ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Category: to be assigned

Approval: Vice-Principal’s Operational Committee (VPOC)

Responsibility: Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic)

Date: January 25, 2018

Definitions:

“Accessibility” a general term for the degree of ease that something (e.g., device, service, physical environment and information) can be accessed, used and enjoyed by persons with disabilities. The term implies conscious planning, design and/or effort to make sure something is barrier-free to persons with disabilities. Accessibility also benefits the general population, by making things more usable and practical for everyone, including older people and families with small children. ¹

“Barrier” anything that prevents a person from fully taking part in all aspects of society, including physical, architectural, information or communications, attitudinal, economic and technological barriers, as well as policies or practices. ¹

“Disability” means,

(a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,

(b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,

(c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,

(d) a mental disorder, or

(e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.*

**Commentary**

There are two common ways of looking at what disability is.

Medical Model: This model of disability says people are disabled by their impairments. From this perspective, disability covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and some not visible. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time. There are physical, mental, cognitive and learning disabilities, mental disorders, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, drug and alcohol dependencies, environmental sensitivities and other conditions.

Social Model: An alternative model of looking at disability is that it is not something a person has. A person with a medical condition is not necessarily prevented (or disabled) from fully taking part in society. If society is designed to be accessible and include everyone, then people with medical conditions often do not have a problem taking part. From this point of view, disability is a problem that occurs when a person’s environment is not designed to suit their abilities. This model encourages us to look at ways of preventing or identifying and removing barriers so that everyone is afforded equal opportunity to fully participate in their environment.

**Purpose:**

This policy provides the overarching framework to guide the review and development of Queen’s University policies, procedures, and guidelines to comply with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation developed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the AODA).

This policy and its related procedures and guidelines facilitate the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities to enable better access to Queen’s University goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures, and premises.

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2 per Section 10 (1) of the Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990
Scope:

This Policy applies to:

- all students, staff, faculty, governing bodies, volunteers, and guests
- all other persons who provide goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures, and premises on behalf of the university

Policy Statement and Organizational Commitment:

Queen’s University is committed to the full inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities. In complying with the requirements of the accessibility standards under the AODA, Queen’s University shall meet the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner through the implementation of this policy and its related procedures and guidelines.

The University endeavors to be a leader in accessibility. We are a community that works together to create an environment where everyone has a full and enriching experience. Accordingly, the university will take steps to facilitate the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities to ensure access to Queen’s University goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures, and premises. This policy does not replace or change our legal obligations towards persons with disabilities under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Responsibilities:

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<tr>
<th>Contact Officer – Accessibility Coordinator</th>
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<td>Date for Next Review</td>
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<tr>
<th>Related Policies, Procedures and Guidelines</th>
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<td>• Guidelines for Customer Service to Persons Who Use Support Persons</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Guidelines for the Use of Personal Assistive Devices</td>
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<td>• Procedure for Managing Notifications of Temporary Service Disruptions</td>
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Policies Superseded by This Policy

| Accessibility Policy (2013) |