

Web Accessibility Manual for Content Editors (compton.edu)

Purpose and scope

This manual explains the day-to-day accessibility requirements for anyone adding or editing content in the compton.edu CMS. It focuses on content decisions (text, images, links, tables, documents, and media)—not web development or coding.

What content editors are responsible for

When you publish or update a page on compton.edu, you are responsible for making sure the content you add is accessible. That includes:

- Using proper page structure (headings and meaningful section titles)
- Writing clear link text that makes sense out of context
- Adding accurate alternative text for meaningful images (and marking decorative images appropriately)
- Avoiding “color-only” meaning and maintaining readable contrast
- Using tables only for data, with clear headers
- Ensuring videos and audio have captions/transcripts as needed
- Making sure linked documents (PDF/Word/etc.) are accessible—or providing an accessible web alternative
- Running required checks before submitting/publishing

Quick “before you submit” checklist

Use this as a final pass before you submit content for review or publish changes:

- Headings are in order (no skipped levels) and not used just for styling.
- Every meaningful image has alt text; decorative images are marked decorative/blank alt text.
- Links use descriptive text (not “click here”) and do not force a new window/tab.
- Color is not the only way information is conveyed; text is readable with sufficient contrast.
- Tables (if any) are used only for data and include column/row headers.
- Videos have accurate captions; audio-only content has a transcript.
- Any PDFs/Word docs you upload or link to are accessible (or you provide an accessible web page alternative).
- You ran the CMS/Modern Campus accessibility check (when available) and fixed issues.

Structure your page with headings (H1–H6)

WCAG principles supported: Perceivable, Operable, Robust

What you must do

Use headings to organize content into a clear outline so users can scan the page and navigate with assistive technology (like screen readers).

Avoid

Do not use headings just to make text bigger/bolder or to change color. If it is not a real section heading, it should be normal paragraph text with formatting as needed.

Heading structure

Headings must follow a logical order:

Heading 1- Main Page Title Only

Heading 2- Major Content Section

Heading 3- Sub-Content Section

Heading 4-6: Super-sub Section

Example:

- Compton College (Heading 1)
 - About Us (Heading 2)
 - Text Content
 - Mission and Purpose (Heading 3)
 - President's Pledge (Heading 4)
 - Apply to the College (Heading 2)
 - Text Content
 - First Time Student (Heading 3)
 - Text Content
 - Returning Student (Heading 3)
 - Text Content

Add images with correct alternative text (alt text)

WCAG principles supported: Perceivable, Understandable, Robust

Alt text is a short description that helps people understand an image when they can't see it (for example, when using a screen reader or when images don't load).

- Those who use screen readers
- Those who have difficulty understanding visual content
- Those without highspeed internet access

What you must do

- Keep alt text short and specific (usually a sentence or less).
- Describe the meaning/purpose of the image in context (not every visual detail).
- If an image is purely decorative (adds no information), mark it as decorative or use empty/blank alt text so assistive technology can skip it.

Photos and Portraits

Alt Text



Good example: “Mount Everest”

Bad example: “Image of a mountain range”

Images Containing Text

If your image contains text, type all the text in in the alt text



Example: “Flyer with text: ASG Invites You To Celebrate: Women’s History Month with ‘Our Annual High Tea’ - Monday, March 23 at twelve o’clock in the Multipurpose Room. RSVP is Required to Attend.”

Bad Example: “Annual High Tea Event Flyer”

Use color and visual design accessibly

WCAG principles supported: *Perceivable, Understandable*

What you must do

Make sure text is easy to read. Use sufficient contrast between text and its background, and do not rely on color alone to communicate meaning (for example, “items in red are required”).

- Use a balance of both light and dark colors to help bring better readability
- Avoid placing text on busy images or low-contrast backgrounds.

Refer to the following pages for more information on this:

<https://webaim.org/articles/contrast/>

Use the Contrast Checker to see if the contrast is good:

<https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>

Add links that are descriptive and predictable

WCAG principles supported: *Operable, Understandable, Robust*

What you must do

Write link text so it’s clear where the link goes or what it downloads—even if someone reads the link by itself.

Avoid

Avoid vague link text like:

- “Click here”
- “View this”
- “Learn more”

Good links:

- “Read About Us”
- “Guidelines and Practices (PDF)”

Present data with accessible tables

WCAG principles supported: *Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, Robust*

What you must do

Use tables only to present data (not to control layout). Keep tables simple and include clear headers so users can understand how cells relate.

- **Do:** Add a header row (and/or header column) when the CMS tool provides that option.
- **Do:** Keep the table structure consistent (avoid merged/split cells when possible).
- **Do:** Provide context with a short sentence before the table explaining what it shows.
- **Avoid:** Using screenshots of tables or images of text instead of real table content.
- **Avoid:** Very complex tables. If a table is complex, consider splitting it into smaller tables or rewriting as a list.

New windows/tabs

Do not force links to open in a new window/tab. Opening a new window can be confusing for some users.

Publish accessible video and audio

WCAG principles supported: Perceivable, Understandable

Video

When you add video to compton.edu, it must have accurate captions.

Caption guidelines

- Make sure captions are properly synced with the audio track
- Make sure spelling and grammar are accurate
- If certain sounds are important for the video content, make sure it's included
- Use consistent text font and styling

For more information about captions visit: <https://www.section508.gov/create/captions-transcripts/>

If the video is visual-only and the visuals are required to understand the content, provide audio description (or choose a different format).

For more information regarding visit: <https://www.section508.gov/create/synchronized-media/#audio-description>

Audio-only

Provide a transcript that includes the spoken words and any important sounds needed to understand the content.

Link to accessible documents (PDF, Word, PowerPoint, spreadsheets)

WCAG principles supported: Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, Robust

What you must do

Only upload or link to documents that are accessible (PDF, Word, PowerPoint, spreadsheets). If you can't make a document accessible quickly, publish the information as a web page instead (or provide an accessible web alternative).

Avoid

Do not upload scanned-image PDFs (they are often not readable by screen readers unless properly OCR'd and tagged).

Minimum checks before you upload

At a minimum, make sure the document has real headings, meaningful link text, sufficient color contrast, and alt text for meaningful images.

For more information on Accessible files:

- <https://www.section508.gov/create/documents/training-videos/>

- <https://www.section508.gov/create/pdfs/training-videos/>
- <https://www.section508.gov/create/presentations/training-videos/>
- <https://www.section508.gov/create/spreadsheets/training-videos/>

Review and publish accessibly

WCAG principles supported: Robust (and supports all principles through quality control)

Before you submit/publish

1. Do a manual check: headings, links, images (alt text), color/contrast, tables, and any linked documents.
2. Run the Modern Campus review/check (when available) and fix any issues before you submit.

How accessibility is monitored (high-level)

Accessibility is checked in multiple ways, including periodic automated scans and manual reviews. If issues are found on pages you own, you may be asked to update the content to meet accessibility requirements.

Where to get help and training

If you are unsure how to fix an accessibility issue in the CMS, contact the webmaster/social media coordinator at webadmin@compton.edu. For general training and examples, use the resources linked throughout this manual (Section508.gov and WebAIM).