

Microlink's Digital Accessibility Service Definition Document

What the service is:

Microlink's Digital Accessibility service provision covers three main areas with a focus on whether a client's website, mobile application or PDF document is usable by a disabled person. Based on the outcome of the reviews for the client's website, mobile application and accessibility of additional resources such as PDFs Microlink is also able to provide support when writing your organisations Accessibility Statement in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations (PSBAR).

1. Microlinks Accessibility Evaluation Services for both Web and Mobile Applications

Microlink provides comprehensive accessibility evaluation services designed to help organisations meet and exceed their legal, regulatory, and usability obligations. Our services cover both websites and mobile applications, ensuring an inclusive experience for all users, including disabled people who rely on Assistive Technologies (AT) such as screen readers.

We offer two levels of assessment across both platforms:

1. **Snapshot Review** – A rapid evaluation providing high-level insight into the most common accessibility barriers.
2. **Full Review** – A detailed conformance assessment aligned with WCAG 2.2 Level AA, the level required under the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations (PSBAR).

Snapshot reviews provide valuable early insights but cannot be used as evidence of WCAG conformance. Full reviews provide a thorough, standards-based assessment and actionable guidance for remediation.

Our Accessibility Testing Methodology (applies to both Web and mobile)

Microlink's evaluations apply a robust combination of manual testing, automated analysis, and assistive technology validation to ensure accuracy, reliability, and real-world relevance.

Manual Testing

Our specialists conduct detailed checks covering:

- Colour contrast and visual presentation
- Meaningful alternative text for images
- Logical reading and navigation order
- Keyboard or gesture-based interaction

- Semantic structure and ARIA attributes
- Form behaviour, validation, and error handling
- Compatibility with screen readers, dictation tools, magnifiers, and reading support software

Automated Testing

We use widely recognised automated tools to supplement manual testing. While automated tools cannot detect all issues and may produce false positives, Microlink validates all results prior to reporting.

User Journey Testing

Where required, we test full end-to-end journeys, such as account login, form completion, search workflows, and transactional processes.

Reporting

All findings are presented in a clear, actionable format, including:

- An accessible PDF report.
- Prioritised short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations.
- Design and UX enhancement suggestions to improve overall usability by disabled people.
- Optional high-level PowerPoint summary for non-technical stakeholders.

Platform-Specific Considerations

Below we outline the approach and considerations that apply uniquely to each platform.

A. Web Accessibility

Scope - Microlink offers:

- A web snapshot review for quick diagnostic insight.
- A full WCAG 2.2 A/AA/AAA review, with AA forming the benchmark for PSBAR compliance.

The assessment identifies common issues such as low contrast, missing or incorrect alt-text, inaccessible form controls, and barriers to screen reader navigation.

Web Testing Process

Our evaluation includes:

- Manual checks for alt-text accuracy, semantic structure, reading order, ARIA implementation, and keyboard functionality.
- Review of complex images using client-provided descriptions where required.
- AT testing using mainstream screen readers.
- Optional testing with ZoomText, Read&Write, and dictation tools.

Browser Coverage

Testing is performed using the following desktop browsers:

- Chrome
- Edge
- Firefox
- Opera
- Safari testing is available when a client provides a Mac or iOS device.

Automated Web Testing

We use two established tools:

- TPGi ARC Toolkit
- PowerMapper (by SortSite)

We minimise false positives and discuss any uncertain results directly with the client.

Sampling Method

Microlink applies the WCAG Evaluation Methodology (WCAG-EM), including:

- A client-selected representative sample of web links referred to as a Uniform Resource Locator (URL).
- An additional 10% random sample, as required by WCAG-EM.
- Coverage of all four WCAG principles:
 1. Perceivable
 2. Operable
 3. Understandable
 4. Robust

Deliverables

- Accessible PDF report
- Optional stakeholder presentation

B. Mobile Accessibility

Scope - Microlink provides:

- A mobile snapshot review to identify high-level accessibility issues.
- A full WCAG 2.2 AA review, addressing mobile-specific requirements.

The review examines issues such as low contrast, image descriptions, control labelling, touch target sizing, and gesture accessibility.

Mobile Testing Process

Our analysis includes:

- Manual contrast testing using screenshots where programmatic checking is not possible.
- Review of alt-text meaning of image descriptions.
- Navigation order and screen reader behaviour.
- Validation of complex image descriptions with client input.
- When alt-text is unclear, Microlink will promptly liaise with the named client contact for clarification.

Supported Application Types

- Native mobile applications.
- Hybrid applications (e.g., apps using WebViews).
- Mobile web applications.
- Tablet/Smartphone devices using native AT.

Testing is conducted using:

- Google Pixel smartphone (Android)
- Apple iPad (iOS)

Screen readers:

- TalkBack (Android)
- VoiceOver (iOS)

Additional tools:

- Accessibility Scanner (Android), identifying issues such as low contrast, missing labels, and touch target sizes.
- Optional support for ZoomText and Read&Write.

Microlink can perform browser-based emulation when requested but recommends testing on real devices for accuracy.

Sampling Method

- Client-selected screens and user journeys.
- Priority screens tested first.
- A tailored, abridged version of WCAG-EM is used for mobile applications.

Deliverables

- Accessible PDF report
- Optional high-level presentation for senior stakeholders

2. Social Value PDF Remediation

Microlink's unique social value approach to PDF remediation, combined with the use of accessibilityInsight offers employment to young disabled people, including students, which provides full training in remediation. This is with a view to helping the public sector in the UK meet its legal obligations under the [Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations](#) (PSBAR). PSBAR ensures compliance to WCAG 2.2 A, and AA.

It may also enable certain high calibre remediators to be offered positions in public sector organisations. For example, this could be in councils, local authorities, and universities. This model is scalable and can be repurposed, if required, to other sectors and other areas such as Web Accessibility.

PDF or document accessibility remediation refers to ensuring that electronic documents are usable by disabled people. This is achieved by Microlink's expert team using a combination of Adobe InDesign, Adobe Acrobat Pro DC, PAC 2024, and the codeMantra (cM) Artificial Intelligence (AI) platform called



accessibilityInsight. accessibilityInsight offers the remediation of digital science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) content at scale. PDFs that are remediated are then tested using AT, such as the screen reader NVDA and/or JAWS. Screen readers enable screen content to be read aloud and/or navigated by users who maybe blind or partially sighted.

Microlink can remediate non-author changes within source Microsoft (MS) documents such as MS Word, PowerPoint, or Excel and then re-export the tagged PDF to be remediated. However, all alt-text descriptions will need to be provided by the document owner. Where source documents require remediation Microlink will need to be notified in writing by email. If this is required, all necessary fonts for the PDF documentation will need to be sent to Microlink at the beginning of the project.

Microlink's Digital Accessibility Consultant oversees QA and has internal support from the Digital Accessibility team. Microlink's PDF remediation ensures not only technical compliance to PDF Universal Accessibility (PDF/UA) and WCAG 2.2 AA where possible for document remediation. For example, text alternatives, reading order, and colour contrast. Microlink is also capable of exceeding compliance by ensuring document usability by disabled people. For example, we will manually ensure that tables are navigable and screen reader accessible using NVDA and/or JAWS. This includes more complex tables that may contain merged cells or require, for example, header rows. In addition to this we will undertake checks for colour contrast and will flag this if major changes are required. Major changes to colour contrast constitutes an author change because alterations can substantially impact the overall design of a document and needs to be addressed by the document owner. Microlink can make minor corrections to colour contrast and can make design recommendations if required, but the design recommendations are charged as an additional service.

All alt-text for images should be provided by the document owner. For logos alt-text will be provided in the form '<Company> logo'. WCAG 2.2 AA SC 1.4.5. Images of Text does not require logotypes (text that is part of a logo or brand name) to be compliant for colour contrast although the provision of alt-text is recommended for best practice. For images in documentation that are there for aesthetic reasons only these images will be marked as decorative. If images are directly referred to in the text, for example by referring to a figure number, and the image provides further information not explicitly stated in the body text a few words of alt-text will be provided. If it is unclear what the alt-text should be, Microlink will reach out to the client on a case-by-case basis, possibly at short notice. For complex images, such as an infographic, plan or detailed schematic we will ask the client to provide text that describes the exact meaning of the complex image and we will ensure that text meets best practice for alt-text.

Microlink can provide a PAC 2024 report for compliance to PDF/UA and/or WCAG 2.2 AA if required. Microlink are also aware of WCAG 3.0 and regularly monitor the roadmaps for the platforms we use for compliance to current accessibility guidelines.

WCAG 3.0 will introduce a more flexible, outcome-based approach focused on real user experience rather than rigid pass/fail criteria, replacing the A/AA/AAA model with bronze, silver, and gold ratings and expanding coverage to a wider range of technologies, including AI, VR, and the Internet of Things (IoT). It also emphasises



broader usability, cognitive accessibility, holistic testing, and assessing whether disabled people who are users can complete tasks. Microlink is preparing by strengthening user-centred testing, adopting more flexible and inclusive design practices, expanding accessibility auditing beyond technical checks, and aligning internal processes with WCAG 3.0's emerging outcome-focused model to ensure future compliance.

For organisations that offer an accessibility apprenticeship scheme Microlink could train up Neuro Divergent (ND) cohorts on accessibilityInsight to remediate PDFs. Microlink would be able to help with the placement of ND accessibility interns from this apprenticeship scheme.

Microlink's specialist delivery partner codeMantra (cM) provides PDF form remediation at scale.

Our digital accessibility services overlap with our in-house capability to undertake AT compatibility testing alongside our provision for JAWS scripting. JAWS is a proprietary screen reader.

Any requests made by our clients for a specific aspect in the above services will need to be put in writing to Microlink. Typically, this will take the form of an email that includes a company branded signature, with date and timestamp.

Why Choose Microlink

- Expert evaluators with extensive experience in digital accessibility.
- Robust methodology combining manual, automated, and AT-based testing.
- Plain-English reporting understandable to all levels of the organisation.
- Actionable insights that support effective remediation and long-term accessibility maturity.

- **Data backup, Restore and Disaster Recovery**

Microlink offers RPO's of 15 minutes and RTO's of 1 working day for the most extreme of situations.

Microlink utilise a disaster recovery plan that is accredited to ISO 27001 standard.

- **Onboarding and Offboarding Support**

Microlink's digital accessibility services do the heavy lifting for you, whether you need web, mobile or PDF remediation in isolation or in combination. From requesting a quote through to delivery we provide a tailor-made service to meet your exact requirements. From identifying barriers in the accessibility of your digital assets in their current state through to consulting on and delivering the most appropriate solutions, we will guide you through the entire process.

Onboarding includes providing a written scoping document that is then agreed by both parties for works to be completed.

Offboarding includes official notification of completion of the contract.

- **Service Levels**

9:00 – 17:30 UK time Monday – Thursday.

9:00 – 17:00 UK time Friday

Typically, we will aim to respond to emails the same working day, but this can take up to 3 days and can be agreed contractually through an SLA.

- **After Sales Support**

Microlink's Web and mobile accessibility service provision provides technical support that is pre-agreed with the client contractually after the delivery of a digital accessibility review. Additional days are charged at the daily rate of £1000 per day.

Microlink's Social Value PDF remediation services: in the unlikely event that a PDF document does not meet requirements then please state the issue and page number(s) to Microlink's Digital Accessibility Consultant. If the error is confirmed by Microlink the PDF page(s) will then be re-remediated at no extra cost.

- **Technical Requirements**

Microlink recommends its customers utilise a modern browser such as the latest supported versions of Chrome, Firefox, and Edge.

If this is not possible the customer will need to be able to access e-mail or telephone.

- **Outage and Maintenance Management**

Microlink employs a combination of multiple servers and load balancing to ensure outages and maintenance can be performed without affecting service availability.

In the unlikely event the system needs to be taken offline, customers will be informed and an alternative route to service will be provided (e-mail / telephone)

- **Hosting Options and Locations**

Microlink deploy our systems within Microsoft Azure and in particular the UK South (London) and UK West (Wales) regions.

- **Access to Data (upon exit)**

No Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is captured during our web and mobile application accessibility reviews, and likewise for our PDF remediation services.

- **Security**

Microlink utilises role-based access controls to restrict access to data.

Data is encrypted in transit utilising HTTPS over TLS 1.2 at a minimum.

Data is encrypted at rest utilising a minimum of AES-256-bit encryption.