Queen’s University

Accessibility Annual Status Report

May 1, 2014 – April 30, 2015

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:

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QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL REPORT 2015

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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 second year of the multi-year Plan; from May 1 2014 to April 30 2015.

## **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 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](http://www.queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/framework/coordinationteam.html) oversees the implementation of the Accessibility Framework and is responsible for the development of comprehensive and integrated Accessibility Plans. This 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](http://www.queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/framework/customerservice.html)
2. [Information and Communications Working Group](http://www.queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/framework/infoandcom.html)
3. [Employment Working Group](http://www.queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/framework/employment.html)
4. [Built Environment Working Group](http://www.queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/framework/builtenvironment.html)
5. [Education, Training, and Awareness Working Group](http://www.queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/framework/eta.html)

The [Operational Review Committee](http://www.queensu.ca/provost/responsibilities/committees/ORC.html), 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 on the next page 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 2 (2014/2015) – Meeting AODA Requirements

The following is a summary of actions taken to achieve compliance with 2014/2015 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.

## 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.

**191/11, section 7 & Section 16 – Training (2014)**

* Online training was provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards under Ontario Regulations 429/07 and 191/11 and on the Ontario Human Rights Code
* The [Queen’s AODA Training Suite](http://www.queensu.ca/equity/training.html) can be found on the Equity Office website.
* Face to face training was made available upon request
* The Equity Office tracked training completion and keep 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 table below indicates the percentage of active employees that have completed accessibility training as of May 6, 2015
* From the numbers below, it is clear that greater effort on the part of Departments and Units must be made to strengthen compliance

| Active Employees | Total | HR 101 | CST | AF | AIE |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Faculty | 1543 | 266 | 1042 | 314 | 262 |
| % |  | 17.2% | 67.5% | 20.3% | 17.0% |
| Staff | 2595 | 1198 | 2315 | 1232 | 212 |
| % |  | 46.2% | 89.2% | 47.5% | N/A |
| Grand Total | **4138** | **1464** | **3357** | **1546** | **474** |
| Percentage |  | 35.4% | 81.1% | 37.4% | 11.5% |

## Information and Communication Standards

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

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

* ITS has again purchased a one-year subscription to Siteimprove.
* The lead of the Information and Communications Working Group has changed from senior representation from the Libraries to senior representation from the office of the VP University Relations as a strategy to come into full compliance with section 14.
* Queen’s is approaching compliance; further plans are in development to ensure ongoing success.

**191/11, section 12– Accessible formats and communication supports (2015)**

* Upon request Queen’s will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner and at a cost no greater than the regular cost charged to other persons.

**191/11, section 18– Libraries of educational and training institutions (2015)**

* Upon request Queen’s libraries will provide, procure, or acquire by other means an accessible or conversion ready format of print materials for a person with a disability.

## 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.

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

* The following policies, procedures, and guidelines received VPOC approval in January 2015
	+ Accommodation of Disabilities in the Workplace Policy.
	+ Individualized Disability Accommodation Procedures.
	+ Disability Accommodation Guidelines.

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

* A Return to Work Policy received VPOC approval in January 2015.

# Section Three: Status Update – Year 2 (2014/2015) – 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.

## 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 around 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?

* This initiative was put on hiatus for this reporting period.
* The Equity Office has been conversing with AMS & SGPS around forming a collaborative effort going forward.

## Accessibility Hub

* Since its launch, the Accessibility Hub has assisted **96** Queen’s Departments and Community Services with accessibility issues.
* Through the Accessibility Hub website, the Accessibility Coordinator has responded to:
	+ **211** specific requests (between May 1, 2014 and April 30, 2015);
	+ and **370** 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 been **26,488 Visitors** to the website, viewing **57,139 pages.**

## 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 is already incorporating these amendments and requirements for its newly constructed or significantly renovated spaces, premises, and facilities.

* All single-user washrooms throughout campus have been re-purposed as gender neutral, and where appropriate, accessible. Appropriate signage signals these gender neutral and/or accessible washrooms.
* The 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 participates on the Campus Planning Advisory Committee.
* A 2-year Accessibility Audit of the University’s built environment has commenced February 2015. Approximately 6 million square feet of interior and exterior space in academic and administration buildings, libraries, student centres and any other buildings expected to undergo capital upgrades, updates or renovations will be audited.
* New construction and renovation design guidelines will ensure that all built environment construction projects will conform to AODA regulations. A new project management checklist will assist and acquaint new project managers with AODA regulations relative to construction projects.

## 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.
* Equity Advisor invited to participate on new AMS Student Life Centre Accessibility Committee.
* Throughout the year the Equity Advisor has been called upon on numerous occasions to provide accessibility advice to Departments and Units and also to representatives from AMS, ASUS, and SGPS.
* Equity Advisor participated on a workshop panel at the Centre of Teaching and Learning (CTL) Professional Development Day in August 2014.
* With funds received from the AMS Accessibility Queen’s, the Equity Office hosted
	+ October 2014, Michael McCreary’s Cross Canada Tour (Autism Awareness).
	+ November 2014, Disability Activist Mia Mingus lunch with students and lecture.
* Equity Advisor invited to speak at ASUS Autism Speaker Series November 2014;
* Equity Advisor delivered guest lecture to SURP 870 class March 2015;
* Equity Advisor delivered key note for Commerce conference;
* Equity Advisor invited to participate in CTL Learning Outcomes focus group;
* Accessibility Coordinator invited to be a guest lecturer for CISC 288 in November 2014;
* Accessibility Coordinator delivered a workshop for School of Graduate Studies 901 March 2015;
* Accessibility Coordinator provided information on students with disabilities to volunteer students with the Queen’s Learning Commons – September 2014;
* Accessibility Coordinator invited to speak with the International Centre for the Advancement of Community Based Rehabilitation (ICACBR) in June 2014;
* Accessibility Coordinator delivered a workshop to Queen’s University Librarians in June 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 Accessibility Hub was officially launched at a campus event in October 2013.

### Accessibility Services Self-Study Report

The Accessibility Scan and Gap Analysis Report also recommended that a working group consisting of the Deputy Provost, the Vice-Provost & Dean of Student Affairs and the University Librarian be struck to conduct an accessibility services self-study. This working group has provided its recommendations for information and feedback to the Operations Review Committee and Vice-Principals’ Operation Committee in the Fall of 2014.

The figure below is a graphical representation of how the Self-Study working group envisions users access a set of services that is framed by an enabling governance structure.



In this reporting year the following recommendations of the Self-Study have been implemented.

* Establish the Accessibility Hub with ongoing funding under the administrative umbrella of the Office of the Provost and reporting to the Director of the Human Rights and Equity Offices
* Establish the full-time position of the Accessibility Hub Coordinator, reporting to the Director of Human Rights and Equity Offices, and physical located at the Adaptive Technology Centre

## 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.
* The 2014 Steve Cutway Accessibility Award was presented to Access Champions for its efforts to provide accessibility assistance to anyone or any event on campus. Founded by Ellen Flanagan (OT’14), Access Champions started as a one-off meant to ensure access and inclusivity for alumni and other visitors during Homecoming 2013. Under Ms. Flanagan’s tutelage, the program expanded to include Orientation Week 2014. Since then Sam Wade (OT’15) and Nicole Krasko (OT’15) have taken up the Access Champions baton with more than 16 OT students willing and able to provide accessibility assistance.
* 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.



Left to right: Ellen Flanagan, Nicole Krasko, Sam Wade, and Principal Woolf.

# Section 4: AODA Requirements Beyond 2015

The following charts indicate future AODA requirements that Queen’s University’s will have to meet. As in 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.

**Design of Public Spaces**

| **Timeline** | **Requirement** |
| --- | --- |
| Jan 1, 2016 | 1. Newly constructed and redeveloped outdoor public use eating areas shall adhere to accessibility
2. Newly constructed and redeveloped exterior paths of travel shall adhere to accessibility requirements
3. Newly constructed and redeveloped off-street parking facilities and on-street parking spaces shall adhere to accessibility requirements
4. New service counters (inclusive of replacing existing service counters) shall adhere to accessibility requirements
5. Fixed queuing guides shall adhere to accessibility requirements
6. Newly constructed or redeveloped waiting area where the seating is fixed to the floor shall adhere to accessibility requirements
7. 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
 |

**Information and Communications**

| **Timeline** | **Requirement** |
| --- | --- |
| January 1, 2015 | 1. Provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities, upon request
2. Make available, upon request, accessible or conversion ready versions of textbooks
3. Where available, our Libraries will be required to provide an accessible or conversion ready format of print-based resources or materials, upon request (some exceptions)
 |
| January 1, 2020 | 1. Make available, upon request, accessible or conversion ready versions of printed material that are educational or training supplementary learning resources
2. 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 | 1. Ensure all internet website and web content will conform to established WWW Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level AA (some exceptions)
 |

# Section 5: 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.