

## 6 Signage

### 6.1 General

*Queen's University signage policy emphasizes the need for uniformity and consistency of application which benefits persons with disabilities, although additional provisions will increase the usefulness of signage for persons with disabilities.*



In general, signs should be explicit, concisely worded and contain easily understood symbols and diagrams (i.e. clear and sharp, not stylized). It is important to avoid a proliferation of signs, as this creates visual noise which can be very confusing to persons with visual impairments.

6.1.1 Signage should be located above head level in heavy pedestrian traffic areas. (*Ceiling suspended signs, as outlined by Queen's signage policy, should be hung so that the bottom edge is no lower than 1980 mm from the ground.*)

6.1.2 Signage should be provided which designates vehicular traffic routes as they differentiate from pedestrian traffic routes.

### 6.2 Characters



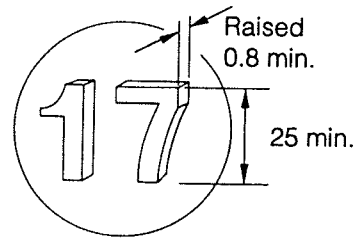
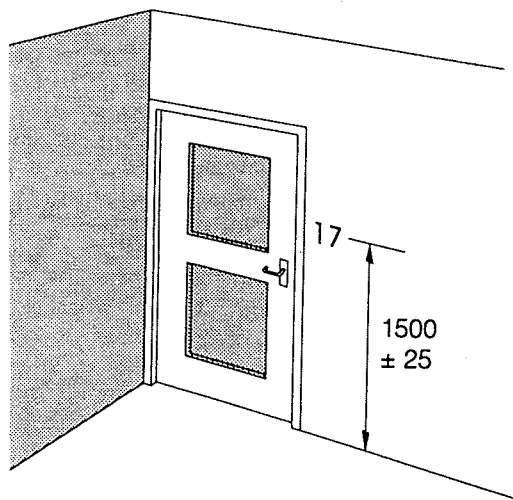
Characters, symbols or pictographs on signs which designate rooms within a building should be located  $1300 \pm 25$  mm above the floor and 150 mm from the jamb (See Figure 6.1). Character size should comply with the size for the intended viewing distance from Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1  
Character Height Dimensions for Viewing Distances

<b>Minimum character height, mm</b>	<b>Maximum viewing distance, mm</b>
200	6000
150	4600
100	2500
75	2300
50	1500
25	750



*People with mobility disabilities may have limitations in the movement of their head, or a reduction in peripheral vision. Signs positioned perpendicular to the path of travel are easiest for them to notice. People can generally distinguish signs within an angle of 30 degrees to either*



Raised Characters or Symbols on Identification Signs

FIGURE 6.1

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*side of the centreline of their faces without moving their heads. Vertical wording should be avoided.*



6.2.1 Severely nearsighted persons may have to be much closer to read a sign than persons with normal visual acuity. A pathway to the sign should be provided so that persons with visual impairments may get in close to read them. Signs at eye level also allow persons to get closer to the sign. It is important not to place flower pots, benches, etc. in front of signs.

### 6.3 Tactile Characters or Symbols

Raised characters are easier to feel than indented characters and are not susceptible to maintenance problems such as filling up with dirt or cleaning compounds.

Raised contrasting borders around raised characters can make the characters difficult to read unless the border is set far from the characters.

6.3.1 Braille characters should be used in addition to the standard alphabet, placed to the left of the raised characters. If braille is provided, it is important to ensure that there are no sharp points or edges. *Since only 4% of persons who are visually impaired are able to read Braille, other methods of conveying information may be used (e.g. large print, recordings, raised lettering).*

### 6.4 Contrast

*The majority of people who are legally blind still retain some vision which allows them to differentiate light from dark, shadows or contrasting colours.*

Characters and symbols should be glare free and contrast with their background (Figure 6.2). Sign backgrounds should be contrasted to the surrounding surface area.

### 6.5 Illumination



The minimum level of illumination on indoor signs should be 200 lux and should be glare free.



### 6.6 Night Viewing

All exterior signs for facilities and buildings, including street addresses, should be illuminated for night viewing.

### 6.7 Street Signs



Street signs should be well illuminated, the characters should be well contrasted with the background and should have high intensity reflective characters to assist in night viewing.

Dark  
on  
Light

High contrast  
between characters  
and background

Light  
on  
Dark

Greatest  
readability

Legibility of Printed Characters

FIGURE 6.2

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Street signs at major intersections should be larger than those at minor intersections.

## 6.8 Orientation / Wayfinding



*Orientation cues help people with visual impairments distinguish pathways and locations. These cues include changes in illumination levels, bright colours, unique patterns, location of special equipment or other architectural features.*

6.8.1 A tactile campus map and directory should be provided. Tactile maps or prerecorded instructions can help people with visual impairments find their way independently in complex buildings or a group of buildings.

6.8.2 Directories should indicate accessible egress routes in addition to general information.

6.8.3 Campus maps and other pertinent information should be provided in alternate formats and it should be posted that these are available.

## 6.9 Access Signs

If accessible facilities are to be identified, then the international symbol of access shall be used (See Figure 6.3). If facilities / services are designed to be universally accessible, then this sign is required. The official symbol indicates to persons with disabilities that they will have reasonable freedom of movement within the building to which it is attached. It usually has a blue background, but if because of lighting conditions, it does not stand out, it can be set on a white background. An arrow can be added to either side or to the top or bottom to indicate direction or the location of an accessible space or facility. (OBC A-3.7.3.1)



The use of access signs should be controlled and should be used in the following situations:

a) Where a building is required to have a barrier-free entrance to accommodate disabled persons, signs incorporating the international symbol of accessibility for disabled persons shall be installed where necessary to indicate the location of that entrance. (OBC 3.7.3.1(1)). Where the main entrance is not accessible and an alternate entrance must be used, a directional sign should accompany the symbol.



b) Where a washroom, elevator, telephone or parking area is required to accommodate disabled persons, it shall be identified by a sign consisting of the International Symbol of Accessibility for Disabled Persons and such other graphic, tactile or written directions as are needed to indicate clearly the type of facility available. (OBC 3.7.3.1.(2))



c) Where a washroom is not designed to accommodate disabled persons in a storey to which a barrier-free path of travel is required, signs shall be provided to indicate the location of the barrier-free facilities. (OBC 3.7.3.1.(3))

d) Signs incorporating the International Symbol of Accessibility for Disabled Persons shall be installed where necessary to indicate the location of accessible means of egress. (OBC 3.7.3.1.(4))



e) The international sign for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing should only



Symbols

FIGURE 6.3

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be used where accommodation has been made for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, ie.



(i) at accessible telephones (flux coils and volume control devices);

(ii) at Teletypewriters (TTY);

(iii) when an assistive listening device is provided; or

(iv) with staff who can use sign language.



f) The symbol for persons who are blind or have a visual impairment should be used where information is available in alternate formats.

## 6.10 Electronic Signs



Electronic signs that can be preprogrammed can be used to provide visual communication which is appreciated by people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. Temporary electronic signage can also be useful for other purposes such as emergency communication or to accompany public address systems.