Accessibility statement for Bristol Old Vic Theatre School's website

Last updated: 16 June 2023

This accessibility statement applies to Bristol Old Vic Theatre School's website at **oldvic.ac.uk**.

The website is operated and maintained by the School's marketing team in conjunction with an externally contracted web developer.

The School wants as many people as possible to be able to use the website successfully including prospective students and applicants for both our higher education and short courses, current students and staff, alumni, and members of the public, all of whom have diverse access needs.

Charity Digital estimates that one in five people in the UK are living with an impairment, disability, or long-term illness and it is important to BOVTS that our website and digital presence across social media is as inclusive as possible.

For example, that means users should be able to:

- change colours, contrast levels and fonts
- enlarge text without the text spilling off the screen
- navigate most of the website using just a keyboard
- navigate most of the website using speech recognition software
- listen to most of the website using a screen reader

The School is also endeavouring to make the website text as simple as possible to understand.

[AbilityNet](#) has advice on making your device easier to use if you have a disability.

How accessible this website is

The School has used the evaluation tools and guidance of the [Web Accessibility Initiative](#) to evaluate how accessible its website is for users who may have visual, auditory, motor and neurodiverse access requirements.

We know that many parts of this website are not currently fully accessible:

- many older images across the website do not include 'alt text' for those using a screen reader;

- many heading structures are not appropriately 'marked up' for those navigating the website with a screen reader or keyboard;
- on some pages, the contrast ratio between light text on a dark background falls below the recommended ratios for those with visual impairments or who are neurodiverse;
- the styling applied to much of the text across the website means it is not possible to change the text size in some browsers, meaning line height or spacing cannot be modified;
- much of the information contained within drop-down menus on our course pages cannot be expanded easily with a keyboard;
- when using a keyboard to navigate our webpages, there is not always a 'visual focus' to assist those who are unable to use a mouse;
- the homepage features a large auto-play video that lasts for more than five seconds and cannot be paused;
- whilst most recent video content that has been added to the website has open or closed captions available, we do not have transcripts available;
- the website typically fails a 'basic structure check' – for example, if a user chooses to turn off loading images, many pages do not load successfully in the browser;
- most older PDFs documents that have been uploaded to the website are not fully accessible to screen reader software.

We are also aware that many parts of the website are poorly optimised for mobile viewing. Mobile users make up a significantly proportion of our users.

Feedback and contact information

If you need information on this website in a different format like an accessible PDF, large print, easy read or audio recording, please contact:

enquiries@oldvic.ac.uk
+44(0)117 935 3535

We'll consider your request and get back to you within 10 working days.

Our reception staff are also happy to answer any general enquiries about the School over the phone. We are happy to facilitate visits to the School in person for prospective students.

Reporting accessibility problems with this website

We know that much of our website is currently non-compliant with WCAG 2.1 accessibility standards, the internationally recognised recommendations for web

accessibility. If you have feedback regarding the accessibility of the website, please contact:

marketing@oldvic.ac.uk
+44(0)117 935 3535

Enforcement procedure

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is responsible for enforcing the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (the 'accessibility regulations'). If you're not happy with how we respond to your complaint, [contact the Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS).](#)

Technical information about this website's accessibility

Bristol Old Vic Theatre School Limited is committed to making its website accessible, in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

Compliance status

This website is only partially compliant with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1](#) AA standard, due to the non-compliances and exemptions listed below.

Non-accessible content

The content listed below is non-accessible for the following reasons.

Non-compliance with the accessibility regulations

- The homepage hero video plays automatically for longer than 5 seconds, without a way to pause it. This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion SC 2.2.2.
- Many older images across the website are not marked up with 'alt text' for those using a screen reader – this includes those where text alternatives that are not alternatives have been used. This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 1.1.1.
- Due to the website's design, many heading structures are not appropriately 'marked up' for those navigating the website with a screen reader or keyboard; This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 2.1.1.
- On some pages, the contrast ratio between light text on a dark background falls below recommended levels (4.5 ratio for text below 14 points). This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 1.4.3.

- The styling applied to much of the text across the website means it is not possible to change the text size in some browsers, meaning line height or spacing cannot be modified. This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 1.4.4.
- Much of the information contained within drop down menus on our course pages cannot be expanded easily with a keyboard. This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 2.1.1.
- When using a keyboard to navigate a webpage, there is not always a 'visual focus' to assist those who are unable to use a mouse; the styling elements applied on the website remove or render the indicator non-visible. This fails WCAG success criterion 2.4.11.
- Whilst most recent video content that has been added to the website has open or closed captions available (thus meeting WCAG 2.1 success criterion 1.2.2) and can be controlled with the keyboard, (thus partially meeting success criterion 2.1.1) we do not have transcripts available (thus not meeting SC 1.2.9.
- Most older PDFs documents that have been uploaded to the website are not fully accessible to screen reader software. This includes, for example, documents that have been produced without a Title in Document Properties, or which do not have 'alt text'. This fails WCAG 2.1 success criterion 2.4.2 and 1.1.1.
- The website typically fails a 'basic structure check' – for example, if a user chooses to turn off loading images, many pages do not load successfully in the browser.

Disproportional burden

The Theatre School has assessed the cost of fixing the above issues. As a small educational charity, we believe that the full cost of correcting the non-compliances outlined above would be a [disproportionate burden](#) within the meaning of the accessibility regulations.

Our website is due for renewal in the near future and the School is currently seeking to replace the existing website. We expect for the new site to be fully compliant with WCAG 2.1 guidelines by December 2024.

If there is any change to this timescale, this accessibility statement will be updated accordingly.

Content that's not within the scope of the accessibility regulations

Bristol Old Vic Theatre School regularly produces theatre and live events which are streamed to our website or social media platforms. We do not intend to provide

closed captions to these streams because live video is [exempt from meeting the accessibility regulations](). Users are, however, normally able to access auto-generated captions via YouTube.

What we're doing to improve accessibility

Bristol Old Vic Theatre School intends to replace its website by December 2024.

Preparation of this accessibility statement

This statement was prepared on 23 September 2022. It was last reviewed and updated on 16 June 2023.

This website was last tested internally on 16 June 2023 by using tools and checks available via the [Web Accessibility Initiative]().

Written by: Matt Carmichael, 23/09/22
Updated by: Matt Carmichael, 16/06/23