

Ally

What is Ally?

It is a tool designed to make uploaded module content into Course Resources accessible. It provides:

- An automatic check on the accessibility of uploaded content and then generates alternative accessible formats that students can select from,
- Feedback to staff on how to improve the accessibility of their module content,
- Reporting to help understand the University benchmark and drive future improvements

Accessibility scores

Ally measures the accessibility of your files that you have uploaded into your module, and shows you a coloured gauge icon, that represents your file's accessibility score, or level of accessibility. Accessibility scores are determined by the severity of issues in each file. A low score indicates the file has severe or multiple accessibility issues; a high score means there are minor or no accessibility issues. For accessibility scores less than 100 percent, Ally gives you suggestions for improving the accessibility of the file.

Content ▾

Build Content ▾ Assessments ▾ Tools ▾ Partner Content ▾

 **Introduction to Chemistry**

 **Atoms + Compounds**

Attached Files:  Dalton's Theory of Atoms.docx (2.348 MB)
 Elements, Compounds & Mixtures.htm (3.763 KB)
 Elements Compounds Mixtures.ppt (723 KB)

The postulates of Dalton's atomic theory: which points do we still use today, and what have we learned since Dalton?

There are four colours of gauge icons: red, orange, and two shades of green, that measure your file's accessibility:

-  **0 - 33 percent: Red icon.** The file is not accessible and needs immediate attention. The accessibility score will range from 0 percent to 33 percent.
-  **34 - 66 percent: Orange icon.** The file is somewhat accessible. The accessibility score will range from 34 percent to 66 percent.
-  **67 - 99 percent: Green icon.** The file is accessible but could be improved. The accessibility score will range from 67 percent to 99 percent.
-  **100 percent: Perfect. Dark green icon.** The file has perfect accessibility, with a score of 100 percent. There is no action needed to further improve.

Please note, students do not see the accessibility score.

Click on the icon, next to your file to understand the score given and how you can improve the file accessibility

How to improve file accessibility

Once you select a file's accessibility score, a panel opens to show the score and

the file name along with information on the file accessibility. For accessible files, Ally tells you what you did correctly. For files that are not accessible, Ally shows issues within the document and provides a step-by-step guide on how to fix the problem. Ally gives feedback for images and text. While image improvements might be one step, text feedback will often include multiple step instructions. Common issues include untagged PDFs or contrast issues.

The Feedback Panel

Once you select a file's accessibility score, a panel opens to show the score along with information on the file accessibility. For accessible files, Ally tells you what you did correctly. For files that are not accessible, Ally shows issues within the document and shows you how to fix the problem.

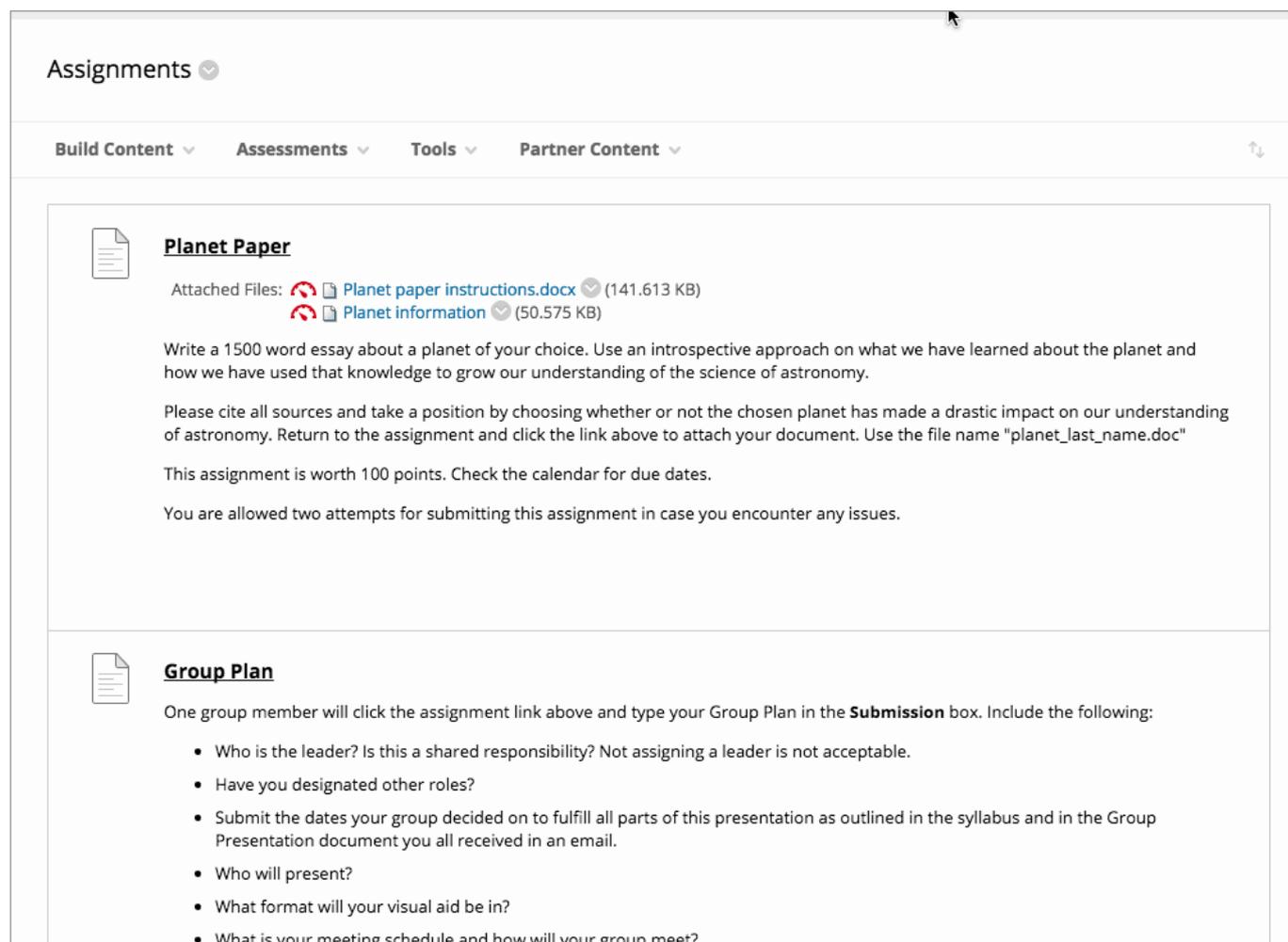
You will find the following details in the file accessibility panel:

The screenshot shows a dark-themed notification window titled "Accessibility score for: standards_draft.pdf". At the top right is a close button (X). Below the title is a gauge showing an accessibility score of 61%, with a blue circle labeled 'A' next to it. The gauge is partially filled with orange. Below the gauge is a blue circle labeled 'B' next to the text "This PDF contains images that are missing an alternative description". Underneath this text are two buttons: "What this means" with a blue circle labeled 'C' to its right, and "How to add descriptions" with a blue circle labeled 'D' to its right. At the bottom of the notification is a white box with the heading "Upload a version with alternative descriptions". Inside this box is a dashed-line area containing an upload icon (an upward arrow on a pedestal), the text "Drop file to upload or", and a "Browse" button with a blue circle labeled 'E' to its left.

- A. Accessibility Score. The file's accessibility color and numerical score based on severity of accessibility issue.
- B. Description. The description of the accessibility issue affecting the file.
- C. Additional information. Detailed information about how the issue affects accessibility and why it is important to correct.
- D. Instructions to improve. Step-by-step instructions for your preferred software that show you how to improve file accessibility.
- E. Direct file upload. A drag-and-drop area to upload original or fixed files.

Improve file accessibility

Ally provides instructions to improve file accessibility within the feedback panels. The animation below, gives an example of the instructions that Ally provides.



The screenshot shows an LMS interface with a top navigation bar containing 'Assignments' and a dropdown arrow. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with 'Build Content', 'Assessments', 'Tools', and 'Partner Content', each with a dropdown arrow, and a refresh icon on the right. The main content area is divided into two sections. The first section, titled 'Planet Paper', includes a document icon, the title, and two attached files: 'Planet paper instructions.docx' (141.613 KB) and 'Planet information' (50.575 KB). Below the files are three paragraphs of instructions: a 1500-word essay prompt, citation requirements, and submission details. The second section, titled 'Group Plan', includes a document icon, a brief instruction, and a bulleted list of requirements.

Assignments ▾

Build Content ▾ **Assessments** ▾ **Tools** ▾ **Partner Content** ▾ ↻

Planet Paper

Attached Files: [Planet paper instructions.docx](#) (141.613 KB) [Planet information](#) (50.575 KB)

Write a 1500 word essay about a planet of your choice. Use an introspective approach on what we have learned about the planet and how we have used that knowledge to grow our understanding of the science of astronomy.

Please cite all sources and take a position by choosing whether or not the chosen planet has made a drastic impact on our understanding of astronomy. Return to the assignment and click the link above to attach your document. Use the file name "planet_last_name.doc"

This assignment is worth 100 points. Check the calendar for due dates.

You are allowed two attempts for submitting this assignment in case you encounter any issues.

Group Plan

One group member will click the assignment link above and type your Group Plan in the **Submission** box. Include the following:

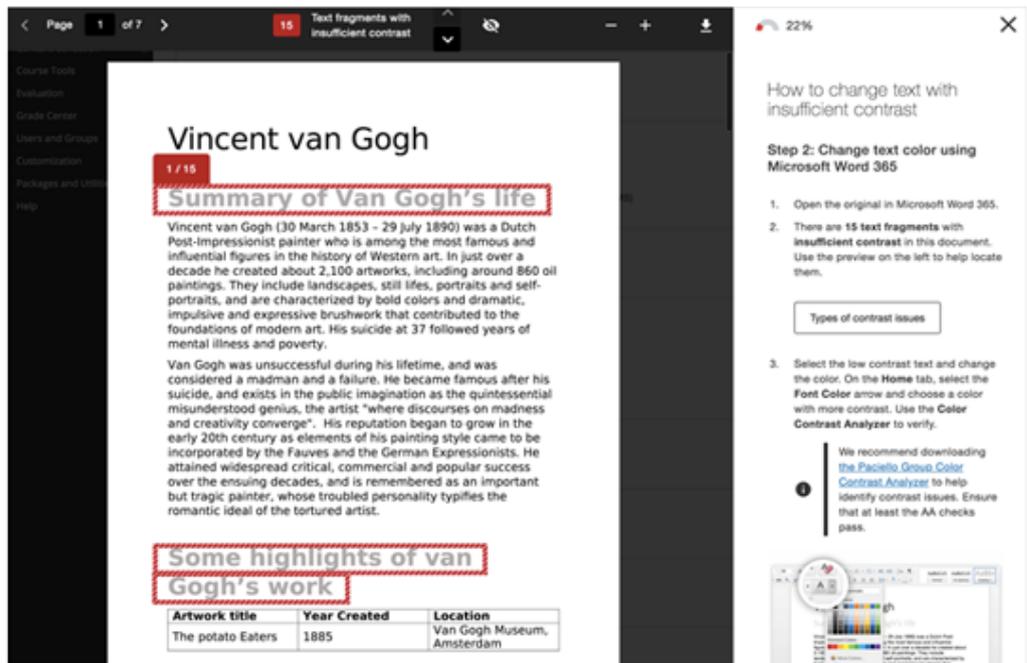
- Who is the leader? Is this a shared responsibility? Not assigning a leader is not acceptable.
- Have you designated other roles?
- Submit the dates your group decided on to fulfill all parts of this presentation as outlined in the syllabus and in the Group Presentation document you all received in an email.
- Who will present?
- What format will your visual aid be in?
- What is your meeting schedule and how will your group meet?

Instructor feedback

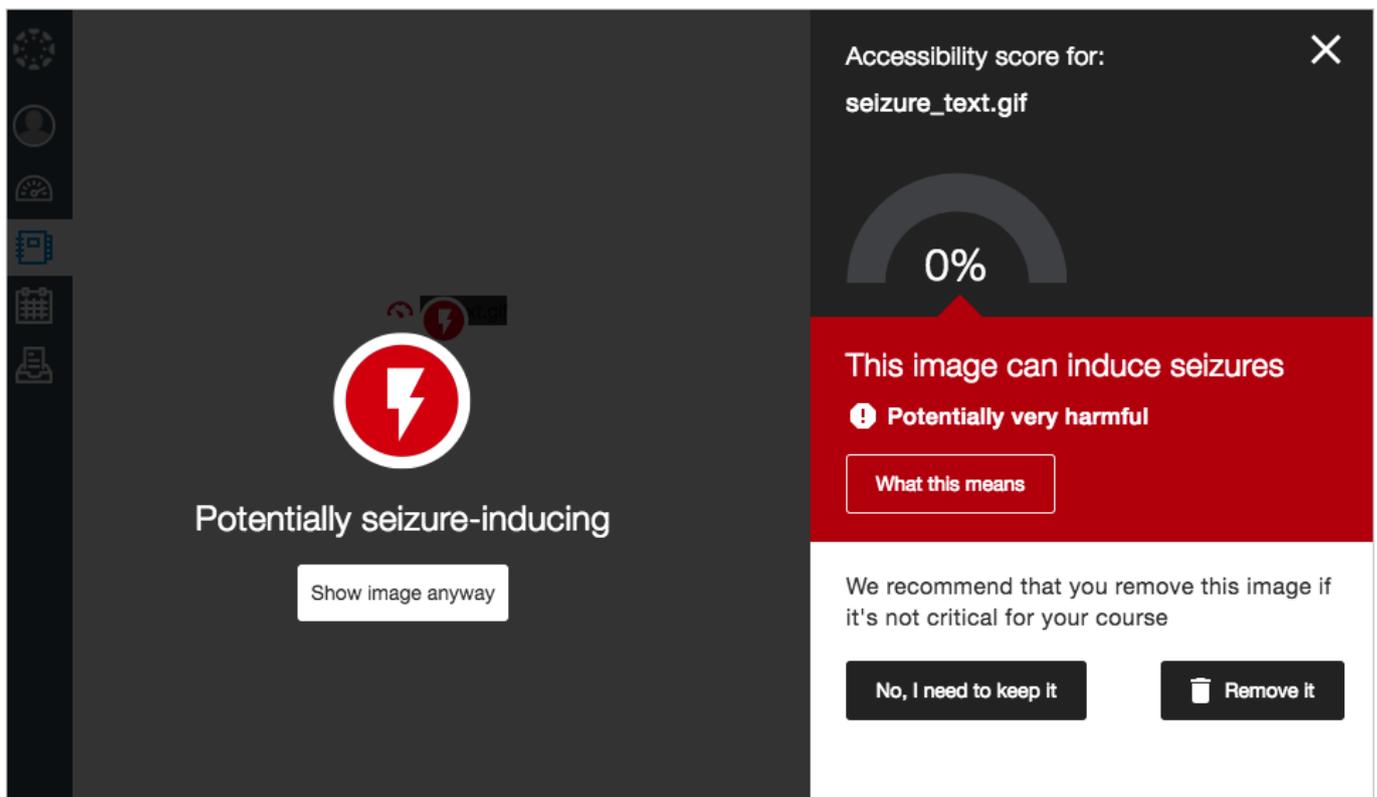
Ally provides you detailed feedback and support to help you become an accessibility pro. Learn about accessibility issues, why they matter, and how to fix them. Green is the goal!

Select the Accessibility score to open the instructor feedback. Follow the steps in front of you to go step-by-step. Select All issues to see every issue in the file and decide what issues to fix first.

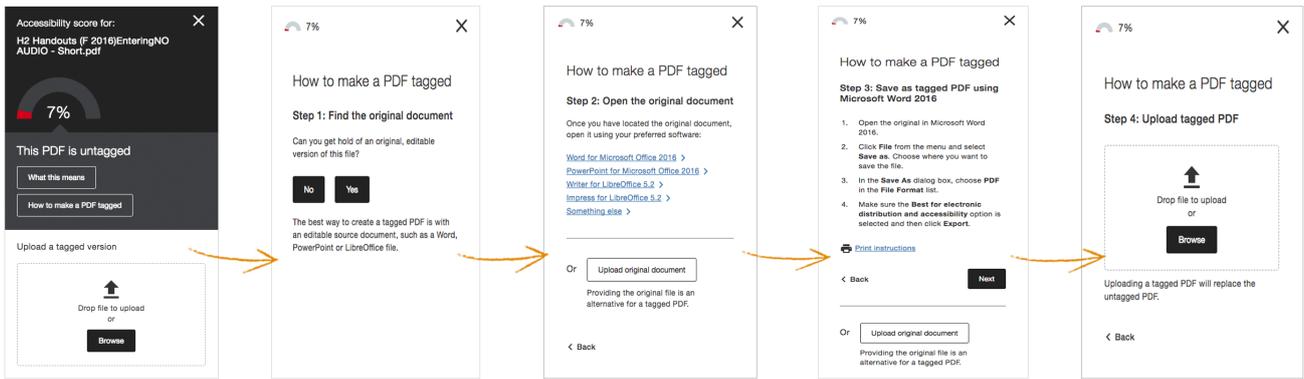
Accessibility score: Low
Click to improve



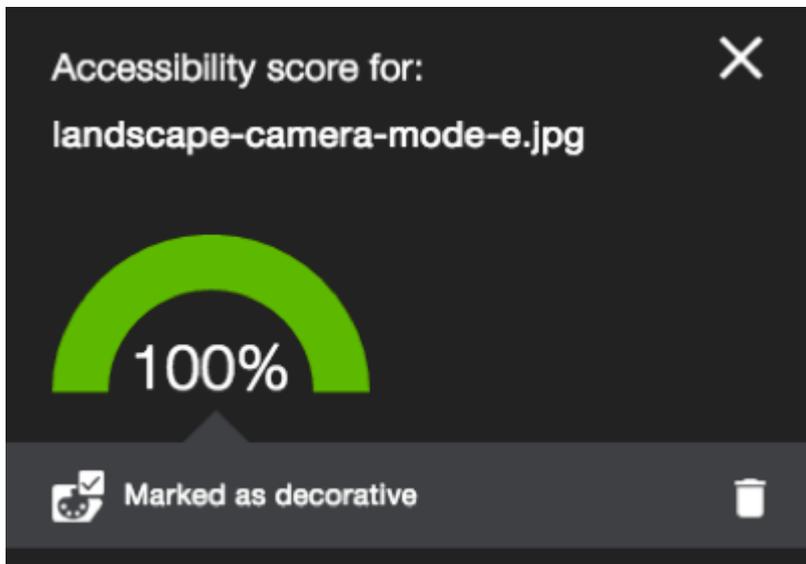
. Ally produces feedback for both images or text. Image feedback often single-step, and involves adding a description for clarity.



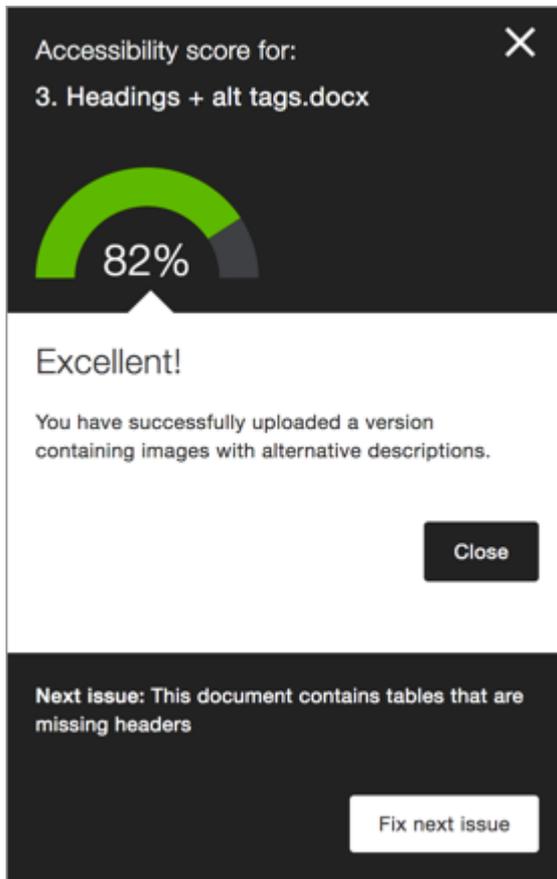
Text feedback will often include multiple step instructions for your preferred software, such as Microsoft Word. Common issues include untagged PDFs or contrast issues.



Ally might prompt you to add additional information or to upload resources to make the file more user friendly. Depending on the issue, there could be several steps you need to take to make sure your file is accessible.



After you make your file more accessible, the accessibility score updates next to the file in the course. If you are unable to make your file more accessible, the file will remain with a low accessibility score. If you have multiple issues within your file, Ally will alert you of the next issue to fix.



What do Students see?

Students do not see the file's accessibility rating nor can they access the Ally Feedback panel.

Students get access to the multiple accessible versions of the module files created by Ally. Accessible files include readable text for screen readers, pictures with captions, and easy-to-navigate content. Student have the choice to download the format that best suits their needs.

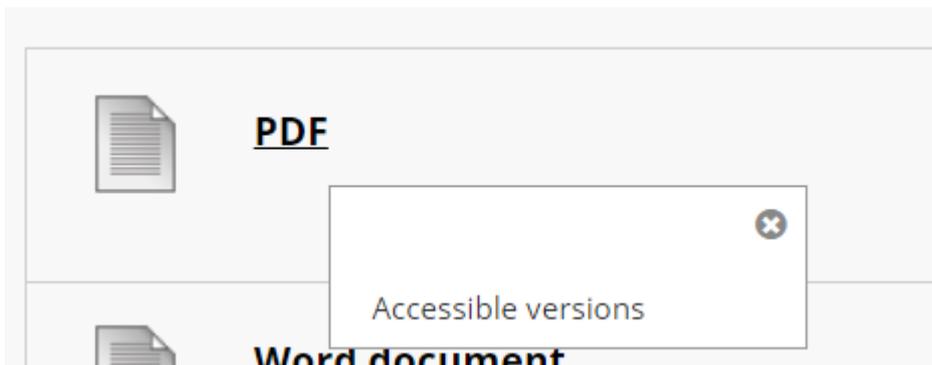
Ally creates these alternative accessible formats:

- OCR version for scanned documents. This text is automatically extracted from your instructor's file and has improved reading and searching capability.
- Tagged PDF version of Word, Powerpoint, and OpenOffice/LibreOffice files.
- Semantic HTML. This option can be used for opening in an online browser or on mobile devices.

- ePub. If you have a mobile reader, you can open an ePub document on an iPad, Kindle, or similar device.
- Electronic braille. A .BRF version for consumption on electronic braille displays.
- Audio. Download this version to access an MP3 version for listening.

How to access the accessible file

Navigate the module to the file required and from the file dropdown menu select **Accessible versions**.



A pop-up window lists accessible file options. Accessible versions may vary depending on the file type.

Download Accessible Version



-  **HTML**
For viewing in the browser and on mobile devices

-  **ePub**
For reading as an e-book on an iPad, Kindle, etc.

-  **Electronic braille**
BRF version for consumption on electronic braille displays

-  **Audio**
MP3 version for listening

Cancel

 Download

Choose a version and select *Download*.

If this is a first download of a specific file type, a *Preparing download* notification appears. The download may take a couple of minutes to complete.

Best Practice

[University of Derby Case Study - An Ally for Inclusive Practice](https://blog.blackboard.com/an-ally-to-support-inclusive-learning-at-the-university-of-derby/)

<https://blog.blackboard.com/an-ally-to-support-inclusive-learning-at-the-university-of-derby/>