Accessibility in Design (a11y)

UI/UX Design Guide · Module 6 of 7 · CHERIEDU Dev Series

1. Why Accessibility Matters

1 in 7 people worldwide has some form of disability. Accessible design is not just ethical — it also improves usability for everyone. Captions help people in noisy environments. Good contrast helps people in bright sunlight.

2. WCAG 2.1 — The Accessibility Standard

Principle	What it means	Example
Perceivable	Content can be seen or heard	Alt text on images, captions on video
Operable	Can be used with keyboard alone	Tab navigation works correctly
Understandable	Language is clear	Error messages say what to fix
Robust	Works with assistive tech	Screen reader reads form labels

3. Colour Contrast Requirements

Text Type	Minimum Ratio	Enhanced Ratio
Normal text (< 18pt)	4.5 : 1	7 : 1
Large text (18pt+ or bold 14pt+)	3 : 1	4.5 : 1
UI components, icons	3 : 1	3 : 1

CHECK YOUR CONTRAST
Use Figma's "Contrast" plugin or webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker to verify every text colour in your design meets 4.5:1 minimum ratio.

4. Keyboard Navigation

- All interactive elements must be reachable by Tab key.
- Focus order should match visual reading order (left to right, top to bottom).
- Focus indicator must be visible — a clear outline around the focused element.
- Skip navigation link: "Skip to main content" for keyboard users.

5. Designing for Screen Readers

- Every image needs meaningful alt text: <img alt="Student fee payment confirmation">.
- Form labels must be linked to inputs: <label for="email"> ... <input id="email">.
- Buttons must describe their action: "Submit" not just an arrow icon.
- Error messages must be programmatically associated with the field that has the error.

TEST
Navigate the CHERI SMS website using only your keyboard (Tab, Enter, Arrow keys). Can you complete

the contact form? Fix everything that does not work.