

Canvas Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT)

This Voluntary Product Accessibility Template, or VPAT, is a tool that administrators and decision-makers can use to evaluate Canvas' conformance with the accessibility standards under [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act](#) and the Act WCAG 2.0 AA Standards.

September 5, 2017

WebAIM.org, a third party authority in web accessibility, has evaluated the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) by Instructure and certifies it to be substantially conformant with Level A and Level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0. While not fully conformant, conformance issues that pose a significant barrier for users with disabilities have been addressed in the sample evaluated.

A sample of the frequently used aspects of Canvas were evaluated in both Student and Instructor roles. This sample included Modules, Moderated Grading, Google & O365 integrations, and the Rich Content Editor.

WebAIM cannot verify the conformance of content outside the scope of the representative sample, or content changed after September 5, 2017. However, based on our interactions with Instructure, WebAIM is confident in their ability and willingness to maintain a substantially conformant LMS.

Canvas LMS Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) Checklist

This Voluntary Product Accessibility Template, or VPAT, is a tool that administrators and decision-makers can use to evaluate Canvas' conformance with the WCAG 2.0 standards, level AA.

Name of Product: Canvas
[WCAG 2.0 Guidelines](#)

Principle 1: Perceivable
Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive.

CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
1.1 Text Alternatives: Provide text alternatives for any non-text content.	Supports with exceptions	Some elements do not have appropriate text alternatives.
1.2 Time-based Media: Provide alternatives for time-based media.	N/A	With the exception of user-added media in the Arc video player section, time-based media was not encountered.
1.3 Adaptable: Create content that can be presented and navigated in different ways.	Supports with exceptions	<p>A few headings are not identified correctly.</p> <p>Some labels or instructions are not associated correctly, or the information presented to screen reader users is not equivalent.</p> <p>Reading and navigation order is usually logical and intuitive.</p>
1.4 Distinguishable: Make it easier for users to see and hear content,	Support with exceptions	Color is not used as the sole method of conveying content.

CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
including adequately separating the foreground from the background.		There are a few instances of text with insufficient contrast, even with high contrast settings enabled.

Principle 2: Operable
User interface components and navigation must be operable.

CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
2.1 Keyboard Accessible: Make all functionality available from a keyboard.	Supports with exceptions	Most, but not all, content is keyboard accessible.
2.2 Enough Time: Provide users enough time to read and use content.	Supports	Time-sensitive content was not encountered.
2.3 Seizures: Do not design content in a way that is known to cause seizures.	Supports	Content does not flash.
2.4 Navigable: Provide ways to help users navigate, find content, and determine where they are.	Supports with exceptions	Heading structure is present, though not always complete.

Principle 3: Understandable
Information and the operation of user interface must be understandable.

CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
3.1 Readable: Make text content readable and understandable.	Supports	Pages have a specified language.
3.2 Predictable: Make web pages appear and operate in predictable ways.	Supports	For the most part, navigation is consistent throughout the application.
3.3 Input Assistance: Help users avoid and correct mistakes.	Supports with exceptions	Important labels and instructions are not always accessible.

Principle 4: Robust
Content must be robust enough that it can be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies.

CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
4.1 Compatible: Maximize compatibility with current and future user agents, including assistive technologies.	Supports with exceptions	HTML validation issues do not impact accessibility. ARIA attributes are sometimes

CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
		incorrect, which can present incorrect roles, states, or properties to screen reader users.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act

Date: 07/07/2015

Name of Product: Canvas

SECTION 1194.21 SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS AND OPERATING SYSTEMS – DETAIL
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CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
(a) When software is designed to run on a system that has a keyboard, product functions shall be executable from a keyboard where the function itself or the result of performing a function can be discerned textually.	Supports	We strive to make sure all sections of Canvas can be navigated and controlled with only a keyboard.

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CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
<p>(b) Applications shall not disrupt or disable activated features of other products that are identified as accessibility features, where those features are developed and documented according to industry standards. Applications also shall not disrupt or disable activated features of any operating system that are identified as accessibility features where the application programming interface for those accessibility features has been documented by the manufacturer of the operating system and is available to the product developer.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas does not interfere with any operating system or browser shortcuts. Accessibility features such as sticky keys, magnifiers, screen readers, cursor sizes and virtual keyboards are not disabled or disrupted by Canvas.</p>
<p>(c) A well-defined on-screen indication of the current focus shall be provided that moves among interactive interface elements as the input focus changes. The focus shall be programmatically exposed so that Assistive Technology can track focus and focus changes.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Where possible, Canvas uses default browser focus styles. Where those styles are overridden, Canvas provides distinct focus styles.</p>

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CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
<p>(d) Sufficient information about a user interface element including the identity, operation and state of the element shall be available to Assistive Technology. When an image represents a program element, the information conveyed by the image must also be available in text.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Provided by the browser.</p>
<p>(e) When bitmap images are used to identify controls, status indicators, or other programmatic elements, the meaning assigned to those images shall be consistent throughout an application's performance.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas uses icons to help depict the purpose of certain interface elements, such as "+" add buttons. The use of these icons is consistent throughout the site. Whenever a single graphic is used, such as a lone "+" graphic, alt text or CSS text replacement is used to enable screen readers to read the purpose of the link/button to the user.</p>
<p>(f) Textual information shall be provided through operating system functions for displaying text. The minimum information that shall be</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Provided by the browser.</p>

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CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
made available is text content, text input caret location, and text attributes.		
(g) Applications shall not override user selected contrast and color selections and other individual display attributes.	Not applicable	
(h) When animation is displayed, the information shall be displayable in at least one non-animated presentation mode at the option of the user.	Not applicable	
(i) Color coding shall not be used as the only means of conveying information, indicating an action, prompting a response, or distinguishing a visual element.	Supports	Canvas does not use color alone to distinguish the importance of a visual element.
(j) When a product permits a user to adjust color and contrast settings, a	Supports	The interface of Canvas has been styled with CSS to comply with Section

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<p>variety of color selections capable of producing a range of contrast levels shall be provided.</p>		<p>508's contrast and color settings. Institutions may be able to theme Canvas for institutional branding, but Instructure monitors the process to ensure that color and contrast remain compliant.</p>
<p>(k) Software shall not use flashing or blinking text, objects, or other elements having a flash or blink frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas does not use flashing or blinking text.</p>
<p>(l) When electronic forms are used, the form shall allow people using Assistive Technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas and all forms in the application work well with screen readers such as JAWS or VoiceOver.</p>

SECTION 1194.22 WEB-BASED INTERNET INFORMATION AND APPLICATIONS – DETAIL
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CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
(a) A text equivalent for every non-text element shall be provided (e.g., via "alt", "longdesc", or in element content).	Supports	Meaningful images in the Canvas user interface have alt-text descriptions. Non-relevant images have no alt-text.
(b) Equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation shall be synchronized with the presentation.	Supports	Canvas does not contain built-in multimedia presentations. Users upload their own content and are responsible for ensuring the accessibility of the uploaded content.
(c) Web pages shall be designed so that all information conveyed with color is also available without color, for example from context or markup.	Supports	Canvas does not use color alone to distinguish the importance of a visual element.
(d) Documents shall be organized so they are readable without requiring an associated style sheet.	Supports	A user or screen reader can read and understand pages in Canvas with the associated style sheets disabled.

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(e) Redundant text links shall be provided for each active region of a server-side image map.	Supports	Canvas does not use server-side image maps.
(f) Client-side image maps shall be provided instead of server-side image maps except where the regions cannot be defined with an available geometric shape.	Supports	Canvas does not use server-side image maps.
(g) Row and column headers shall be identified for data tables.	Supports	Data tables, such as the list of assignments and their due dates in the "syllabus" page, are marked up with informative column and row headers.
(h) Markup shall be used to associate data cells and header cells for data tables that have two or more logical levels of row or column headers.	Supports	Canvas has no data tables with two or more logical levels of row or column headers.

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(i) Frames shall be titled with text that facilitates frame identification and navigation	Supports	Canvas does not use frames.
(j) Pages shall be designed to avoid causing the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.	Supports	Canvas does not cause the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.
(k) A text-only page, with equivalent information or functionality, shall be provided to make a web site comply with the provisions of this part, when compliance cannot be accomplished in any other way. The content of the text-only page shall be updated whenever the primary page changes.	Supports	Canvas is compliant with all provisions of this section, so a text-only version is unnecessary.
(l) When pages utilize scripting languages to display content, or to create interface elements, the	Supports	Canvas uses javascript, WAI-ARIA and the most modern HTML5 techniques to provide feedback from interactive

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<p>information provided by the script shall be identified with functional text that can be read by Assistive Technology.</p>		<p>elements and to allow Assistive Technology such as screen readers to read and transmit information back to the user.</p>
<p>(m) When a web page requires that an applet, plug-in or other application be present on the client system to interpret page content, the page must provide a link to a plug-in or applet that complies with §1194.21(a) through (l).</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas does not require any applet or plug-in to work with its default functionality. Users can upload their own multimedia content using Flash, but if users do not have Flash installed on their computer, they will be prompted with a link to download Flash.</p>
<p>(n) When electronic forms are designed to be completed on-line, the form shall allow people using Assistive Technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas and all forms in the application work with screen readers such as JAWS, NVDA or VoiceOver.</p>

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<p>(o) A method shall be provided that permits users to skip repetitive navigation links.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas has a "skip to content" link at the top of every page that will bypass all site and course navigation. Canvas also uses semantic HTML5 elements such as <nav>, <aside> and <footer>, as well as ARIA landmark roles such as "navigation", "complementary", "main" and "contentinfo" to cue Assistive Technology.</p>
<p>(p) When a timed response is required, the user shall be alerted and given sufficient time to indicate more time is required.</p>	<p>Supports, with exceptions</p>	<p>Students are notified when elements are timed, and instructors can grant students additional time on timed elements on an as-needed, individual basis.</p>

Note to 1194.22: Canvas interprets items of this section as consistent with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG 2.0) (December 8, 2008) published by the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium: (a) 1.1, (b) 1.2, (c) 1.4, (d) 1.3 (g) 1.3, (l) 4.1, and (o) 2.4.

SECTION 1194.31 FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA – DETAIL
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CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
<p>(a) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require user vision shall be provided, or support for Assistive Technology used by people who are blind or visually impaired shall be provided.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas has been optimized to work well with screen readers such as JAWS or VoiceOver.</p>
<p>(b) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require visual acuity greater than 20/70 shall be provided in audio and enlarged print output working together or independently, or support for Assistive Technology used by people who are visually impaired shall be provided.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas supports screen magnification and browser-provided zoom functionality.</p>
<p>(c) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require user hearing shall be provided, or support for Assistive Technology used by people who are deaf or hard of hearing shall be provided.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas does not require hearing for operation.</p>

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CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
<p>(d) Where audio information is important for the use of a product, at least one mode of operation and information retrieval shall be provided in an enhanced auditory fashion, or support for assistive hearing devices shall be provided.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas does not use any audio for its default operation. Users can upload their own content and are responsible for ensuring the accessibility of the uploaded content.</p>
<p>(e) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require user speech shall be provided, or support for Assistive Technology used by people with disabilities shall be provided.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>Canvas does not require speech for operation.</p>
<p>(f) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require fine motor control or simultaneous actions and that is operable with limited reach and strength shall be provided.</p>	<p>Supports.</p>	<p>Canvas does not require fine motor control or simultaneous actions. It is accessible via keyboard.</p>

SECTION 1194.41 INFORMATION, DOCUMENTATION AND SUPPORT – DETAIL
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CRITERIA	SUPPORTING FEATURES	REMARKS AND EXPLANATIONS
<p>(a) Product support documentation provided to end-users shall be made available in alternate formats upon request, at no additional charge</p>	<p>Supports, with exceptions</p>	<p>Product support in an accessible text-based format is available online at http://support.instructure.com. Alternative formats may require an additional charge.</p>
<p>(b) End-users shall have access to a description of the accessibility and compatibility features of products in alternate formats or alternate methods upon request, at no additional charge.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	
<p>(c) Support services for products shall accommodate the communication needs of end-users with disabilities.</p>	<p>Supports</p>	<p>All support content at http://support.instructure.com is available in an accessible HTML, text-based format.</p>