

ADA 508 Accessibility Compliance Workflow for Microsoft Word Documents

Prepared by the The University of Utah Graduate School's Thesis Office

Accessibility compliance is best obtained through using the Word template provided by the Thesis Office.

- Download the template from our webpage. <https://gradschool.utah.edu/thesis/templates-guides-samples/index.php>
- Read the instructions within the text and in the comments attached to the template. Watch the video on how to use the template linked in the comments and found on our YouTube channel in the Word Expert playlist.
- Apply the correct Word styles for the headings, subheadings, table titles, figure captions, and text.
 - If you would like to change the appearance of the subheadings, or block justify the text, adjust the settings for the appropriate Word styles rather than skipping levels or changing each one individually. Instructions on how to do that are found within the template. Videos on how to do that are found in the Word Expert and Accessibility playlists on our YouTube channel.
- Managing Figures and Tables.
 - Build your tables within Word rather than importing them from elsewhere. Large Excel tables that must be inserted into the Word document will need separate treatment for accessibility done for them in Excel before inserting. Instructions for this are found in the Accessibility playlist on our YouTube channel. Keep in mind that large Excel tables of data can be uploaded to ProQuest separately as Supplemental Data if you do not need to talk about them extensively in the text. Tables **should not** be inserted as images.
 - **Do not** build charts within Word; build them elsewhere and insert them as images. If you have built your chart within Word, you must turn it into an image and then add alt text.
 - As you insert figures, charts, and graphs (all considered figures in our template and images within Word), add alt text. Add alt text by right clicking on the image
- The accessibility checker is located on the bottom bar of the Word window. If the document is accessible, it states Accessibility: Good to go. If it does not say this, run the automated accessibility checker. Fix any errors that it tags. There are two errors that you may ignore. If it flags your document for reading order, check to make sure that you didn't skip subheading levels. Fix any subheadings that you skipped or applied incorrectly. If it is tagging the figure captions and/or table titles as being out of reading order, you may ignore that error. It is the

result of the way the table titles and figure captions are created as headers and does not affect accessibility compliance.

- Tip: If you enable the navigation or document outline panel, you can see all the elements tagged as headings. They will be in order like an outline and you can see if you have missed tagging any or tagged them in the incorrect order.
- If it tags tables for merged or split cells, try to rebuild your table without any split or merged cells. If you need those things for correct data presentation, you will need to fix this issue in Adobe Acrobat. We have a video on how to do that in our Accessibility playlists.
- Save your document. Use the native “save as” feature in Word. Do not import it using Acrobat. Do not convert it using the Adobe plug-in for Word. These methods do not carry the accessibility features into the PDF.
 - For Mac: Select the “best for accessibility” before saving.
 - In PC: Click the options button. The save panel it will open has fields below the file name field to insert the document title, the author, and the tags. Click the “Options” button. The window that will open will give the option to create bookmarks using header styles. Make sure that option is selected, as well as the document properties and embed fonts options.
- Open the PDF. Check the bookmarks bar to make sure the bookmarks have been saved. Check the tab at the top of the document to make sure that the document title is showing instead of the file name. Open the document properties window. Click Menu (File for Mac) and then scroll down the options to Document Properties. Make certain that the fields on the Description tab are filled in. Click the Advanced tab. Make sure the language is set.
- This time is a great time to flip through all the pages looking for formatting errors. Many times you will find something you missed in the Word document and you can then fix these errors before you submit the manuscript to us.
- If you had complicated tables that tripped the split/merged cells error in Word, you will then need to fix the tables manually.

Save the PDF and submit it to us through our online system.