

## **Institutional Framework for Digital Accessibility**

Kennesaw State University (KSU) is committed to providing equitable access to all digital learning environments, instructional materials, and institutional resources for all members of its community. This Institutional Framework for Digital Accessibility provides guidance and outlines KSU's digital accessibility efforts with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA, as required under federal law (ADA, Sections 504 and 508 where applicable). Accessibility standards evolve, and KSU treats compliance as an ongoing, good-faith process, not a onetime checklist.

This framework applies to institutional websites, instructional materials, learning technologies, and digital tools used in teaching, learning, and administrative operations, and is designed to support all KSU employees. Accessibility is a shared institutional responsibility, and employees are not expected to be technical or legal experts in accessibility standards.

Our goal is to make expectations clear, supports visible, and processes manageable - while documenting good-faith institutional efforts to meet accessibility requirements.

### **At a Glance - What KSU Employees Need to Know**

- **Accessibility compliance is a shared institutional responsibility.**
- **KSU provides expert offices, tools, and training to assist employees in their roles.**
- **Employees are encouraged to design and manage digital content with accessibility in mind, but perfection is not required.**
- **When accessibility barriers arise, employees are supported through institutional processes.**

### **Institutional Commitment**

KSU has a long-standing commitment and investment in accessibility, inclusive design, and student success. Note that accessibility is not intended to constrain innovation, creativity, or academic rigor; rather, it is integrated as a shared value of equitable student access supported by appropriate infrastructure and expertise.

Accessibility is supported through dedicated institutional partners. Employees are not expected to navigate accessibility on their own. Key Partners include:

- Digital Learning Innovations (DLI) – Provides accessibility guidance for instructional and training materials, consultative reviews, documentation, and training.
- Student Disability Services (SDS) – Manages individual student accommodations and access planning.
- University Information Technology Services (UITS) – Reviews accessibility in technology infrastructure and procurement.
- Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing – Supports accessibility of public facing websites and institutional communications.
- Legal Affairs – Monitors accessibility law and advises the institution.

Formal decisions about exceptions, remediation timelines, or mitigation strategies are made institutionally, not by individual employees.

## **Digital Content and Materials: Practical Guidance**

### What Is Expected

- Create or manage digital materials with accessibility in mind when feasible, meaning when tools, institutional support, and reasonable time allow within the context of instructional responsibilities.
- Prioritize current and forward-facing content, including instructional, administrative, and public-facing materials.
- Work collaboratively with the appropriate support offices when challenges arise.

### What Is Not Required

- Employees are not required to remediate all historical or archived content.
- Employees are not expected to independently determine technical or legal compliance.
- Employees are not required to remove content solely because it is imperfect or flagged by an automated tool.

Consultative accessibility reviews and expert guidance are provided to assist with instructional, training, and administrative materials. Digital Learning Innovations (DLI) oversees and manages course accessibility evaluations, which take the form of consultations, with findings documented in the Course Quality Database. These documented findings are not intended to serve as employee performance indicators, but to support institutional planning, identify common support needs, and track progress over time.

When materials cannot be fully remediated, institutional support offices can assist with documenting good-faith efforts and exploring reasonable solutions or alternatives. For example, faculty are encouraged to document efforts in partnership with DLI, which can assist in researching potential solutions, monitoring emerging accessibility technologies, and make recommendations to institutional and unit leaders regarding investment in tools that support instructional accessibility efforts.

Additionally, accessibility training is consistently available for instructors through independent online resources, instructor-led workshops, and just-in-time consultation, with asynchronous self-directed training available for non-instructional accessibility needs and developed by DLI in collaboration with relevant offices.

### **Third-Party and Vendor Materials**

When accessibility gaps exist in instructional or training software or other materials provided by publishers or vendors, employees should work with the relevant department (such as the KSU Bookstore, Procurement, or UITS) and document any communications with vendors regarding the gap. Unit and institutional leaders are responsible for deciding whether to continue using those materials, seek alternatives, or take other corrective actions. Employees are not

individually responsible for resolving technical accessibility limitations in publisher or vendor systems beyond reasonable reporting and collaboration with institutional support offices.

### **Technology Tools**

KSU evaluates accessibility during technology purchasing and renewal processes, including review of Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates (VPATs). Accessibility is considered alongside functionality, security, pedagogical or operational need, and cost.

Employees have access to institution-supported tools, including:

- YuJa Panorama (integrated in D2L Brightspace for instructional use)
- YuJa DocHub (document accessibility support for instructional and administrative content)

Digital Learning Innovations (DLI) provides guidance on appropriate use and limitations of available instructional tools. The Office of Procurement will also assist in documenting accessibility of purchases.

### **Communications**

Strategic Communications and UITS oversee monitoring, auditing, and remediation processes for institutional web properties. Responsibilities for public-facing content are distinct from instructional content responsibilities. KSU subscribes to website accessibility auditing software as well as other tools and add-on features aligned with the need for websites and public-facing content. Stakeholders may request a website audit by submitting a request to Strategic Communications.

### **Student Support**

Student reports of accessibility barriers are reviewed collaboratively by appropriate institutional units including Student Disability Services in a timely manner. Both faculty and students are supported throughout the resolution process with the goal of reaching the accessibility needs of the student with minimal disruption to all. Faculty participation may be requested as part of a collaborative resolution process supported by Student Disability Services and relevant institutional offices.

### **Documented Good Faith Effort**

Documentation of accessibility efforts is a critical component of institutional compliance. Documentation should be practical and proportionate, using normal communication and existing records whenever possible rather than creating new reporting burdens. Documentation may include email correspondence, meeting notes, vendor communications, accessibility review reports, and tool-generated records. Removing content from online availability without a replacement does not, by itself, address accessibility obligations and is strongly discouraged. Unresolved issues should be reasonably researched to identify a solution or escalated through established institutional pathways to identify appropriate alternatives, mitigation strategies, and other due diligence tasks.