Job Description

Job title	Accessibility Specialist
Directorate	BUSINESS : Business Support
Division	Finance and Business Improvement
Range	MPR 5
Reports to	Lead Content Designer

Main purpose of the job:

As an accessibility specialist, you will play a vital role in ensuring our digital products and services are accessible to all users, including those with disabilities. You will provide detailed understanding of accessibility guidelines, collaborate with cross-functional teams to implement best practices, conduct audits, and champion accessibility throughout the organisation. You will help us ensure that websites and digital products managed by the Digital Team remain legal and compliant.

Liaise with stakeholders in a way that promotes the vision and values of the Council.

Accountabilities and outcomes:

- Confidently understand the internationally recognised Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and how the recommendations improve accessibility
- Conduct thorough assessments of websites, digital applications, and documents to evaluate accessibility compliance and provide actionable recommendations
- Plan and manage accessibility audits, prioritising work based on volume of use and level of risk
- Provide guidance to colleagues in other service areas on how to meet accessibility requirements
- Test products using different assistive technologies
- Collaborate with multi-disciplinary team members to implement accessibility improvements
- Create and maintain records of accessibility assessments, findings, improvements and risks
- Manage the council's accessibility statements, making sure they are regularly updated
- Uphold our accessibility policy and digital standards

- Contribute to the team's best practice guidelines and update our accessibility toolkit
- Help to educate the organisation about accessible and user-focussed practices. This includes leading our internal accessibility community of practice by answering questions for colleagues and running learning sessions on accessibility topics
- Attend community meetings to network with likeminded individuals, learn about what other organisations are doing to improve accessibility and collaborate on projects where possible
- Stay informed about accessibility guidelines and practices, particularly monitoring updates to WCAG criteria
- Provide regular reports on our accessibility performance.

At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.

Key Corporate Accountabilities:

To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives and targets.

To understand and actively keep up to date with GDPR responsibilities, including completing regular refresher training.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all employees are required to act in such a way that safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

To participate in the Performance Appraisal process and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs utilising the Career Development Framework.

To actively promote the Council's Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place.

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.

To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder.

Promote the Medway Carbon Neutral by 2050 commitment; supporting the Council action plan to ensure we play our part in addressing the climate emergency.

Organisation:

This role reports to the Lead Content Designer.

The post holder will not be required to line manage others but may be required to direct, coordinate or train other employees.

The post holder will be required to liaise with all stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation.

Working Style:

HYBRID - a flexible working arrangement whereby an employee can undertake their work either in the office and/or partially or mainly from home on a temporary or permanent basis.

Person specification

All criteria at level A are considered essential unless stated otherwise.

Qualifications

Level A

- A good standard of education, such as A level qualifications or equivalent experience

Level B (in addition)

- Evidence of working towards a relevant qualification in accessibility, equivalent to at least a level 4

Level C (in addition)

- A recognised level 4 qualification in accessibility.

Knowledge

Level A

- Detailed knowledge of accessibility legislation and standards including:
  - WCAG (currently 2.1 and 2.2)
  - Equality Act 2010
  - Disability Discrimination Act 1995
  - Public Sector Accessibility (Web and Mobile) Regulations 2018
- Knowledge of HTML, CSS, and JavaScript and related common accessibility issues
- Knowledge and confidence using one or more assistive technologies
- Understanding of user research principles and benefits
- Knowledge of UX best practice in the public sector, such as the GDS design system.

Level B (in addition)

- Knowledge and confidence using a range of assistive technologies
- Knowledge of modern technology, including cloud technology, architecture, agile delivery methods and software practices

Level C (in addition)

- Knowledge of the cross-government DDAT framework.

Experience

Level A

- Working in multi-disciplinary teams to apply accessibility guidelines at AA or AAA level and resolve accessibility issues
- Performing detailed accessibility audits for digital products such as websites and mobile applications
- Documenting accessibility assessments, findings and improvements clearly (clearly enough for others to work from) and iterating services as a result
- Creating, updating and managing accessibility statements

- Measuring and reporting on accessibility performance of digital products including progress, outstanding issues and risks
- Convincing people that accessibility and inclusivity is the best way to design services that work for everyone, even those without disabilities.

Level B (in addition)
- Reviewing requirements and specifications for accessibility compliance
- Defining test conditions for others who test for accessibility compliance
- Providing introductory training about accessibility
- Taking an active part in the cross-government accessibility, digital or design community.

Level C (in addition)
- Using a large range of assistive technologies to test digital products
- Analysing and reporting on test activities and results
- Providing training on a variety of accessibility topics across an organisation
- Advocating for people affected by accessibility barriers with senior management.

Skills
Level A
Able to:

- Communicate the purpose and requirements of accessibility guidelines and advocate for people affected by accessibility barriers across the council
- Actively listen to the needs of design and business stakeholders – empathise with their goals and operational constraints and interpret the information they give you
- Provide advice and recommendations to staff and stakeholders based on your knowledge and experience
- Communicate problems in a way they can be understood by non-specialists, and troubleshoot where required, to support the organisation in operating more effectively
- Perform detailed audits of websites, digital services and documents using manual and automated tools and document findings clearly
- Run collaborative discussions and activities and work with a wide range of disciplines to help the organisation improve accessibility
- Engage with users to collate evidence around user needs.

Level B (in addition)
Able to:

- Propose methodologies to follow and approaches to implementation
- Provide appropriate technical solutions to a range of accessibility issues
- Prioritise accessibility tasks, making decisions characterised by managed levels of risk and complexity
- Understand the sustainability and consequences of your decisions
- Supervise, co-ordinate and train others where required

- Be an advocate for the team, managing differing perspectives and influencing colleagues in other business areas
- Communicate effectively with external stakeholders, such as software suppliers, on accessibility issues
- Manage an in-house accessibility community to share knowledge and set strong consistent standards
- Understand and define research that will test accessibility and user needs.

Level C (in addition)

- Analyse and provide feedback on governance and project documents, and to governance boards, against accessibility standards
- Shape and share communications about accessibility that are relevant to the audience in question
- Resolve technical disputes between wider peers and indirect stakeholders, considering all views and opinions
- Think strategically about improving accessibility and inclusivity for people interacting with the council, such as how we can use quantitative and qualitative data about users to make improvements to our online experience.

Behaviours

We are looking for someone who can demonstrate they are:

- Empathetic – ability to understand and share the feelings of others, especially those who face accessibility challenges
- User centred – putting residents and communities at the heart of decision making
- Collaborative – working with others to deliver the best we can
- Flexible – willing to adapt to a changing environment
- Empowering – helping others to take accountability for their decisions and actions regarding accessibility
- Curious – constantly learning and evolving.