



The Web Quality Assurance Checklist

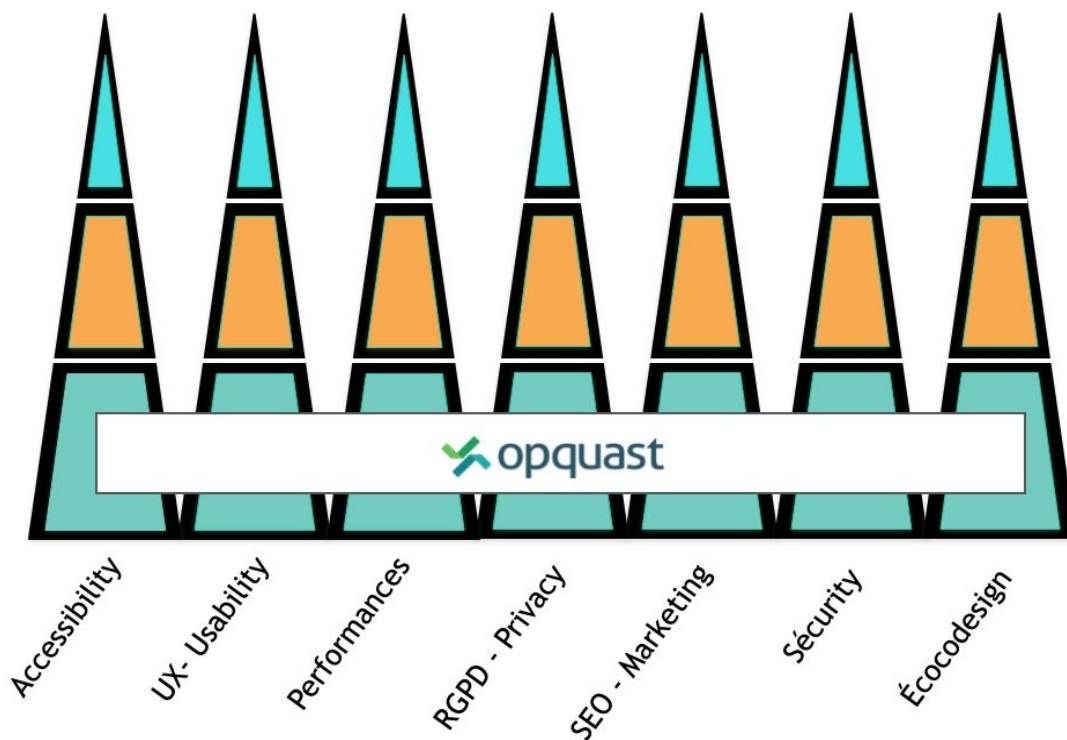
Best practices 2020 - Version: 4.0 - English Version

www.opquast.com

Opquast and the Checklist in brief

In operation since 2000, Opquast **has become** a world pioneer in **web quality assurance** best practices. The company essentially produces checklists and certifies the skills of Web professionals. **Opquast** has already certified nearly 10,000 people with an extended community using Opquast checklists to **improve all web products and sites as well as the production and project process**.

This checklist represents 240 best practices. Each best practice contributes to producing better quality web products with improved user experience. Each of them is arrived at via community consensus. The checklist is distributed under an open license.



Multidisciplinary foundation to manage Web project risks

The domains covered are: **performance, accessibility, security, data privacy, SEO, eco-design, SEO, risk and other quality assurance aspects that impact the user experience.**

The Opquast checklist has been updated every five years since 2004. Each version is established by a **large task force of community experts** during online workshops; the latest version **reconciling over 1300 comments**. The workshops are led by Elie Sloim, founder of Opquast, and Laurent Denis, Opquast’s quality and accessibility expert. The 2020 version presented here is **the most advanced and extensive checklist, in terms of both content and structure.**

Web Quality Assurance Checklist

240 best practices

1. Contents

- 1 The site provides a way for users to find out about new content and services.
- 2 Information about copyrights and reuse rights is available from every page.
- 3 Each page's source code contains metadata that describes the content.
- 4 Dates are presented in an explicit format.
- 5 The first occurrence of an abbreviation or an acronym in the body of any page gives access to an explanation of its meaning.
- 6 The publication date of the contents is indicated when needed.
- 7 A lexicon or a glossary adapted to the target audience explains the industry-specific or technical vocabulary used.
- 8 Advertisements and sponsored content are identified as such.
- 9 The conditions for moderation of public spaces are indicated.
- 10 Content and files intended for public spaces can be checked before upload.
- 11 Public spaces offer at least one way to report abuse.
- 12 Each graph is accompanied by its numerical data.
- 13 The search results page indicates the number of results, the number of pages of results, and the number of results per page.

2. Personal data

- 14 The privacy and confidentiality policy is available from any page.
- 15 The process of accessing and modifying personal data is described.
- 16 Account creation is possible without the need to use a third-party identification system.
- 17 Account creation is subject to a confirmation process.
- 18 The site offers a mechanism to prevent account or identity theft.
- 19 Accounts and subscriptions opened online can be closed online by the same method.
- 20 If the site offers a personal or subscriber space, it is possible to download personal content.
- 21 Connection to all the services offered is possible with the same identifiers.
- 22 It is possible to log out from private areas.
- 23 The website accepts email aliases containing the + sign.
- 24 The headers sent by the server specify the communication policy of the referrers.
- 25 External links that open in a new window don't share contextual information.
- 26 Exchanges of sensitive data are securely transmitted and reported as such.
- 27 Sensitive data is not transmitted unencrypted through URLs.
- 28 The purpose of using cookies, as well as the limitations inherent in refusing them, are explained.

3. E-Commerce

- 29 A product or service can be purchased without creating an account.
- 30 The details of each item can be viewed from the shopping cart.
- 31 No additional products or services are added to the shopping cart without being user triggered.
- 32 Registration for ancillary services is not enabled by default.
- 33 Product availability is indicated before final validation of the order.
- 34 The estimated delivery time is indicated before the final validation of the order.
- 35 The estimated delivery costs are indicated before the final validation of the order.
- 36 The method for retrieving a dematerialised or virtual/digital product is specified before placing the order.
- 37 Users can still modify each item's quantity, and add or delete one or more items, before the final validation of the order.
- 38 The nature and quantifiable characteristics of products and services are indicated.
- 39 The period of validity and conditions of special offers and promotions are indicated.
- 40 The detailed sub-total is indicated before final validation of the order.
- 41 The conditions of financing are indicated.
- 42 The operating conditions of the after-sales service are indicated.
- 43 Debit and payment conditions are indicated before final order placement.
- 44 Warranty conditions are indicated.
- 45 The terms of sale or use are available from all pages.
- 46 The information relating to the delivery zones of the products or the realization of the services are indicated.
- 47 The means of payment accepted, and the corresponding procedures are indicated.
- 48 The identity of third parties involved in transactions is specified.

- 49 The recourse in cases of dispute are indicated in the general terms and conditions of sale or of use.
- 50 The address and the terms and conditions for returns are indicated before the final validation of the return order.
- 51 The cost of the return is indicated before the final validation of the return order.
- 52 The mode of filing and the procedure for handling complaints are indicated.
- 53 The conditions for reimbursement are indicated.
- 54 The hardware and software necessary for the operation of the service are indicated before final validation of the order.
- 55 The displayed prices show the applied taxes and any additional charges, as well as tax-exclusive prices.
- 56 Different shipping and billing addresses can be specified.
- 57 The website accepts at least two methods of payment.
- 58 Personal banking information is only stored after the explicit consent of the user.
- 59 The personal banking information stored by the site can be modified or deleted at any time.
- 60 The transaction's reference number is displayed to the customer, once the order has been placed.
- 61 The invoices issued are also available online
- 62 Each invoice is subject to a confirmation email.
- 63 Any mention of an affiliation with a professional association, or endorsement by a label or an award, features a link to the source.
- 64 Unavailable products are differentiated by visual and textual means.
- 65 An email providing the transaction's reference number and the order details is sent after order placement.
- 66 Each complaint shall be issued with an acknowledgment of receipt.

4. Forms

- 67 Each Form Field has its own Label associated with it in the Source Code.
- 68 Information supplementing a field's label is associated with that field in the source code.
- 69 Each form field's label indicates whether or not it is a required field.
- 70 Each form field's label indicates the required data format, where applicable.
- 71 The user is warned whenever a field is case-sensitive.
- 72 The label of each form field indicates the maximum number of characters allowed, where applicable.
- 73 The creation of a password by the user is subject to a mechanism for the prevention of input errors.
- 74 The characters entered in a password field can be displayed in an un-encrypted text.
- 75 Each form label is visually associated to the field that it describes.
- 76 The contextual information relating to a form field has a close visual-proximity to it.
- 77 If any data entered in the form are rejected, the fields containing the rejected data are indicated for the user.
- 78 If any data entered in the form are rejected, the reason(s) why are indicated to the user.
- 79 If any data entered in the form are rejected, all the data entered can be modified by the user.
- 80 Custom error messages are expressed in the language of the form.
- 81 For forms divided over several pages, an overall summary is displayed before the final version is submitted.
- 82 The page displayed after the form's submission allows the user to return to their navigation directly.
- 83 Form submission is followed by a message indicating whether or not the action was successful.
- 84 The user is alerted at the beginning of a complex process to the nature of the data and documents required

- 85 Complex processes are accompanied by a list of their steps.
- 86 The current step in a complex process is indicated.
- 87 Each step in a complex process allows the user to go back to the previous step.
- 88 The user is warned when they will lose information if they go back using their browser's history during a complex process.
- 89 Navigating through a complex process does not cause any previously-submitted data to be lost.
- 90 Copy-and-paste is possible in the form's fields.
- 91 The items in a drop-down list are grouped together appropriately, where applicable.
- 92 The lists of form options are presented in an identifiable order.
- 93 Input fields such as Email, URL, telephone, number, search, password, and date and time are assigned an appropriate input type.

Interested in Web Quality Assurance? Are you familiar with the VPTCS model ?



www.opquast.com/vptcs/

5. Identification and contact

- 94 The homepage explains the nature of the content and services offered.
- 95 If the site is reserved or intended for a specific audience, that audience is mentioned, at least on the homepage.
- 96 The identity of the author, the company or the organization is indicated.
- 97 Each page provides a title that enables one to identify the site
- 98 Each page provides a title that enables one to identify its content
- 99 The source code of the pages contains a valid call to a favourite icon (“favicon”)
- 100 The complete address and telephone number of companies and organizations are available from all pages of the site.
- 101 The registration number issued to companies or organizations under the legal registration procedures in force in their country is indicated.
- 102 The site provides at least two means of contact.
- 103 Response times for information requests are indicated.
- 104 The operating hours and prices for the services made available to users are indicated.
- 105 Each request for information produces an acknowledgement receipt.
- 106 All emails provide at least one means of contact.
- 107 The site provides at least one means of contacting the person in charge of complaints.
- 108 The site provides at least one means of contacting the moderator of public spaces.
- 109 The identity of the person or department responsible for the content is indicated.
- 110 If the site claims to adhere to one or more standards or guidelines, a link is provided to each of them.

6. Images and medias

- 111 Each decorative image has an appropriate text alternative.
- 112 Each image link has an appropriate text alternative.
- 113 Each information-carrying image has an appropriate text alternative.
- 114 Thumbnails and previews are not larger images resized on the client side.
- 115 Included objects have an appropriate text alternative.
- 116 Each audio and video content is accompanied by a text transcription.
- 117 Videos have synchronized subtitles.
- 118 The length of video and audio content is indicated.
- 119 Videos are user-triggered.
- 120 Sounds are user-triggered.
- 121 Video content and animations, sounds and flashes can be paused.
- 122 The running of video or any animation does not block access to navigation or content.

« Mastering Web Quality Assurance »

The benchmark certification for web professionals

- 14-hour self-paced online training, available 24x7
- For all web professionals, **strategic to operational, including: marketers, project managers, web designers, sales and technical staff.**
- A multidisciplinary approach: **UX, SEO, accessibility, ecodesign, performance, privacy...**
- For **all levels**, beginners to advanced.
- Content based upon best practices **framework and vocabulary which can be applied from design through to post implementation**
- Design principles focused on user diversity and user contexts

[Download the program \(PDF-150ko\)](#)

7. Internationalization

- 123 The international dialling codes are available for all phone numbers.
- 124 The country is specified for all mailing addresses.
- 125 Each page's source code indicates the content's main language.
- 126 The main language of a link's target page can be identified when it differs from the main language of the original page.
- 127 Each language change is identified.
- 128 Links to translated versions point directly to the current page's translation.
- 129 Links to equivalent versions of a page or site are written in the target language.
- 130 The server respects the preferential order of languages specified by user agents.

Who drives the Opquast project?



Élie Sloïm

Founder and President of Opquast. Consultant, trainer and lecturer, Elie is involved in many events, companies and training courses in France and abroad

(Csun San Diego, Chancellery of the Belgian Prime Minister, Parisweb, Confoo Montreal, World Usability Day, Webdesign International Festival, Open data on the Web (London), a11y Québec, keynote speaker at a11y Québec (2013, 2016) - DevCon Mauritius.)

He is the co-author of "Qualité Web" and the "Memento Sites Web: les bonnes pratiques", published by Eyrolles.

He wrote the forewords of :

- «CSS2» by Raphaël Goetter, Eyrolles
- «Ergonomie Web» by Amélie Boucher, Eyrolles
- «Tri par cartes» by Gautier Barrère and Eric Mazzone, Eyrolles
- «Intégration Web» by Corinne Schillinger, Eyrolles
- «Bonnes pratiques Eco-conception» by Frédéric Bordage, Eyrolles
- «60 questions pour réussir votre site Web » by Jean-Marc Hardy, Dunod
- «Ecrire pour le Web » by Muriel Gani, Dunod.



Laurent Denis

Laurent Denis has a strong academic leaning: a postgraduate degree in Contemporary History from the Sorbonne, a teacher for many years, teaching

activities with children with disabilities. It is this background where he has specialized in accessibility that gives him perfect standing to be a main contributor of the Opquast certification 'Mastering Web Quality Assurance'. His knowledge and practice of standards and specifications make him one of the leading specialists on Web standards. Co-author of "Qualité Web: La référence des professionnels du Web" by Eyrolles, he also wrote the forewords of:

- "Réussir son site web avec XHTML and CSS" Mathieu Nebra (founder of OpenClassRooms
- "Intégration web - Les bonnes pratiques: Le guide de survie de l'intégrateur" Corinne Schillinger, also at Eyrolles.

8. Links

- 131 Each link has a title in the source code.
- 132 Each hyperlink's label describes either its function or the nature of the content of its target.
- 133 Hyperlinks of the same nature have identical colors, shapes and behaviors on all pages.
- 134 Underlining cannot be used for elements other than hyperlinks.
- 135 Hyperlinks are visually differentiated from the rest of the content.
- 136 The site applies a different style to visited and unvisited links.
- 137 Internal and external hyperlinks are differentiated.
- 138 Internal links to restricted content are differentiated.
- 139 Links which cause external software to open have an explicit label.
- 140 Telephone numbers can be enabled using the appropriate protocol.
- 141 The user is notified when new windows are to be opened.
- 142 The format of the files available for download is indicated.
- 143 The size of the internal files available for downloading is indicated.
- 144 The language of downloadable files is mentioned when it is different to the original page.
- 145 Internal names for downloadable files make it possible to identify their content and origin.
- 146 The website does not prohibit or restrict incoming links.
- 147 All hyperlinks internal to the site are valid.

9. Navigation

- 148 If the site is not restricted to a specific public, its content can be accessed directly.
- 149 Navigating the website does not open any pop-up windows.
- 150 It is possible to return to the homepage from any page.
- 151 Each page displays information about its location in the site's tree structure.
- 152 Active menu items are identifiable.
- 153 Navigation blocks of the same nature are in the same place on every page.
- 154 Navigation icons are provided with an explicit legend.
- 155 Mechanisms for closing windows are visually attached to their content.
- 156 Mechanisms for closing windows are immediately available.
- 157 Newly dimensioned windows and modal windows are equipped with an explicit close button.
- 158 Mechanisms for closing windows are shown in the same location on every page.
- 159 Each page contains quick-access links placed at the beginning of the source code.
- 160 Keyboard focus has not been removed or masked.
- 161 The website can be used and navigated in its entirety using only a keyboard.
- 162 Keyboard navigation is set up in a predictable order.
- 163 The site offers an internal search engine.
- 164 Each page of search results can be reached via a web address.
- 165 It is possible to relaunch a search from its results page.
- 166 The sitemap is available from every page.
- 167 The time limits imposed on an action or access are indicated.

10. Newsletter

- 168 Subscribing to newsletters is subject to a confirmation process.
- 169 An unsubscribe link is provided in each newsletter.
- 170 Unsubscribing from within the newsletter does not require email confirmation.
- 171 It is possible to unsubscribe from newsletters from the website.
- 172 The latest edition of the newsletter is available online.
- 173 Newsletter archives are available online.
- 174 The newsletters' frequency can be found before subscribing.

11. Presentation

- 175 The graphic charter is consistent throughout the site.
- 176 Information is not conveyed by color alone.
- 177 Content is presented with sufficient contrast to its background.
- 178 The content and meaning of each page are not altered when styles are disabled.
- 179 Content is not only designated by its shape or its position on the screen.
- 180 Content that needs to be reproduced by screen readers is not hidden from them.
- 181 The size of the clickable elements is sufficient.
- 182 Texts that can be formatted via styles are not replaced by images.
- 183 Content generated via styles is provided with a suitable alternative.
- 184 Typographic symbols have an appropriate alternative.
- 185 A generic font family is listed as the last alternative in font family lists.
- 186 Styles do not justify the text.
- 187 Capitalization for decorative purposes is done using styles.
- 188 The website does not block the browser's zoom functionalities.
- 189 The website offers one or more mechanisms for adapting to mobile devices.
- 190 The site offers styles dedicated to printing.
- 191 The content of each page can be printed without printing the navigation blocks.

12. Security

- 192 All pages use the HTTPS protocol.
- 193 Security certificates are signed and currently valid
- 194 Pages using HTTPS have a strict transport header.
- 195 Pages using the HTTPS protocol do not offer HTTP resources.
- 196 Password operations can be carried out in their entirety online
- 197 Passwords can be chosen and changed by the user
- 198 A mechanism raises the user's awareness regarding their password's level of security
- 199 The site provides a way to reinitialise a password.
- 200 The site doesn't communicate a password by email.
- 201 The headers sent by the server disable automatic detection of each resource's MIME type.
- 202 The server indicates each resource's MIME type.
- 203 Information relative to transaction security is indicated.
- 204 The server does not send the file listing of directories with no index page
- 205 The server sends activation information for protection against cross-site scripting.
- 206 The server sends information that indicates which domains are allowed to embed its pages in frames
- 207 The website offers a security mechanism that limits the sources of its content.
- 208 The server doesn't communicate information on the software and languages used.
- 209 Integrity control of third party resources is present and valid.
- 210 The website offers at least two mechanisms to validate a secure operation.

13. Server and performances

- 211 The address of the website and of its subdomains works with and without a www prefix .
- 212 The website's root contains instructions for web crawlers.
- 213 The website provides a sitemap file listing the content to be crawled.
- 214 The server does not force redirects from the desktop version to the mobile version or application.
- 215 The server sends a 404 HTTP error code for resources not found
- 216 The server sends a personalised 404 Not found error page
- 217 The server sends a personalized 403 "Forbidden" error page.
- 218 The main navigation menu is displayed on custom error pages.
- 219 The server transmits compressed contents to the clients which accept them.
- 220 The server sends information to enable the caching of contents
- 221 Headers sent by the server contain information pertaining to the character set used
- 222 Style sheets of the site are minified.
- 223 Scripts of the site are minified.

14. Structure and code

- 224 The date of publication or update of the contents is made available in a programmatic form.
- 225 Each page's source code contains metadata that define the character set used.
- 226 The character encoding is UTF-8.
- 227 Each page's content is organized according to a hierarchical structure of headings and sub-headings.
- 228 Elements that are visually displayed as lists are tagged in an appropriate way in the source code.
- 229 Each HTML ID is only used once per page.
- 230 The website does not block the copying of content.
- 231 The website does not block access to the contextual menu.
- 232 The site does not force any redirects or auto-refreshes on the client side.
- 233 The text of internal PDF documents is selectable.
- 234 Internal PDF documents are given a structure based on titles.
- 235 Syndication feeds can be detected by user agents
- 236 Cells in data tables are linked to their headers
- 237 Data table titles are filled in.
- 238 Linearising tables used for layout does not impede the understanding of contents
- 239 Data tables are not replaced by images.
- 240 Data tables are not simulated through styled text

Credits and thanks

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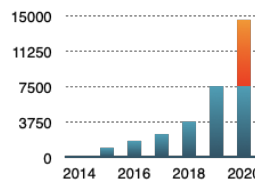
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