Accessing MyAberdeen with NVDA

Although most users will have their own preferred method of using NVDA the following Quick guide is intended to help those accessing MyAberdeen and its associated tools with NVDA for the first time.

Introduction

Using My Aberdeen with NVDA can be quite daunting, and at first frustrating, due to the number of links and tools that are available. It is recommended that the first time you use MyAberdeen that you listen to all of the links. After familiarising yourself with your courses you can use the INSERT+F7 shortcut to get the list of links from the Elements List and choose whichever sounds appropriate. If you have any problems with the accessibility of a course please contact your course tutor, atech@abdn.ac.uk or clt@abdn.ac.uk.

At the moment Internet Explorer 9 provides the most reliable and consistent browsing experience with NVDA. More experienced NVDA users may have their own browser preferences but should be aware that this guide was produced using Internet Explorer.

It is assumed that you are familiar with using Internet Explorer and accessing Forms using NVDA. If you are not sure about this, we recommend that you visit the “Using NVDA to Evaluate Web Accessibility” page located at http://webaim.org/articles/nvda/

Useful keystrokes

INSERT+F7 - Displays the Elements list which includes a list of links, headings and landmarks on the current Web page.

Note: If you know the title of the link, you can press the letter beginning that title until the link you are searching for is found.

INSERT+F9 - Displays a list of the frames on the current Web page.

Web page quick navigation keys

B - Moves to the next button on the page.

E - Moves to the next edit form field in a document or web page using the virtual cursor.

F - Moves to the next form field.

N - Moves to the next block of text.

H - Moves to the next heading.

T - Moves to the next table.

M - Moves to the next frame.

L - Moves to the next list.

U - Moves to the next unvisited link.

V - Moves to the next visited link.

K - Moves between links.

Hide Course Menu / Show Course Menu link can reduce browsing time considerably

Login to MyAberdeen

Go to http://www.abdn.ac.uk/myaberdeen and login using your University of Aberdeen Username and Password. You may need to press F or SHIFT+F to get to the login form.

Structure of My Aberdeen Pages

Information about the content and structure of the various My Aberdeen pages can be found in other student support guides at http://www.abdn.ac.uk/students/myaberdeen-support.php.

Introduction to My Aberdeen introduces you to MyAberdeen and some of its key features.

Introducing the Course Environment introduces you to the MyAberdeen course environment.

Note that these documents are not NVDA specific but do contain information useful to NVDA users.
How do I...?

View important information on the My Aberdeen homepage

The MyAberdeen homepage includes links to many useful and important areas of MyAberdeen where you can find out what is currently expected of you. Particularly useful links include Announcements, Tasks, My Grades and Calendar. Use the links section of the Elements List (INSERT + F7) to access these links and repeatedly press the first letter of the link until you hear the option you require. Although you can view these items from course homepages, the advantage of checking the information from the MyAberdeen homepage is that it brings together all items from all your courses so you get a fuller picture of what you need to do.

View a list of my courses / Go to a course

At the MyAberdeen homepage, use the headings section of the Elements List (INSERT + F7) or repeatedly press H to find the My Courses section (a Heading Level 2) on your home page and then tab to the course you want to go to and press Enter.

Once you are familiar with the titles of your Courses as displayed in MyAberdeen you may find it quicker to use the list of links to directly locate that course by pressing its initial letter when in the list of headings.

To move between courses you can either return to the MyAberdeen Homepage (Use the Links section of the Elements list (INSERT + F7), then H to find the link to Home) or use the My Places link.

Navigate within a course

The course page area has two areas: the course menu and the course page content.

Do not forget to check My Announcements, My Tasks and What’s New using the Headings section of the Elements List (INSERT + F7) to access these sections on a daily basis to make sure that you are up to date with what is required of you, and to find out if any arrangements have been changed.

The course menu allows you to access different areas of your course. The course menu is read out every time you select another page from within your course. To prevent this happening you can choose Hide Course Menu from the links section of the Elements List (INSERT + F7). When you want to show it again, choose Show Course Menu. When not hidden, you can quickly get to the Course Menu by using theHeadings section of the Elements List (INSERT + F7) and pressing C until you find the entry for Course Menu. To ensure you access all course material you must frequently Show the Course Menu.

The extent of the material available and the links used on any given MyAberdeen course will vary according to the individual course coordinator or tutor. The names of the links within your courses will depend upon what your tutor has decided to name them. If you find these link names confusing contact your course rep or course tutor as it may be that they can be re-named in a way that will be more helpful for everyone.

In the Content area of your course, different items all have a heading. This allows you to easily navigate through the course content sequentially by pressing H repeatedly (shift H to go back). Headings may have a description of the item below them and if this is the case you can use the arrow keys to read it.

Use the Quiz Tool

The MyAberdeen Quiz tool makes heavy use of forms, and you should therefore be very familiar with completing web forms before using this quiz tool for any assessed work. If you are not confident about using NVDA and the MyAberdeen Quiz Tool for assessed work you should ask your tutor for the quiz in an alternative format. After completing each question for which you are sure of the answer it is recommended that you save that answer.

When you begin a test NVDA will read out the instructions for your test. Be sure to read this as it contains any instructions that may have been provided by the instructor, whether multiple attempts are allowed and whether you are allowed to save answers and resume later to complete the other questions. If the quiz will not allow multiple attempts you should be careful not to select the Save and Submit button until you are truly confident in your answers.

We recommend that you listen to the whole quiz first after which NVDA will read the links to all questions and answer fields in sequential order. Within each test the types of questions you may encounter include radio buttons, free text answers using blank form fields or combo boxes from which one answer out of a selection of answers may be selected.

Some question types are more difficult to complete using NVDA than others. You can move between questions quickly using the Headings section of the Elements List (INSERT + F7).
View the Discussion Forum

Once the Discussion page opens, press T which will take you to the next Table. This should take you to the table that lists all the discussion forums that are available to you, press the arrows keys to navigate through the table or press tab to locate and follow the link to the forum you want to enter.

In the forum, press T to take you to the table containing the discussion threads. One of the first links that you come to is a “Tick to select all items” checkbox. If you would like to read all the forum posts in a “most recent message first” style list rather than viewing each thread individually, check this checkbox then, shift tab once to find the Collect link and then Press Enter. We recommend that you do this.

To reply to a message, press the Reply link immediately after the message. Using Insert F7, select the "ON Text Editor is on" link and press Enter to select "Text Editor is Off". If you do not do this you will not be able to gain focus on the text input message box to type your response. MyAberdeen saves this preference so you should only have to do this the first time you reply to a message.

After typing your message, tab through the links until you get to either Save or Submit, and select whichever you would like to do. Clicking Submit will submit your post and return you to the discussion thread. Refresh the page by pressing F5 to view the page with your new entry included.

If you want to start a new thread, return to the forum page and follow the Create Thread link.

Wikis

A Wiki is a collaborative tool that allows you to contribute and modify one or more pages of related material. MyAberdeen Wikis are reasonably easy to use with NVDA given a few key strokes. Once in the Wiki content, you can listen to the entries, Edit Wiki Content or make a comment relating to existing entries. If you select Edit Wiki Content ensure that Text Editor is set to ‘off’ so that NVDA can get focus on the text entry box. Be careful not to accidentally delete all the text within a Wiki entry when editing entries. It may be easier to navigate through Wiki entries one word at a time using Ctrl Left arrow and Ctrl Right arrow until you find the section you want to add to or delete. When you are happy with your editing select Submit and the Wiki entry will be updated. You will be directed back to the Wiki’s home page from which you can select My Contribution to see what and when you contributed to the wiki.

Further Information

Further information about using NVDA to access the Blackboard learning environment (on which MyAberdeen is based) can be found in the Screen Reader Tutorial located at [http://library.blackboard.com/d/?eb3b04cd-4d39-4af0-9d2d-a3f32a95430f](http://library.blackboard.com/d/?eb3b04cd-4d39-4af0-9d2d-a3f32a95430f)

If you would like to become an eLearning champion and help to suggest further improvements to the documentation for using MyAberdeen with NVDA users please contact atech@abdn.ac.uk or clit@abdn.ac.uk