



# Oakswood College

Empowering Through Education



## Digital Accessibility

### *Policy*

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE • ENSURING COMPLIANCE  
SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY



GOVERNANCE



QUALITY



COMPLIANCE



EXCELLENCE



**Oakwood College**  
Empowering Through Education  
*(Trading name of Oakwood Group Ltd)*

**Oakwood College Digital Accessibility Policy**

**Document Control & Version History**

<b>Document Title</b>	Oakwood College Digital Accessibility Policy
<b>Document Type</b>	Governance & Compliance Policy
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems
<b>Accountable Officer</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Approved By</b>	Board of Governors
<b>Approval Date</b>	18 March 2026
<b>Effective From</b>	18 March 2026
<b>Review Cycle</b>	Annual
<b>Next Review Date</b>	18 March 2027
<b>Applies To</b>	All users of Oakwood College’s public-facing website and key digital services (including students, applicants, staff, partner university and awarding body representatives, contractors, stakeholders and members of the public), and to all staff, contractors and partners involved in designing, developing, procuring, publishing or maintaining digital content and systems for Oakwood College.
<b>Version</b>	1.0
<b>Related Policies</b>	Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy & Support Through Studies
<b>Document Location</b>	Oakwood College Policy Repository



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## **1. Policy Statement**

The College is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible learning and working environment for all students, staff and visitors, including disabled people and those with long-term health conditions. This Digital Accessibility Policy sets out our approach to ensuring that our website and key digital services comply with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 and with our duties under the Equality Act 2010, and explains how this work supports the Office for Students' expectations around equality of opportunity for disabled students in higher education. It provides a framework for how we design, procure and maintain accessible digital content, how we respond to accessibility issues and requests for reasonable adjustments, and how we monitor and review our progress over time

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to set out how Oakwood College will ensure that its website and key digital services are accessible, inclusive and usable for the widest possible range of users, including disabled students, applicants, staff and visitors. It explains how we meet our legal obligations under the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 and the Equality Act 2010 for our online information and services, and how this work supports the Office for Students' expectations around equality of opportunity and the experience of disabled students in higher education. The policy provides a clear framework for monitoring and improving digital accessibility, clarifying responsibilities, and ensuring that accessibility considerations are embedded in the design, procurement and maintenance of Oakwood College's digital estate

## **3. Scope**

This accessibility policy applies to the Oakwood College website and its core public-facing web pages and is intended to align with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, relevant government accessibility statement guidance, and sector expectations for supporting disabled students in higher education. In a broader sense this policy applies to all online materials, including the website, social media platforms, published documents, multimedia assets such as audio, video and imagery, and digitally delivered teaching and assessment content.

## **4. Commitment to accessibility**

Oakwood College is committed to making its website accessible in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. This

includes current students, applicants, staff, partner-universities, awarding bodies, stakeholders and members of the public, including disabled users who may rely on assistive technology.

The website is intended to support recognised accessibility good practice. In line with government guidance, the College publishes and maintains a separate Accessibility Statement for its website which is reviewed on an annual basis. This statement explains the scope of the content covered, the current level of accessibility, any known limitations, how users can report accessibility issues, and how they can request information in alternative formats.

Oakwood College recognises its legal and regulatory responsibilities in respect of digital accessibility and, in order to support compliance, commits to:

- Reviewing the Accessibility Statement on the College website annually.
- Providing the necessary tools to support staff in creating accessible digital content.
- Providing appropriate training to staff on digital accessibility requirements.
- Promoting accessibility tools and guidance for staff use.
- Conducting periodic accessibility audits of digital content and systems, recording identified issues, assigning corrective actions, and monitoring remediation progress against agreed timescales.
- Monitoring requests for reasonable adjustments and documenting any accessibility exemptions or limitations where a disproportionate burden assessment applies.
- Ensuring accessibility requirements are considered during the procurement, selection, implementation and review of digital systems, platforms and third-party services.

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Formal accessibility reviews of the College website and key digital systems will normally be undertaken at least annually, with additional reviews conducted following significant system changes or redevelopment.

Users who experience accessibility barriers or wish to request alternative formats may contact the College through the contact details provided within the Accessibility Statement. Accessibility-related complaints will be handled in line with the College's Complaints Policy where appropriate.

## **5. Accessibility standard**

Oakwood College aims for its website to conform, as far as reasonably practicable, with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA. Government model guidance for accessibility statements uses WCAG compliance as the benchmark for describing the accessibility status of a website or digital service.

The website should be usable with common accessibility features and assistive technologies. This includes the ability, in most cases, to change colours, contrast levels and fonts, zoom in without loss of content or functionality, navigate by keyboard, use speech recognition software, and access content through screen readers.

Where third-party systems or externally hosted content are used, Oakwood College will take reasonable steps to consider accessibility requirements during procurement and implementation; however, some accessibility limitations may remain outside the direct control of the College.

## **6. Disproportionate Burden**

The Accessibility Regulations recognise that, in a limited set of circumstances, full compliance may place a disproportionate burden on a public sector organisation. This may arise, for example, where resolving a specific accessibility issue would involve significant cost but deliver only limited benefit to users. However, a lack of time or knowledge does not constitute a disproportionate burden, and the majority of digital content is expected to be fully accessible.

Where Oakwood considers that a disproportionate burden may apply, it is legally required to carry out an assessment of the extent to which compliance would impose such a burden, taking into account relevant factors, and to document the outcome of that assessment.

## **7. Support for disabled students**

The Office for Students states that universities and colleges should support disabled students to access, succeed in and progress from higher education. In practice, this means accessibility should not be treated as a technical website issue alone, but as part of a wider institutional approach to student support and equality of opportunity.

Where a student or applicant needs information from the website in another format, Oakwood College will take reasonable steps to provide that information in an accessible alternative format. This may include accessible PDF, large print, audio, or another suitable format, depending on the request and the nature of the information.

Students who require disability-related support or reasonable adjustments should be directed to the Head of Student Services so that support needs can be considered promptly and consistently. The Office for Students expects providers to take disabled students' experiences seriously and to maintain an effective institutional response across the higher education journey.

## **8. Governance, Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems is accountable for accessibility compliance.
- Responsibility for the procurement of digital products, services and platforms sits with relevant managers or staff leading those activities.
- **Individual members of staff** are responsible for ensuring that any digital content they create or share is accessible in line with this policy. Where an exemption is sought, they must provide a clear rationale and supporting explanation.
- **Heads of Department** are responsible for ensuring that staff engage with appropriate training and support to create accessible digital content and services.
- **The Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems**, supported by relevant digital and operational staff, will oversee the accessibility of the digital estate. This includes monitoring and reviewing the accessibility of the College website and any digital services or applications in use, maintaining the Accessibility Statement, and coordinating responses to accessibility issues (although resolution may be carried out by relevant service owners).

Where practicable, relevant staff responsible for digital content, systems or teaching materials should take reasonable steps to support compliance with accessibility requirements. This may include the use of automated tools (for example, automatic captioning of recorded lectures) and ensuring that staff have access to appropriate training, guidance and accessibility resources.

The Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems, supported by relevant operational staff, will monitor relevant regulatory and sector developments relating to digital accessibility and ensure that appropriate guidance, training materials and institutional practices remain up to date. Our Accessibility Statement can be found on our website

<https://oakwoodcollege.co.uk/>

## 9. Accessibility Issue Resolution and Response Times

Oakwood College is committed to responding promptly to identified accessibility issues affecting its website, digital systems and online content. Where accessibility barriers are identified through audits, user feedback, complaints or internal review, the College will take reasonable steps to investigate and address them within defined timescales where practicable.

The College will normally aim to:

- Acknowledge reported accessibility issues within **5 working days**.
- Carry out an initial assessment of the issue and required action within **10 working days**.
- Resolve minor accessibility issues within **30 working days** where reasonably practicable.
- Develop an action plan and estimated remediation timeframe for more complex issues requiring system development, third-party supplier involvement or significant technical changes.

Where immediate resolution is not possible, the College will consider appropriate interim measures or alternative accessible formats to minimise disadvantage to users.

Accessibility issues identified through formal audits or monitoring activities will be recorded and tracked through appropriate quality assurance and compliance processes until resolved or formally risk assessed.

The effectiveness of this policy and associated accessibility arrangements will be reviewed annually through the College's governance and quality assurance processes.