Ally Accessibility Fixes
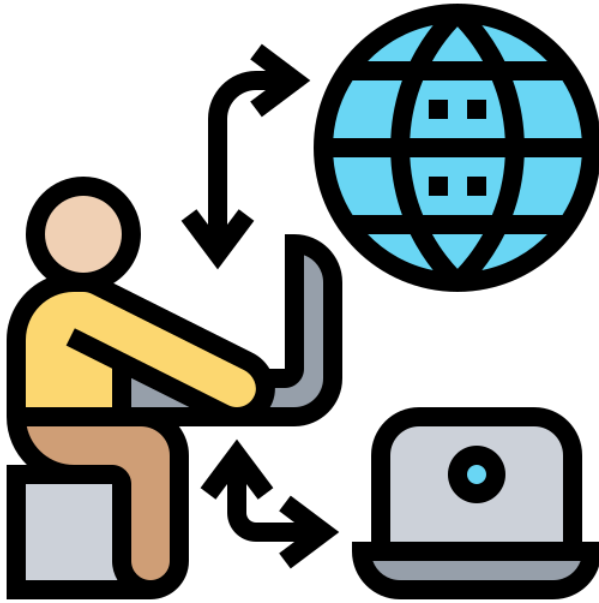
Remediating content at the source

Icon courtesy of freepik from Flaticon.com

Contents

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to demonstrate the issues that will be flagged by the Ally software in Canvas, and how to fix them at the source eg via Word, PowerPoint, or Canvas. There are separate guides available about fixing issues through the Ally software. You can contact sophie.gahan@ucc.ie for a copy of these. Alternatively, you can view the Ally Adoption Toolkit here.
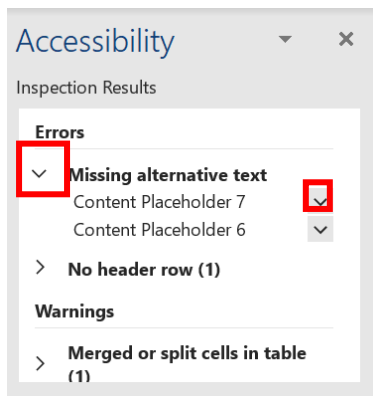
Word

Accessibility Checker

When you are editing a Word Document for accessibility, start by running an Accessibility Check. This is located under the **Review tab.**
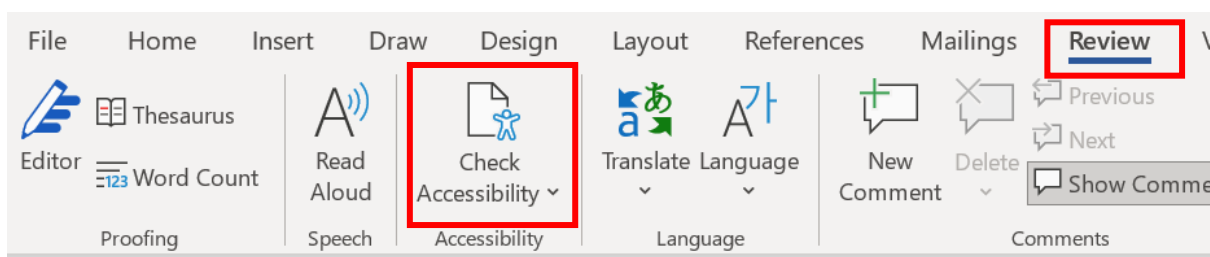
A list of different issues will appear, you can expand these using the arrows on either side.


In the following section, we will explain each of the issues that may arise during an Accessibility Check or Ally review.

Types of Issues

Colour Contrast

Colour contrast refers to the ratio of foreground text colour against the background colour on a webpage or document. It is best to avoid bright text and highlight colours. Stick to black font, on a white/grey background, where possible and use blue for links.

The Accessibility Checker will alert you to any contrast issues with your text. You can correct any issues from within the Checker.
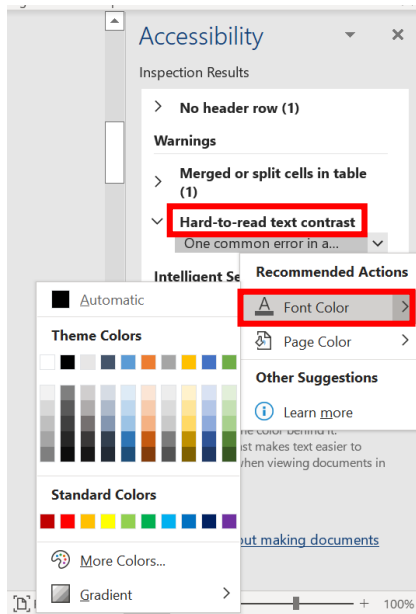

For more information on colour contrast ratios, visit WebAimChecker.org

Headings

Properly formatted Headings in a document allow a screenreader to navigate the content more easily and skip to sections as necessary. A screenreader can extract a list of all the Headings in a document, which can be read aloud to the user. If pre-formatted Headings aren't used, this is not possible. For example, using bold and underline won't enable this list to be generated.

Headings can be added from the **Styles** gallery, which is underneath the **Home** tab in Word.
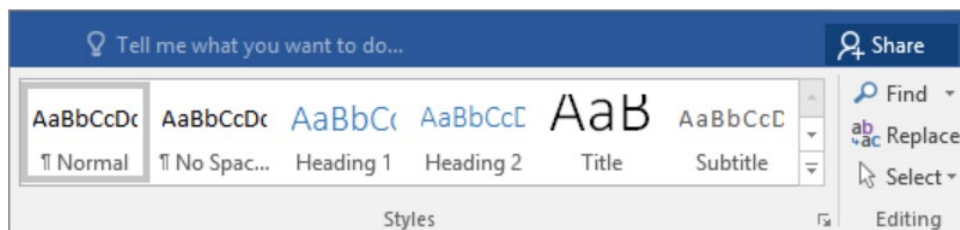
Headings work in a hierarchy, meaning the largest is Heading 1 and the smallest is Heading 5. A Heading 2 must always have a Heading 1 above it in the document structure. A Heading 2 can follow any other heading as long as there is a Heading 1 in the hierarchy and the hierarchy is maintained.

[Heading Styles can be customised and saved in a format of your choice. See the Microsoft Support documentation for more information](#).

Alt Text

Alt Text is the text description of an image that is provided to a screenreader. You can add Alt Text to any images or graphics that you include in a Word Document by right-clicking the image and selecting Edit Alt Text.
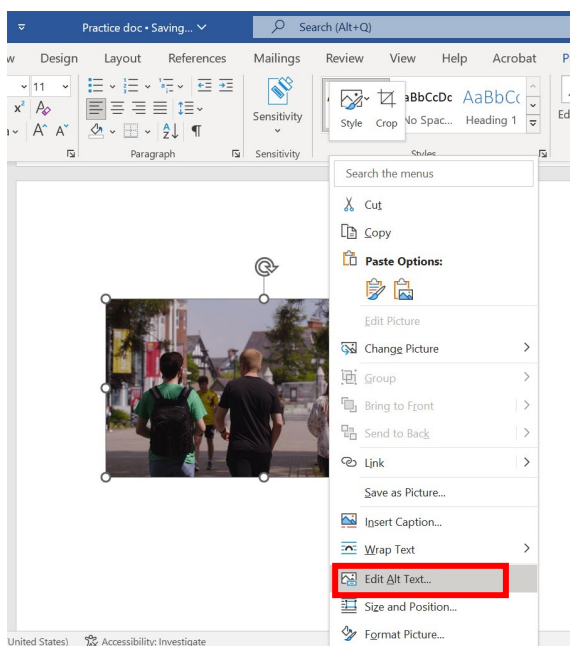

[For more information, you can watch our session on Alt Text here](#).
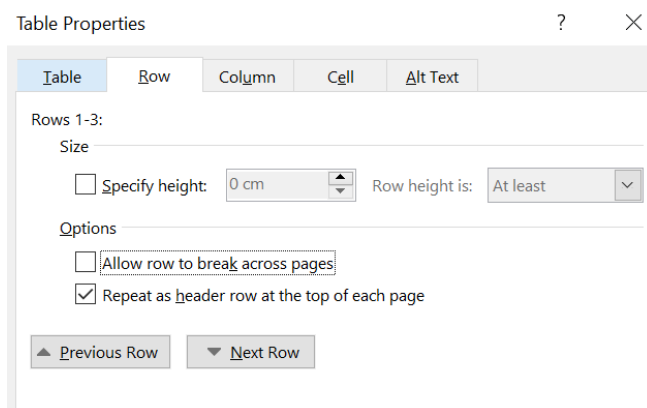
Tables

1. Headers

If you can Tab smoothly through a table, cell by cell and row by row, a screen reader should have no trouble with it. Designated header rows make it easier for a screen reader to navigate your table, and some screen readers will call out the name of a row or column before reading the data.

You can assign a **Header Row** or **Header Column** by clicking the table and selecting the **Table Design** tab.
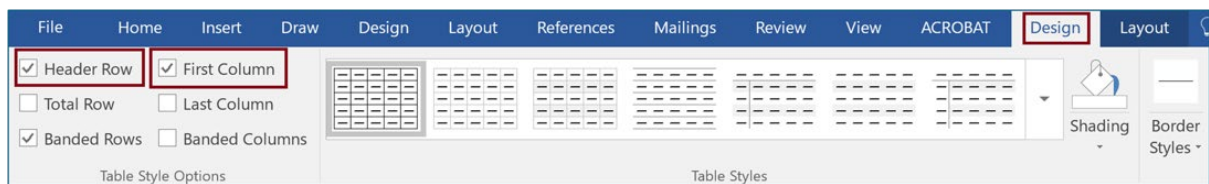
Under Table Properties, check **Repeat as header row at the top of each page**.

Also, be sure **Allow row to break across pages** is **unchecked.**

2. Merged/Split Cells

Another item that may be flagged in your Accessibility Checker is merged/split cells. Screen readers make sense of information in a linear way. They read tables from top to bottom, left to right.

Using merged or split cells in your table confuses the reading order and can make your information difficult to follow. Instead, consider breaking down your information into multiple simple tables (with no merged or split cells) or rethink how you are presenting the information.
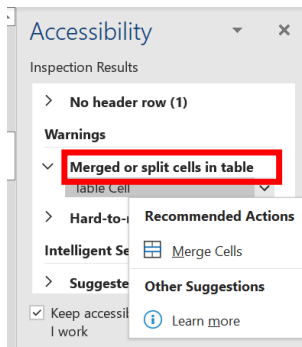
Note: It is not possible to fix the merged cells issue within the Accessibility Checker without running into an issue with split cells, and vice versa. This can be fixed via the licensed version of Adobe Acrobat by changing the scope attribute of the merged or split cells.

Setting a Title

A title on a document makes it easier to understand for users with visual impairments. It is more descriptive than the file name. If multiple documents are open at once, a title allows the screenreader to quickly navigate through all files before opening a specific one.

To set a title on a Word Document, select **File** and **Info**. In the **Properties** section, click the **Add a Title** field to add a document title.
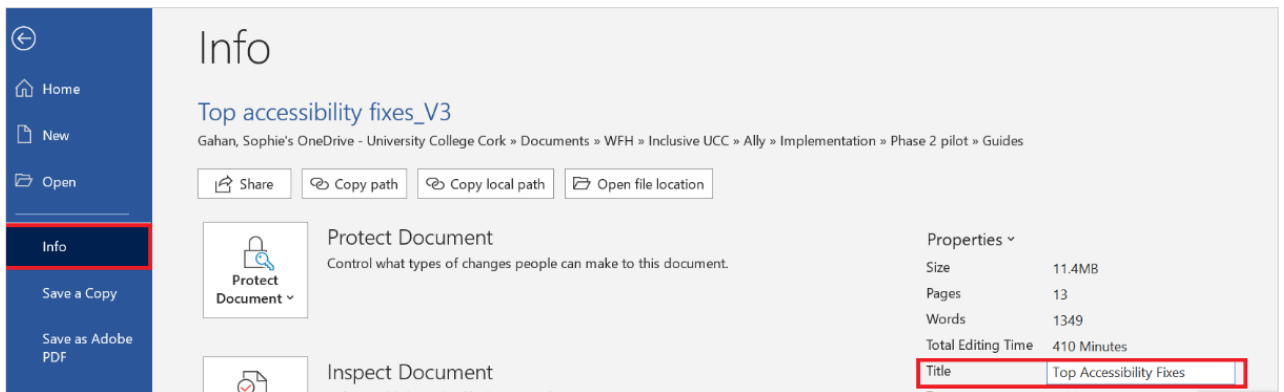
Setting a Language

Setting a language on a document not only informs the spellchecker of how to manage edits, but it also informs a screen reader of what language to select when reading the content aloud.

To select all the text in the document, go to the **Home** tab, choose **Editing>Select** and **Select All**. With all the text selected, go to the **Review** tab, select **Language** and select the **Set Proofing Language** option.
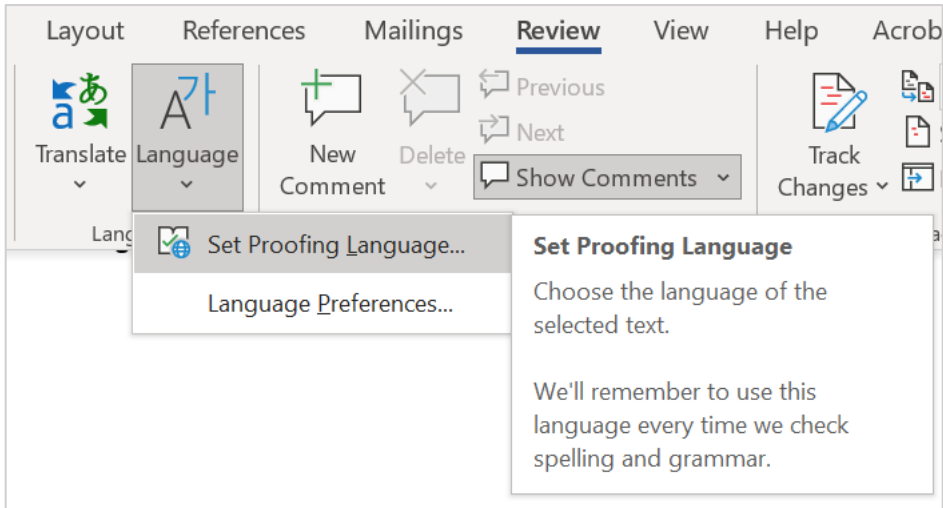
Once the **Language** dialog box opens, select the language that the text is written in.
Note: If you frequently use this language for other documents, select **Set As Default**.
To further facilitate language detection, unselect **'Do not check spelling or grammar'** and select **'Detect language automatically'**.

PowerPoint
Accessibility Checker

Similar to word, the Accessibility Checker in PowerPoint is located under the **Review tab**.
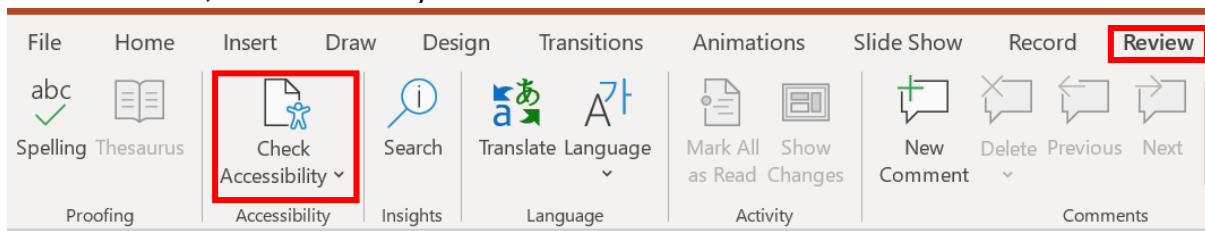

Types of Issues

All of the same principles listed above will show in the Accessibility Checker i.e Colour Contrast, Alt Text, and Tables. PowerPoint will also flag Slide Titles and Reading Order.
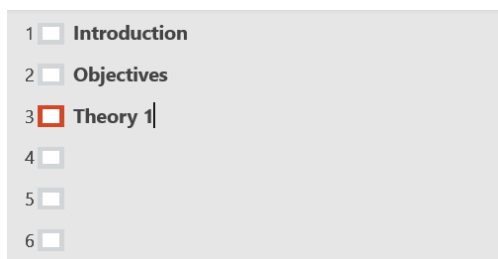
Slide Titles

If pre-formatted slide titles have not being used during a PowerPoint design, then the Accessibility Checker will recommend that they are added.

To resolve this issue, simply click on the slide number, in the AC review.
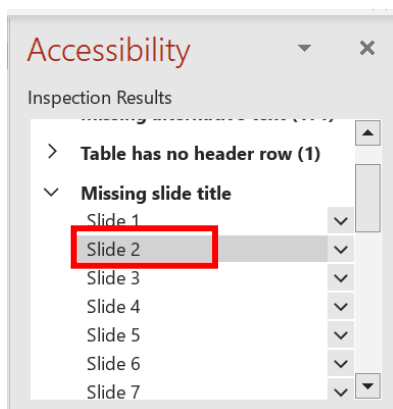
A new panel will appear to the left of your presentation. You can insert slide titles by typing directly into this area. **Note:** these titles will also be added to your slides.

Alternatively, if you already have a title on your slide, but it is a simple textbox, you can use the Accessibility Checker to '**Set as Slide Title**.' Use the dropdown arrow next to the issue to do this.
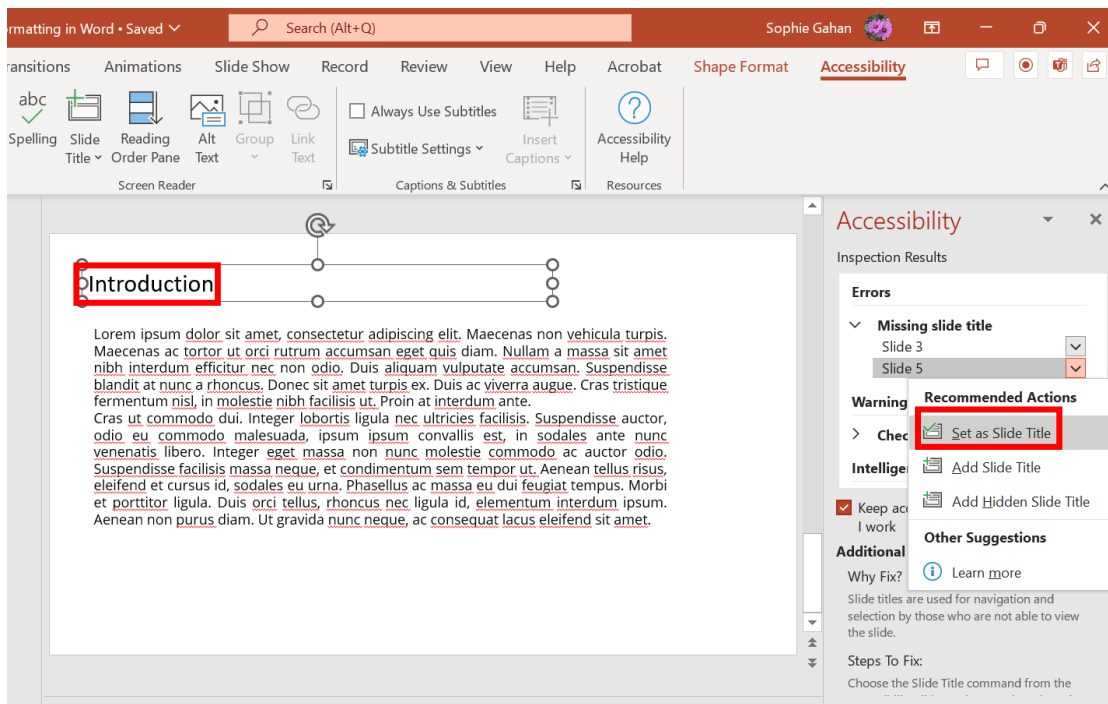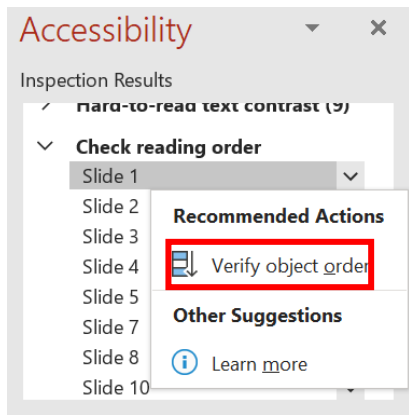

Reading Order

The Reading Order in PowerPoint refers to the layout of the elements on each slide. You must let the end user know what comes first. You can adjust this through the Accessibility Checker.
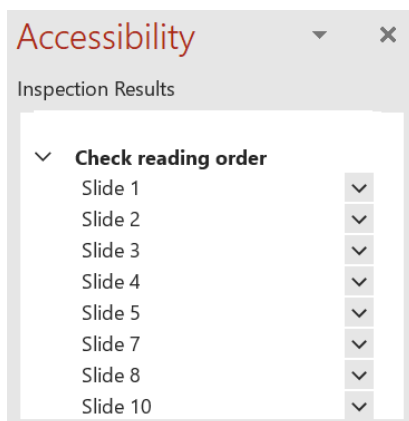
You can adjust this by using the dropdown arrow next to the issue and selecting '**Verify Object Order'**.

A **Reading Order** panel will appear to the right of your presentation. Untick any items that do not need to be read aloud. You can drag and drop the read-aloud content in the preferred order.
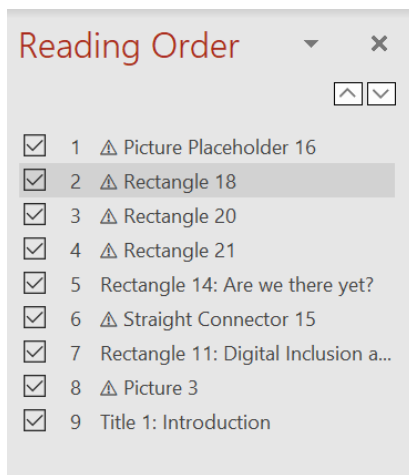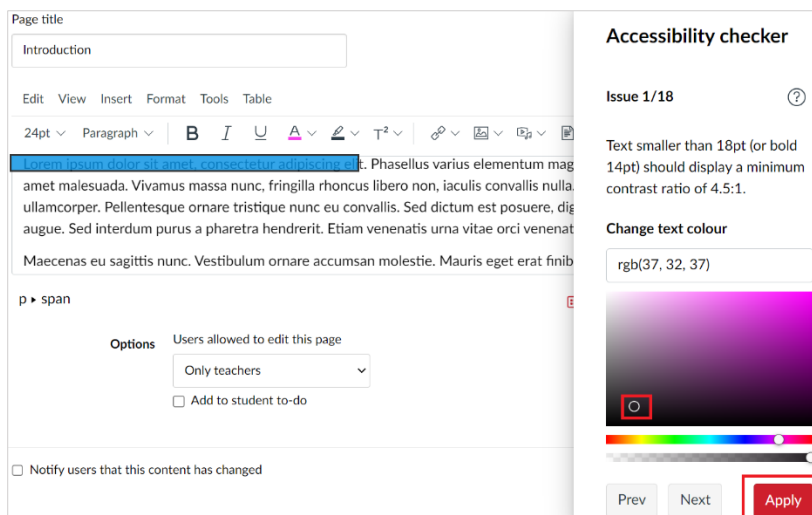
Canvas

Accessibility Checker

The Accessibility Checker is built-in to the **Rich Content Editor** (RCE) in Canvas. The RCE is used in all Announcements, Assignments, Discussions, Pages, Classic Quizzes, and the Syllabus. As you are creating/reviewing content in Edit mode in the RCE, the Accessibility Checker will flag any reading issues with you.
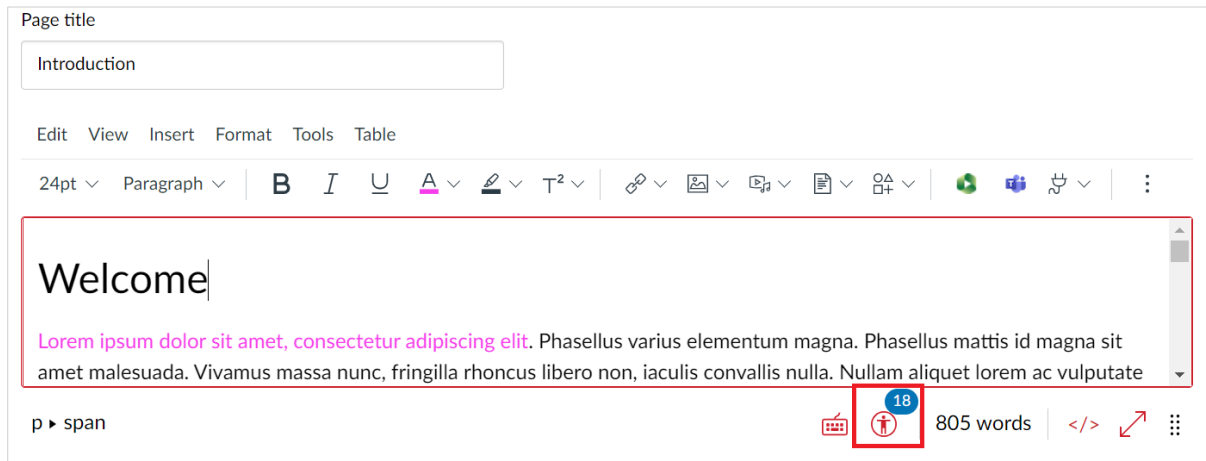
You can click this symbol to step through each issue and resolve it through the Checker. A pop-up window will appear on the right. From here, you can select an alternative display and the **Apply** button will become available once the edit meets Accessibility standards.

The Ally software will work in tandem with the Canvas Accessibility Checker to highlight issues. **Note**: sometimes Ally will flag an issue that has not being caught by Canvas. This is because Ally has higher thresholds for things like Colour Contrast. For that reason, it is best practice to do a final review of content through Ally.

PDF

Tagging

Tagging is the most common issue with PDFs, to be flagged by Ally. Tags are an invisible layer of formatting that create a logical reading order for a screen reader. They are applied to content such as Tables, Figures, Artifacts and Lists. Each tag identifies the type of content and stores some attributes about it. They also arrange the document content into a hierarchical architecture (or a "tag tree"). You do not need advanced editing skills to apply these changes. SensusAccess UCC will generate tags for you.

A demonstration of SensusAccess can be found at 8:50 mins of this video.

Note: where possible, it is best to share content in the original Word document, rather than converting to PDF.

Video

Captions

Captions can be added retrospectively to your videos in Panopto using **Automatic Speech Recognition**, alternatively you can upload a caption file.

To add automatic captions, select the **Captions** button from the left-hand panel when using Edit Mode in Panopto.
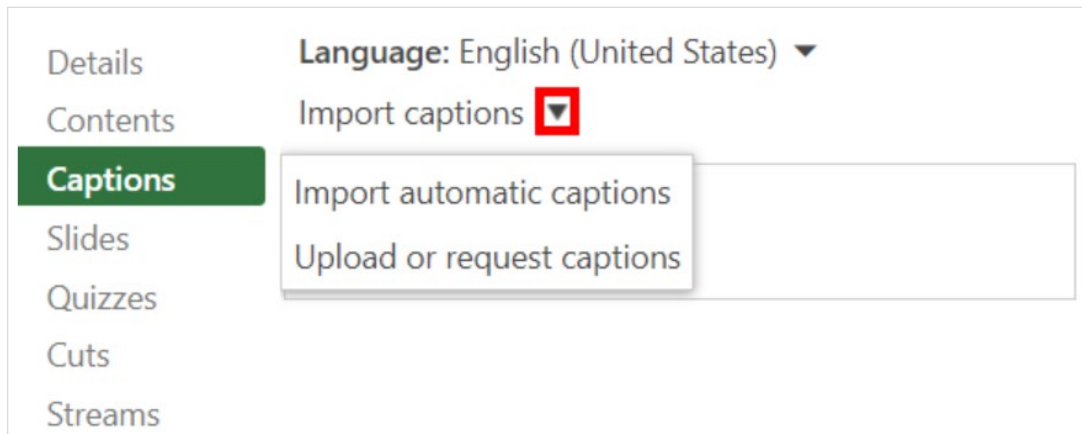
Select **Import Automatic Captions** to generate captions for your video. Once complete, you can click directly into any paragraph to edit the captions.
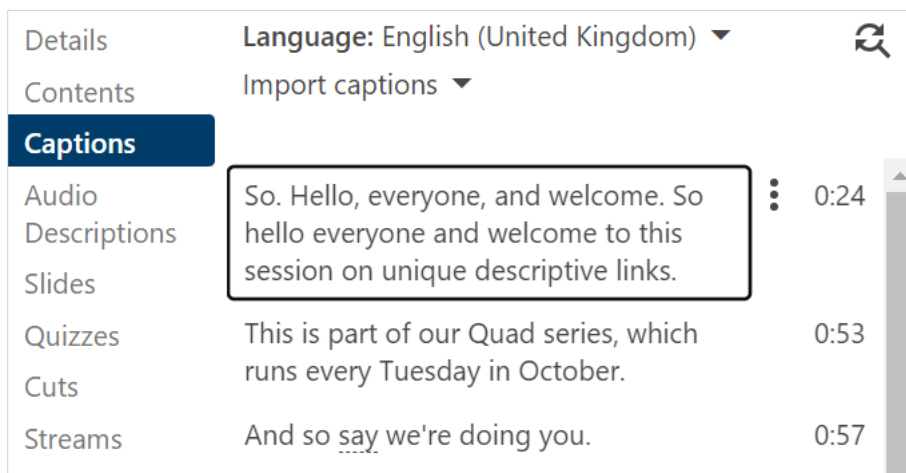
Resources

Legislation related to accessibility

- [EU Web Accessibility Directive (Irish context)](#)
- [The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0](#)
- [The Universal Design for Learning Guidelines](#)

Support Services

- [Microsoft Support](#)
- [Panopto Support](#)
- [Canvas Support](#)