

# A practical solution to increasing accessible content with Anthology Ally



ADCET Webinar Series

Michael Garner

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# About Anthology

Anthology offers the largest EdTech ecosystem on a global scale, supporting over 150 million users in 80 countries.

Through over 60 SaaS products and services, Anthology advances learning in partnership with K-12, higher education, business and government institutions.

Tapping into this unmatched portfolio of solutions, only Anthology can leverage data from across the EdTech ecosystem to create intelligent experiences that lead to better outcomes.

**150M+**

users



**80+**

countries



**60+**

SaaS products



# Combining Best-in-Tech Solutions to Power Your Success

Anthology and Blackboard completed their merger on October 25, 2021, creating the largest EdTech ecosystem at a global scale.

Our passion is making the lives of learners, educators, and leaders easier. That's why we create experiences that are more informed and personalized to support learning, teaching, and leading more effectively.

By responsibly leveraging data, our solutions enable insights and information at the right time, in the right way, to support the right actions—with data privacy and security at the forefront of our approach.

**Blackboard**<sup>®</sup>

campuslabs<sup>®</sup> 

CAMPUS<sup>SM</sup>  
MANAGEMENT

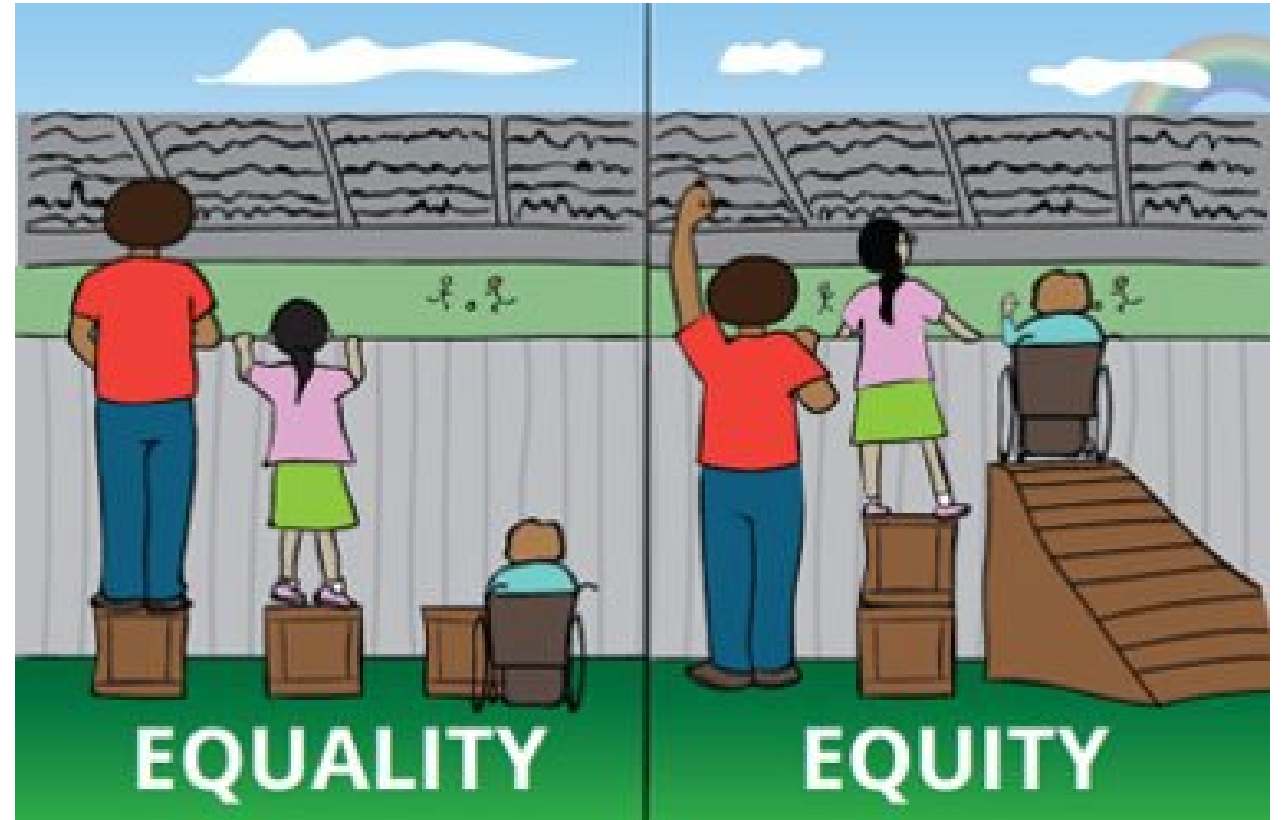
IMODULES

# Definitions – What is Accessibility and Digital Accessibility?

“Accessibility involves designing systems to optimise access.

Being inclusive is about giving equal access and opportunities to everyone wherever possible”.

(Jisc, 2018)



# What is Digital Accessibility?

- Digital accessibility is the ability of a website, application, or electronic document to be easily navigated and understood by a wide range of users, including those users who have visual, auditory, motor, or cognitive disabilities.
- Accessibility means making your content and design clear and simple enough so that most people can use it without needing to adapt it, while supporting those who do need to adapt things. (Central Digital and Data Office (CDDO), 2018)



# Why is it important?

- At least 1 in 6 people in Australia have an impairment or disability. (AIHW, 2022)
- Many have temporary disabilities
- It prepares learners to succeed in diverse working environments.
- Learners value an inclusive approach
- Benefits all



# Diverse 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners



Visible disability



Invisible disability



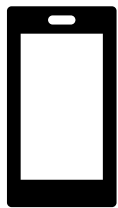
International students



Professionals seeking more education



Temporary disability



Mobile



First-time college students and their family

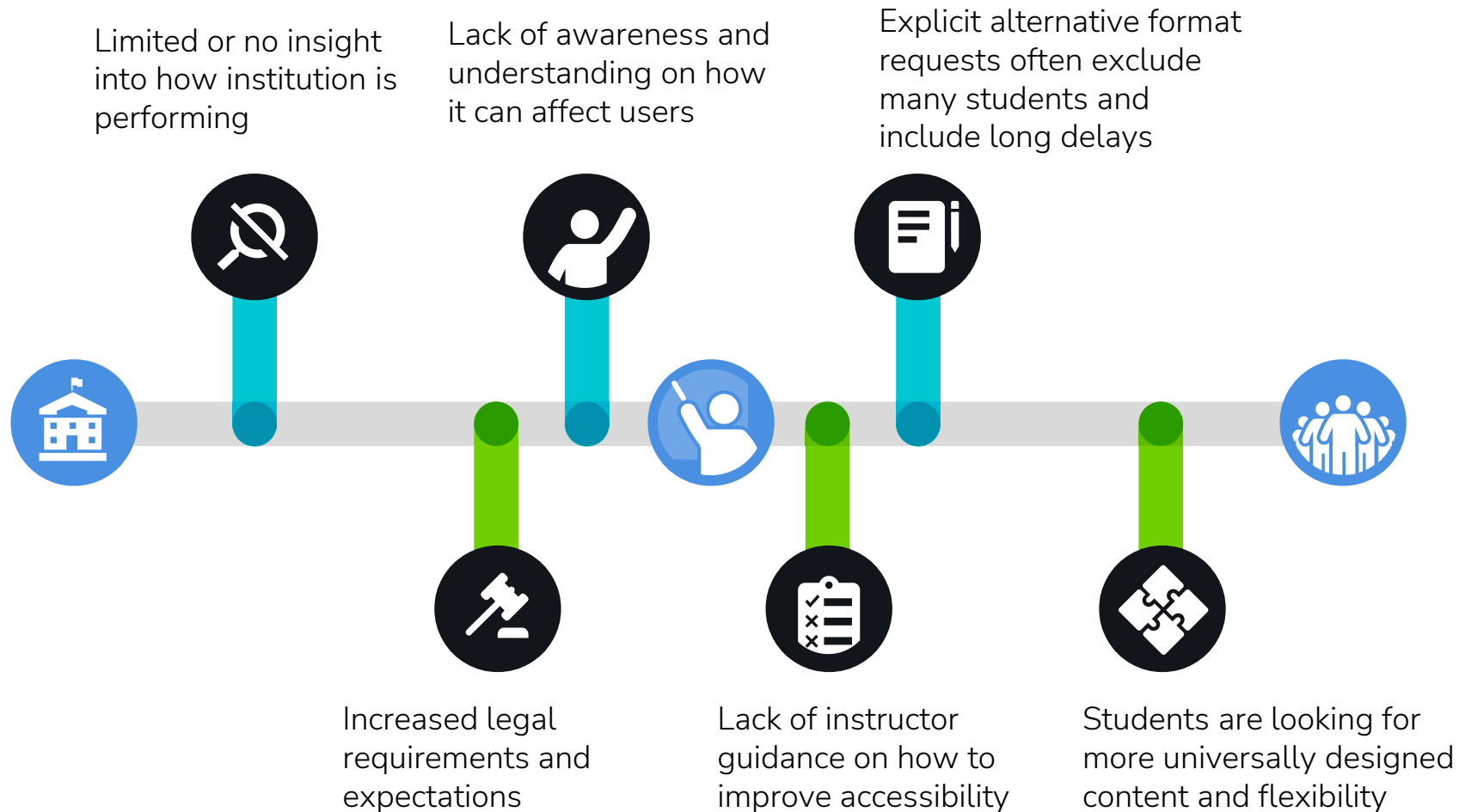


Parents



Commuters

# Challenges of building an inclusive environment





Ally has something for each learner



# Ally in numbers



Over  
**1300**  
Institutions Around the  
World



Over  
**81 Million**  
Courses Processed



Over  
**3.4 Billion**  
Content Items Processed



Since  
2017

Creating more inclusive  
learning environments for all

# Fix Your Content Day



A 24-hour competition committed to creating accessible and more inclusive digital learning content across classrooms and institutions globally for [Global Accessibility Awareness Day \(GAAD\)](#).

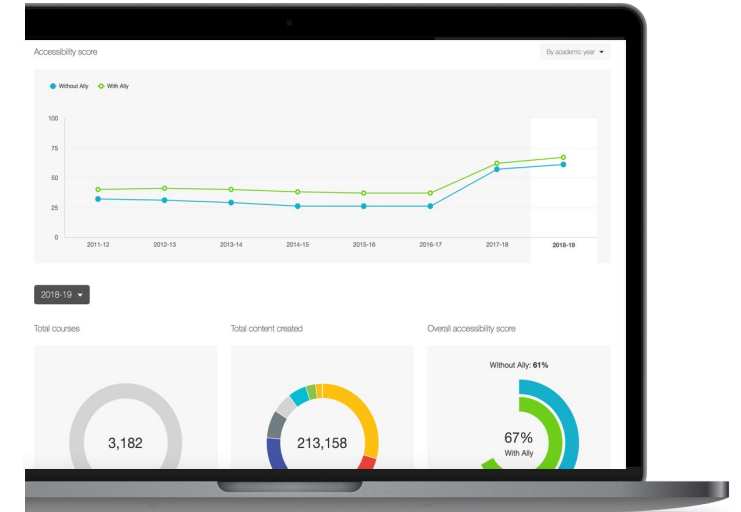
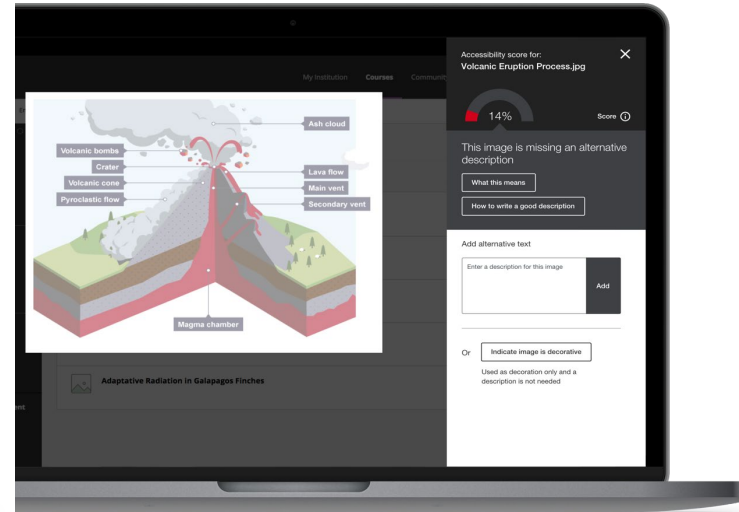
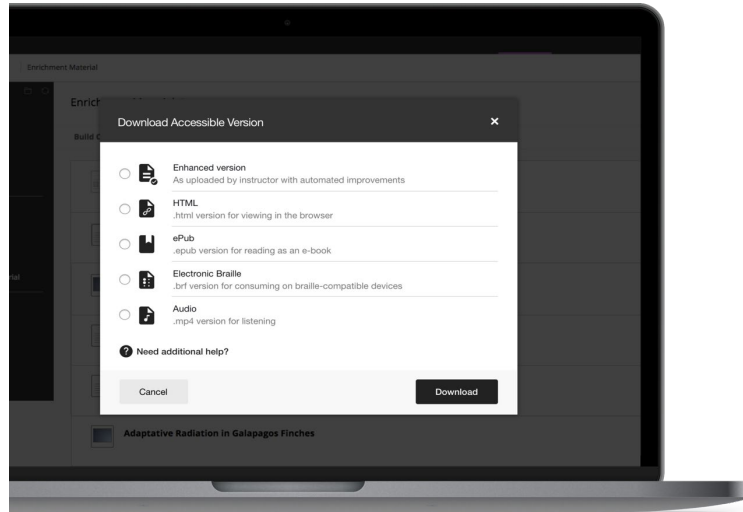


**Are you up for the challenge?**

<https://www.anthology.com/fycd>

*Learn tips and strategies for mobilizing team members with our [Communications Pack](#).*

# Ally Components



## Alternative Formats

Automatically provide alternate formats for web pages and embedded media to provide more flexibility to your visitors

## Content Creator Feedback

Educate and increase awareness with detailed guidance to help improve content.

## Accessibility Report

Automatically checks your website for accessibility issues and provides detailed insight into problem areas



# Alternative Formats for Inclusive Environments

AllyUltra



## Vincent Van Gogh: Module 1

Download Alternative Formats



### Summary of Van Gogh's life

Vincent van Gogh (30 March 1853 – 29 July 1890) was a Dutch Post-Impressionist painter who is among the most famous and influential figures in the history of Western art. In just over a decade he created about 2,100 artworks, including around 860 oil paintings. They include landscapes, still lifes, portraits and self-portraits, and are characterized by bold colors and dramatic, impulsive and expressive brushwork that contributed to the foundations of modern art. His suicide at 37 followed years of mental illness and poverty.

### Highlighted work

Almond Blossom (1890)Wheat field with Cypresses (1889)Bedroom in Arles (1888)

The Potato Eaters (1885)

Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear (1889)

### Emerging artist

In September 1883 Van Gogh moved to Drenthe in the northern Netherlands. In December, driven by loneliness, he went to live with his parents in Nuenen. Van Gogh focused on painting and drawing. Working outside and very quickly, he completed sketches and paintings of weavers and their cottages. During his two-year stay in Nuenen, he completed numerous drawings and watercolors, and nearly 200 oil paintings. His palette consisted mainly of somber earth tones, particularly dark brown, and showed no sign of the vivid colors that distinguish his later work. There was interest from a dealer in Paris early in 1885. Theo asked Vincent if he had paintings ready to exhibit. In May, Van Gogh responded with his first major work, The Potato Eaters, and a series of "peasant character studies" which were the culmination of several years of work. When he complained that Theo was not making enough effort to sell his paintings in Paris, his brother responded that they were too dark, and not in keeping with the bright style of Impressionism.



# Instructor Feedback

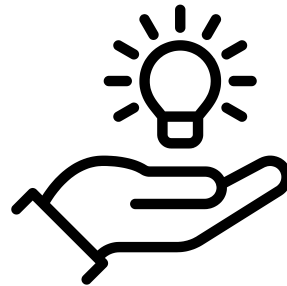
## Identify an Issue

- Based on WCAG 2.1 (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)



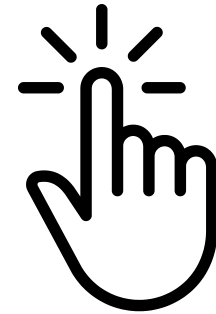
## Give Guidance

- How to solve or prevent the issue



## Quick Fix

- With a couple of clicks, fix the issue



# Content Creator Feedback

Ally BugBash 1.41.0 Ultra

## Vicent Van Gogh module 1

88%

Hidden from students

Accessibility score: 88%  
Select to improve



### Summary of Van Gogh's life

Vincent van Gogh (30 March 1853 – 29 July 1890) was a Dutch Post-Impressionist painter who is among the most famous and influential figures in the history of Western art. In just over a decade he created about 2,100 artworks, including around 860 oil paintings. They include landscapes, still lifes, portraits and self-portraits, and are characterized by bold colors and dramatic, impulsive and expressive brushwork that contributed to the foundations of modern art. His suicide at 37 followed years of mental illness and poverty.

### Highlighted work



Vincent\_van\_Gogh\_-\_Sunflowers\_.jpg



Issue highlight

In-browser preview

The screenshot shows the Ally accessibility tool interface. The main content area displays a PDF document titled "Changing Course: Ten Years of Tracking Online Education in the United States". A red box highlights the first issue, "1 / 112", which is a text fragment with insufficient contrast. The sidebar on the left shows a list of document thumbnails, with the current document highlighted. The right sidebar displays the accessibility score for the document, which is 6%. It also includes a section for the identified issue, "This PDF contains text with insufficient contrast", and provides step-by-step guidance on "What this means" and "How to fix contrast". The bottom right section shows the last crawl date for the domain, "4/18/20, 9:53 AM".

Accessibility score

View all identified issues

Most impactful change

Documentation

Step-by-step guidance

Last Crawl Date

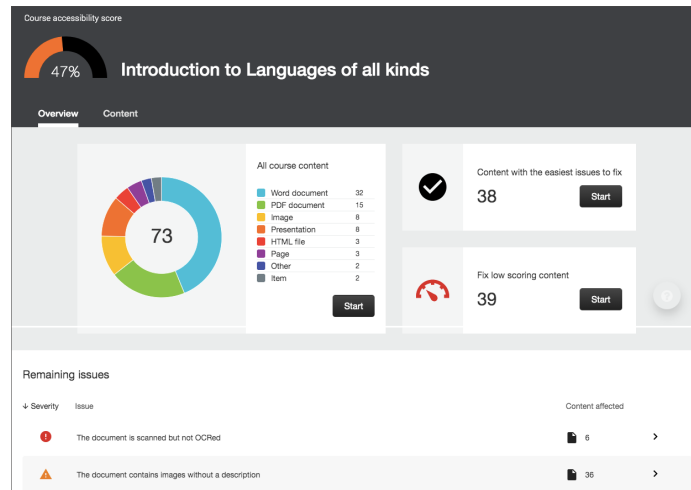




# Reporting

## At the course level

- Can be seen by the instructor
- Number of files / content
- Number of issues
- AX score



## At the institution level

- At department / domain levels
  - Number of files/content
  - Number of issues
  - AX score
- List of courses (LMS Version)
  - Number of Students
  - Number of Files
  - AX score
- Usage
  - Alternative Format Launches



# Demonstration

# Using Ally VS What Ally checks

## Ally needs to be assessed also

- It is a web application
- Users with disabilities must be able to use Ally
- How are we assessed?
  - VPAT (Voluntary Product Accessibility Template)
  - Level of compliance of a software

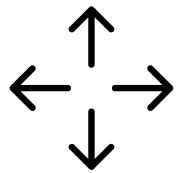
## What Ally checks in LMS content

- WCAG 2.1 (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)
- Is divided into three levels
  - A
  - AA
  - AAA
- Ally looks for AA checks
- It does not contain ALL checks
  - We are continuously including more checks and guidelines



# Ally capabilities


- **LMS agnostic**
  - Works with multiple LMS
    - Blackboard Original
    - Blackboard Ultra
    - Moodle
    - D2L Brightspace
    - Instructure Canvas
    - Schoology
- **CMS Integration**
  - Embedded script
  - Provide admins with ability to correct issues
- **Easy administration**
  - Toggling options
  - Feature flags
- **Language support**
  - +20 Languages
    - User interface
    - Translated versions
    - Audio format




# Some Existing Ally Clients

- Curtin University
- James Cook University
- TAFE SA
- Charles Darwin University
- Charles Sturt University
- Griffith University
- University of NSW
- Victoria University of Wellington
- Victoria University
- Western Sydney University
- University of Wollongong
- Southern Institute of Technology
- Dept of Education Tasmania
- Deakin University



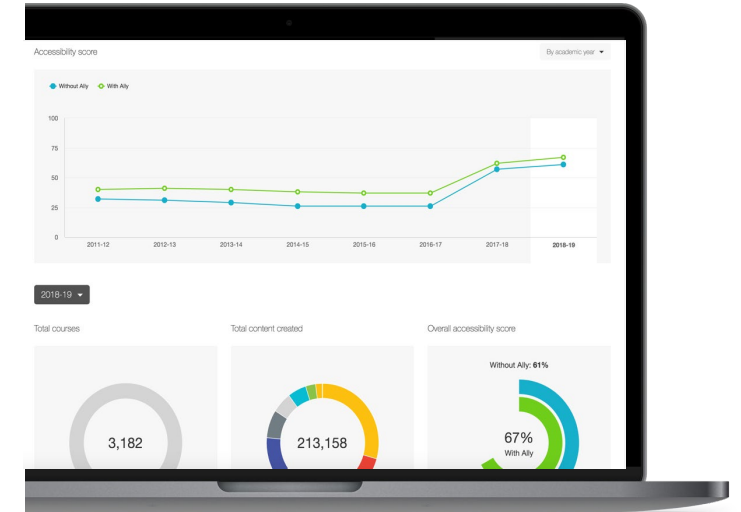
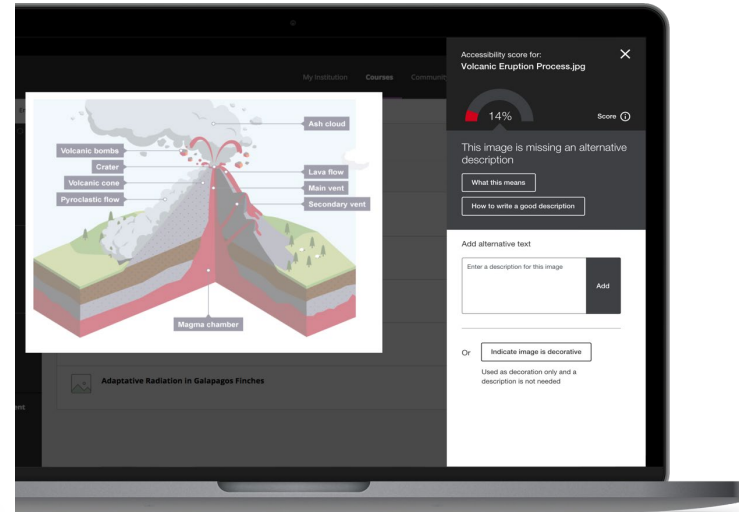
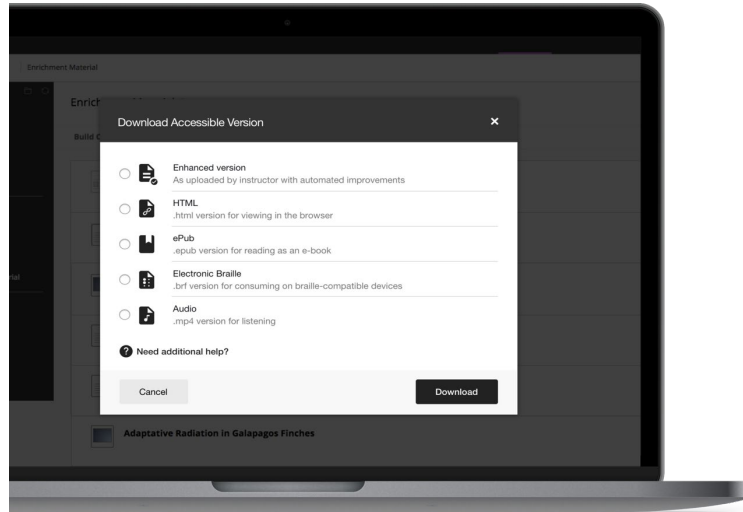


“Ally has increased awareness of accessibility, phenomenally.”



Caroline Briggs  
Assistive Technology Officer  
**University of Cumbria**

# In Summary



## Alternative Formats

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# Useful Resources

## Ally User Group

What's on your mind?

**Jess Thompson** about 12 hours ago **PUBLIC**

As our schools are increasingly using Ally to improve course accessibility and improve institutions scores, they have expressed interest in a tool that would allow them to globally search, find, and replace inaccessible files in all versions/modalities of a course, or allow them to search for and replace all files, embeds, or links including newly captioned videos. During these discussions a colleague uncovered a Canvas feature request that's a couple of years old, but marked as on the "product radar" (<https://community.canvaslms.com/ideas/1165>). For those Ally users at Canvas schools perhaps you could help vote up this feature request and maybe we could get it into production at some point. Thank!

**Comprehensive Course Search Tool (Searching Cou... | Canvas Community**  
<https://community.canvaslms.com/ideas/1165>

Unlike (1) - Comment

**John Scott** Ally European User Group Apr 23, 2018 - 1:41 PM - Updated **PUBLIC** **EVENT**

**Ally European User Group Conference Call**  
April 27, 2018 (4:00 PM - 5:00 PM)  
Join us for a call to share updates and progress from the Ally European User Community.  
[Collaborate Room to Join Call](#)

**Participants:**  
4 attending - 1 maybe - 0 declined  
Attend Maybe Decline

Like - Comment

**Nicolaas Matthejs** Release Notes Apr 19, 2018 - Updated **PUBLIC**

**Ally 1.14.2 (April 19, 2018)**  
Alternative Format size  
The file size for HTML and ePub alternative formats containing images has been reduced significantly, allowing for faster downloads and easier reading on mobile devices.

**Bug fixes and improvements**

- Renamed the "unknown" column to "other" in the institutional report CSV export to align with the institutional report UI.
- Implemented several visual improvements to the "Overview" graph in the institutional report.

**Upcoming events**

**Ally European User Group Conference Call** **ATTENDING**  
Apr 27, 2018 (4:00 PM - 5:00 PM)

**Latest activities**

- Beckie Squires** joined the space **General** about 9 hours ago
- Beckie Squires** joined the space **Study: Support & docs** about 9 hours ago
- Beckie Squires** joined the space **Release Notes** about 9 hours ago
- Beckie Squires** joined the space **Study: Instructor Feedback** about 9 hours ago
- Beckie Squires** joined the space **Ally Research & Testing** about 9 hours ago
- Beckie Squires** joined the space **Study:** about 9 hours ago

**Most active people**

[Get a list.](#)

- Receive updates about Blackboard Ally
- Participate in UX research, usability testing, early access, etc.
- Read institutional stories and case studies

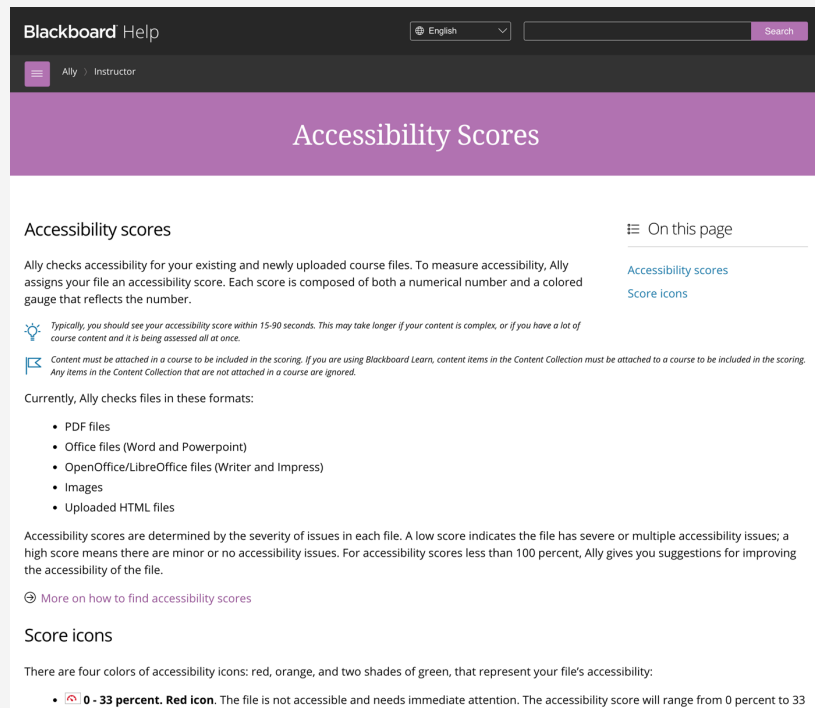
**Sign up at:**  
<https://usergroup.ally.ac>





# More Useful Resources

## Ally Documentation



The screenshot shows the Blackboard Help page for Ally. The page title is "Accessibility Scores". The main content area is titled "Accessibility scores" and includes a brief description: "Ally checks accessibility for your existing and newly uploaded course files. To measure accessibility, Ally assigns your file an accessibility score. Each score is composed of both a numerical number and a colored gauge that reflects the number." Below this, there are two informational icons: a clock icon indicating a typical assessment time of 15-90 seconds, and a document icon stating that content must be attached to a course to be included in the scoring. A list of supported file formats is provided: PDF files, Office files (Word and Powerpoint), OpenOffice/LibreOffice files (Writer and Impress), Images, and Uploaded HTML files. A paragraph explains that accessibility scores are determined by the severity of issues, with a low score indicating severe or multiple issues and a high score indicating minor or no issues. A link is provided to "More on how to find accessibility scores". The "Score icons" section begins with a list item: "0 - 33 percent. Red icon. The file is not accessible and needs immediate attention. The accessibility score will range from 0 percent to 33".

- End-user documentation
- Ally release notes

<https://help.blackboard.com/Ally>



# Questions





anthology  
Advancing Knowledge