

EXCEL & ACCESSIBILITY

July 2023



Face the Future with Confidence®



Andrew Paw
Associate Director



CONNECT WITH ME...

ICAEW Blog series:

- [Accessibility Features in Excel – Part 1: Overview](#)
- [Accessibility Features in Excel – Part 2: Introduction](#)
- [Accessibility Features in Excel – Part 3: Best practices & features](#)

AGENDA



03 Introduction

04 Accessibility in Excel

05 Accessibility Features

09 Best Practices

10 Q&A!

INTRODUCTION



1.3bn

- 1.3 bn people, around 16% of the global population currently experience significant disability.



2.2bn

- More than 2.2 billion people have a new or distance vision impairment.



9-12%

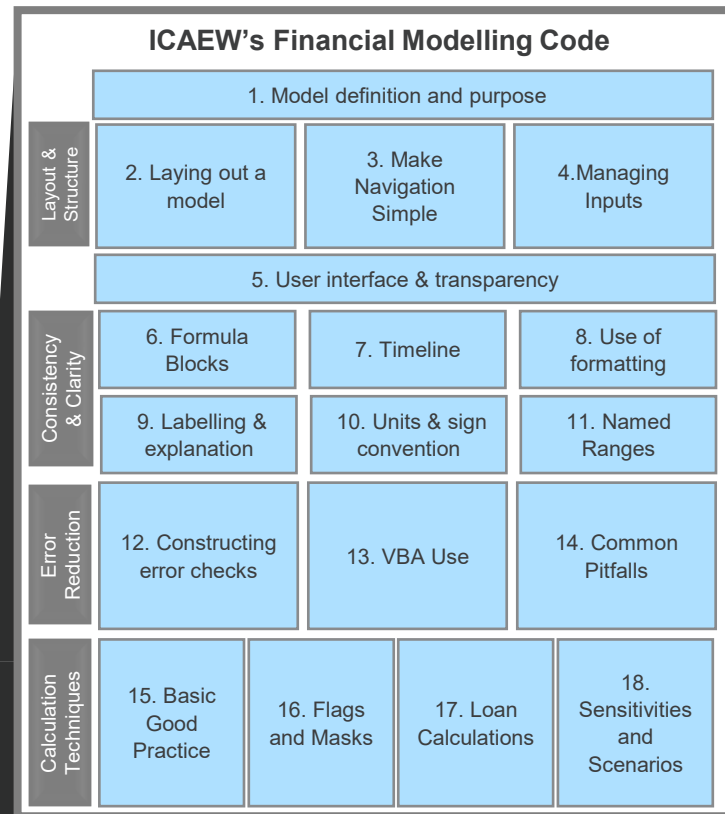
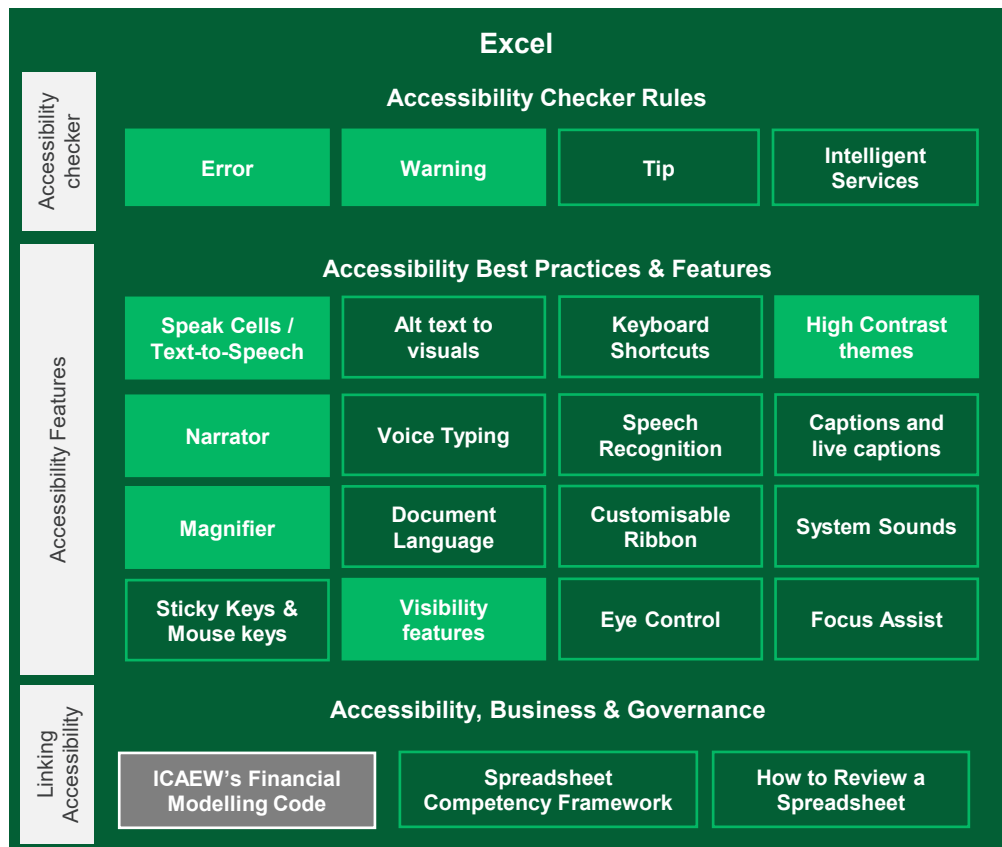
- 9 to 12 percent of the population is affected by dyslexia.



>75m

- More than 75 million people, around 1% of the population has autism spectrum disorder.

EXCEL ACCESSIBILITY



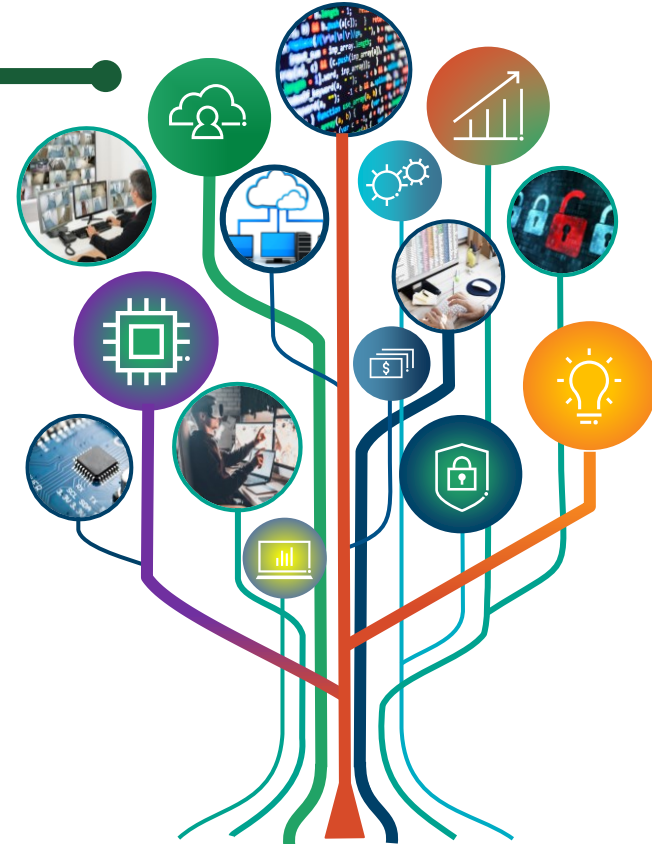
ACCESSIBILITY CHECKER: ERRORS & WARNINGS



	Windows	Mac	iOS	Android	Web
Outlook	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Word	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Excel	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Power Point	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
OneNote	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Sway	No	No	No	No	Yes
Visio	Yes	n/a	No	n/a	Yes

A group of four diverse professionals (three women and one man) are gathered around a wooden table in a bright, modern office setting. They are all looking at a laptop screen, with one woman pointing at it, suggesting a collaborative work environment. The scene is framed by a thick green border.

Accessibility Features in Excel



ACCESSIBILITY CHECKER



What is Accessibility Checker?

The Accessibility Checker is a tool that verifies your file against a set of rules that identify possible issues for people with disabilities and classifies each issue as an **error**, **warning** or **tip**. It explains why each issue might be a potential problem and suggests how you can resolve the issues that appear.



Error

If content in the file makes it very difficult or impossible for someone with a disability to use, the Accessibility Checker classifies it as an error.



Warning

If the content in most (but not necessarily all) cases is difficult for people with disabilities to understand, the Accessibility Checker gives a warning.



Tip

When there is content that people with disabilities can understand but that could be better organised or could be presented in a way that can improve their experience.



How do you access Accessibility Checker?

Within Excel: File → Options → Accessibility → Make Excel more accessible menu.

TEXT TO SPEECH TECHNOLOGY



Speak cells

Speak cells is a tool embedded within Excel, employing text-to-speech technology to transform text into natural-sounding speech.



Speak cells

Users can choose a specific cell, a range of cells, or even the entire worksheet to be read aloud.



Stop Speaking cells

To stop the speech function, users can either select the stop speaking button or simply click on any cell within the worksheet.



Stop on Enter

The Speak on enter feature, reads out every data entry made when the Enter key is used.



Narrator

Narrator is similar feature to Speak cells but operates at the system level. The Narrator goes beyond reading text to reading other on-screen elements, such as buttons. This feature can integrate with Excel and is accessible to both Windows 10 and 11.

To open Narrator settings:



To enable Narrator and to turn off the Narrator:



HIGH CONTRAST THEMES



High Contrast themes

High contrast themes offer users the ability to enhance the contrast between text, links, buttons, and backgrounds. In Excel users can select different modes such as dark, grey, or white and personalize their user interface to suit their preferences and needs.



High Contrast themes

Windows 10 & 11 provide additional high contrast themes for users. In Windows 11, Microsoft has taken it a step further by introducing 4 new high contrast themes that can be customised, to improve visibility and overall aesthetic appeal.

To open Accessibility settings in Windows:



To turn on and off high contrast theme:



MAGNIFIER & VISIBILITY FEATURES



Zoom slider

To adjust the zoom level of a spreadsheet, users can use the zoom slider located in the bottom-right corner of the Excel window. The zoom percentage ranges from 10%-400%, typically set to 100%



Magnifier

Magnifier enables users to adjust the zoom level of the entire screen including other elements such as buttons, making content more easy to read and interact with. Within Magnifier settings users can:

- increase screen size up to 16 times the original
- enable automatic activation
- adjust magnifier behaviour
- combine with text-to-speech

To open the tool directly through the Settings app:



Ctrl

M

To open a compact dialogue box showcasing the main features of the tool:



+



Additional Visibility features

Within Windows 10 & 11 users can also:

- Change size of text, percentage ranges from 100%-225%
- Adjust screen brightness
- Personalise Windows experience (e.g., hide scroll bars, show animations, etc.)

BEST PRACTICES



Add clear and descriptive names for cells and sheets



Add contrast using fonts, colours and cell styles



Add Alt text



Provide instructions if user input is required



Use simple table structures



Start at cell A1



Provide description of destination target when using hyperlinks



Check Accessibility Checker



ICAEW Blog series:

[Accessibility Features in Excel – Part 1: Overview](#)

[Accessibility Features in Excel – Part 2: Introduction](#)

[Accessibility Features in Excel – Part 3: Best practices & features](#)

Any Questions?