



Digitising Content Together

Ministerial NETwoRk for Valorising Activities in digitisation

Quality principles of cultural websites

Test



Transparent

This section examines the first quality principle, that «A quality Website must be transparent, clearly stating the identity and purpose of the Website, as well as the organisation responsible for its management». It:

- examines how to interpret the transparency principle
- outlines criteria for establishing whether or not a Website is transparent
- suggests a checklist of Website characteristics to be used to ensure transparency
- describes a number of tests which can be taken in order to verify that the Website is transparent.



1. Does the site name appear on the browser title bar?
2. Does the part of the site (e.g. 'Exhibitions', 'Mission Statement') also appear on the title bar, in order to facilitate navigation?
3. Is the site name the most prominent text on the front page?
4. Does the site URL indicate the nature of the site?
5. Is the mission statement prominently displayed on the front page?
6. Does the mission statement clearly state the aims, nature, owner and content of the site?
7. Is the mission statement available in multiple languages?
8. Is it clear and easy to switch from one language to another?
9. Does the front page state clearly the identity of the organisation responsible for the creation and maintenance of the site?
10. If an animated or other non-informational front page is used, can this easily be bypassed or skipped?



Effective

This section examines the second quality principle, that «A quality Website must select, digitise, author, present and validate content to create an effective Website for users». It:

- examines how to interpret the effectiveness principle
- outlines criteria for establishing whether or not a Website is effective
- suggests a checklist of Website characteristics to be used to ensure effectiveness
- describes a number of tests which can be taken in order to verify that the Website is effective.



1. Have focus groups or other user representatives been consulted as to the choice of content which would make the site as effective and useful as possible for them?
2. Have formal content criteria been drawn up, and followed, which reflect the target audience requirements?
3. After digitisation and building of Web pages, have experts reviewed the content to ensure that item labeling (identification) is correct?
4. Have experts also reviewed the supporting information / description?
5. Is it clear which supporting information belongs to which cultural artifact?
6. Are item labels or supporting information available in multiple languages?
7. Is it easy and clear to switch between languages?
8. Have all internal and external hyperlinks been tested?
9. Are images presented at a suitable resolution?
10. Are image download times acceptable? Even for slow Internet connections?
11. Has the use of thumbnails been considered?
12. Are high-resolution images also available?
13. Have IPR and Digital Rights Management issues been considered for such images?
14. Have the navigation suggestions been considered?
15. Have the focus groups reviewed the site in terms of usability and navigation?



Maintained

This section examines the third quality principle, that «A quality Website must implement quality of service policy guidelines to ensure that the Website is maintained and updated at an appropriate level». It:

- examines how to interpret the 'maintained' principle
- outlines criteria for establishing whether or not a Website is maintained
- suggests a checklist of Website characteristics to be used to ensure quality of service is delivered
- describes a number of tests to verify that the Website is delivering quality of service.



1. Does your Website contain information which refers to specific events or news, with specific dates?
2. If so, are all such dates in the future, or do you have some 'old news' on your site?
3. Does your Website present long-term or medium-term progress reports (e.g. of a project, an artistic exercise, a theatre season, a ballet on tour, etc.)
4. If so, is it kept fully up to date?
5. Does your Website contain progress reports of now-completed initiatives?
6. If so, have they been concluded and summarised?
7. Do you have a policy for the migration or repositioning of completed progress-report initiatives? If not, have you planned one? If so, is it fully implemented?
8. Do you have a policy of periodically reviewing and refreshing your Website content? If not, should you consider one? If so, is it fully implemented?
9. Have you considered a new user interface or new home page in the last six months? Would this encourage its use?
10. Does your site have a backup procedure in place?
11. Has it been tested?
12. Does your site have an agreed and implemented availability service level policy?
13. Are there backup or hot-swappable or redundant hardware and software platform elements in place to ensure ongoing availability?



Accessible

This section examines the first quality principle, that «A quality Website must be transparent, clearly stating the identity and purpose of the Website, as well as the organisation responsible for its management». It:

- examines how to interpret the transparency principle
- outlines criteria for establishing whether or not a Website is transparent
- suggests a checklist of Website characteristics to be used to ensure transparency
- describes a number of tests which can be taken in order to verify that the Website is transparent.



1. Does the site appear comply with W3C WAI guidelines?
2. Was the site planned from the start to support access from a wide range of delivery channels?
3. Does the site make sense without any images?
4. Does the site still have value without any images?
5. Was the site planned from the start to support universal access?
6. Does the site rely on proprietary extensions or plugins?
7. Are multiple browser types supported?
8. Are mobile and handheld devices supported?
9. Are slow Internet connections supported?



User-centred

This section examines the fifth quality principle, that «A quality Website must be user-centred, taking into account the needs of users, ensuring relevance and ease of use through responding to evaluation and feedback». It:

- examines how to interpret the user-centred principle,
- outlines criteria for establishing whether or not a Website is user-centred
- suggests a checklist of Website characteristics to be used to ensure that the needs of the user take priority
- describes a number of tests which can be taken in order to verify that the Website is as user-friendly as possible.



1. Have you recruited a dedicated user focus group?
2. Does the user group truly reflect your target audience?
3. Are all major elements of your target audience represented in your focus group?
4. Has the Website concept and aims been clearly communicated to your focus group?
5. Has your focus group reviewed prototype Web elements?
6. Has your focus group provided feedback?
7. Has the feedback been formally documented and included in the design process?
8. Has this feedback been reflected in later prototypes
9. If your site is 'live'
 - a. Do online feedback facilities exist?
 - b. Are they promoted?
 - c. Are they being used?
 - d. Is the feedback being documented formally and kept for the next site review?
 - e. Is the feedback being evaluated, in case there is an urgent need for change?
10. If user contribution to your site is appropriate
 - a. Do online content contribution facilities exist?
 - b. Are they fully documented and easy for the public or your target audience to use?
 - c. Are they being used?
 - d. If not, is this due to lack of promotion or difficulty of use, or do your users really have nothing to contribute?



Responsive

This section examines the sixth quality principle, that «A quality Website must be responsive, enabling users to contact the site and receive an appropriate reply. Where appropriate, encourage questions, information sharing and discussions with and between users». It:

- examines how to interpret the responsiveness principle,
- outlines criteria for establishing whether or not a Website is responsive
- suggests a checklist of Website characteristics to be used to ensure responsiveness
- describes a number of tests which can be taken in order to verify that the Website is responsive.



1. Does the site have a screen where questions can be asked?
2. Is there a member or staff or a team in place who can answer questions?
3. Has this resource been briefed and trained?
4. Has this resource got time allocated to him/them to provide this service?
5. Does this resource have access to specialist experts who can authoritatively answer questions at any level about the material on the Website?
6. Have the experts been briefed and have they committed to providing support?
7. Is there a user response policy in place?
8. Has this been explained to and endorsed by the relevant personnel?
9. Is there an open forum, discussion board or other mechanism where users can discuss questions and issues?
10. Is there a moderation process in place which protects the site from inappropriate contributions?
11. If so, is this managed by a responsible resource, with time allocated to it, access to experts, full training, etc.?



Multilingual

This section examines the seventh quality principle, that «A quality Website must be aware of the importance of multi-linguality by providing a minimum level of access in more than one language». It:

- examines how to interpret the multi-linguality principle
- outlines criteria for establishing whether or not a Website is multi-lingual
- suggests a checklist of Website characteristics to be used to ensure multi-linguality
- describes a number of tests which can be taken in order to verify that the Website is multi-lingual.



- 1. Does the site have any multi-lingual content?**
- 2. Does the site identity and profile material appear in more than one language?**
- 3. Is there any material presented in sign language?**
- 4. Is there any material presented in non-EU languages which are used by immigrant populations?**
- 5. Is the site's non-static information available in multiple languages?**
- 6. Is the static (cultural) information available in more than one language?**
- 7. Is the site structure logically separate from the language in use?**
- 8. Was multi-linguality planned into the site from the very start?**
- 9. Does the site have a stated multi-linguality policy? Is the site reviewed against such a policy?**
- 10. Is the site reviewed against such a policy?**



Interoperable

This section examines the eighth quality principle, that «A quality Website must be committed to being interoperable within cultural networks to enable users to easily locate the content and services that meet their needs». It:

- examines how to interpret the interoperability principle,
- outlines criteria for establishing whether or not a Website is interoperable
- suggests a checklist of Website characteristics to use to ensure interoperability
- describes a number of tests which can be taken in order to verify that the Website is interoperable.



1. Was desk research carried out before Website design began?
2. Did this focus on relevant standards?
3. What standards were identified as most relevant?
4. Is the metadata model based on Dublin Core?
 - a. If not, why not?
5. Does the Website work with any browser?
6. Is disclosure functionality implemented using OAI harvesting?
 - a. If not, why not?
7. Does the Website have a site-level metadata profile?
 - a. Does the profile use a standard such as RSLP?
 - b. Is the profile also implemented using the META tags on the homepage?
 - c. Are the contents of the META tags expressed in DC, DC.Culture and/or RSLP?
8. Is distributed site searching implemented?
9. Is distributed catalogue and/or database searching possible?
10. If it is, can it be searched remotely? And is the remote searching method the standard in use, in the expected interoperability partners?



Managed

This section examines the ninth quality principle, that «A quality Website must be managed to respect legal issues such as IPR and privacy and clearly state the terms and conditions on which the Website and its contents may be used». It:

- examines how to interpret the management principle,
- outlines criteria for establishing whether or not a Website is managed
- suggests a checklist of Website characteristics to use to ensure management
- describes a number of tests which can be taken in order to verify that the Website is managed.



1. Does an end user code of conduct exist?
2. Must the user actively endorse it? (A tick-box is to be preferred to a 'click here to agree' button).
3. Does the end user code of conduct include protecting the overall database, as well as the content in the database?
4. Are steps taken to restrict the potential unauthorised reproduction or exploitation of content?
 - a. Limited image resolution?
 - b. Visible watermarking?
 - c. Digital watermarking?
5. Do legal agreements exist between the site owners and the content owners?
6. Do these agreements protect the site owner in the event of third party infringements of content owner IPR?
7. Is a user privacy policy available?
8. Is it (or a link to it) prominently displayed for the end user?
9. Are records kept of user access or user information?
10. Are these records necessary?
11. Are these records protected in accordance with privacy legislation and directives?
12. Is the site content available under a Creative Commons license?



Preserved

This section examines the tenth and final quality principle, that «A quality Website must adopt strategies and standards to ensure that the Website and its content can be preserved for the long-term». It:

- examines how to interpret the preservation principle
- outlines criteria for establishing whether or not a Website can be preserved
- suggests a checklist of Website characteristics to use to ensure preservability
- describes a number of tests which can be taken in order to verify that the Website can be preserved.



1. Has a long term preservation policy been drawn up?
2. Has a short term preservation strategy / backup plan been drawn up?
3. Is it in effect?
4. Is the Website backed up regularly?
5. Are backups held off-site?
6. Are master periodic backups held on DLT or other more durable media?
7. Does a full disaster recovery plan exist?
8. Has it been tested?
9. Has a medium term preservation plan been drawn up?
10. Does it include
 - o Media refreshing?
 - o Media migration?
 - o File format migration or emulation?
11. Does the Website use standard file formats?
12. Does the Website use standard presentation technologies?
13. Does the Website use proprietary extensions and technologies?
14. Does the Website use plugins or downloadable extra functionality?



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Thanks for your attention.

Keep in touch soon...