

LBCC Web Content Guidelines & Best Practices

Introduction

To effectively communicate the mission and services of **Long Beach City College (LBCC)**, it's essential that all web content creators follow consistent standards. These guidelines are designed to help you produce content that is:

- **Accessible**
 - **Accurate and up-to-date**
 - **Aligned with LBCC branding and voice**
 - **Engaging and easy to find online**
 - **Compliant with legal and institutional requirements**
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1. Know and Engage Your Audience

1.1 Identify Your Audience

Before you begin writing, ask yourself:

- Who is this content for? (e.g., prospective students, current students, faculty, community members)
- What information are they likely looking for?

Example: When writing about enrollment, anticipate and address common questions from prospective students and their families.

1.2 Speak Directly to Their Needs

Use friendly, relatable language. Focus on benefits and services that matter most to the reader.

Example:

“Need help with your coursework? Our free tutoring, workshops, and study groups are here to support you every step of the way.”

2. Maintain Consistent Branding

2.1 Use Official Logos and Colors

Always follow **LBCC's brand guidelines** for logos, fonts, and colors to maintain institutional identity across all pages.

2.2 Use Approved CMS Templates

LBCC's CMS (Content Management System) includes templates to keep pages uniform. Contact **PAM** or the **Web Coordinator** for access.

Available templates include:

- 1 Column (with pods on right or bottom)
- 2 Column (with pods on right)
- 3 Column (with pods on right)
- Pathway
- Program
- Department
- Directory

2.3 Use a Consistent Tone and Voice

Maintain a **professional yet approachable** voice that reflects LBCC's supportive culture.

Example:

"We're here to support your journey at LBCC."

3. Ensure Accuracy and Clarity

3.1 Double-Check Your Information

Example: before publishing, verify:

- Deadlines, important dates
- Tuition rates
- Program descriptions
- Contact info

3.2 Write Clearly and Concisely

Break up long blocks of text. Use bullet points and headings.

Instead of:

✗ “The institution endeavors to enhance the academic experience of students through various initiatives.”

Say:

✓ “LBCC offers many programs to help students succeed academically.”

4. Follow Accessibility Standards

Creating accessible content ensures everyone—including those with disabilities—can navigate and understand your information.

4.1 Structure Content with Headings

Use H3, H4, and H5 headers to organize your page content logically for readability and screen readers.

4.2 Use Real Text, Not Text in Images

Avoid using images to display text. Always use **actual text** that assistive technologies can read.

4.3 Provide Alt Text for All Images

Include descriptive alternative text.

Example:

✓ “A diverse group of students collaborating in a modern study space at LBCC.”

✗ “Image of students.”

4.4 Caption All Videos

Videos must include accurate captions synced with audio, and describe important sounds (e.g., music, laughter).

4.5 Keep Up with WCAG Standards

Stay familiar with [WCAG 2.1](#) and monitor updates to ensure all digital content is compliant

5. Use PDFs Strategically and Share Them via OneDrive

5.1 Prioritize HTML Over PDFs

Create content directly in HTML whenever possible.

Why? HTML is:

- More accessible
- Easier to update
- Better for mobile and SEO
- Loads faster for users

5.2 When PDF is Appropriate

Use PDF only for documents that need a fixed layout:

- Legal Forms (e.g., contracts, applications)
- Official Records (e.g., transcripts)
- Printable Policies or Forms requiring signatures

5.3 Share PDFs via OneDrive (Not the Web Server)

Benefits:

- Users always access the **most up-to-date** version
- Prevents confusion from outdated content
- Reduces server load

Steps to Share a File via OneDrive:

1. **Name the File Clearly**
 - ✓ *“Monthly Report – October 2024”*
 - ✗ *“Oct Report”*
2. **Upload to OneDrive**

Place it in the correct folder for easy retrieval.
3. **Set Sharing Permissions**
 - Right-click the file → Click “Share”
 - Under **Link Settings**, select “**Anyone with the link**”
 - Set to **View Only**
 - Click **Apply**
4. **Copy the Shareable Link**

Click **Copy Link**, then paste wherever needed (email, web, chat).

6. Optimize Content for Search Engines (SEO)

6.1 Use Relevant Keywords

Help users find your content by including likely search terms.

Example:

Use “*LBCC nursing program*” instead of just “*our program*”.

6.2 Write Strong Meta Descriptions

Write a clear and engaging summary for each page.

Example:

“Explore LBCC’s affordable, high-quality healthcare programs designed for your future success.”

6.3 Link Internally and Externally

- Link to related LBCC pages
- Link to credible external resources

Example:

When discussing financial aid, link to LBCC’s financial aid office and government FAFSA resources.

7. Promote Engagement

7.1 Encourage Interaction

Include calls to action or questions to prompt user response.

Example:

“Not sure what scholarships you qualify for? Fill out our interest form and we’ll help you get started.”

7.2 Use Multimedia

Use images, videos, maps, and infographics to make content visually engaging.

Example:

Embed an interactive campus map for better user experience.

8. Keep Content Current

8.1 Review Content Regularly

Update pages **at least twice a year** or as changes occur.

Focus on:

- Deadlines
- Program descriptions
- Faculty or contact info
- Event details

8.2 Stay Informed About Higher Ed Trends

Adapt your content to reflect changing needs (e.g., increase in online/hybrid learning, workforce development).

9. Proofread and Review

9.1 Eliminate Errors

Check spelling, grammar, and formatting. Tools like **Grammarly** can help improve clarity.

9.2 Follow LBCC Policies

Ensure all content aligns with LBCC's:

- Style guides
 - Copyright standards
 - Privacy and promotional policies
 - **Obtain Approval from the Content Owner: All content must be reviewed and approved by the designated content owner** (e.g., department lead, program coordinator, or area manager) prior to publication. This ensures accuracy, alignment with departmental goals, and institutional accountability.
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10. Respect Copyright & Attribution

10.1 Use Licensed Media

Only use media (images, music, video) that is:

- Purchased or licensed

- Free for commercial use
- Approved for institutional use

10.2 Provide Proper Attribution

Always credit the source and include copyright or license info.

Photos of People:

Obtain a **signed photo release** from anyone featured in imagery.

10.3 Submit Usage Proof

All copyright usage documents (e.g., licenses, releases) must be submitted to **Public Affairs & Marketing (PAM)** or the **Web Coordinator**.

11. Use Analytics to Improve Content

11.1 Monitor Performance

Track web traffic, clicks, and engagement metrics using web analytics tools.

11.2 Adjust Based on Data

Use insights to:

- Improve underperforming content
- Expand on popular topics
- Inform strategic content planning

Conclusion

By following these best practices, LBCC web content contributors can create **high-quality, accessible, and engaging** content that reflects our mission and values. Your attention to these standards helps foster an inclusive, informative, and trustworthy online experience for the entire LBCC community.