

## **Digital Accessibility in Higher Education: a Model for Improvement**

The retention of disabled students in Higher Education (HE) remains low, yet cuts have recently been made to the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) which helps to support them. With the number of disabled students enrolling in Higher Education (HE) continuing to rise, increasing logistical and financial pressure is being placed on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to facilitate reasonable adjustment. This presentation will present a 'Model of Improved Digital Teaching Material Accessibility', which has been developed in an attempt to minimise the increasing pressure on HEIs. The study informing this model investigated the accessibility of digital teaching materials on a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) in a level 7 course at a UK HEI. The model can be used by academics to create accessible and inclusive teaching materials, including advice for standard document formats like Word and PDF, to other resources such as interactive video resources and presentations. The model assumes a preventative, anticipatory strategy, removing the requirement for retrospective, targeted, reasonable adjustment. The presentation will be relevant to delegates interested in inclusive practice, inclusive technology and student retention. We anticipate that adopting the model will improve both disabled and non-disabled student learning, increase disabled student retention and reduce future logistical and financial pressure on HEIs.

**Claire Moscrop**

Senior Lecturer Teaching and Learning  
Edge Hill University