

AODA – Multi Year Accessibility Plan 2012-2013 Update

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) came into effect in Ontario in 2005. The AODA applies to both the public and private sectors and its goal is to ensure that all Ontarians with disabilities have full access to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, building structures and premises by January 1, 2025. This goal is being achieved through the development, implementation and enforcement of provincially-set accessibility standards. The AODA will eventually replace the current *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (ODA) (2001) though the ODA currently remains in effect.

Trent University is committed to a learning and working environment which provides opportunities for development and growth for its community members. In keeping with this mission, Trent embraces the “Environmental Model of Disability” as operationalized in the World Health Organization’s definition of disability. In this model, disability is viewed as a consequence of barriers created by design flaws in the built and human environment. It is these design flaws which prevent people with disabilities from full participation in a community. Trent University is committed to breaking down the barriers which prevent the full inclusion of all of its community members in its living and learning environment.

Trent University

One of Canada’s top universities, Trent University is renowned for striking a unique balance between outstanding teaching and leading-edge research. The University is consistently recognized nationally for faculty who maintain a high level of innovative research activity and a deep commitment to the individual student. Distinguished by excellence in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences and increasingly popular professional and graduate programs, Trent is dedicated to providing its students with an exceptional world view, producing graduates who are ready to succeed and make a difference in the world. Trent’s Peterborough campus boasts award-winning architecture in a breathtaking natural setting on the banks of the Otonabee River. Together with its satellite campus in Oshawa, Trent draws excellent students from throughout the country and around the world.

The Office of Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility reported on December 22nd, 2013 to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO) that Trent University was in compliance as of January 1, 2014.

A number of provisions under the Integrated Standards came into effect on January 1, 2013, and OHREA staff worked with the Accessibility Subcommittee and key stakeholders throughout 2012-13 to meet and when possible exceed the requirements.

The following report serves as the annual update to our Multi-year Accessibility Plan and is formatted using the same headings as the Plan for ease of reference.

Section 1

Part I: General Standards

Multi-year plan

The first item required by the IASR was to develop and adopt a multi-year Accessibility Plan which defines the process Trent University will follow in its on-going compliance work. Trent has reviewed its policies, practices, facilities and services. The OHREA drafted The Plan in consultation with the stakeholders in various University departments. The five-year plan will serve as a template for Trent to review and redress barriers which may currently appear in its daily operations and will ensure that new policies, procedures, facilities and services will take into account the needs and rights of persons with disabilities in accordance with the requirements of the AODA. The Plan was approved by the President/Vice-Presidents Executive Committee (PVP) in March 2013 and is found on-line at <http://www.trentu.ca/ohrea/accessibility/aoda.php>

Accessibility Policy

Another significant compliance requirement under the IASR was to develop and adopt an Accessibility Policy. Trent's *Accessibility Policy* (which in fact was a substantive revision of the *Accessible Customer Service Policy*) was given final approved by PVP in April 2013.

Accessibility Commitment Statement

The IASR provisions require that the university adopt a statement of commitment to accessibility, as proclaimed in the university's plan and policy. Trent's statement follows below:

Statement of Commitment to Accessibility

Trent University's mission includes encouraging and celebrating excellence and innovation in teaching, learning, research and student development as well as promoting a culture which engages all members of the Trent community, favours dialogue and collegiality, and nurtures a sense of belonging.

In fulfilling our mission, the University strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. The University is committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing people with disabilities to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as others benefit. This includes the provision of integrated services unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from goods or services.

The University is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*.

Procurement & RFP Language

The OHREA worked with our Purchasing Department to include language around the AODA and the process of acquiring new goods that meets our legislative requirements. Accessibility has also been included in the scoring criteria for RFP's.

Procurement – Trent University Clause

Accessibility - The University is committed to accessibility as expressed in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (hereinafter referred to as the AODA), which places a legal obligation on the University to provide accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025. The University is committed to fostering, creating and maintaining a barrier-free environment for all individuals providing equal rights and opportunities.

All members of the University community, including suppliers required to be on campus, contractors and subcontractors, engaged by the University, are responsible for adhering to and following the commitments set out in the above-noted policy. The Supplier agrees to adhere to the policy and to ensure that all of its subcontractors similarly adhere to the policy.

Lorraine Hayes,
Manager of Purchasing Services
Trent University, Peterborough ON Canada

Accessibility Awareness Training

The Office of Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility was identified as the lead administrator and coordinator of the new IARS training. OHREA developed the training module in conjunction with the Student Accessibility Service Office and with Council of Ontario University Tool-Kit resources. The OHREA met with the three union groups (CUPE 1 & 2, OPSEU, TUFA) in joint committee to develop a collaborative launch strategy. The six deans also endorsed the module prior to launch. The Educator's Accessibility Awareness Training program was launched in the Fall of 2013 to all instructors, professional instructional support staff and teaching assistants at Trent University. This program focuses on the responsibility to meet our instructional obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC), the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and regulation 16 of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). The training was delivered in multi-modes including in-person training and e-learning. The Faculty of Education took part in the initial roll-out of training whereby 45 faculty members participated. The e-learning module of Accessibility Awareness Training launched in December 2013.

Feedback Mechanism

The IASR required Trent to expand the present Customer Service Feedback process to include the new requirements. The OHREA website was updated accordingly.

AODA – Feedback

Trent University is committed to providing access to our goods and services. We offer opportunities for people to give feedback on how we provide goods or services to people with disabilities.

Please contact us. In person/ by phone/ by mail:

Office of Human Rights, Equity & Accessibility (OHREA)
Otonabee College, Rooms 121-124
TRENT UNIVERSITY
1600 West Bank Drive
Peterborough, ON K9J 7B8 Canada

AODA Co-ordinator

Robyne Hanley, Coordinator, Human Rights, Equity & Accessibility
Otonabee College, Room 121
Phone: 705-748-1011 Ext. 7240
Email: robynehanley@trentu.ca

E-Mail: access@trentu.ca

Section 1
Part II: Information & Communication Standards

The IARS requires Trent University to provide accessible formats and communication supports upon request. We are also required to notify the public of their availability. The OHREA developed and supported a sign campaign and the development of an electronic form field for people to make requests. The signs are posted in all service point locations. A one-page information sheet was also circulated with the sign at delivery.

Sample:



Trent University is committed to providing an inclusive and barrier-free access to information by providing accessible formats for persons with disabilities upon request.

Please visit:

http://www.trentu.ca/accessibility/overview_request.php

Emergency Procedures

Emergency Response Procedures were reviewed and adapted with the Risk Management department in 2012. This past year, OHREA was invited to deliver the professional development session for the Council of Environmental Health and Safety Officers (CEHSO) hosted at Trent University. Trent was recognized as a leader in our implementation and delivery of the IASR Emergency Response Procedure requirements. The Emergency Procedures are available on the Risk Management website in accessible formats.

Accessible Version of Trent University Emergency Response Procedures are available here:

[Emergency Response Procedures \(Word\)](#)

[Emergency Response Procedures \(PDF\)](#)

Campus Security will continue to ensure that all our emergency procedures, plans and safety information are in accessible formats and that all members of the Trent community have the opportunity to develop an individualized emergency plan based on the needs of their disability.

The Office of Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility (OHREA) and the Risk Management Office work together to provide the opportunity for any member of the Trent community to request an individualized emergency plan.

If you are unable to participate in any area of the Emergency Response Procedure as a result of a disability, please contact:

Robyne Hanley
Office of Human Rights, Equity, and Accessibility
Trent University OC 121
robynehanley@trentu.ca
705-748-1011 Ex 7240

Fire Safety Sticker – Residence Project: as a component of our continued commitment to Emergency Responses, the OHREA worked with the Housing Department to implement new Fire Safety Stickers on each residence door:

INDIVIDUAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (IERP)

An individualized emergency response plan (IERP) should be developed for anyone with disabilities that are living in residence. The Office of Human Rights, Equity, and Accessibility (705-748-1011 x7240) will work with you to develop an IERP.

Website and web content

The OHREA staff continue to work with the Information Technology (IT) and the Communications departments to assist in meeting their obligations under the IASR. Both IT and Communications have appointed staff to serve as leaders for their respective departments in AODA support (Sean Daniels – IT, Katriona Dean – Communications).

Matrix Project (web content)

In May of 2013 a project was identified by IT and OHREA to examine AODA compliance for digital services. The working group, started by compiling a list of services which IT was responsible for, and used this list as our evaluation base. Understanding how to evaluate the services was our next hurdle. We researched testing methods used by other educational organizations in Ontario. We next built a service matrix which essentially broke down the language of the AODA into a series of tests which could be performed by accessing the various services from computers (in the case of desktop client tools) and browsers (in the case of strictly online tools). These services encompassed our own websites, in-house built systems, and third party applications where applicable. These units of testing were given a numeric score value (low for non-compliant, and higher for compliance) which resulted in a compiled total score for all the tests for each service. The OHREA supported this IT project with summer student employees to test and report using an accessibility matrix developed by Sean Daniels. This matrix has aided in the identification of follow-up projects to bring our services into compliance and several of those are currently on-going. Additionally the reporting of this matrix to administrative groups has aided in bringing awareness to the need for compliance, and policy changes to incorporate AODA compliance guarantees from vendors and staff working on all new product launches. Work on AODA compliance for digital services is being handled through several projects, including an overhaul to our public and internal web presences. This work remains on-going.

Trent Oshawa Website

A new Trent in Oshawa website was launched in the fall of 2013. The successful vendor on this project was Soshal. The Director of Communications included the AODA legislative compliance standards of WCAG 2.0 Level A in the RFP. The vendor reported the new site as in-compliance with the AODA but was not able to produce a test document. The OHREA, IT and Communications working-group identified inaccessible features with the site. Communications and OHREA are actively working to bring the site into basic compliance.

Trent Portal: Portal accessibility improvements

The *myTrent* portal, an application/content gateway built in-house by Trent in order to serve a wide variety of constituents, was designed to meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance. However, tweaks to the UI were necessary to streamline the experience for students with disabilities. They include:

- Support for users with Dyslexia by letting them switch to the “Open Dyslexic” font face (older versions of Internet Explorer use Comic Sans).
- Revision of CSS styles to ensure that contrast ratios between font and background colour meet or exceed requirements without introducing contrast glare.
- Elimination of distracting visual elements (lines/grids/drop shadows) except where essential.
- Increase in line spacing and white space to prevent content elements from flowing into one another for those with cognitive impairments.
- Code revision to facilitate easier parsing by screen-readers.

In 2014, Trent will continue to refine the portal in order to facilitate easy access to pertinent services and content to all its users.

Section 1
Part III: Employment

The OHREA, the Human Resource Department, the Office of Research and the Deans’ offices will be working this year on the new regulations outlined in Reg. 191/11, s. 22-32.

Section 2
2009 – On-going

On-going Customer Service Training Requirement

AODA Customer Service Standard (CSS) requires on-going training for new staff, faculty and student employees. The OHREA continues to offer training in multi-modalities to meet our legislative compliance. All new hires are informed of the CSS training requirement through Human Resources, Risk Management new employee e-mail check list, and via New Staff Orientation.

The Dean's office mails CUPE offer letters to new hires which includes the following statement:

Trent University is committed to inclusive education and requires Instructors to complete the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Customer Service Standard Training prior to employment. This training is available at <http://www.trentu.ca/ohrea/training/aoda>. Instructors are required to complete this training once. If you have completed this training elsewhere, please contact Robyne Hanley (robynehanley@trentu.ca).

In-person sessions are offered through the Human Resource Staff Development Schedule. Group sessions are also offered upon request for department groups.

E-learning sessions are offered through BLACKBOARD,

2012-2013 Participants:

AODA Student Employees and Leaders	57 completed
AODA CUPE CCS Training	39 completed
AODA Graduate Teaching Assistants	48 completed

Continued Services:

Accessible Customer Service Record Keeping
Accessibility Customer Service Policy review
Service Disruption Notices
Feedback Mechanisms

**Section 3
Design of Public Spaces (formerly Built Environment)**

Accessibility Audit

OHREA worked with the Vice President's Office of Administration to secure funds for an additional component of the Accessibility Audit (2012) to be conducted. The firm AccessAbility Advantage will be completing a document that prioritizes the recommendations over a 5 year plan and develops a costing matrix. This project is scheduled for completion in February 2014.

Accessible Routes Project

The OHREA worked with our Physical Resource Department in developing new signage that identifies 'Accessible Routes'. This signage was installed Fall 2013. The signs identify accessible entrances and routes into and between buildings on the Peterborough campus. The next project will be to update the 30 legend signs across campus to highlight accessible routes. This is scheduled for February 2014.



**Accessible
Route**

Section 4 Fostering a Culture of Inclusivity and Beyond Compliance

The mission of Trent University affirms its commitment to an inclusive intellectual and social community that values the contributions and collaboration of all its members. To promote such a culture, Trent has taken the lead on important initiatives to make education accessible to people with disabilities and to foster their active participation in the life of the university.

Excerpt from: Radical Recovery: An Academic Plan for Trent University (2012-2015)

Recommendation 6. Affirm and ensure a culture of inclusivity.

The Committee recommends a renewed affirmation in our marketing and practices of Trent's long-standing commitment to inclusivity, tolerance, and openness to diversity in all of its forms. We envisage a proactive approach rather than merely adhering to the letter of the law (i.e., the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act [AODA]). This would involve not only accommodating students with physical or learning challenges, but articulating clearly that Trent welcomes diversity in all of its many hues: in sexual orientations, social class, creed, ethnicity, and so on. Trent will be clear in its creation of a culture of openness by educating ourselves about innovative pedagogies, exploring the use of technologies in teaching to "invisible learning challenges" and so on. This would necessarily involve cooperation and collegial collaboration between faculty members and the Disability Services Office.

Enhanced Mentoring Grant

The OHREA staff have supported the 'Mentoring for Inclusion' activities under the Enhanced Mentoring Grant for 2012-13 which have contributed to the Educators Accessibility Awareness training initiative. Andrea Walsh was re-hired as a Program Assistant in OHREA to facilitate work on this grant. Grant funds supported human resources to develop the Learning Innovations website to include more current and extensive resources for faculty in the area of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Accessible Education (AE).

As in prior years, four Learning Innovation Grants (LIG) were awarded to faculty through a competition process facilitated by OHREA and the Instructional Development Centre (IDC) Advisory Board. The 2012-2013 disbursements of the Learning Innovation Grant

provided \$16,000 to the four projects. This funding opportunity is being offered to assist faculty members who wish to evaluate their current pedagogical practices and revamp course design and delivery to increase learner accessibility and engagement. To date, this fund has committed \$90,000.

The following projects received funding in the 2012–2013 allocation:

Mary Ann Armstrong and Kristi Kerford (Academic Skills): \$4,000 to pilot a Peer Assisted Study Session program that is based on the Supplemental Instructional (SI) model, developed by Dr. Deanna Martin in 1973 at the University of Missouri at Kansas City. SI is an academic assistance program that has been shown to increase student performance and retention. It targets historically difficult academic subjects – those that have a high rate of F or D grades, and drops and withdrawals – and provides regularly scheduled, out-of-class, peer-facilitated sessions.

Jane Mackie (Trent-Fleming School of Nursing): \$4,000 for the development and use of online learning activities for the teaching of medication calculations as a way to break down barriers to student learning and improve success of nursing students. A series of gradual and repetitive online learning activities will be used to solidify basic numeracy concepts and increase self-efficacy as the nursing students become more confident in their skills for effective medication calculations.

Fergal O’Hagan (Department of Psychology): \$4,000 to improve student accessibility and transferability of their skills for statistical computing through the redevelopment of PSYC 3015Y course materials to use the open-source statistical program R. The course redevelopment will involve transforming the present work book and textbook materials.

Matthew Thompson and Andrew Vreugdenhil (Department of Chemistry): \$4,000 to create short preparatory videos to help introductory chemistry students who may be at a disadvantage by having no previous laboratory experience. The videos will help to equalize the experience-level of students, helping them all to understand specialized equipment and equipment set-up for their laboratory exercises, prior to attending lab. In addition, supplementary videos will be generated that are aimed at helping students better understand how to use the data from their laboratory exercises to complete their laboratory reports, once they have completed the experiment.

EnAbling Change Grant and the MV1

Trent's commitment to accessibility was once again demonstrated with the successful addition to the first ever MV-1 campus shuttle - Canada's First Accessible Vehicle. Our MV-1 is an accessible transportation solution that is providing a direct service that addresses the physical accessibility barriers present on the Symons campus. In 2012 Trent University independently sought out to complete the "Trent University Built Environment Audit". A team of engineers and researchers spent the summer studying our campus and identified over 1,400 barriers. Trent's geography offers a unique landscape for people with disabilities to traverse. A significant number of way-finding and topographical issues were reported.

Through community partnerships and successful government grants we were able to secure the funds to purchase and operate the first ever Accessible Transportation Solution Shuttle. Trent University is the first university in Canada to be able to offer their students, faculty, staff and visitors the MV-1 shuttle.

Valuing Diversity and Inclusivity Presentations:

The Office of Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility hosted several information sessions through various partnerships at Trent. The OHREA worked with our Human Resource Department, IMPACT, and the Student Support Certificate to facilitate sessions on the topic of Human Rights, valuing diversity and best practices for inclusivity. Over one hundred participants took part.

For additional information or if you require an accessible version of this report, please contact:

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