Standards - Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 3

WCAG 3 will be an updated version of WCAG, with no estimated release date, and a timeline of 'a few years', with some aspects requiring additional research that is still yet to be completed. WCAG 3 will retain the success criteria for WCAG 2, but will be structured very differently, use different language and be assessed as compliant in very different ways. The proposed changes are much simpler to understand.

There is a summary of the draft of WCAG 3 available here: Explainer for W3C Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 3.0 that describes the status of the project and how it is structured and will develop. There is also the full WCAG 3 Working Draft that describes the standard and all it's proposed guidelines.

Key things to know

- Success criteria will be called Guidelines.
- It is proposed that each Guideline will have Foundational Requirements, with some also having Supplemental Requirements, and sometimes an Assertion.
- Foundational Requirements form the basis of legal minimum standards, with Supplemental Requirements offering the higher levels, although the Conformance model is yet to be designed.
- An Assertion is something that can't necessarily be independently verified, such as using people with access needs to test content, creating organisational policies on style guides and and the content not purposefully misdirecting from information that has a personal impact.
- While WCAG stands for 'Web Content Accessibility Guidelines' the official title will drop the 'Web Content' to just be referred to 'Accessibility Guidelines'. This reflects the wider application of the guidelines, while retaining the well known acronym.
- There will be no level A AA or AAA any more, instead there will be a very different Conformance model.
- The new Conformance model is still yet to be decided, but may include Bronze Silver and Gold levels.

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