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# University of Guelph's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2023 Progress Update



# Introduction

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Building a culture of accessibility and inclusion at the University of Guelph is an institutional imperative and crucial component of success. The U of G is deeply committed to creating equitable opportunities for every member of our community to reach their full potential by embedding equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and human rights into our institution's processes and procedures.

In 2022, the U of G developed a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan which captures initiatives, strategies and goals to not only comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), but to fulfil our university's commitment to building learning, working, and living environments where everyone experiences a sense of belonging.

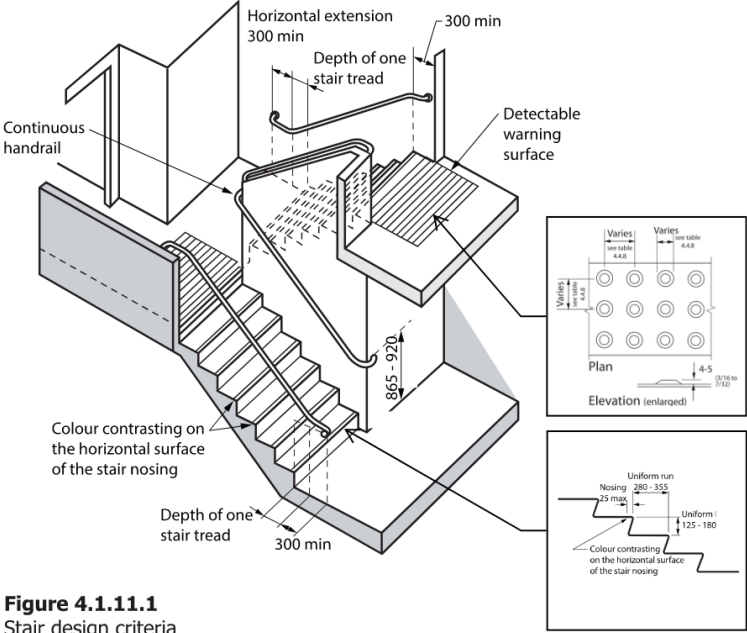
This update outlines the progress made on the goals this year outlined in the 2022-2024 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, as we continue to identify and address barriers to full participation and success.



## Table with 2023 progress updates to the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

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Date	Deliverable	Responsibility	2023 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 (C.C.S.), and others	<p>2023 was a compliance reporting year. The Digital Accessibility Resource Centre (D.A.R.C.) worked with site owners to have them audit their content for WCAG 2.0 Level A &amp; AA accessibility compliance and fix any reported issues.</p> <p>The D.A.R.C. continues to work with the U of G community to help maintain the accessibility of current and new digital assets.</p>

Ongoing	Exterior stairs repair program to replace aged stairs with new stairs that incorporate accessibility features.	Physical Resources	<p>Physical Resources has been continuously working on the Exterior Stair replacement program since our last update. The goal of this initiative is to repair our aged infrastructure while adding accessibility features such as detectable warning surfaces, colour contrasting nosing, continuous handrails and appropriately scaled risers &amp; treads. Please see the diagram 4.1.11.1 below which shows some of the elements we are installing to make the physical infrastructure on Campus safer and more accessible.</p> <p>The drawing also labels some of the stairs that have been completed to date. The full list includes the following areas:</p> <p>Bldg 47 front stairs  Section of Alumni stairs next to bldg. 057 and 055  Bldg 069 North West stairs  Bldg 069 back steel stair  Bldg 160 North exit stair  Winegard stair and ramp next to UC  Stair and ramp between bldg. 002 and 067</p>  <p><b>Figure 4.1.11.1</b> Stair design criteria</p>
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2023	Supplement the new Diversity and Human Rights (D.H.R.) landing page, or create a new document to <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>The landing page, and multiple other D.H.R. resources including training modules have been updated with information on D.A.R.C. for the creation of accessible documents. D.H.R. landing page includes contact information for other units.</p> <p>The bottom of the D.H.R. landing page reads: "Upon request, D.H.R. will provide or help arrange for the provision of alternate formats or communication supports for information on this page, and in accordance with the A.O.D.A. Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation."</p>
2023	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	Membership and Terms Of Reference have been reviewed and updated to ensure that U of G's accessibility planning and reporting is participatory and involves the lived experiences of students, faculty, and staff with disabilities. The current committee membership includes two students with disabilities and one staff member with disabilities.
Ongoing	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	C.C.S. and OpenEd will develop an Request For Proposals to procure a digital accessibility tool. This work will resume in late 2023/early 2024.
Ongoing	Continue to work with external consultants to proactively address the Post-Secondary Education Standard (P.S.E.) recommendations with a specific focus on training.	D.H.R., Human Resources, Open Ed, C.C.S., and others	<p>C.C.S. has completed work with the external consultants and have recommendations on how to use this information for future accessibility training initiatives.</p> <p>D.H.R. continues to engage with external community of practice to monitor and prepare for possible P.S.E. recommendations. The Accessibility Officer monitors P.S.E. Recommendations and continues to report on them at the Accessibility Steering Committee meetings.</p> <p>OpenED and D.H.R. are collaborating to update the Making Education Accessible and Accessible Service Provision modules.</p>

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2023	<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	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.
2023	Complete hiring process for library digital accessibility coordinator. This position will deliver training to library staff about accessible documents, multimedia, and web content, including A.O.D.A. standards and WCAG 2.0 Level AA, and will provide guidance and leadership about best practices in the creation of accessible content.	Library	Successful candidate has been focusing on remediating web, document and media content to ensure A.O.D.A. compliance, and continues to provide guidance and leadership for staff in the creation of accessible content.

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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>A new Human Rights Module has been created by D.H.R. and is being launched in January 2024. This module includes a section on accessibility, duty to accommodate, and the Ontario Human Rights Code.</p> <p>D.H.R. has made some minor updates to the Making Education Accessible Module and is now also updating the Accessible Service Provision Module in collaboration with OpenEd. This update helps those who take this module to provide services to persons with disabilities in an accessible manner. Topics covered include rights and duties around accessibility, alternative feedback provision, and creating accessible digital content.</p> <p>In-person New Days training conducted by D.H.R. introduces new U of G employees to the supports available. This training is available to any new employee at U of G. Topics covered in this training include accessibility services, equity, diversity, and inclusion, and anti-oppression.</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. Create a new resource on intersectionality and disability.	D.H.R.	A new resource has been created by D.H.R and published on the office's website that provides an overview of intersectionality and disability, and practical strategies to create and review initiatives of accessibility from an intersectional lens.
2022-2024	Continue to work with campus partners to create a Community of Practice focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (also known by its acronym S.T.E.M.) accessibility, with representation from campus academic and non-academic units.	D.H.R., Accessibility Steering Committee, and others.	Work continues with campus partners to create a Community of Practice focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (S.T.E.M.) accessibility, with representation from campus academic and non-academic units.



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2022-2024	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.	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.
2022-2024	Create accessibility communication strategy with accessibility committee.	D.H.R., Accessibility Steering Committee, and others.	A framework to draft an accessibility communication strategy was created by D.H.R. and reviewed by the Accessibility Steering Committee in 2023. A draft accessibility communication strategy has been created by D.H.R and will be finalized and implemented in 2024.
2022-2024	Develop an Accessibility and Resource Capacity Building Strategy.	D.H.R., Accessibility Steering Committee, and others.	Ongoing work to build a strategy includes expanding the campus EDI community of practice to incorporate accessibility, and collaborating with EDI champions across the campus who work on accessibility. Initial collaboration between D.H.R. and other units including the Office of Teaching and Learning, McLaughlin Library, and Campus Ceremonies and Events departments has begun.
2022-2024	Develop a consultation plan for engaging groups and individuals, including persons with disabilities, in strategies or other action items.	D.H.R., Accessibility Steering Committee, and others.	U of G's accessibility planning and reporting aims to be participatory and involves the lived experiences of students, faculty, and staff with disabilities. The current committee membership includes two students with disabilities and one staff member with disabilities. The Accessibility Steering Committee invites accessibility advocacy groups within and outside the campus to present their initiatives in its meetings.
2023	Accessible Customer Service Policy update	D.H.R.	Updated the policy with new DHR contact information, and that office is open and receiving in person inquiries. Updated the policy to specifically mention the availability of communication supports and alternate formats in the feedback process in a timely manner with costs, and consultations also included to better reflect requirements of s 11 and 12 of the IASR.



2022-2024	Emergency planning for employees with disabilities	D.H.R., Occupational Health and Wellness, Campus Safety Office, and others	<p>To understand and respond to the specific needs of each individual employee with disabilities, D.H.R. together with Occupational Health and Wellness, and Campus Safety Office have sent a memo to the university leadership team to remind managers to share individualized emergency response information with their staff who have a self-disclosed disability. If an employee with disabilities needs assistance in responding to an emergency, an individualized emergency response plan should be created by the manager in consultation with the employee, and later added to that employee's overall accommodation plan. This information is also shared with emergency responders at the Campus Safety Office. We aim to achieve broad adoption of this emergency planning procedure in 2024.</p> <p><b>Manager's Responsibilities for Accessible Emergency Planning:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Direct staff to the '<a href="#">Be Prepared</a>' webpage of the Campus Safety Office for accessible emergency response information.</li> <li>2. Discuss and collaborate with staff members to be prepared for emergencies by identifying their needs during an emergency. The '<a href="#">Be Prepared</a>' webpage details the types of emergencies that everyone at UofG needs to be prepared for.</li> <li>3. Co-create individualized emergency response plans who need assistance during an emergency.</li> <li>4. File the individualized emergency response plans with Occupational Health and Wellness.</li> <li>5. Share the individualized emergency response plans with Campus Safety Office.</li> </ol> <p><b>Employee's Responsibilities for Accessible Emergency Planning:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be aware of the accessible emergency response information available at the '<a href="#">Be Prepared</a>' webpage of the Campus Safety Office.</li> <li>2. Discuss and collaborate with managers by disclosing what kind of special assistance they need during an emergency. The '<a href="#">Be Prepared</a>' webpage details the types of emergencies that everyone at UofG needs to be prepared for.</li> <li>3. Co-create individualized emergency response plans in collaboration with their managers to be better prepared on how to act during an emergency.</li> </ol>
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Date	Deliverable	Responsibility	2023 Updates
2023	Update to the 2022-2024 Multi-year Accessibility Plan (MYAP)	Physical Resources, D.H.R.	Updated page 16 of MYAP. This update provides further information about how the U of G inspects accessibility elements of the built environment and maintains them effectively. Physical Resources continues to respond to feedback from the campus community, and its Maintenance Operations unit works on the ongoing maintenance of accessibility supports.
2023	Updated Volunteer Policy within Environmental Health and Safety.	Environmental Health and Safety, D.H.R.	Launched a revised EHS volunteer Policy in which the Accessible Customer Service Provision Module and the Principles of Belonging Module have been made mandatory training for all volunteers on campus. This change achieves the AODA compliance requirements in IASR section 7 and 80.49.