regulations. Which was that new and revised website had to conform to the regulations, and we're now on a timeline as I said, and I wanted to point out one of the things we're adding in the timeline. Which is, the Government is now starting to put in place how it is going to monitor websites and accessibility statements for compliance, and they've released a little bit of information about that, I know they are still thinking about it quite a lot. But that will be starting from the spring. It will be ramped up; we've talked about they will be looking up to 2,000 websites a year, but it will be ramping up over the next couple of years. And there's a process in terms of when they will then collate that information and report it back to the European Union alongside every other state involved with these regulations, because there is still built into our laws and we anticipate that will carry on. And will allow us to compare how countries are doing, systems are in place, et cetera. And but it is important to flag up that at the moment they're not monitoring being but that will starting come early next year, and they will be first of all looking at new sites, sites that they can tell have BP significantly revised. But then from next September 2020 when all existing websites and Intranets, they may then start to be monitored as well, and further going into further 2021, we will be looking at mobile apps as well you but how we monitor mobile apps, how we test mobile apps is technically quite difficult and even less standardised testing processes.

So, hopefully that gives you an idea of yes, we are expecting people to be conforming now and monitoring starting in the future. And we mentioned in previous webinars, colleague from University of Kent, George Rose has been doing monitoring how public sector bodies are doing with accessibility statements and his most recent data for the beginning of October, when he looked at 131 universities, to see if there was an accessibility statement available on whether it was compliant, he found that 30 of 131 had a compliant web accessibility statement which is 23%. But there was 60% either had a poor accessibility statement or no accessibility statement at all. Now, there's the caveat there, that universities may not need to be compliant yet because their sites may not be new or substantially revised and actually across public sector, similar figures for other sectors as well that people are starting to publish new accessibility statements, recognising some of the benefits of doing that as well for their users but we've still a long way to go to make sure they're meeting all the regulations. So, if you move to the next slide Mark. Just picking up on current challenges, what people are talking about and what people are saying are difficulty points ‑ and sort of just to highlighting points there's work a lot of people always ask us about PDFs. Obviously they're particularly popular within academia, and within teaching, either for distributing teaching materials so taking Word documents and PowerPoints or for internal documents but also for research publications and journals and learning materials and standardised PDF is the common format and one of our collaborators, Alastair McNaught and I, put a survey on how PDFs were used within institutions, and when you get the slides there's a link to his article survey data, from this, what we found is generally people are using Microsoft Word and then PowerPoint to produce PDFs, there is some use of specialised tools like Adobe within design but if you are using Microsoft Office there's lots of accessibility tools in there, and if you make them accessible word or PowerPoint document that will reduce the issues of PDF. The big problem we have from accessibility point is once they're in PDFs it is really difficult to fix the accessibility issues. So, think about how they're being made.

Provide accessible alternatives, if you really do have to provide PDF, think can you provide accessible alternative there all the time or on demand. And minimise use, so do think about why you're using them and make sure people choosing it for some out of date reasons, that people think they're more locked-down than other formats, Microsoft Word opens any PDF and opens it in a digital document now so that reasoning is outdated. The other area again lots of people have asked us about throughout the last this year has been multimedia and captions, particularly when it comes to things like Lecture Capture or using YouTube videos etc and to highlight that videos are exempt under these regulations until September 2020, so anything you're producing in this academic year is exempt, it is only video produced after September 2020, that will be covered by the regulations and live video and broadcast which is considered video within the last 14 days, will always be exempt.

But the key thing there is really plan for future creation, think about how you're creating video and whether you can build in processes to caption, or transcript or create accessible alternatives when the videos are being created and if you can't consider what will happen if somebody requests an alternative format. Consider disproportion of burden process but it is much more important to think about having a process for any videos you will create after September 2020

And then the third area we are hearing a lot of questions about, is the requirements to consider accessibility of third party content particularly when it is coming from suppliers and that might be commercial suppliers and that can be anything from a back‑end system like a HR system, or accounting system through to purchasing learning materials, E‑learning or E-books as well. Now, we're engaging with the private sector, and there is some work going on about procurement standards and again the link in the slide takes you resources that have been developed between universities and procurement organisations.

But, think about engaging your procurement staff, making sure they understand the regulations and the requirements more than just are you compliant, tick. Think about asking what testing have you done, have you tested with people?

Can you show us an example of an accessible site or materials you've done and evaluate the accessibility cost. So, when you are doing any tendering or procurement process, think about how much it is going to cost you to make something accessible, compared to something that's already accessible out of the box. Because that responsibility lies with the public sector organisation not with the private sector at the moment in terms of these regulations.

But one of the common themes across all of those points is really the planning and the leadership and the organisation areas and we had a great Conference last week with TechShare Pro ‑across the whole accessibility community and that was a really common theme that came out of public sector and world leading industry that you need to have leadership and planning. So, one of the things we thought would be good to lead into when Richard talks about what he's doing at University of York is getting you to tell us, who is leading on compliance preparation, and this is always one of the questions we have what team is dealing with accessibility and how that's going to be dealt with?

So hopefully, Mark will launch a poll now, and we can see your answers.

MARK: Thanks Abi, the question is who is leading on compliance preparations to meet the accessibility regulations within your institution?

Depending how you've joined you may find you don't have a poll up on screen, and if that's the case, feel free to drop into the chat and put your message in there. The options that we've listed are, IT services director, PVC teaching and learning, HR director, director of marketing, web external relations, E‑learning manager, or maybe something completely different, if so definitely use the chat window. Or do you have no‑one? Or do you not know is one of the options. And I see you're all voting.

You've had 45 seconds to vote and 62% voted so I'll give a couple more seconds.

And I think both Abi and Richard are going to be quite interested by these results.

I've given you a couple more seconds just for anyone who is completing it to give their answer.

Now I'm going to end the poll and share the results.

So, Abi and Richard, I don't know if you can see them on screen but there's a spread there and quite surprised by the 10% that say no‑one, maybe that's because you're not from the public sector so maybe you're just joining us as another interested person.

But Richard do you any comment on this, are you surprised by this response?

RICHARD: No, I guess not it just shows it is a mixed sort of approach that institutions have in terms of where the responsibility lies but there's no‑one stand-out role that really makes sense for all institutions.

MARK: Yeah great I'm going to stop the sharing there, and yeah as I say, really interesting response there, very diverse response so I'm going to stop sharing and I'm going to hand over to Richard who is introducing himself and then talk a bit about what the University of York is doing.

RICHARD: Hello everyone and thanks for the introduction Mark. My role is Head of Programme Design and Learning Technology at the University of York and it is really my learn tech brief which judging from the check comments, many participants here have a similar sort of role.

It was that learn tech brief that got me the job if you like, of looking at things from a University of York perspective way back September, last year when the Policy Connect paper came out on accessible VLEs, and having had a look at that quickly grasped that this was broader than a VLE compliance issue but had implications right across the web. So, what I will talk about now is our journey from there, to where we are now and what we've done. So, if we move on to the next slide and the obvious first step we took was to get all the wise heads around the table so in November last year, we set up a cross-services working group and so that started with my team the Learn Tech Team but we brought in IT, disability, marketing, and as well as wise heads from our accessibility forum which we'd had running since 2007, so we weren't approaching this from a standing start, we did had a legacy of collaboration on this, which was important. And, we also brought in academic and student representation right from the start, so we tried to move towards a joined-up approach, and this was specifically though for learning teaching and assessment. Our brief was not to go beyond that. That's quite enough anyway to be looking at the implications for that. But, I can't stress enough the importance of having that cross‑services approach because that's been critical from the start in terms of managing the information flow across the institution, getting good coms out and avoiding any duple case of effort or contradictory messages going out about what we're doing and by when, and I'm sure you're aware there's been a lot of panic and misconceptions about what the legislation is asking us to do by when.

More of that in a minute.

So, going back to that poll, from a York perspective, governance and the reporting of what we were doing goes in two directions. One is a light-touch briefing to our published information compliance group and that looks at statutory obligations for the university, things likes GDPR, so we give updates to that group. But we’re really be an extension of our Inclusivity Strategy Group which has been around for a while now and that internal reports up to our university teaching committee which is chaired by a Pro Vice Chancellor for teaching learning students, so there are two key senior stakeholders, therefore. There is the PVC teaching learning and publish information group, that’s our director of corporate and information services.

I think, what's been really important for us is that the way we position things is that we have positioned all our accessibility work as a subset or a component of this broader institutional commitment that we've got to inclusivity and equality. And that's based on our policies, so the screen shot you see there is of the webpage where our policy is set out with what this means for our teaching obligations as well.

So, the key message is one of business as usual, and what we're doing with accessibility is what we've been doing in the past, it is a natural continuation and is consistent with our institutional values. So, it is not a new initiative. And I think that's the first myth that we try to debunk that this is something new, it is consistent and also, that goes, that is also rings through for the legislation in terms of the Equality Act, possibly the regulations give a harder edge and ask us, to demonstrably show what we're doing, be transparent in terms of our measures but the proactive stance on that, we should have been embracing that already. Having said all of that, I mean, that's helped the continuity in terms of selling the message partly to academics, but, there's a big “but” there, and that's the issue of workloads and workload implications for staff and great sensitivity has been needed and continues to be needed over that. So, with that in mind we've tried to manage change in an incremental and very much a supported way, and that's been based on three key phases of assistance to teaching departments.

So, if we move on.

The first phase kicked off in the beginning of this calendar year, our spring term, and it is based on building evidence base to inform changes we made, and I think that's critical for any stakeholders but particularly academics, providing them the evidence to show what we need to do and by when.

So, our first starting point was actually involving a marketing web team to draw on our existing institutional license with Jisc and as part of that, we got a free snapshot review of our prospectus emissions pages and that provided some immediate valuable feedback. First of all, it was reassuring in showing that our pages were largely OK, but there were some priority actions we needed to look at. Most obviously our accessibility statement which we've just been talking about, trying to improve the number of keyboard tabs or reduce the number of keyboard tabs required to be access it, that was an obvious one but, one that we needed to look at.

The other thing that I did was to make a case directly to our PVC teaching and learning for funding in order to set up a student internship project running across the whole calendar year and we eventually tapped access funds to do that, and that enabled us in the spring term to take on nine interns who were a mix of undergrad and postgrads to work with us in reviewing all teaching content within our Blackboard virtual learning environments and so we got the nine students together, we trained them up on the web content accessibility guidelines and then we got them looking at, in groups of three, at a faculty not modern faculty where they were studying, but another one because we didn't want them to be too focused on the content but looking at the formatting and the layout of the content and then coming up with an appreciation of to what extent the content resources met the web accessibility guidelines and they were asked to through a spreadsheet, to record their findings on compliance, partial compliance or no-compliance, and they were looking at roughly three pieces of content, typical content in a module site, for all module sites across a programme, where module site was team talk they would look more in appreciation how academics were approaching content layout. And what we did was then to report that in an aggregate form back to departments in May 2019 with a breakdown of the spreadsheet results and a report.

Which we can have a look at now.

So, this what you see here now is a screenshot of, screenshots of the typical report that went back to departments in May, and on the right‑hand‑side were the feedback on particular content types that you can see, looking at obvious things like contrast, use of alternative text, et cetera, so, that keys in directly to the WCAG standards. But on the left, we also put a lot of emphasis on usability, layout, and all the issues consistent with inclusive design and this can be often forgotten if you're going through an automotive checking process, but the layout and the usability of sites is equally important. So, site structure, descriptions, and navigation were all things that we looked at too, and reported on.

So in terms of formatting the report, departments would get this, they would then get a list of priority actions which we felt were important in order to get them ready for the start of September 23rd to meet the first deadline and we’d also provide some a whole range of assistance and support at the end as well. So, the prioritisation was there to, so they weren't completely overwhelmed by what we were saying in terms of changes that needed to be made. We tried to really key in on what we thought was achievable so the quick wins before September. And we made a big play on the range of support that departments could draw on.

OK if we move on.

We also along with the spreadsheet we shared this document which is our review guide and this is also what we provided this for student interns, so that's our definition of the WCAG standards in what we tried to put in humanly readable terms so it is something that can be easily understood and not abstract. So we've made this guide, we've licensed it under creative comments so it is there for everyone to use, and we'd be more than happy if you were to take that, adapt it and improve upon it, but it is meant to be a first step in terms of trying to communicate more effectively, the requirements for academics and indeed all staff. If we move on.

So those are the initial steps, phase one, in what we did, obviously the next challenge for us, was how we communicated what we were doing, and I'd be very interested first of all to find out how have tackled communication within your own institution, so I'll hand back to Mark for this.

MARK: Thanks for your presentation so far, so yeah, as I say, as I did before, I'm going to launch a poll and depending how you've joined you may find you can't see the poll.

So, if you can't see the poll, please do drop into the chat box and respond to the question which is how are you communicating your accessibility provision to end users?

Some of the options are, an institutional statement, statements for all key web systems.

Statements on departmental/school provision. Perhaps you're doing all three of those things, so all of the above.

Or maybe you're doing something different, and you can use the chat window to let us know. And again, there’s no statement, as another option, I appreciate some of you have may using that if the question is not directly relevant to you.

45% of you have voted so far, I see a few messages in the chat so I will give you a few more seconds just for those who do want to answer this question. OK.

And 60% of you voted have so I will end it now.

And I will share the results.

And Richard I think you can hopefully see on your screen, so, the highest percentage, 31% have an institutional statement but again there is a spread across there, 23% have statements for all key web systems. The lowest percentage is people having statements on departmental school provision

How does that, is that again what you'd expect? How does it tally up what the University of York is doing?

RICHARD: I'll explain what we're doing, but it is very heartening to see there are some institutions are investing for statements for all key web systems which provides I think, the utmost transparency, I think the challenge around that is keeping these updated and relevant to end users. I'll stop sharing and let you continue.

RICHARD: Ok so on that theme of communication, we've tried to go for a multi-layered approach.

And that involved initially sort of springtime first of all just setting up within our institutional multiples to briefings to key stakeholders, so I set up a session with programme leaders our network and programme leaders across the university and chairs of board which are our academic leaders in our departments and that was a testy affair, but, it was very worthwhile in terms of explaining what we were doing, and there was a memo went out to heads of department, so, there's a way of trying to get the initial message out there. And then another part of our strategy was then to move on to practical workshops. Now, I don't know what other institutions are like in terms of their experience of running scheduled central workshops but over the years we've moved away from those all together because of poor signups and all our business is very much bespoke within departments, but, we decided to try this again, as scheduled workshops and it was amazing the take-up that we got. For two-hour sessions on the basic of creating accessibility documents we were getting packed out rooms, 70‑plus staff had a go and more coming along to the follow-up more advanced session which was looking at universal design how to build interactive sites so I can draw from that that, there was a tacit, perceived need for this sort of training and in terms of digital capabilities around accessibility and we got there at the right time and also maybe the trailer in terms of the accessibility briefings we'd done before had also been helpful in drumming up that interest.

So that has carried on throughout the summer and continues to be important in terms of training signups. And what we were hoping to get out of the training workshops was not only to cover basic skills but also to try and identify a cardo of champions who could then work with us, in developing joint workshops in departments to reach those staff that wouldn't come and that has worked to some extent as well.

We've also been talking to IT services, our information group on staff digital skills framework of which accessibility skills are embedded within that, so that draws on the Department of Education’s skills framework as well as the Jisc digital accessibility framework system so is amalgam of that and York context to it, we will push that to professional staff and departments in the future as well.

So, that's all the training. In terms of accessibility statements though, we also beyond the institutional accessibility statement we also developed and have been developing and publishing statements for all of our key learning systems including the VLE and we have accessibility tab that you don't need authenticate to see, this has information from our vendors and our take on how accessible our key E‑learning systems are.

So, that's a bit about the communication. In terms of well let's move on now to the final part of that which is then trying to bring all our information together because I think, this is probably true again of most institutions, we've had a lot of good legacy accessibility information across the institution over the years but the trouble is it is in different pockets of our web domain, and updated and run by different parts, different professionals services within the university. So, it is not been easy to bring everything together and speak with a common voice in terms of the training and support that we're offering. So, with a we've done is to build our own Wiki service which will bring this information together in one stop shop. What we're intending to do is link this up to our inclusivity webpage, we haven't quite done that yet but this is what we're pointing to staff to at the moment, so this has all the training resources, frequently asked questions which are generated through our training workshops so it is meant to be the go‑to place for support.

OK, if we move on.

That was all phase one, phase two, was a new set of interns, so I got ten new ones, and who were trained up and their task was to work with my central E‑learning team to provide that follow‑on support to departments that I promised after we delivered those reports in May. So, this is the phase two.

Now, I tell you what we weren't doing with the students and they were a mixture of undergrads and postgrads, and we were not asking them to go into a department and fix everything, legacy content and content, current content for the next academic year because that would be an impossible task. What we were hoping instead was they would do some action planning with departmental co‑ordinator to set out the priorities, the first steps, so, to develop a sort of planning strategy. And also then to work on maybe the most commonly used site that incoming students would see in the Autumn term and have a contrast between how it had been configured and a reworked version which was fully accessible and present that to staff and show the journey that staff needed to go on in order to apply those same principles to their own sites. So, what I'm talking about here is more of an education piece for staff.

And then with an opportunity of that at-desk support, where you can sit down and talk through the I, but what they are weren't doing was building those sites for staff because we wanted staff to understand the issues and then take responsibility, take ownership themselves. The one thing we were encouraging is the development of sustainability templates and that's the key message, in terms of legacy content you won't fix everything, only resources that you're using currently and teaching should be a focus, but we want to get everything accessible by design really from the beginning of this academic year onwards. So that minimises any problems further down the track. So, building sustainable resources is a good way forward. So we were supervising those ten interns and our central team we were providing advice on role over of sites as well as this knotty issue of third party content and systems to be fair this is a another challenging area, because there’s an awful lot we don’t know at the centre that departments are doing, either hand coded systems that they’ve developed themselves which are not part of the very and or third party systems they are using, so that’s a challenge. And another sweetener is funding we provided for departments where they didn’t want to use our central interns but had staff they wanted to buy out themselves to work on alternative resources and, I mean, one example is one department which will remain nameless, there were some staff there that for years had never used electronic resources but simply handed out handwritten resources which needed to be digitised or put in accessible fashion so that was a big sort of challenge. The other thing is as you get departments going on this, a lot, they tend to go at this with great vigour and you start to see the real challenges, so beyond the quick fixes in terms of alternative text and using headings and styles we started to get into the nitty gritty of issues like maths notation and what we were very clear on right from the start as central team we didn’t have the answer for everything, and we wanted to do this in partnership with our staff so we set up special interest groups and particularly one around maths notation in order to flag some of the issues which we can then take on and contact other expert services like the Government Digital Services for answers. The final thing I should say on accessibility statements we encouraged departments to develop their own communications to students as well and I’m pleased to say over two-thirds of our academic departments now have their own statements as well which linked back to our institutional statements as well.

OK, so that was phase two, phase three is where we are in now in this currents academic year and we’ve provided further funding and that’s not by creating or tapping new funds but reallocating existing teaching learning funds, Rapid Response Fund in order to provide buy outs for that departments who hadn’t been able to do as much work they wanted to over the summer so we done that. We continue with our training and try to work on the cascade model with accessibility champions. And we’ve also, purchased Blackboard Ally and piloting that, with a number of departments before we role that out. So, one interesting thing is, obviously the back end we have installed this, and that’s given us some figures so we can track the journey we’ve already made over the summer. It was interesting, just through the work over the summer we got up to 75% rating in Ali without using academics using alley itself and that shows the progress that can be made through education and support.

And the other sort of issue, again around the culture change is we’ve currently working on a soft lamp of institutional accessibility tutorial, so if we just have a look at that now.

So, the thinking behind this tutorial is to I mean, it is to provide five, ten-minute engaging overview of what the regulations are saying, and what we now need to be doing as an institution. But to actually really to clearly articulate from user presenter why accessibility is important, why these keys into our philosophy of universal design whatever we do here is beneficial to everybody. And the sort of actions we should be thinking about, why we need to take action and the implications of that.

So, we have a sort of overview, high level overview to start with and if we move on. You can see in these boxes some of the components that then make up the tutorial so we do cover some of the basics that are there’s our face-to-face workshop on use of styles out text, font size et cetera, so there are some practical tips, about you, we’re not trying to cover everything, we’re trying to giver a flavour of some of the issues. And, but we also, it is very important to get user stories this there, from different types of students where their experiences and then to explain how our existing staff are already meeting in challenge and doing some really interesting things so two of our academics.

Emily Brunsden and Mark Egan, we’ve got two recordings of them in terms of how they build inclusive teaching principles to their practice and I think that’s really powerful. The final part of the tutorial is a call to action, where staff are encouraged to list the priority actions they’re going to take and then download that as a document and take that away.

And what we’re aiming to do with the tutorial is see this as a first step, and then they will be upping off point, based as oriole as teacher, administrators to content provider as bespoke tutorial in the future. This one we’re going to be talking probably next year, once we’ve done the soft launch and got the feedback, we will be talking to our human resources department because we’d like to make this compulsory requirement just as we do on information security of our safety so we’re sure all staff, incoming, new, existing, regularly update themselves on these principles. OK.

So, that’s in a nutshell what we’ve been doing, but, I wouldn’t like to pretend that we’ve cracked it all, far from it, this is ongoing, a culture change we’re dealing with here but there are some tricky issues and in some ways the regulations are, and the spirit of them are ahead of their time in terms of the maturity of some of the software that we are dealing with. One of the basics things of content authoring within the VLE, we’re using self-hosted blackboard tool and it’s very easy to create content within the platform which is not accessible. We’re aware of the new generation of SAS platform which may do this better and have inbuilt accessible templates that’s great if they are becoming available but there are other solutions for us out there, such as Xerte which we can plug in and we’re looking at that now. And another massive challenge, as I’ve eluded to is maths and scientific notation, for disciplines like economics where resource is PDFs have volumes of equations, figures, that is a big challenge, in terms of describing or using old text for those, so how we get around that. And then the video captioning one, we’ve now run scheduled lecture capture, each week we’re producing over a thousand lecture recordings so building this accurate, meaningful, useful captioning, we’re struggling to find a good solution for that, out there in the market.

And then there’s this question of third-party content and particularly procurement processes, and ensuring we remain on top of that.

And in terms of challenging suppliers on what they’re doing, so, these are some of our key challenges we’re facing.

OK.

And I think as Mark said these slides are available on slide share but if you want to know with a we’re doing at York, here are at links of the resources I mentioned, which say a bit more, that’s the review guide and ability net case study and our own blog post which explains the approach we’ve taken.

MARK: That’s great, thanks Richard. I’m going to move on. So we have just a final poll before we move into the question and answer section of the webinar and we just again, another opportunity if you’re to engage with us, I know a lot of you have been active in the chat and we’ve plenty of questions coming through, about you we wanted to launch a final poll if you joined us via desktop you’ll see this up on your screen, what are the biggest challenges you’re facing at your constitution in relation to the accessibility regulations ? this is quite useful for us because it means myself Abbie and Richard can go through the many questions we’ve got coming through and maybe try and focus in on what’s of most importance to everyone.

You can choose more than one if you’re using the on-line tool, if you joined by desktop and have the poll up on screen.

You can select more than one.

Options are, is it video lecture recordings? Is it maths and scientific notation? Graphs? Third party content? Procurement? And I just give awe couple more seconds for anyone mid-completing the poll and then I’ll share it and we can ask Abbie and Richard to make any comment.

So, I’m going to end the poll now.

And I’m just going to share results and I think this would be a nice opportunity so I’m going to leave these up on screen but we’re now in the question and answer section of the webinar and I know that Abbie has been in the chat and I’m looking at the questions that have been coming through.

Looking at this, you can see that there’s again the spread of challenges, the highest percentage is all of the above. They’re struggling with at 40% but Abbie have you seen anything in the chat about the issues that people are having that you wanted to make a comment on?

ABI: I wanted to make a comment on maths because that's an area I done research over the years and this is a role recognition alongside some of the other comments, the challenges being faced so this is a journey, accessibility is always a journey and particularly with maths and science, actually the technology is not there yet. Particularly PDFs and maths cannot be made accessible, it is just not within the PDF standard, you can just do it for screen reader but then cant zoom it so there's lots of challenges, so it is good to hear organisations like York engaging with this challenge but we need to push that out to developers and the community as well to say look, it's been a niche academic issue up until now, we really need solutions but then to think in terms of the compliance and regulation, that, that is understandable and as long as you have an accessible alternative to those who really need it, that can be done within the accessibility statement of disproportionate burden. So, it's recognising where this is actually a technical challenge as well as resourcing challenge as well, and there's a few questions on videos I wanted to answer because some of them, obviously I mentioned videos, is always an area where people are saying, in terms of live videos, what the regulations say is that if you broadcast live after 14 days if you keep it up on the website, after 14 days it is considered a recorded video so it is no longer exempt. A lot of people who are broadcasting live are using YouTube that do auto captions, and but strictly you know auto captions are still not there yet, and interesting discussions on accuracy, 70/80%, so one in five words wrong, that is really not good enough so think about, if you are auto captioning, are you using a platform where you can go in and improve captions, and do that over time?

And prioritise those videos.

I think we all recognise the challenges Richard pointed out with captioning, lecture caption both expense and practicalities, I will put an interesting link into the chat pane, an interesting link from Edinburgh where they looked to engage students who correct auto captioning, so they're using as student intern project to improve particular causes that they've identified needing captions, going forward.

There were a few questions about sharing training resource, and templates is that something you're making open outside of York?

RICHARD: Yes absolutely, we as I say, we shared some of our templates already, but, if there are specific requests please do get this touch and more than happy to share and learn from others as well

ABI: Also, one of the sites where we put resources onto is called Lexus.org.UK and we're happy to put resources as well, and host resources, Kent University and Kent County Council gave their toolkit to that site as an open license, so if there’s anything they'd like to share, then we can signpost it through that site as well.

MARK: We have got a few questions that came in at point of registration, I might let Abi look at some questions that came in the window in the chat.

But I think a couple of these we can directed towards yourself Richard, so these are ones that came in at the point of registration for this webinar and the first question we’ve had is shouldn’t we be aiming for actually accessible rather than check box compliance and I’d wonder if you’d be happy to comment on that Richard.?

RICHARD: Yes thanks Mark, if I understand this correctly, What they’re thriving at is not just simply a sort of response in relation to the WCAG guidelines on content but thinking of the usability issues how different types of learners engage with content, I couldn’t agree more with that, it wasn’t just simply ticking off have you meaningful hyperlinks, tabs reflow and all that stuff but actually thinking B particularly with VLEs as well they’re complex platforms you’re thinking about navigation, layout, and the usability of those sites, and I think that’s the biggest thing with the sites it is difficult to find things and navigate your way around, so thinking about usability first that’s crucial and there’s a colleague of mine from my team on this webinar Lilian who has done all the fantastic training, she leads on that at York bun of the things she’s going to be doing is running user experience workshops with students and that will give us great insight into some of these challenges and we will feed the lessons learned back into your workshops so we run with academic staff.

MARK: That’s great the next question we had, Abi, I might ask you to answer is, are these laws EU or UK, or will they change with Brexit?

ABI: The B word, it always come up, this is UK law, the regulations are UK law, the only part that may change, I think there is in regulations, they say they will review them in a few years' time, and the part that may be reviewed is monitoring and reporting to EU, monitoring process is based on what the EU is requiring and that's has to be reported to EU, but essentially a lot of what is in there, is already law under the Equality Act. The actual requirement to provide accessible websites and accessible resources, is the same as the Equality Act. It is the accessibility statements that the new requirement and then the monitoring on top of that from the Government point of view. So, every time we discuss it with Cabinet Office who are responsible for this, is no this is UK law, it is not going to change from the point of view of the public sector.

MARK: Have you any seen any questions Abi you'd like to answer live?

ABI: There's interesting questions on examinations and quizzes and that might be something that Richard wants to pitch in as well. I would say from a Richard mentioned Zerty which is a good on‑line platform for E‑learning content it is built from scratch as accessible and it is an open framework as well, and we do look at a lot of E‑learning content and I've been involved in making them, and a lot of platforms can create a lot of challenges out of the box. So, even though they say from a third party supplier you can supply content you will be limited what options you can use and it is not always clear or have to use certain assistive technologies and can't assume it will be with anything so it is very possible to create accessible activities, on‑line activities and exams and quizzes but you do need to do some thinking and planning before buying into a system to make sure that you can achieve that. Richard have you had any look at exams and quizzes at York? Richard: We do run digital exams closed exams and there we sort of rigorously check questions of run accessibility checks around that, I think in terms of traditional assessment this is the whole accessibility piece needs further attention anyway. But I think this is a big, big question, not one that I think we can solve in the next few minutes.

MARK: That's great, we got another, we have two more questions that come in at point of registration that we're aiming to answer on this webinar. Just to say that there will be a follow-up blog as well, where we'll aim to answer as many of the questions that have come through as possible, so if we don't get around to your question now, our apologies, obviously we're limited on time but we will answer as many in the follow-up blog.

But I guess the next question that came through was a bit interesting, was how much money should he within committing to this, and where should it be coming from?

Richard do you want to give a percentage perspective on this, and maybe Abi can follow up?

RICHARD: Certainly my institution, there isn't a golden goose you can go to and unlimited pot of cash, you really have to Box Clever, so with we did was to as I say initially to look at access funds to underwrite these student internships that we've run. But, in another cases I mentioned we have persuaded our Pro Vice Chancellor to allocate this year some of our proportion of rapid teaching response teaching funds for innovative project for solely for accessibility use a so that's a priority for this year as well. We're also heavily engaged in business planning, it is absolutely crucial if to have a solid business case, and to get into the medium-term planning cycle so we've done that, or making the case for video captioning, not that I think there's an obvious solution out there, that with a clear price tag for it, but we're making that case now, signalling that to the senior management team and also we've been working with our IT department on specialist software licenses like Math Type to try and solve the equations issue so there's no specific answer in terms of how much but you have to be creative in terms of what existing sources of support there are, and where you can make use of those, that's fantastic, but you've got to do the hard yards in terms of planning and business case.

MARK: Thanks Richard Is there anything you would add to that Abi.

ABI: It is and that's one of the parts of the changes with the regulations actually recognising there seems to be a form of road map, that should be built, quite public in the statement where you're saying you don't necessarily meet accessibility standards, and to sort of refer back to the first question of checklist compliance first, is this going to be moved? That's the difference between these regulations and with what we see in the US, in America, where you have to comply, and people maybe get sued or legal action, actually, what's happened with the EU regulations is it is saying, there is a compliance requirement although you can report partial or noncompliance but you need to explain what you don't comply with and how you're going to fix it, so, and when it comes to disproportionate burden which is reasonableness in our equality, you need to think of all resources available, you can't say my department doesn't have the time to do this, you need to think about that, and consider that as compliance level.

So, how much money should we be committing is not necessarily something to ask us, it is what you should be asking internally, then thinking you might have to publicly make that statement as well.

MARK: That's great. I see how much time we have remaining so we have one more question, so maybe I'll propose this to Richard and ask Abi if she can see any last burning questions, obviously Abi gets asked a lot of questions, so she may see something she's not been asked before, so I will address this, does HE institutions have quality checking the content academics are providing, do you have a personal perspective on that.

RICHARD: Certainly at York for our suite of fully on‑line programmes, we have sort of, we work with commercial partner and we do our own independent checks of content there before it is released, going through the whole accessibility standards and protocols so that is done quite rigorously, independently of programme teams to ensure it does fully comply. What we can't do, and it is not scalable is do all of that for our traditional blended courses, and it is very much the academics' responsibility, hence, it is an education piece, a culture change we should be working towards. Now, obviously, automated accessibility checkers like Blackboard Ally may help us to flag to staff some areas they need to address. But, as I've been trying to say in this webinar I don't think Ally in of itself is silver bullet we need to think of the spirit of inclusivity, the usability issues more generally but it is a useful tool and one we think will be useful. The other thing I would say, is the way that we encouraged departments to frame their own communications to students in terms of their accessibility statements is to introduce the concept of partnership with students, so where there are issues encouraging students to raise them with module leaders, programme leaders and fix them together so, we're working as a team on this, because this is such a complex task ahead of us, but it is one where we're trying to educate and empower both staff and students in a partnership approach.

MARK: That's great, thanks Richard. And then Abi I know we've been answering the questions from attendees along the way, looking at the time is there any final ones you did want to answer before we reach the end of our time or anything that stood out as something you haven’t been asked before?

ABI: Right yeah there’s a lot of discussions about third party content and things like turn a tin, and as I mentioned sort of videos and marketing materials as well. And I think this is where learning about some basic accessibility checks can be really important and understanding that communication with your suppliers. There are some really simple checks you can do and I will paste a link into the chat pain while I’m talking about some quick checks that don’t require any assistive technology or looking at the code and you can get quite a lot of understanding on what, where you are with accessibility, and so, some checks were developed so you can start to get procurement people and nontechnical people, project managers thinking about accessibility at source. And it is a challenge if you already have a system in place but if you know it is not accessible think about what you will do if somebody can’t access it. So again, one of the critical questioning that organisations are challenged with at the moment is what to do with accessibility problems? Who deals with that is this and I think if you think about that question, then that helps solve a lot of who is responsible, who is going to do the leadership and which of our suppliers do we need to go push back on, because that’s what we need to be doing with the private sector particularly to getting them to engage as well and realise this now is a priority for the public sector to address.

MARK: That's great. Thanks Abi.

We are kind of at the end of our webinar now so I just want to talk about a new next steps so, those of you who filmed the webinars, it is part of our buy monthly series for webinars for HE professionals about the public sector accessibility regulations so just to say those will return next year. So do make sure you're on our mailing list if you aren't already, because we will obviously in the new year send out invitations to those. We do advice for higher education and further education institutions so there's a website up on our screen, and that's just shared in the chat window, so if you do need some specific advice for your institution, please do use that.

And I want to thank Richard for joining us and I'm sure Abi will reiterate the sentiment, it is interesting to hear how a specific institution has approached the accessibility regulations, and then to see how that kind of compliments or contrasts all the conversations happening in chat.

So, I want to use this as an opportunity to thank you Richard and Richard is on Twitter so if you want to speak to him, or have a specific question about how the University of York is approaching the regulations, he's more than happy for you to connect with him on Twitter. A then generic contact for AbilityNet here.

Inquiries at:

E‑mail address, or you can call us during UK office hours on:

If you have any specific questions about technology, disability, we are here to help, and I also want to obviously thank Abi as always Abi's been on a lot of these webinars, she really is an expert and well connected so, again, just thank you to Richard and Abi, and for all of who have joined us today, we really appreciate it.

And, we will be contacting you with the recording and the slides.

So, yeah thank you everyone and thank you Abi and Richard.