

Queen's University

Accessibility Annual Status Report

May 1, 2016 to April 30, 2017

This document is available in alternate formats, upon request. Please contact us at 613-533-2563 or by email at equity@queensu.ca

Public Communication of the Accessibility Plans and Annual Reports

Queen's current and past Accessibility Plans and Annual Reports are available:

- Online at the Equity Office website at: [Reports and Plans](#)
- On written request to the Equity Office, Queen's University, Mackintosh-Corry Hall, Room B513, Kingston, ON, K7L 3N6
- By telephoning the Equity Office at (613)533-2563
- By email at equity@queensu.ca
- In alternate format as requested

Accessibility Feedback

Queen's recognizes that feedback is critical to the process of identifying and removing barriers to participation as well as improving how we deliver our services to persons with disabilities. The [Accessibility Feedback Online Form](#) can be used to submit feedback about accessibility to the Equity Office.

Feedback may also be given by emailing the Equity Office at equity@queensu.ca, by telephone at (613) 533-2563, or by fax at (613) 533-2031. You may also send feedback via regular mail:

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Section One: Introduction

Background

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (“AODA”) Queen’s University is considered a large designated public sector organization. As such, Queen’s is required to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi- year accessibility plan. That document constitutes Queen’s University’s Accessibility Plan (“[the Plan](#)”) for the period 2016 – 2025.

AODA legislation also requires public sector organizations to prepare an Annual Report (“the Report”) relative to the multi-year accessibility plan. This Report documents the planning and implementation activities undertaken by Queen’s during the first year of the multi-year Plan, from May 1, 2016 to April 30, 2017.

Vision & Commitment

Queen’s vision is to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the strategic identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to their full participation. Accessibility planning provides the university with the opportunity to take a comprehensive look at its services, policies, procedures, practices and programs to determine which aspects of its operations require action towards advancing accessibility. In order to support progress and meaningful implementation of the Plan, a strong foundation built upon the following principles is necessary.

Informed & Committed Leadership

- All Departments and Units are asked to provide input into the Plan.
- The Vice-Principals’ Operations Committee (VPOC) approves the Plan and receives annual status reports for information and comment.
- Accountability is demonstrated through the Plan and its related accessibility documentation that is made publicly available and in alternative formats upon request.
- Mandatory accessibility and human rights training is offered for all staff, faculty, and students acting on behalf of the university.
- Engaged and aware employees incorporate accessibility into daily practices at all levels of the organization and are encouraged to use an inclusionary lens when preparing policy and procedural documents or developing programs and services.

Queen’s University’s Comprehensive Strategic Framework for Accessibility

In October 2016, VPOC approved transitioning the Accessibility Framework to Phase 2 – Competency.

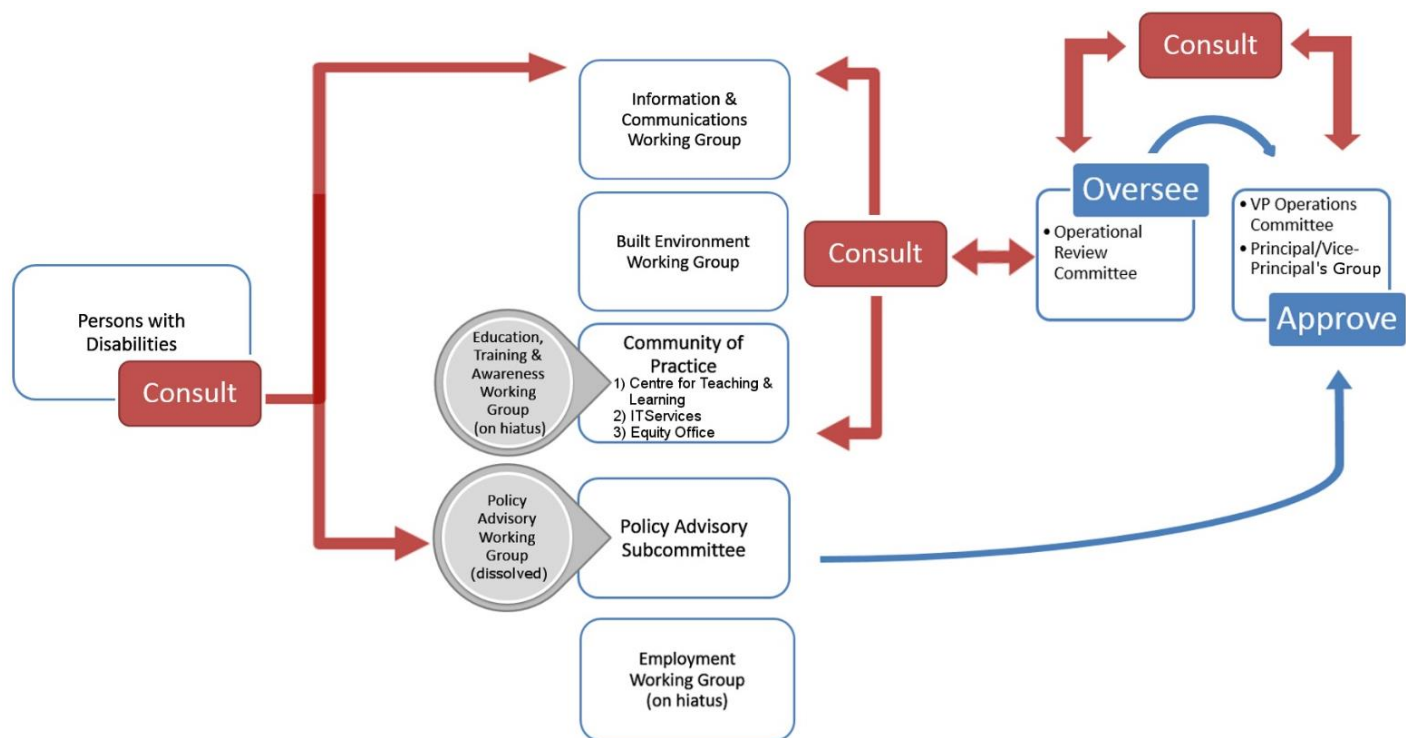
Phase Two - Competency

Through 2015, some original working groups were either placed on hiatus (because AODA obligations were met) or dissolved. The remaining working groups continued work towards

compliance or competency of the university's obligations under the AODA in the following manner:

1. Consult with Persons with Disabilities whose input is shared with the five working groups and throughout the cycle;
2. The process of each working group and committee are as follows:
 - a. **Information and Communication Working Group:** continue to monitor Queen's websites and departmental compliance efforts (with WCAG 2.0 Level A) every six months and make recommendations.
 - b. **Built Environment Working Group:** continue its work to meet obligations of the Design of Public Space requirements coming into force in 2016.
 - c. **Community of Practice** (*formerly the Education, Training, and Awareness Working Group has been put on hiatus*): include input from the Centre for Teaching and Learning, ITS Services, and the Equity Office.
 - d. **The Policy Advisory Subcommittee (PSAC) of VPOC** (*formerly the Policy Advisory Working Group which has folded*): has agreed to expand its Terms of Reference to include providing feedback on Accessibility policies, procedures, and guidelines and submit them directly to VPOC for approval.
 - e. **Employment Working Group:** has been put on hiatus. The AODA requirements have been met operationally by the Human Resources department through the development of the [Accommodation of Disabilities in the Workplace Policy](#), [Individualized Accommodation Procedures](#), [Disability Accommodation Guidelines](#), [Return to Work Policy](#), and [Return to Work Procedure](#).
3. Any initiative from each active Working Group or Committee (with the exception of PSAC) is given to the Operational Review Committee (ORC) who provides feedback and endorsement ensuring institutional-wide considerations are discussed;
4. The VP Operations Committee, Principal or Vice Principal's Group consults with ORC and provides final approval.

Figure 1- Phase Two: Reporting Structure of the Framework for Accessibility



Section Two: Status Update – (2016/2017) – Meeting AODA Requirements

The following is a summary of actions taken to achieve compliance with 2016/2017 applicable requirements under the AODA and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR 191/11). Compliance deadlines appear in brackets and refer to January 1st of the given year.

Information and Communication Standards

Communicating and providing information in ways that are accessible to all is another cornerstone of building an accessible organization.

191/11, section 14 – Websites conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines – WCAG 2.0 Level A (2014)

Although the compliance date has passed, work on compliance continued in 2016/17.

- ✓ ITS again purchased a one-year subscription to Site Improve.
- ✓ The Information and Communications Working Group created an inventory and gathered some basic data on all Queen's websites from colleagues across campus so that its members could better understand Queen's current rate of compliance.
- ✓ The Information and Communications Working Group will continue to monitor Queen's websites.

Design of Public Space and the Built Environment

- ✓ A 2-year Accessibility Audit of the University's built environment has concluded and the data entry is finished. Approximately 6 million square feet of interior and exterior space were audited. These included academic and administration buildings, libraries, student centres and any other buildings expected to undergo capital upgrades, updates or renovations.
- ✓ The Queen's Facilities Accessibility Design Standards (QFAD) Project Team continue to develop the QFAD with feedback from the Built Environment Working Group. On account of infrastructure changes within Physical Plant Services and Campus Planning this project is behind schedule yet there is university commitment to see this project through to implementation.
- ✓ An Equity Advisor participates on the Campus Planning Advisory Committee.

For new and significant construction or renovation projects, Queen's University will:

- ✓ Newly constructed and redeveloped outdoor public use eating areas shall adhere to accessibility requirements.
- ✓ Newly constructed and redeveloped exterior paths of travel shall adhere to accessibility requirements.
- ✓ Newly constructed and redeveloped off-street parking facilities and on-street parking spaces shall adhere to accessibility requirements.
- ✓ New service counters (inclusive of replacing existing service counters) shall adhere to accessibility requirements.
- ✓ Fixed queuing guides shall adhere to accessibility requirements.
- ✓ Newly constructed or redeveloped waiting area where the seating is fixed to the floor shall adhere to accessibility requirements.
- ✓ Queen's Accessibility Plan shall include procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of accessible elements in public spaces and procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions when required accessible elements are not in working order.

Duncan McArthur Hall

- ✓ At Duncan McArthur Hall, accessibility upgrades were identified in 2015. A \$50,000 grant was awarded from the Service Canada Enabling Accessibility Fund and Queen's matched the grant with an additional \$50,000.
- ✓ The university officially unveiled these accessibility improvements at Duncan McArthur Hall during a ribbon-cutting ceremony on October 5, 2016.

191/11, section 80.16-80.17 - Outdoor public eating areas (2016)

- ✓ Duncan McArthur Hall - two new accessible picnic table platforms.



191/11, section 80.21-80.31 – Exterior Paths of Travel (2016)

- ✓ Duncan McArthur Hall - A new concrete accessible ramp leading to the building's front entrance.
- ✓ Duncan McArthur Hall - The installation of several curb cuts that allow persons with disabilities to cross the street in a safe and barrier-free manner.



191/11, section 80.32-80.39 - Accessible parking (2016)

- ✓ Richardson Stadium - When the stadium was constructed there were 10-15 accessible parking spaces installed – for football games an additional 10 are installed.

- ✓ Duncan MacArthur Hall – during this project the pay and display machine area was renovated and a new curb was installed to make it accessible also, an additional two spaces were installed with accessible meters.



Education, Training, & Awareness

Queen's recognizes the importance of collaboration in order to share and gain expertise. We continue to strengthen our capacity to inform, educate, raise awareness, and involve both persons with and without disabilities on and off campus. AODA training, both face-to-face and online, continues to be undertaken in 2016/17.

191/11, section 7 & Section 16 – Training

- ✓ Online training continues to be provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards under Ontario Regulations 191/11 and on the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- ✓ The [Queen's AODA Training Suite](#) can be found on the Equity Office website.
- ✓ Face-to-face training was made available upon request.
- ✓ The Equity Office tracked training completion and kept records for compliance purposes.
- ✓ Quarterly Compliance Progress Reports were sent to all departments and units.
- ✓ All employees and volunteers are encouraged and provided opportunities to access all available AODA training. However, for the purposes of tracking compliance of our employees, the Equity Office adheres to the Federal Contractors Program criteria: Employees are defined as those earning a salary and that are employed by the university for more than 12 weeks and/or work more than 14 hours per week. This excludes Adjunct 1's, Affiliates, Associates, Co-op Students, Guests, and Casual employees.

- ✓ The tables below are a comparison of percentages of completion by active employees between July 2017, May 2016, and May 2015.
- ✓ With an increase of more than 200 faculty and staff, the percentage who completed the Customer Service Training remained almost the same.
- ✓ Although the Human Rights 101, Access Forward, and Accessibility Instruction for Educators training all experienced completion rates increase, the table shows that more work is necessary for compliance.

July 2017				
	Customer Service Training	Human Rights 101	Access Forward	Accessibility Instruction for Educators
Active Faculty and Staff (4738)	81.6%	52.6%	54.1%	41.9%
Students and Casuals (6002)	58.5%	44.5%	45.5%	N/A

May 2016				
Active Faculty and Staff (4518)	Customer Service Training	Human Rights 101	Access Forward	Accessibility Instruction for Educators
Total	80.8%	41.8%	43.3%	28.3%

May 2015				
Active Faculty and Staff (4282)	Customer Service Training	Human Rights 101	Access Forward	Accessibility Instruction for Educators
Total	80.6%	32.4%	34.7%	17.0%

Section Three: Status Update – (2016/2017) – Exceeding AODA Requirements

Queen's strives to improve its ability to consult, engage, listen, and reframe accessibility issues so that the results work better to meet the expectations and needs of persons with disabilities. We continually seek new ways to engage with persons with disabilities concerning how Queen's might best ensure everyone's full participation. Below are some accessibility achievements that exceed AODA requirements.

Access Art Queen's

Access Art Queen's installation took place for two weeks in April at the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. This was an art installation seeking to destabilize privilege traditionally associated with experiencing art. Operated under an anti-oppressive framework, Access Art Queen's sought to alternatively utilize art as a technique of radical resistance in order to reimagine art as accessible. Artists and organizations from within the Queen's community, Kingston, and beyond contributed pieces of various mediums to engage visitors in discourse and conversation about disability and in/accessibility.



Accessibility Hub

- ✓ Since its launch, the Accessibility Hub has assisted over **120** Queen's Departments and Community Services with accessibility issues.
- ✓ Through the Accessibility Hub website, the Accessibility Coordinator has responded to:
 - Over **725** specific requests since the website launched (Oct. 2013).
 - Requests range from the simple to very complex. Including; built environment, video captioning, workplace accommodations, audio transcripts, website and

document accessibility, physical access, accessible transportation, and accessible parking.

- ✓ Since Google Analytics was added to the Hub (Nov. 22, 2013) there have over **82,000 Visitors** to the website, viewing over **175,000 pages**.

DEAP Tool

The Diversity and Equity Self-Assessment & Planning (DEAP) Tool for both Academic and Administrative Units has been developed by the Queen's University Equity Office to assist Units to better understand their working environment climate as it relates to equity and diversity. Implementation of the DEAP Tool across units will be an additional method towards ensuring that the university not only meets, but also in some cases, exceeds the AODA requirements. The DEAP Tool is a self-audit tool for internal use for Units to:

- ✓ Understand the demographic profile of their staff, faculty, and students;
- ✓ Assess how inclusive the Unit is;
- ✓ Provide an opportunity to reflect on areas in need of improvement using the Diversity Score Card assessment template;
- ✓ Support further commitments to equity and diversity;
- ✓ Develop an action plan and timeline to enhance inclusion.

The Tool also is designed to complement other administrative responsibilities of units such as:

- ✓ Departmental Strategic Planning;
- ✓ Cyclical Review Process (CPR) and Queen's University Quality Assurance Process (QUQAP's);
- ✓ Hiring and Appointments Processes;
- ✓ Implementation of the Academic Plan.

Thus far the following units have engaged with the Tool: School of Nursing (has completed year one progress report and is currently setting goals for year two), Libraries, Faculty of Education, Department of Economics, Department of Chemical Engineering, School of Medicine. Finance is piloting the first Administrative Unit DEAP Tool. Student Affairs, VP Research and VP International have indicated an interest as well. The DEAP will be strategically implemented within the Faculty of Arts and Science early in 2017. The Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) is also aiming to align the completion of the DEAP with the Quality Assurance Process.

Education, Training, & Awareness

Queen's recognizes the importance of collaboration in order to share and gain expertise. We continue to strengthen our capacity to inform, educate, raise awareness, and involve both persons with and without disabilities on and off campus.

- ✓ The 'From Diversity to Inclusion in the Workplace' Certificate Program co-developed between Human Resources and the Equity and Human Rights Offices continues to realize good enrollment rates.
- ✓ The Equity Advisor delivered a guest lecture to SURP 870.
- ✓ The Accessibility Coordinator co-presented at the University of Guelph Accessibility Conference in May 2017.
- ✓ The Accessibility Coordinator presented at TD Day on creating accessible course content.
- ✓ The Accessibility Coordinator staffed information booths at SOAR and at the Graduate Students Resource Fair.
- ✓ The Accessibility Coordinator presented at the new Faculty Orientation.
- ✓ The Accessibility Coordinator delivered accessibility training to Orientation leaders, Residence staff, AMS, ASUS, the Engineering Society, and the Dan School of Drama and Music.
- ✓ The Accessibility Coordinator sits on the Transition Resource Guide Advisory Board - Regional Assessment and Resource Centre (RARC) and the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC), City of Kingston.
- ✓ Throughout the year, the Accessibility Coordinator has provided numerous training and workshops to numerous Departments and Units regarding website, document, and social media accessibility; including Alumni Relations, Queen's Rector, Office of the Provost, School of Medicine, CTL, ITS, and Department of English.

Student Wellness Services

In the Spring of 2018, Student Wellness Services will move into the new Innovation and Wellness Centre. The Centre will bring collaborative and experiential learning spaces, state-of-the-art laboratories and mental health and wellness services together in one convenient location at the heart of campus.

[Student Wellness Services](#) (SWS) is the university's central health care and related service provider comprising four streams of service: Health Promotion, Student Health Services, Counselling Services, and Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS).

- ✓ During the 2016/2017 academic year, QSAS registered 1483 student with disabilities.
- ✓ The Student Experience Office introduced one-on-one consultations between Accessibility Services staff and incoming students and their families, at Summer Orientation to Academics and Resources

- ✓ Accessibility Services added an advisor position to support students requiring academic accommodation, increased the capacity of the office's transition support program, and enhanced its website
- ✓ Student Wellness Services and the Office of the University Registrar are participating in the ongoing design and planning process for the new Queen's Innovation and Wellness Centre, scheduled to open in 2018 on Union St. The new facility will include new space for Student Wellness Services (including Accessibility Services housed on the main floor), and a new university Examination Centre that will coordinate the scheduling and sitting of all centrally-administered accommodated final exams, and all midterm exams requiring computer-based accommodations. The new centre will also provide space, staff and services to facilitate all accommodated, centrally-administered midterms and tests, not just those requiring the use of a computer, and graduate-level accommodated final exams. The centre is being designed to accommodate a broad range of required environments.

Final Exam Accommodations

QSAS arranges final exam accommodations through the Exams Office. The number of accommodated exams provided by the Exams Office has increased through the years.

Total Exam Accommodations					
Dec-2014	Apr-2015	Dec-2015	Apr-2016	Dec-2016	Apr-2017
2761	2542	3149	3196	3638	3558

Academic Accommodation Policy

- ✓ The University Senate approved a new university-wide policy and procedures for Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities developed through the Advisory Committee on Academic Accommodations.
- ✓ [Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Policy](#)
- ✓ [Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Procedure](#)

Mental Health

Student Affairs offers a number of programs designed to help students, faculty and staff support those experiencing mental health issues. These programs aim to:

- ✓ Help provide timely, professional, compassionate care to students in distress;
- ✓ Raise awareness about the personal and developmental impact of mental health problems;
- ✓ Help reduce the stigma associated with mental illness;
- ✓ Provide information and support to members of our community who are supporting individuals experiencing mental health challenges;
- ✓ Encourage people to talk and help create more openness about mental health.

Mental Health Training

- ✓ Identifying and Responding to Students in Distress (IRSD);
- ✓ Mental Health: Awareness, Anti-Stigma, Response;
- ✓ Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Canada.

Steve Cutway Accessibility Award

- ✓ Established in 2008, this award recognizes students, staff and faculty who demonstrate innovation, enthusiasm and compassion in creating learning and work environments that allow the full participation of persons with disabilities.
- ✓ The Equity Office coordinates the nominating group as well as the event.
- ✓ In honour of Queen's 175th anniversary, the Equity Office and the Human Rights Office will bestow their Human Rights Initiative, Steve Cutway Accessibility, and Employment Equity awards on alumni.
- ✓ The 2016 Steve Cutway Accessibility Award was presented to Katie Charboneau, Artsci'11, who worked as an accessibility advocate and ambassador during her studies at Queen's. Ms. Charboneau worked to change attitudes on campus, in addition to bringing attention to physical barriers. She spearheaded the creation of a Queen's Accessibility Awareness Month as well as a specialized library, two initiatives that raised awareness of accessibility issues and helped to educate the Queen's community. Accessibility Queen's also hosted an information awareness fair each year, which connected students with groups, committees, and organizations on campus and within the broader Kingston community. Ms. Charboneau is currently doing similar work as the administrative manager with All In. The Kingston-based organization provides expert information, education, support, and opportunity for all individuals and organizations, in the area of mobility impairments.



Katie Charboneau accepts the Steve Cutway Accessibility Award from Provost Benoit-Antoine Bacon

Section Four: Moving Forward to 2025

AODA Requirements

The following chart indicate future AODA requirements that Queen's University will have to meet. As for all other preceding AODA requirements, failure to meet these requirements could lead to a non-compliance designation and could result in financial implications for the University.

Information and Communications

Timeline	Requirement
January 1, 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Make available, upon request, accessible or conversion ready versions of printed material that are educational or training supplementary learning resources2. Where available, our Libraries will be required to provide an accessible or conversion ready format of digital and multimedia resources or materials, upon request (some exceptions)
January 1, 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Ensure all internet website and web content will conform to established WWW Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level AA (some exceptions)

Future AODA Standards

Regular reviews of the AODA are required to make sure the legislation is working as intended and to identify where improvements can be made. Mayo Moran, Dean of the Faculty of Law of the University of Toronto, was mandated to lead the scheduled independent review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). [She tabled her report and recommendations to the Ontario government in November 2014.](#)

The report identified a need for new standards covering the health care and education sectors. New standards could have an impact on Queen's:

1. Health Care Standard: would affect the School of Medicine on what and how it teaches. Such a standard may include: requiring accessible examination equipment, health information to be provided in alternate formats, and require training for medical practitioners;
2. Education Standard: could require that Learning Management Systems (LMS) and website extranets be within the scope of the website accessibility requirements.

Education Standard

On December 5, 2016, Premier Wynne announced in the Ontario Legislature that her Government had agreed to develop an Education Accessibility Standard. The next step under the AODA is to start the process of developing the promised Education Accessibility Standard and appoint an arms-length Standards Development Committee to consult the public on accessibility barriers in Ontario's education system, and to develop recommendations on what that accessibility standard should include. On May 25, 2017, an email invitation from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario was sent asking for members of the public to apply to serve on the Education Standards Development Committee.

Health Care Standard

As part of Ontario's Accessibility Action Plan, the Government of Ontario has committed to identifying and addressing accessibility barriers in the health care sector through the creation of a potential new accessibility standard for health care under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). The development of an accessibility standard for health care is about addressing barriers to accessibility that persons with disabilities may experience when receiving health care services. The Accessibility Directorate of Ontario and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care are holding pre-consultations with stakeholders to identify accessibility gaps and barriers specific to the health care sector.

Canadians with Disabilities Act

A federal act is being developed to ensure that Canada becomes fully accessible to people with disabilities, effectively implementing the equality rights, which the Charter of Rights and the Canada Human Rights Act guarantee. After the 2015 election, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau named Carla Qualtrough the Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities with the [mandate to enact the Canadians with Disabilities Act](#).

On May 29, 2017, the Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, released a report entitled, ["Creating new national accessibility legislation: What we learned from Canadians."](#) The report summarizes the input received following Canada-wide consultations to inform the development of new planned federal accessibility legislation.

Accessibility Vision for the Queens University Biological Station (QUBS)

QUBS expressed a strong desire to increase the accessibility at both Opinicon and Elbow Lake properties. QUBS requires funds to reconstruct the following to be fully accessible and compliant with the Design of Public Spaces Standards going forward:

- a) The 'Red Trail' at Elbow Lake
- b) Lindsay Lake trail at Opinicon
- c) Lodges at both Elbow Lake and Opinicon
- d) Beach access route at Elbow Lake.

In addition, the QUBS is in the midst of raising the necessary funds to construct two new facilities. This would position the QUBS as a leading biological station internationally. Accessibility is at the core of their vision. As such, they envision that the new facilities will be state of the art when it comes to Universal Design (i.e., accessible entrances, barrier-free access to all floors, gender-neutral washrooms, and so forth).

Accessibility is Key for Success in Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion

Over the years and especially of late, a great deal of work has gone into diversity and inclusion efforts. The university has made clear its intention to put these efforts into action to ensure tangible and lasting positive change. As the authors of the Principal's Implementation Committee on Racism,

Diversity, and Inclusion [Report](#) rightly point out, goals for equity, diversity, and inclusion fit within a larger framework of institutional cultural norms at Queen's, which are foundational to the mission of the university. However, with so much moving the diversity and inclusion needle, we need to be mindful to continue to include persons with disabilities in this critical work. An intersectional perspective is needed to fully understand the interaction of different social identities, within a context of connected systems and structures of power. The accessibility principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equality of opportunity are key to successful equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts.

Section Five: Conclusion

Queen's University has made great strides toward greater accessibility for our students, staff, faculty, and visitors. With the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation acting as a primary driving force, the Accessibility Framework has focused its efforts on achieving legislative compliance through the development and implementation of best practices approaches to accessibility in the post-secondary environment. As awareness of how accessibility contributes to student, staff, and faculty engagement expands, so too will the barrier-identification processes and responses that bring continuous improvement in accessibility for persons with disabilities. We are a community that works together to create an environment where everyone has a full and enriching Queen's experience.