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# University of Guelph's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2022 Progress Update

# Introduction

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Fostering a culture of equity, inclusion and accessibility that allows every member of our community to succeed is an institutional imperative. Last year, the University of Guelph developed a multi-year plan to expand and enhance accessibility and build a plan for a strong future. The University of Guelph's 2022-2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines key initiatives and commitments to not only comply with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, but to build working and learning environments where everyone belongs.

Below you will find a summary of progress towards these initiatives and strategies that has been made over the last year.

The Table on Page 4 provides additional progress updates from the 2022-2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.



## 2022 Highlights

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### ***Proposed Post Secondary Education Standard***

The University continues to monitor development of the proposed A.O.D.A. Post Secondary Education Standard. In March 2022, the Government Development Committee submitted its [final recommendations](#) to the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility. At the time of the reporting, the government has not released any updates.

The final recommendations have been summarized and continue to be distributed to units at the institution. The University continues to engage with an accessibility community of practice regarding the proposed standard.

### ***Office of Diversity and Human Rights***

The Office of Diversity and Human Rights (D.H.R.) and the Accessibility Steering Committee have started discussions on development of an accessibility resourcing and capacity building strategy. This includes ongoing work to devise and implement an initiative to identify accessibility champions at the institution. This will include continuing to identify new accessibility members and new partners at the University. We will continue to work towards development of a strategy that seeks to identify and leverage the evolving landscape of accessibility resources at the University.

In addition, the Office of Diversity and Human Rights has drafted a framework for an accessibility communication strategy. This framework will incorporate the communication recommendations of the proposed Post Secondary Education Standard.

### ***Student Accessibility Services***

Last year, Student Accessibility Services (S.A.S.), created a new private space at the S.A.S. Exam Centre for students experiencing emotional distress to receive support with dignity.

- Purchase of a freestanding unit called a "Mute Box."

### ***Office of Teaching and Learning***

The Office of Teaching and Learning (O.T.L.) is growing its expertise on accessible pedagogy. Dr. Christopher Laursen joined O.T.L.'s team in September 2022 to focus on accessibility in relation to universal design principles and inclusive instructional and assessment practices. Please feel free to contact him at [laursenc@uoguelph.ca](mailto:laursenc@uoguelph.ca). O.T.L. welcomes your questions or ideas on accessibility or universal design principles in relation to teaching and learning. [Click here](#) to learn more about O.T.L.'s vision and mission, and to explore their current resources.

### ***Employment Standard and Information and Communication Standard Reviews***

While not part of the review, units updated the emergency planning survey in Qualtrics. This is part of the University's obligations under the Employment Standard.

We remain committed to devising a framework to review the recommendations in 2023 and will update the Multi Year Accessibility Plan as necessary.

## Table with 2022 progress updates to the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

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Date	Deliverable	Responsibility	2022 Updates
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make all new digital assets accessible going forward.</li><li>• Monitor to maintain ongoing accessibility.</li><li>• Improve the accessibility of the backlog of digital assets over time.</li><li>• Proactively address future compliance requirements.</li></ul>	Computing & Communication Services (or simply C.C.S.), and others	Ongoing.  2023 is a compliance reporting year. We will review these deliverables with the U of G community in early 2023 and provide guidance for decentralized compliance reporting for early fall.
Ongoing	Exterior stairs repair program to replace aged stairs with new stairs that incorporate accessibility features.	Physical Resources	Ongoing

Date	Deliverable	Responsibility	2022 Updates
2022	<p>Supplement the new Diversity and Human Rights (D.H.R.) landing page, or create a new document to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify all key campus contacts and support services for the creation of accessible documents.</li> <li>Reorganize information on how to make and respond to requests for alternate formats.</li> </ul>	D.H.R. and the Accessibility Steering Committee	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>The new <a href="#">Accessibility Landing Page</a> continues to be updated with new resources and functionality. This includes resources on accessibility for instructors, web accessibility, and the Digital Accessibility Resource Centre (D.A.R.C.) that provides guides on creating accessible documents.</p> <p>Additional resources have been drafted, including a summary of the Integrated Standards and responsibilities, and a new resource on creating an accessible syllabus. These resources, once finalized, will become part of the landing page.</p> <p>D.H.R. continues to support units on best practices to communicate alternate formats and communication supports.</p>
2022	Accessibility Steering Committee membership review and networking review to enhance input and consultation between persons with disabilities and the Accessibility Steering Committee.	D.H.R. and the Accessibility Steering Committee	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>D.H.R. and the Accessibility Steering Committee are revising terms of reference and membership in line with best practice and guidance from the Post-Secondary Education Standard recommendations.</p>
2022	Continue to work with digital accessibility tool vendors, in particular those with testing, auditing, and reporting tools, with a focus on websites and online courses in the learning management system.	C.C.S. and Open Ed	Paused.

Date	Deliverable	Responsibility	2022 Updates
2022 and beyond	Continue to work with external consultants to proactively address the Post-Secondary Education Standard recommendations with a specific focus on training.	D.H.R., Human Resources, Open Ed, C.C.S., and others	<p>Ongoing. Preparation work has begun.</p> <p>The University continues to engage with accessibility communities of practice. D.H.R. and the Accessibility Steering Committee will identify opportunities to revise and create training that focuses on accessible education.</p> <p>Modules may need to be reviewed. For example, the newly launched Making Education Accessible module for educators will be reviewed to incorporate elements from the Post-Secondary Education Standard recommendations.</p>
2022	<p>Library entrance and courtyard renovation. This project will enhance accessibility for library users by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the number of power doors.</li> <li>• Incorporating inclusivity into the design of the main entrance.</li> <li>• Leveling the external pathway between buildings.</li> <li>• Installing new exterior tables with accessibility seating allowing for wheelchair access.</li> <li>• Creating a new accessibility service point for I.T. Help.</li> </ul>	Library Facilities	<p>Complete.</p> <p>Construction of the front entrance and courtyard was completed in the summer of 2022, with an official opening in September. All the accessible enhancements listed were incorporated into the final design.</p>
2022	Complete hiring process for library digital accessibility coordinator. This position will deliver training to library staff about accessible documents, multimedia, and web content, including AODA standards and WCAG 2.0 Level AA, and will provide guidance and leadership about best practices in the creation of accessible content.	Library	<p>Complete.</p> <p>Successful candidate has been focusing on remediating web, document and media content, accessibility policy development, and leading staff training on accessible PowerPoint, Word, and PDF creation and repair.</p>

Date	Deliverable	Responsibility	2022 Updates
2023	Review and as necessary update or create any training modules, including equity, diversity and inclusion modules, to recognize disability as a critical aspect of the institution's commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.	D.H.R.	<p>Complete and Ongoing.</p> <p>D.H.R. with the Office of Open Learning published a new eBook called <a href="#">Building Community: Introduction to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion</a>. The book includes disability within concepts of allyship, anti-oppression, unconscious bias, and intersectional oppression.</p> <p>D.H.R. developed and launched two new online learning modules highlighting equity, diversity, and inclusion in hiring practices. The first is called Principles of Equitable Recruitment: Unconscious Bias in the Faculty Hiring Process. The second is called Principles of Equitable Recruitment: Unconscious Bias in the Staff Hiring Process. Both modules explore the concepts of employment equity and unconscious bias and identifies strategies and steps hiring committees can take to minimize bias at every step of the process.</p> <p>D.H.R. is finalizing the creation of a new human rights module. The new educational resource has been designed for students, faculty, and staff, and includes an overview of the various responsibilities under the <i>Ontario Human Rights Code</i> and the University's Human Rights Policy. Topics will include duty to accommodate, intersectionality, and discrimination.</p>
2023	Create a guidance document resource and or training for staff and faculty on how to incorporate an intersectional accessibility lens into the creation of policies, procedures, or guidelines.	D.H.R.	Ongoing. Preparation work has begun.

Date	Deliverable	Responsibility	2022 Updates
2022 to 2024	Continue to work with campus partners to create a Community of Practice focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (also known by its acronym STEM) accessibility, with representation from campus academic and non-academic units.	D.H.R., Accessibility Steering Committee, and others.	Ongoing.  Library Accessibility Services, the Digital Accessibility Resource Centre, and the Office of Teaching and Learning have had preliminary discussions on accessible practices for creating and sharing math content.
2022 to 2024	Finalize an accessibility policy for the provision of internally published textbooks and supplementary learning resources in alternative formats upon request.	D.H.R., Accessibility Steering Committee, and others.	Started.  D.H.R. has drafted a new resource that summarizes the integrated standards and how to action them at the University. This includes requirements under the A.O.D.A.'s Information and Communication Standards for producers of educational resources, and processes at the University.