

Case Study

QCA – Disabled user testing September 2007

Background

The new NDAQ database www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk was launched in early September 2007. QCA had an accessibility consultancy undertaken during the development of the new site, but wanted to test the site with users with disabilities to assess its 'real user' accessibility.

Objectives

To obtain user experience feedback from testers with a range of disabilities on the usability of the user journey through the NDAQ database.

How we responded to the brief

We proposed a series of individual usability tests with six testers with a range of disabilities.

What we did

We recruited 6 testers: one blind tester who used Jaws, one partially sighted tester who used Lunar screen magnification software, two testers who did not use a mouse and two who suffered with dyslexia

We discussed the project requirements with the client and produced a facilitation guide that covered both general undirected exploration of the site and some specific tasks. The testing took place at our purpose built studios in Chippenham.

The testing was conducted by a WUP facilitator who adopted a non-directive approach to surface testers' behaviours. The recordings of



the testing sessions were analysed to identify issues which were documented in a report that was presented to the client.

The outcomes

Overall, the site tested well with the disabled testers. In particular, the blind and partially sighted testers thought the site worked very

well with the assistive technologies they use:

- "I think it's very good... from a navigational point of view I love the way it jumps straight to the page... I have seen an awful lot worse and I think it's incredibly good" (Jaws user)
- "I think they've been really consistent which has really helped...they've kept it really simple, it's not flashing in any way, the only graphic I saw was the picture of the woman's face on the front and I think that was really good...they've really given some thought to the colours...the boxes across the top are very easy and clear...very easy site." (Lunar user)

However, the user testing did uncover a number of usability issues. Recommended actions address these issues were agreed with QCA, supplemented with code examples and a best practice guide on implementation.

"We chose WUP because of their specialist expertise and experience in website accessibility and usability. WUP did an excellent job for us"
Alan Long, Head of web based accreditation, QCA Strategic Systems.

Timing and costs

The project was conducted in Sept 2007 and took approximately 4 weeks to complete at a cost of approximately £6,800.