What do MOOC providers think about accessibility?

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What do MOOC providers think about accessibility?

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How do MOOC providers cater for disabled learners?
- Interviews

 Interviews with accessibility content managers of MOOC platform providers, platform software developers/designers, educators and those with a range of expertise in the MOOC community.

What are the expectations of disabled learners when taking part in MOOCs?
- Open University online surveys and interviews

 Analyse pre and post MOOC survey data from 14 Open University MOOCs in FutureLearn to understand the demographics of learners and undertake a qualitative interview study of learners.

How can MOOCs be made accessible for disabled learners?
- MOOC Accessibility audit

 Development of a MOOC accessibility audit that includes expert-based heuristic evaluation, user-based testing and universal design for learning guidelines.

Context, motivation and expected outcomes

Providing accessible MOOCs can be an appropriate educational resource for disabled learners, but there is a lack of research about what educators and disabled learners expect from MOOCs. This research will benefit the MOOC providers who would be able to use the project’s outputs and disabled learners to improve their lifelong learning and re-skilling.

Themes

1. Organisational accessibility processes: Structural processes of the organization: how to work the barriers to learning, testing, production of the materials, improvements, training and protocols.
3. Stakeholders: All the bodies that are part in the management of MOOCs.
4. MOOC educational enablers: The educational bits and external factors that enable the learning through MOOCs.
5. Disabled learners and MOOCs: Benefits for disabled learners and data got from the MOOC providers.
6. MOOC learning processes: The processes that include pedagogical and educational approaches which affect the learning in MOOCs.

Findings

- Responsibility of creating accessible content falls on course teams.
- Accessibility is not always embedded in the routine design and development activities of the educational context of organisations.
- Legislation and standards play a predominant role in the development of accessible MOOCs.
- MOOCs can be valuable for disabled learners if they are accessible.
- MOOC platforms do not profile the learner's preferences.

Recommendations

- Providers should increase the effort in developing the skills of the course teams to create accessible content.
- Producing accessible educational resources requires clarity from the organisation in accessibility policies, guidelines and managing reported accessibility incidences.
- Further focus on learners, their preferences and learning design, has to be offered rather than aiming only to follow the minimum legal requirements.
- Explore the potential of developing MOOCs based on social models of disability.
- Not profiling the preferences of learners makes it difficult to deliver, or even recommend, the content in an accessible way to the learner.

Sample for the interviews with MOOC providers

- 6 Course Teams members
- 3 Technical Specialists
- 6 Accessibility Specialists
- 3 Educational Content Specialists
- 8 MOOC researchers

MOOC PLATFORM PROVIDER

- Technical Specialists:
  - Software developers
  - Digital designers
  - Technical program managers

MOOC PROVIDER

- COURSE TEAMS:
  - Educators
  - Instructional designers
  - Curators
  - Facilitators

ACCESSIBILITY SPECIALISTS
- Accessibility managers
- Inclusive Designers

EDUCATIONAL CONTENT SPECIALISTS:
- Course editors
- Learning media developers

MOOC PLATFORM PROVIDER

- Replication and feedback on barriers to learning
- Accessibility and UX guidelines
- Access to accessibility state to learners
- Production of educational materials
- Lesson plans, videos, podcasts, and text
- Third-party software
- Platform design

MOOC educational enablers

- Organisational accessibility processes
- Accessibility and technical specialists
- Accessibility testing, audits, and accessibility
- Improvement of bariers to learning
- Standardisation
- Legislation and standardisation
- Certification
- Learning and pedagogical design
- Cultural diversity, language and digital literacy
- Openness
- Measurability
- Learner experience and effective learning
- Value added

MOOC learning processes

- Stakeholders
- Platform Providers
- Educational content specialists
- Course providers
- MOOC researchers
- MOOC platform providers
- MOOC software developers/designers
- MOOC educators

Sample
- 14 Open University MOOCs in FutureLearn
- Pre and post MOOC survey data

Development of MOOC accessibility audit that includes expert-based heuristic evaluation, user-based testing and universal design for learning guidelines.