

VCU Web Standards & Guidelines Checklist

Web Services requires 3-5 business days to review websites and/or applications before being made live to the public. Upon review, errors will be reported to requester. This window of time is put on hold until all corrections have been made and the request is placed at the back of the queue.

Please mark off fulfilled requirements below. When all requirements have been met, please sign the last page of this checklist where indicated and return.

1. General

- The website represents VCU and not the VCU Health System.
- The website complies with VCU copyright policies.
- The website does not promote commercial activity outside of official university business.
- If the website contains sexually explicit content, a written warning statement is provided, and the content is accessible only through a password mechanism.
- If the website is a unit's primary web presence, it is not a blog.
- The website is listed in the VCU A-Z index with at least one site owner or technical contact provided.
- If the website is left out-of-date for 12 or more months, it will be moved to the VCU website archive or taken offline.

2. Accessibility

2.1 Federal

- The website includes skip to content links on every page.
- The website includes unique title tags for every page.
- If the website has form inputs, these inputs have associative labels.
- The website is equally functional and navigable when using the mouse, keyboard, or both.
- The website provides alt-text for non-trivial images.
- The website provides links with meaningful text and information as to its end location.
- If the website provides PDF files, these files properly allow highlighting text in a logical order and copying its contents to another program.
- If the website provides videos, these videos are captioned.
- The website has an appropriate language set on every page.
- The website utilizes suitable color contrast ratios between text and background.

2.2 VCU

- All new website designs or redesigns and/or web applications must be submitted to Web Services for accessibility approval via Service Desk, category EIT Accessibility
- The website passes WCAG 2.0 Level AA accessibility standards.
- If the website provides PDF files, these files pass WCAG 2.0 Level AA accessibility standards.
- The website does not contain HTML validation errors.
- The website contains a link on every page to a “text only” version of itself.
- A div with the id of “skip-links” with a series of skip links enclosed is included after the opening body tag of every page within the website.
- The website is readable with stylesheets disabled.

3. Branding

- The website loads an approved VCU branding bar at the top of every page and is not obstructed from view by visual elements.
- The website does not use unofficial VCU logos or seals on any page.
- If the website is for a unit that serves a specific part of the university, the unit name is prefixed or used in conjunction with its title or parent unit.

4. Captioning

- If the website contains audio/visual media intended for the general public or any VCU employee who has a relevant accommodation agreement on file with the ADA Coordinator, these materials have appropriate captioning.
- If the website contains audio/visual media provided by instructors for students, these materials have appropriate captioning or transcriptions and are registered with the appropriate disability office.

5. Content

- The website has a link to the VCU homepage with the text "Virginia Commonwealth University" on every page.
- If the website is for a unit of the university that has a parent unit, a link to the parent unit is provided on every page.
- The website provides contact information (e.g. address, phone, email) on every page.
- The website provides a date of when the site or its pages were last updated or reviewed on every page.
- The website does not use the phrase "PO Box #####" on any page.

- The website includes links to the required inclusion resources.
- The website provides a helpful 404 error page.
- The website includes an input to the VCU search tool.
- The website does not contain duplicate information from VCU Bulletin.
- Websites cannot deliver primary content via an iframe.

6. Content Management

- If the website requires a content management system (CMS), the VCU approved content management platform, TerminalFour, is used.
- The website contains a link to the TerminalFour “Direct Edit” mode of the site in the footer of every page.
- The website uses the appropriate TerminalFour navigation tags to generate links used to navigate the site.
- The website provides configurable global header and footer sections within its TerminalFour page layout(s).

7. Design & Browser Compatibility

- The website utilizes HTML5 and works on modern browsers.
- The website does not use tables as the primary means of site structure or layout.
- The website utilizes external CSS stylesheets for styling.
- The website provides at least a 16px x 16px favicon.
- If the website is not under development, assets such as images, css and javascript are not served from development environments.
- The website does not use Flash.

8. Domain

- The website uses a vcu.edu top-level domain.
- The website uses a subdomain that does not include “VCU”.
- The website uses a domain or subdomain that does not include a person’s name.
- The website uses a top-level domain hosted on a VCU approved web server.

9. Mobile

- The website is responsive and mobile-friendly.
- The website utilizes viewport meta tag(s) to properly handle device width.
- The website passes the Google Mobile-Friendly Test.
- The website has buttons and inputs that have a decent tap target area.
- The website provides content that is equally available, visible, and navigable regardless of viewport size or viewing device.

- Content that requires the user to download an external application from a mobile application store or download library must include download instructions and contact information to request the content in alternate formats.

10. Security

- The website is loaded over HTTPS with a valid certificate.
- The website has a secure connection.
- If the website contains pages that require authentication or forms requesting sensitive data, these pages send requests over SSL with a secure connection.
- The website does not automatically redirect visitors to an external non vcu.edu domain.
- Websites cannot deliver primary content via an iframe.

11. Analytics

- If the website is using Google Analytics, the Google Analytics account must be set up using at least two VCU domain accounts.
- If the website is using Google Analytics, the Google Analytics account must grant access to webservices@vcu.edu with "Manage Users" permissions.

Plan Go Live dates with the review process in mind. If reported errors are not corrected, Go Live dates may be extended an additional 10 business days.

Domain: _____ (example.vcu.edu)

Technical contact: _____ (Full name)

Date: ____ / ____ / _____ (MM/DD/YYYY)