

Customer success story



University
of East
London

University of East London develops
best practice **accessibility** within
e-learning



Customer success story



e2train creates e-learning to best practice accessibility standards for diverse student and teaching body.

Background

The University of East London (UEL) is an exciting and diverse learning community with over 20,000 students. The University is justly proud of the sense of community at UEL, based on mutual respect and support between students and staff. UEL has a higher than average number of learners with disabilities and has been successfully delivering a classroom programme of training on disability issues for some time.

Accessibility requirements

Sarah Frame, Head of UELConnect, the University's department responsible for flexible learning solutions explains, *'The classroom training covered our needs under the Disability Discrimination Act and SENDA. But we wanted to do more than that at UEL - our objective was to develop a course that would enable our colleagues to be pro-active in anticipating the needs of disabled staff and students. That would enable us to genuinely eliminate disability discrimination.'*

UEL initially considered a face-to-face training solution. But after further review, decided that the aims may be better achieved via an e-learning module. This would enable the institution to incorporate real life experiences. It would also create a safe environment for staff to explore various scenarios and to include access to a wide range of disability related resources.

Choosing a partner

UELConnect's activities include the development and delivery of a wide range

of learning solutions for both internal and external clients. However, with their own content development team fully engaged on strategic projects, UEL decided to jointly develop this particular module with UK learning solutions provider, e2train.

e2train was already working with UEL on other external projects as a partner institution. Sarah felt that this joint approach would be perfect for the project. An additional challenge was to ensure the highest possible accessibility standards throughout the course. Specifically, the project demanded that accessibility without compromising the interactivity was required to ensure the content was highly engaging.

The solution

The chosen solution was to produce a training programme which featured different forms of interactivity throughout the course and offer alternative options on every screen to ensure maximum accessibility and flexibility.



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e2train's award-winning content team created a number of different interactions and accessibility options throughout the course to sustain learner interest and optimise their training experience. The functionality of the course offers a wide range of choices which can be switched on or off, and it is offered in both Rich Media and Text formats to suit different disabilities and learning styles.

Options	Disability
Audio narration	Blind or visually impaired learners
Subtitles	Deaf
High, low or pastel screen contrast	Change of background colour and contrast can aid dyslexic readers
Compatibility with screen readers	Blind or visually impaired learners
Zoom	Visually impaired or dyslexic learners can zoom in on any section of a page in order to see it better
Access keys	Replaces use of mouse for those with motor skill problems

Offering alternative interactive/text screens which can be opted in/out of at any time greatly increases accessibility options



Different interactions include audio scenarios followed by questions, use of video and numerous quizzes. These interactions are set against the backdrop of the University itself to make it more relevant to the end user. So for instance, the criticality of taking this course is emphasised to the learner through a particularly powerful video interview with a disabled student who describes the challenges of studying at the institution.



Results

The end results have seen a resounding seal of approval from the institution. Explains Sarah, 'There was particular enthusiasm for the overall visual impact of the course, and positive feedback on the level of interactivity and engagement. Our internal accessibility experts were consulted throughout the development process and were also delighted with the outcome. We believe this training will help us all work together to remove the barriers which can be associated with disability and make our vision of inclusivity a reality, for the benefit of the UEL community as a whole'.

Next steps

UEL is now the process of producing further e-learning courses, which will be developed using the accessibility course as a model, to meet the rest of its HR and safety training needs in an innovative and interactive approach, and creating an accessibility blueprint for the future.

Best practice accessibility

The University of East London's approach to accessibility was driven by a number of real world issues, arguably not addressed by current standards and guidelines.

Around 9% of UEL's student population have some form of registered disability. The most common of these is dyslexia, but they also include deafness, visual impairment and motor neuron limitations.

The limitation of most accessibility guidelines is that they usually just provide a single alternative text based route through an e-learning course. But that too easily discriminates against learners who are perfectly capable of benefitting from many of the course interactions but can't because they are placed 'off limits' by the single track approach of the course creators.

The UEL/e2train accessibility solution provides the opportunity for the learner to divert to the simple text alternative on each page rather than choosing an interactive process. This optimises the experience for the disabled learner by giving them the ability to take part in the interaction if it suits their capability or learning style. The course itself includes interaction on almost every page. This is combined with an additional range of font size, colour and background colour options which further increases accessibility.

About e2train

e2train is an award-winning supplier of learning and performance technologies. The company's vision is to empower individuals and organisations to learn effectively and improve performance by being a trusted provider of innovative, technology-based solutions and services. Its Kallidus software is used throughout the world to create, deliver and manage organisational learning and performance management operations.



For a demonstration or just more information about Kallidus, call **01285 883900**, email: sales@e2train.com or go to www.e2train.com/Kallidus

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