Queen’s University

Accessibility Annual Status Report

2014

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](http://www.queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/reports.html)
* 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](https://www.queensu.ca/forms/index.php/accessibility/add) 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:

Equity Office
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QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL REPORT 2014

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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](http://queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/reports.html)”) for the period May 1, 2013 to April 30, 2016.

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 2013 to April 30 2014.

## **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 progress reports for information and comment
* Accountability is demonstrated through the Plan and its related accessibility documentation which 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 Comprehensive Strategic Framework for Accessibility**

The [Comprehensive Strategic Framework for Accessibility](http://www.queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/policy/Queens-University-Comprehensive-Strategic-Framework-For-Accessibility-Oct-2011.pdf) (“Accessibility Framework”) enables the development and implementation of an Accessibility Plan that serves the university in the following ways:

* To develop plans to address accessibility in five priority areas related to the AODA
* To establish shared accountability and responsibility for accessibility for persons with disabilities at Queen's, including funding accessibility-related expenses through standard operating budgets and identifying other sources of revenue streams
* To provide educational opportunities about accessibility to improve understanding of accessibility issues and the university’s obligations in accessibility compliance
* To continue efforts to incorporate accessibility issues in university diversity initiatives

The Accessibility Coordination Team oversees the implementation of the Accessibility Framework and is responsible for the development of comprehensive and integrated Accessibility Plans. The Accessibility Coordination Team, is comprised of the Leads of the five Working Groups to support harmonized effort between each group.

The five Working Groups are comprised of members with direct responsibility and expertise as it pertains to accessibility requirements and identified priorities. Each Group also has a member that self-identifies as living with a disability and holds a particular interest in the Group’s area of focus. A list of the Working Groups is included below:

1. Policy Advisory Working Group
2. Information and Communications Working Group
3. Employment Working Group
4. Built Environment Working Group
5. Education, Training, and Awareness Working Group

The Operational Review Committee, a senior management committee reviews all accessibility initiatives at the request of the Vice-Principals’ Operations Committee, thus ensuring institutional-wide considerations are discussed. Ultimate approval of Accessibility Plans and initiatives rests with the Vice-Principals’ Operations Group (VPOC).

**Figure 1** Reporting Structure of the Framework for Accessibility



## Queen’s Strategic Roadmap

Organizational change is complex and involves many components: policies, procedures, practices; people; technology; infrastructure; communications and awareness. Taken together, these are the levers that will bring about change. The Queen’s Strategic Road Map for Accessibility below provides an overall view of the approach to and management of organizational change to foster an accessible environment at Queen’s.

The university recognizes that successful learning and employment outcomes are the result of a shared responsibility and commitment on the part of students, faculty and staff, and expects that all members of the community will advance and contribute to the ongoing development of an environment that is accessible and inclusive, while actively working to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.

| **TRANSFORMATIONAL STRATEGY** | **STRATEGY OUTCOMES** | **Queen’s Strategic Road Map for Accessibility\*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Vision** | An Accessible Queen’s University |
| **Key Outcomes** | * Meaningful consultation with persons with disabilities in formulating solutions and implementing decisions
* Persons with disabilities who are Queen’s customers receive quality goods and services in a timely manner
* Persons with disabilities who are Queen’s employees participate fully and meaningfully in services and employment
 | * Information and communications are available in accessible formats to all Queen’s employees and customers
* Queen’s employees are able to identify barriers to accessibility and actively seek solutions to prevent or remove them on a continuing basis throughout the organization
* There is greater accessibility into, out of, and around Queen’s facilities and public spaces
 |
| **IMPLEMENTATION** | **Levers** | **Policies, Procedures, Practices** | **People** | **Communications and Awareness** | **Technology** | **Infrastructure** |
| **Changes** | New/revised directives and policies will reinforce accessibility considerationsNew and existing tools and guidelines will embed accessibility criteria into day-to-day practices | Staff, Faculty, Student TrainingAccessible human resources practicesImproving employment accommodation practices | Accessibility information is widely available through the Accessibility Hub and other communications and eventsOngoing stakeholder outreach and consultations with persons with disabilitiesAccessible feedback mechanisms are in place | Accessible internet sitesAccessibility features are built into new kiosksMaterials available in accessible formats on requestITS staff familiar with adaptive technology and can provide client assistance | New facilities and all future extensive renovations are completed to meet accessibility standards and Ontario Building Code barrier-free design |
| **Foundation** | **Informed and Committed Leadership** | **Strong Governance and Accountability** |
| **Alignment and Coordination** | **Measurement, Evaluation, and Reporting** |

\*based on a concept from the Ontario Public Service with thanks, any accessibility issues with the above table please contact 32563 for clarification.

# Section Two: Status Update – Year 1 (2013/2014) – Meeting AODA Requirements

The following is a summary of actions taken to achieve compliance with 2013/2014 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. Bullets in red indicate that although the compliance date has passed, there is a plan in place for reaching compliance.

## General Requirements

**191/11, section 3 – Accessibility Policy and statement of organizational commitment (2013)**

* Accessibility Policy and statement of organizational commitment approved by Vice-Principals’ Operations Committee (VPOC) November 25th, 2013, it can be found [here](http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/administration/accessibility.html).
* Policy Advisory Subcommittee of VPOC takes accessibility into account when reviewing all policies, procedures, and guidelines

**191/11, section 4 – Multi-Year Accessibility Plans and Annual Status Reports (2013)**

* 2013-2016 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan approved by VPOC October 31, 2013 and is posted [here](http://queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/reports.html).
* 2014 Annual Status Report received for information and comment by VPOC date and is posted [here](http://queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/reports.html).

**191/11, section 5 – Procuring goods, services or facilities (2013)**

* Procurement Policy approved by VPOC April 29, 2013 and is posted [here](http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/finance/procurement.html).
* Learning and Development tool on procurement can be found [here](http://www.queensu.ca/procurement/aoda.html).
* RFP process and all new contracts have added accessibility language/references.

**191/11, section 6 – Self-service kiosks (2013)**

* Queen’s University shall incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks, as per actions under section 5 above.

**191/11, section 7 – Training (2014)**

* AODA Training Suite approved by VPOC July 21, 2013 and can be found [here](http://queensu.ca/equity/training.html). The AODA Training Suite consists of four modules:
	+ Accessible Customer Service
	+ Accessible Instruction for Educators
	+ Human Rights
	+ Access Forward (training specifically related to Regulation 191/11)
* Training is provided online, face-to-face, and in booklet form, as appropriate.
* An Equity Advisor has consulted with every faculty and unit on campus in order to increase awareness and answer questions pertaining to each faculty and units’ responsibilities concerning training compliance
* The Equity Office will to track training completion and keep records for compliance purposes and Quarterly Reports will be send to all units in May, August, November, and February

## Information and Communication Standards

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

**191/11, section 11 – Accessible formats for providing feedback (2014)**

* 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](https://www.queensu.ca/forms/index.php/accessibility/add) can be used to submit feedback about accessibility to the Equity Office.
* Feedback may also be given by visiting the Accessibility Hub website found [here](http://www.queensu.ca/accessibility/).
* 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.
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**191/11, section 14 – Websites conforms to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines – WCAG 2.0 Level A (2014)**

* ITS purchased one-year subscription to Siteimprove and managed a project to gauge AODA web compliance readiness
* Several Siteimprove training sessions delivered
* It is estimated that to date, 95% of Queen’s websites have been identified, and approximately 60% of owners have requested Siteimprove reports
* Queen’s approaching compliance; further plans are in development ensure ongoing success

**191/11, section 15 – Accessible educational and training resources, including student records (2013)**

* Accessibility Hub provided additional support, with service units, for ensuring educational or training resources or materials in an accessible format
* Accessibility Hub provided additional support, with service units, for ensuring student records and information on program requirements, availability and descriptions in an accessible format
* Accessibility Statement approved by VPOC and adopted by the Office of the Registrar and other appropriate Units, the statement can be found [here](http://queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/policy/statement.html).

**191/11, section 16 – Training to Educators (2014)**

* See section 7 above.

## Employment Standards

The process of finding, getting and keeping a job must be inclusive and accessible in order to build an engaged and effective workforce at Queen’s.

* Human Resources and the Equity Office provided face-to-face training sessions for all faculty staffing officers responsible for academic hiring, concerning the requirements below.

**191/11, section 22 – Notify about availability of accommodations in recruitment process (2014)**

* Careers web page updated to include statement of availability of accessibility accommodations in recruitment process

**191/11, section 23 – Notify applicants of accommodations available during assessment and selection process (2014)**

* Careers web page updated to include statement of availability of accessibility accommodations in interview process

**191/11, section 24 – Notify successful applicants of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities (2014)**

* Statement of availability of accessibility accommodations added to letter of offer

**191/11, section 25 – Inform employees of policies to support employees with disabilities (2014)**

* Orientation toolkit includes information about policies to support employees with disabilities

**191/11, section 26 – Provide alternate formats for workplace information, upon request (2014)**

* Accessible formats and communication supports provided to employees on an on-going basis.

**191/11, section 28 – Develop written process for documented individual accommodation plans (2014)**

* The following policies, procedures, and guidelines have been drafted and are pending Policy Advisory Subcommittee (PASC) endorsement, university consultation and VPOC approval
	+ Accommodation of Disabilities in the Workplace Policy
	+ Individualized Disability Accommodation Procedures
	+ Disability Accommodation Guidelines
* It is anticipated that these policies, procedures, and guidelines will go to PASC September 2014

**191/11, section 29 – Develop written process for return to work process (2014)**

* A Return to Work Policy has been drafted and is pending Policy Advisory Subcommittee (PASC) endorsement, university consultation and VPOC approval
* It is anticipated that these policies, procedures, and guidelines will go to PASC September 2014

**191/11, sections 30, 31, 32 – Accessibility considerations in performance management, career development and advancement, redeployment (2014)**

* Staffing Officers are aware of these requirements by having had the face-to-face training referred to above.
* Formal communication concerning these requirements are pending approval of the Accommodation of Disabilities in the Workplace Policy

# Section Three: Status Update – Year 1 (2013/2014) – 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 outlines some accessibility achievements that exceed AODA requirements.

## Accessibility Café Series

Accessibility Cafés are a chance for the Queen’s community to get together to discuss building an inclusive and accessible Queen’s community that follows the requirements of the AODA. Each Café has a unique topic and all participants are encouraged to share their perspectives and generate ideas. How can we improve upon what Queen’s is doing already towards imagining and then building an even stronger inclusive and accessible Queen’s community?

* October 9th, 2013: Feedback on the about to be launched Accessibility Hub – facilitated by Andrew Ashby, Accessibility Hub Coordinator, at Stauffer Library
* November 4th, 2013: Accessible Instruction for Educators – facilitated by Heidi Penning, Equity Advisor, at West Campus
* January 8th, 2014: Reimagining the International Symbol of Access – facilitated by Heidi Penning, Equity Advisor, at Student Life Center
* February 5th, 2014: Facility Accessibility Design Standards at Queen’s University – facilitated by Rebecca Tan, SURP MA Candidate, at Stauffer Library
* March 6th, 2014: Residences – Designing in Accessibility – facilitated by Yvonne Holland, Manager, Campus Planning, at Student Life Center

## Accessibility Hub

* With VPOC’s approval, this project commenced May 1, 2013 and the [Accessibility Hub](http://www.queensu.ca/accessibility/) was officially launched October 30th, 2013 with much excitement and media attention!
* A blue folder ACCESS Queen’s campaign was conducted to raise awareness about the Accessibility Hub and its resources; a blue folder went out to all faculty and staff.
* Link to the Accessibility Hub has been placed in the footer of all Queen’s main pages
* Accessibility Hub is on Twitter

## Steve Cutway Accessibility Award

* Established in 2008, this award formally recognizes the outstanding contributions of faculty, staff and students towards advancing accessibility for persons with disabilities at Queen's University.  Andrew Ashby, Accessibility Hub Coordinator won the 2013 Steve Cutway Accessibility Award

## Procurement

* Equity Advisor invited to act as Chair of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) Procurement Committee, Queen’s Procurement Specialist asked to participate, in recognition of Queen’s success in compliance in this area

## Design of Public Space and the Built Environment

Queen’s is committed to greater accessibility into, out of, and around our facilities. Although the new amendments to the Ontario Building Code concerning accessibility do not come into force until 2015, and the Design of Public Space requirements do not come into force until 2016, Queen’s will have regard for these amendments and requirements for newly constructed or significantly renovated spaces, premises, and facilities prior to 2015.

* Single-user, accessible washroom near the main student street in Mackintosh-Corry Hall has been completed.
* The new Campus Master Plan (CMP) has established a vision and framework to guide how the university will physically change over the next 10 to 15 years. Achieving barrier-free accessibility ensures usability by the broadest possible range of persons. The principles of universal design have been incorporated into space planning where recommended.
* The Library and Archives Master Plan (LAMP) project is integrated with the Campus Master Plan. LAMP provides high-level options and recommendations for the development of the Library’s and Archives’ facilities. Again, the principles of universal design have been incorporated into space planning where recommended.
* An Equity Advisor has been assigned to the newly formed Campus Planning Advisory Committee.
* Funding has been secured for a campus-wide accessibility audit spanning over two years. Anticipated start date is October 2014.

## 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 successfully completed its second year of offerings. This Program includes courses examining accessibility in the workplace, amongst others.
* ITS offered several workshops on the Siteimprove tool
* Accessibility Hub Coordinator offered several workshops on accessible documents and websites
* Accessibility Hub Coordinator offered workshop on assisting students with disabilities
* Accessibility Hub Coordinator CISC 282 – Fundamentals of Web and Mobile Applications guest lecture on accessible websites
* Equity Advisor and Occupational Student supported accessibility initiatives (i.e., Accessibility Champions) at Homecoming
* Equity Advisor participated on Center for Teaching and Learning Teacher Development Day panel concerning accessibility in the classroom
* Equity Advisor SURP 870 (School of Urban and Regional Planning – Program Development for Human Services) guest lecture on taking accessibility into account when planning and policy-making
* Equity Advisor delivered Universal Design for Learning workshop to Educational Developers at the Center of Teaching and Learning
* Equity Office received grant from the AMS Accessibility Queen’s committee to host two events in the Fall of 2014

## Information and Communications

The Information and Communications Working Group (ICWG) of the Queen’s Accessibility Framework completed an Accessibility Scan and Gap Analysis Report relating to information and communications accessibility in February 2013. In April 2013 the Accessibility Steering Committee addressed the first recommendation of the report, to create an online accessibility information hub with a designated Coordinator. The proposed purpose of the Accessibility Hub was to provide online resources and information to the Queen’s community regarding: the AODA, creating accessible websites and documents, accessible formats, accessibility, technologies, and event planning. Development was completed over the summer and the Accessibility Hub was officially launched at a campus event in October 2013.

* Upon further recommendation of this report, a working group has been struck and is currently underway to conduct an accessibility services self-study. The working group consists of the Deputy Provost, the Vice-Provost & Dean of Student Affairs and the University Librarian. Recommendations will be provided for information and feedback to the Operations Review Committee and Vice-Principals’ Operation Committee in fall 2014.

# Section 4: 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.