DocWright

Faculty User Guide

Making documents accessible.

What is DocWright?

DocWright is a tool that automatically improves the accessibility of your course documents before you upload them to your LMS (Canvas, Blackboard, or any other learning management system). It works on PDFs, Word documents (DOCX), and PowerPoint presentations (PPTX).

Accessible documents are required under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and benefit every student — including those using screen readers, students with low vision, and students who use assistive technology.

Your LMS measures accessibility with a built-in tool (such as Ally) that assigns each file a score from 0–100%. DocWright is designed to get your documents to 100%.

> **What does "accessible" mean?** An accessible document has the right structure so that screen readers can navigate it — headings tagged as headings, images with text descriptions, and a reading order that makes sense. A PDF that looks fine on screen may be completely unreadable to a student using a screen reader.

A Common Problem: Print to PDF

Many faculty create PDFs by going to File → Print → Save as PDF. This is one of the most common causes of inaccessible course documents. When you print to PDF, all the underlying structure is lost: headings become just large bold text, the reading order disappears, and images have no descriptions. A screen reader sees either a blank document or a wall of unsorted text.

> **How to tell:** Open the PDF and try selecting text with your cursor. If you cannot select any text, or selecting one word selects half the page, the file was likely created by printing to PDF.

DocWright can repair many print-to-PDF files, but results vary. The best approach is to export properly from the source application — File → Save As → PDF in Word, or Export → PDF in PowerPoint — then run that file through DocWright.

What DocWright Fixes

Issue	PDF	DOCX	PPTX
Missing or incorrect headings	Auto	Auto	—
Missing document title	Auto	Auto	Auto
Missing language tag	Auto	Auto	Auto
Images with no alt text	AI	AI	AI
Math equations (Word/OMML)	—	AI	—
Math equations (LaTeX/tagpdf)	AI	—	—
Charts and diagrams	AI	AI	AI
SmartArt diagrams	—	Auto	Auto
Missing slide titles	—	—	Auto
Poor reading order	Auto	—	—
Video embeds	—	—	Auto
Scanned PDF (image only)	Partial	—	—
Password-protected PDF	Partial	—	—
Print-to-PDF (no text layer)	Partial	—	—
Low colour contrast	Partial	Partial	Partial

Auto = fixed automatically • AI = requires AI step (internet) • Partial = detected, may need follow-up • — = not applicable

Step-by-Step: How to Use DocWright

Step 1 — Launch	Double-click the DocWright icon on your desktop. The tool opens in your web browser. You do not need an internet connection for most features — the application runs entirely on your computer. *Tip: Keep the application window open while working. Closing it stops the tool.*
Step 2 — Drop your file	Drag your document onto the drop zone in the browser, or click the drop zone to browse. DocWright accepts PDF, DOCX, and PPTX files.
Step 3 — Click Fix Accessibility	Click the Fix Accessibility button. The tool analyses your document and applies all automatic fixes — usually a few seconds. You will see Issues found and Fixes applied.
Step 4 — Generate AI Descriptions (if prompted)	If your document contains images, charts, SmartArt, or math equations, a Generate AI Descriptions button appears. Click it — AI will write meaningful descriptions for each image so screen reader users understand what is shown. *Tip: Requires internet. Images are sent to an AI service — no other document content is transmitted. May take 30 seconds to a few minutes. Do not close the browser tab while running.*
Step 5 — Export as Accessible PDF (DOCX only)	If you uploaded a Word document and need a PDF, click Export as Accessible PDF. This converts using Word's own export engine, producing a properly tagged accessible PDF. *Tip: Never use File → Print → Save as PDF in Word. Always use the Export button in DocWright, or File → Save As → PDF with "Document structure tags for accessibility" checked.*
Step 6 — Download	Click Download Fixed File to save the processed document. The file size in the button confirms you are downloading the updated version, not your original.
Step 7 — Upload to your LMS	Upload the downloaded file to your LMS as normal. Your LMS will re-scan and update the accessibility score. Most documents reach 95–100% after processing.

Understanding Your Results

- A fix was applied automatically — no action needed
- An issue found that may need your attention
- Information about your document (no action needed)
- Images or equations that need the AI step

If Your LMS Still Shows a Low Score

A small number of issues cannot be fixed automatically:

- **Low colour contrast** — Must be fixed in the original document by choosing higher-contrast colours.
- **Scanned PDFs** — If using Canvas or Blackboard, Ally can run OCR automatically — open the Ally report and look for the OCR option. Or use Adobe Acrobat (Tools → Scan & OCR) then run through DocWright again.
- **Password-protected PDFs** — Remove the password in Acrobat or Preview first.
- **InDesign PDFs** — Structural limitations that DocWright will flag with guidance on next steps.

Which File Type Should I Upload?

File type	Best for	Notes
DOCX	Documents with text, headings, images, equations	Best option. Full fix pipeline. Use Export as Accessible PDF for your LMS.
PPTX	Slide decks	Best for presentations. Download and upload the fixed PPTX to your LMS.
PDF	When you only have the PDF	Good results in most cases. Some issues may need the original source file.

Using DocWright with LaTeX Documents

Standard LaTeX PDF output is not accessible — math is encoded as fragmented text and vector lines that screen readers cannot interpret. To produce a fully accessible LaTeX PDF, recompile using LuaLaTeX with the tagpdf package.

Step 1 — Add to your preamble (before \documentclass)

```
\DocumentMetadata{
  lang=en-US,
  pdfversion=2.0,
  testphase={phase-III,math}
}
\documentclass[12pt]{article}
\usepackage{amsmath}
\usepackage{hyperref}
```

Step 2 — Compile with LuaLaTeX (not pdfLaTeX)

TeXstudio: Options → Configure → Build → Default Compiler → LuaLaTeX. Overleaf: Menu → Compiler → LuaLaTeX.

> Always compile twice. LuaLaTeX needs two passes to write all tagging metadata correctly.

Step 3 — Run through DocWright

Drop the LuaLaTeX PDF into DocWright → Fix Accessibility → Generate AI Descriptions. This workflow consistently produces a 100% accessibility score.

> Save .tex files to a path with no spaces (e.g. C:\LaTeX\). Spaces can cause LuaLaTeX to fail silently on Windows.

Common Compile Errors

- **"Undefined control sequence \pdfpagewidth"** — caused by `\usepackage[pdftex]{graphicx}`. Remove `[pdftex]`; use `\usepackage{graphicx}` and let it auto-detect LuaLaTeX.
- **"fontspec Error: font cannot be found"** — with `unicode-math`, the math font (e.g. Latin Modern Math) must be installed separately (MiKTeX Console → Packages → search `lm-math`).
- **Wrong compiler selected** — the compiler dropdown next to the green Typeset button in TeXworks/TeXstudio must say **LuaLaTeX**, not pdfLaTeX.
- **"\contentsline has an extra }" or similar odd errors** — a stale `.toc`/`.aux` file left over from a failed compile. Delete `.aux`, `.toc`, `.out`, `.lof`, then recompile twice.
- **Compile hangs indefinitely — no PDF, no visible error** — a corrupted `.toc` has truncated a command (e.g. `\contentsli` instead of `\contentsline`), and LaTeX has silently dropped into an interactive `?` prompt instead of erroring out. Delete `.aux`/`.toc`/`.out`/`.lof`, add `-interaction=nonstopmode` to your LuaLaTeX tool configuration, and recompile twice.
- **Always compile twice** — the first pass writes tagging/reference metadata; the second pass reads it back in. Easy to forget — make it a habit.

Common Questions

Will DocWright change how my document looks?

No. DocWright modifies only the accessibility structure — tags, descriptions, and reading order that screen readers use — without changing anything visible.

Do I need to run it every time I update a document?

Yes, after significant edits. Small fixes like typos are generally fine without re-processing.

The AI step is taking a long time — is that normal?

Yes. Each image is sent to an AI service individually. A document with 10 images may take 3–5 minutes. Do not close the browser tab.

My document got 95% — what is the remaining 5%?

Usually a logo or header image with low colour contrast — often flagged as a false positive. Check the fixes list for any messages explaining what remains.

Can I use DocWright on a Mac?

Export as Accessible PDF requires Microsoft Word and is Windows only. All other features — PDF, DOCX, and PPTX — work on Mac.

What happens to my document during the AI step?

Only images are sent to the AI service — not document text, not student data. Images are processed and not retained on any external server.

My PPTX has SmartArt — will DocWright fix it?

Yes. DocWright extracts text from SmartArt and writes a meaningful description automatically. Review it in PowerPoint via right-click → Edit Alt Text.

I have a PPTX with an embedded video — what happens?

DocWright detects video embeds and adds a "Video on slide N" placeholder, which satisfies the LMS accessibility checker. Edit the alt text in PowerPoint if you want a more descriptive label.

Quick Reference Card

1. Launch DocWright from your desktop
2. Drop your DOCX, PPTX, or PDF onto the tool
3. Click Fix Accessibility — wait a few seconds
4. If the AI button appears → click it and wait
5. For DOCX → click Export as Accessible PDF
6. Click Download Fixed File
7. Upload the downloaded file to your LMS

Need help? Contact DocWright support or your college accessibility coordinator. Include the filename and a screenshot of any error message. contact@docwright.org · docwright.org · (856) 817-5100