McMaster University

DATE: October 15, 2013

SUBJECT: McMaster Accessibility Council - Fourth Annual Report

TO: Patrick Deane, President
              David Wilkinson, Provost and Vice President (Academic)
              Roger Couldrey, Vice-President (Administration)

FROM: Patty Solomon, Associate Dean and Director, School of Rehabilitation
              Science and Chair of McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC)

Please find enclosed, for your review, the fourth annual report from the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC).

The Council is required to submit an annual report to the President through the Provost & Vice-President (Academic) and the Vice-President (Administration). This report summarizes the activities of the Council in its fourth year of operation.

Any questions or concerns regarding the enclosed report may be directed to me.

Executive Summary

This fourth Annual Report of the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC) highlights the achievements of MAC to date and sets a course for continued accessibility accomplishments in the year ahead.

This past year saw the continuation of the training required under the Customer Service Standard of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA). As of May 3, 2013, approximately 16,608 members of the McMaster community, including Faculty, staff, students employed by the University, and external contractors, have completed the mandatory training.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the *Act* came into force on July 1, 2011, and McMaster was able to meet the initial compliance date of January 2012 for certain specified initiatives. The IASR addresses accessibility in the context of Employment, Information & Communications, and Transportation. (To read details of the achievements over the last three years please see our previous MAC Annual Reports.) The rolling compliance dates attached to the various elements of this standard provided MAC with an opportunity to strategize for the effective implementation of the compliance requirements. The AODA standards have allowed the University, through MAC's leadership, to demonstrate its commitment to accessibility and promote McMaster as a truly inclusive and diverse community.

In accordance with the AODA Integrated Standards, MAC has created a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2012-2025), which is available on the McMaster Accessibility Website. The Multi-year plan highlights the University's strategic process in complying with the legislation and preventing and removing barriers.

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1.   Introduction & Background

1.1   Disability awareness and accessibility continue to be important priorities at McMaster University. This priority commitment is underpinned by McMaster's strategic development plan, which identifies the goal of "building an inclusive community with a shared purpose" as one of its strategic priorities. Furthermore, accessibility initiatives at both theoretical and practical levels throughout the University will support and enhance the identified areas of Student Experience, Community Engagement and Research, as articulated in President Patrick Deane's "Forward With Integrity" guidance document.

1.2   In 2001, the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (ODA) was enacted and the University responded by forming the McMaster University Committee for Disability Access (MUCDA). This Committee was established to better understand disability and accommodation issues at the University and to comply with the legislation through the development of an annual Accessibility Plan.

1.3   In 2005, the provincial government enacted the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (AODA). The goal of this Act is to make Ontario fully accessible to persons with disabilities by 2025. Businesses and organizations that provide goods and services to people in Ontario are required to meet standards in five important areas:

- Customer service (compliance in January 2010)
- Information and communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Built environment

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2.   **About the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC)**

2.1   When the AODA was enacted, members of MUCDA recognized that as an advisory committee, they would not be able to sufficiently ensure University-wide compliance with the new legislation. Consequently, MUCDA was disbanded and the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC) was formed in the summer of 2009. The intention of MAC was to serve as a longstanding Council, with the goal of leading the University through each of the five AODA standards to achieve compliance by 2025. The Council is comprised of senior members of the University Administration, including Assistant Vice-Presidents and senior directors from a cross section of the University. (Refer to Appendix A for the MAC Terms of Reference, including a full member listing.)

2.2   The MAC Terms of Reference state that the purpose of the Council is to provide "a mechanism for planning, reviewing and evaluating the implementation of the AODA Accessibility Standards within the University" and that the Council shall report to the President via the Provost in the form of an annual report.

2.3   The Council serves as the governing body for accessibility issues on campus, and works in collaboration with several departments and advisory groups supporting accessibility initiatives; including the President's Advisory Council on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC) and its working groups. The advisory function of MUCDA was assumed by PACBIC's Access & Accommodation working group. (Refer to *Appendix B* for the Access & Accommodation Working Group Terms of Reference.)

2.4   Since its inception in 2009, MAC has worked towards the implementation of AODA legislative and regulatory requirements. Initial accomplishments have included the development of a University accessibility policy and implementation of the AODA Customer Service Standard. The Council worked in cooperation with external and internal partners, including the Council of Ontario Universities,

University Technology Services (UTS), the Office of Human Rights & Equity Services, Human Resources Services and Student Accessibility Services (formerly the Centre for Student Development).

3. McMaster Accessibility Policy and Website

3.1 In its first year of operation, MAC developed the McMaster University Policy on Accessibility, (*refer to Appendix C*) which was adopted by the University's Board of Governors on March 4th 2010. The policy details the University's commitment to creating a fully accessible environment, in accordance with the AODA. It establishes protocols and guidelines on the use of service animals, support persons, and assistive devices on campus, as well as the handling of notifications of temporary service disruptions.

3.2 In 2012, McMaster received a Notice of File Review from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (at the time, a department of the Ministry of Community and Social Services). The Notice required McMaster to demonstrate how it had been complying with the AODA legislation. MAC's Chair, on behalf of the University, submitted the University's Response to Notice of File Review to the Accessibility Directorate on November 9th, 2012. The Directorate was satisfied with the University's submission but indicated that there was scope for improvement and made the following recommendations:

3.2.1 McMaster amend its accessibility policy to specifically identify who is to be trained, the content of the training and when training is to be provided as required by the Customer Service Standard, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

3.2.2 McMaster add a reference regarding the availability of information/documentation in accessible formats on its website similar to the message posted on the Emergency Guidebook site.

3.3 As of the writing of this report, certain members of the MAC working group, which consist of Human Rights and Equity Services (HRES), Human Resources Services (HRS) and Student Accessibility Services (SAS) are working together to

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ensure the University updates its policies to reflect the recommendations made by the Accessibility Directorate.

3.4 The University continues to identify and promote best practices for providing notice of service disruptions across campus. Ongoing training of notice of disruption policies and effective mechanism of communicating the notice on a regular basis is recommended for all managers and supervisors on campus that provide services to the general McMaster community.

3.5 Facility Services continues to administer a registration-based notification of service disruption whereby individuals who indicate an interest in the activities in certain buildings on campus are sent email notification of pending service disruptions. Facility Services continues to observe best practices to improve the content of service disruption notices, especially those related to construction.

3.6 An official McMaster website, dedicated entirely to accessibility issues on campus, was first unveiled in late 2009 to provide the campus community and members of the public with information about the AODA. The site also serves as the central access portal for the online Customer Service training.

3.7 The website currently provides information on the AODA generally and the Customer Service online training module in particular. Over the last year, a Community of Practice (CoP) on accessibility at McMaster has been transforming the accessibility website into a "one-stop-shop" for all information on services and resources relating to accessibility.

3.8 The overall objective of the centralized website is to harmonize the numerous initiatives, resources and programs on accessibility at McMaster. This group is a community of individuals committed to advancing accessibility and effecting change in order to create accessible environments for learning, working and being.

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3.9 The website is a model of both accessible content and form. Integrating website accessibility standards into the site will provide a working, live example of the features and functionality of what a fully accessible website should look like. Once complete, the project will meet the objectives of the legislative requirements under the Information & Communications part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

3.10 The Accessibility website is set to launch in the first few weeks of October 2013, in time for the new academic session. To ensure the usability of the website, the CoP has created a short survey for visitors to the site to rate the usefulness and ease of use of the site. This information will be used to enhance and maintain the site's relevance and maintain it as the central accessibility hub.

4. **Implementation of Customer Service Standard and Components of the Integrated Accessibility Standards**

4.1 MAC has overseen the implementation of the Customer Service Standard and components of the Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR) at McMaster University. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), which addresses the areas of information and communication, employment and transportation became law on July 1, 2011, and the various provisions have rolling compliance dates. The accessibility website outlines the requirements under the Customer Service standard, provides general accessibility information, and serves as a portal to the online Customer Service Standard Training. By the end of 2013, this website will merge with McMaster's centralized Accessibility Website (as noted above).

4.2 On February 8, 2010, the University implemented mandatory AODA training on the Customer Service Standard through an online training module developed by

the Council of Ontario Universities. The AODA requires employers to track employee participation in the training in order to demonstrate compliance. As of May 2013, over 16,608 employees, graduate students employed by the University and other members who serve the public on behalf of the University have been trained on the basic principles of accessible customer service.

4.3   In 2011, McMaster became one of three Ontario Universities to make the AODA training a mandatory component for graduate students, thereby emphasizing the connection between accessibility awareness and a comprehensive McMaster education.

4.4   Providing accessible customer service training is an on-going requirement at the University, one that needs to be monitored and tracked, like other mandatory training. MAC is also continuing to improve the current accessibility feedback and temporary service disruptions notification systems.

4.5   Members of the McMaster Accessibility Council have engaged in a review of the existing AODA Customer Service Standards Online Training modules. The team has provided their feedback and suggested revisions to the existing training modules to better represent the work and common experiences of McMaster University staff, student and faculty. The next step in the review and revision process is to host a series of focus groups with key stakeholders from within the McMaster community for feedback. Feedback will then be incorporated into the modules where relevant. However, given that the IASR required training deadline is January 1, 2014, the MAC working group is exploring the possibility of shortening the existing Customer Service training from 1.5 hours to 20 or 30 minutes, to ensure effectiveness of the training and reduce the potential for training fatigue.

4.6   In terms of the training and tracking of the IASR, MAC will consider how it will provide its various trainings for the diverse needs of its employees. One consideration may be to have an array of training options and resources available online and in-person for employees to choose from that may be relevant to their job descriptions. This would allow managers and their staff to gain knowledge of accessibility considerations that are directly relevant to their work.

4.7 According to the IASR, public institutions, such as McMaster University, are required to develop a multi-year accessibility plan. McMaster has already created a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2012-2025, which was approved by MAC and is currently available on the McMaster Accessibility Website: www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility. A companion document to the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is the Implementation Guidelines, an internal document that aims to facilitate timely and substantive compliance. McMaster is required to review and update this plan every five years. It also may be advantageous to incorporate the Campus Accessibility Action Plan, CAAP (discussed below), as well as other broader accessibility initiatives into the multi-year plan for oversight by MAC. This would allow McMaster to more effectively monitor its achievements and planning for the future.

4.8. The IASR calls for universities and colleges to provide training to its instructors on accessible course delivery and instructional design. The Council of Ontario Universities in partnership with York University, University of Toronto and Guelph University has developed the Educators' Accessible Resource Kit. MAC has followed its progress over the past year and the resources are now available online for public use. McMaster is currently in compliance with the established January 1st, 2013 deadline, however, there is scope of improvement. Discussion has taken place at MAC regarding making this training available to McMaster faculty, tailored specifically to this community. However, this has yet to be completed. Although the

Customer Service Standards online training has been implemented with a firm commitment to timeliness and dedication to the principles of accessibility, the training for educators has proven to be more challenging. MAC will facilitate leadership in this matter and strive towards creating a campaign among McMaster faculty that highlights the value of incorporating accessibility considerations and a commitment to inclusion into their teaching styles.

4.9 In terms of the accessible websites aspect of the Information and Communication Standards of the IASR, McMaster University is a decentralized institution, with numerous websites and webpages under its umbrella. This poses a challenge in ensuring that all of the University's webpages and content are compliant with the WCAG 2.0 standard as outlined in the Standards. One way to address this challenge is for McMaster to develop an Accessible Website Policy that would be adopted by the various departments at McMaster, although other steps may also include an awareness campaign on the requirements for website compliance with the WCAG 2.0, initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA.

4.10   In terms of the Employment Standards of the IASR, Human Resources Services has taken the lead in ensuring that McMaster's Human Resources Policies are in compliance with the standards. McMaster is currently in the process of updating its Workplace Accommodation Policy, which will include updated recruitment processes to include notice to employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities.

5. Additional MAC Activities

5.1 Perhaps the largest success of the McMaster Accessibility Council has been the significant increase in awareness of accessibility throughout the campus. In its first three years of operation, MAC helped spread the importance of, and organizational commitment to, accessibility wherever possible. For instance, various campus partners have worked together to host Disability Awareness and Mental Health Awareness initiatives, as well as ensuring that all events that occur on campus take into account accessibility considerations. MAC continues to ensure that accessibility considerations are implemented throughout the McMaster community, from day-to-day operations, to the classroom, to the community at large. The following are some of the ways we are doing this work:

5.2 The construction of the L.R. Wilson Hall building, located on the main McMaster campus will begin in October 2013. The building will comply with AODA Built Environment Standards as well as existing Ontario Building Code Regulations. The MAC has also provided its recommendations to ensure accessibility prior to the breaking of ground.

5.3 In April of 2012, Facilities Services engaged in an audit of the McMaster campus to assess its level of accessibility. The scope of the audit was limited to a review of the existing conditions of the campus entrances, interior corridors, public washrooms, fire alarm systems, elevating devices, and drinking fountains based on current Building Code requirements or best practices. The results of this audit have helped to guide Facility Services and MAC in establishing priorities for deferred maintenance and capital funding investments in order to provide an accessible campus and comply with the AODA.

5.4 Subsequent to this work, Facility Services created the Barrier-Removal Action Plan (BRAP) – now called the Campus Accessibility Action Plan (CAAP), a

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multi-year plan to address barriers in the McMaster physical space. The CAAP is a five-year outlook that will be submitted directly to the VP Administration, rather than making an annual request as had been done in the past. In support of these initiatives MAC requested funds from the McMaster Budget Committee towards the implementation of the Plan. The Budget Committee's approval of $334, 200 for accessibility-related capital projects will be allocated to accessibility priorities identified by MAC. Academic buildings have been prioritized by allocating $334,000 each year over five years.

5.5 In 2012-2013 an expenditure of $300, 000 was allocated towards the implementation of a new testing centre inside Mills Library. However, it has been determined that this project is not implementable due to the limited space of Mills Library. The allocated money will be diverted to completing identified priorities of year two of the CAPP.

5.6 In accordance with the McMaster Lift Policy and Design Guidelines, Facility Services contracted the purchase of service for the maintenance of lifts. The vendor will monitor frequency of use and prepare a preventative maintenance program accordingly, as well as training of lift usage. This will ensure the continued use of lifts with minimal interruption in service. Additionally, it has been identified that there is a need for a centralized approach to addressing access to the lifts on campus. Currently, this is done on an ad hoc basis, and a clear plan with a dedicated department to this issue will be explored by MAC.

6.   Upcoming Initiatives

6.1 As the McMaster Accessibility Council enters its fourth year of operation, it will continue the implementation of the Customer Service and Integrated Accessibility Standards of the AODA. Plans are also underway to review the University's information and communication protocols and assess the level of accessibility with a goal of making proactive change.

6.2 In order to meet the policy development requirements of the IASR, MAC will ensure that the existing Accessibility Policy, which was originally developed to address the Customer Service standard, is revised as necessary to meet the requirements of the IASR.

6.3 With multiple accessibility initiatives in need of compliance over the next year, MAC will continue to use the Implementation Guidelines as a work plan to set the course defining, refining and implementing accessibility initiatives to meet and exceed AODA compliance.

6.4 Apart from the accessibility initiatives prescribed by legislation, MAC will continue in its oversight function to determine priorities for accessibility-related capital projects.

7.   Conclusion

7.1   In its fourth year of operation, the McMaster Accessibility Council continued to build on its success of the previous three years regarding the promotion of customer service training and on-time or early compliance with many of the components of the Employment and Information and Communication aspects of the IASR.

7.2   As MAC looks to further its commitment to enhancing accessibility across the University in the 2013-2014 academic year, it will continue to develop and

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employ proactive strategies to meet AODA compliance as well as foster a spirit of accessibility that extends beyond legislative requirements. To this end, the budgeted accessibility audit will initiate the process for maintaining and expanding accessibility at McMaster. In addition, MAC will oversee a multi-stakeholder approach to implement training on accessibility awareness related to accessible program or course delivery and instruction.

7.3   Following the 2011 endorsement from MAC of a full-time Accessibility Specialist position housed in the Office of Human Rights & Equity Services (HRES), the Accessibility Program has been developed as a core function within HRES. The Accessibility Program is engaged in awareness-raising, training, the provision of resources, and the development of best practices to alleviate accessibility barriers across the University.[1]

7.4   The Accessibility Specialist is part of the Working Group of consultants who attend MAC meetings, advise MAC on its identification of priorities and facilitate the development of a work plan through which MAC's substantive work on accessibility oversight and implementation is conducted.

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[1] The Accessibility Program, referred to as MACcessibility, was formally launched in the summer of 2012, and several outreach initiatives have been scheduled to introduce MACcessibility to the campus community.

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Appendix A - McMaster Accessibility Council Terms of Reference

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McMASTER ACCESSIBILITY COUNCIL
TERMS OF REFERENCE

McMaster Accessibility Council and its Members are responsible for ensuring the University's adherence to AODA Accessibility Standards. The Council provides a mechanism for planning, reviewing and evaluating the implementation of the AODA Accessibility Standards within the University.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To guide the development of plans for the implementation of the AODA Accessibility Standards at the University.
2. To receive plans and reports related to the implementation of AODA Accessibility Standards from the appropriate University personnel and committees.
3. To make recommendations to the University regarding policies and institutional changes required to ensure adherence to the AODA Accessibility Standards.
4. To monitor progress of AODA Accessibility Standards implementation across the University.
5. To oversee the filing of the required accessibility reports to the Ontario government regarding the University's compliance with AODA.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Council will report to the President through the Provost & Vice-President (Academic) and the Vice-President (Administration). The Council will prepare an annual report of its activities. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every five years.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Council will be reviewed periodically to ensure that all areas of the University are appropriately represented. Membership on the Council is made up of senior officers of the University who are accountable for decisions made at the Council. From time to time, members of the Council may send a delegate if they are unable to attend a meeting.

Quorum

Three senior officers (or designates who have been given authority) are required to vote on a motion to bind the University. In addition, where there is a vote binding another department, the Council member of that particular department must be present at the meeting.

Members

Assistant Vice-President (Teaching & Learning)
Chief Human Resources Officer
   -   Director, HR Employee Services and Support (HR designate)
Chief Information Officer
   -   Manager, Client Services (UTS designate)
Director, Human Rights & Equity Services
Associate Vice-President (Academic)
Director, Rehabilitation Science (Chair)
Associate Vice-President (Students & Learning) and Dean of Students

Consultants

Manager, Employee Health Services
Human Rights Officer, HRES
Accessibility Specialist, HRES
Manager, Student Accessibility Services

MEETINGS

A schedule of meetings will be developed based on an annual planning cycle of issues/topics for the agenda. The recording of minutes of

meetings will be provided by the Executive Assistant to the Associate Vice-President (Student Affairs) and Dean of Students.

Approved March 29, 2012

Appendix B - Access & Accommodation Working Group Terms of Reference

PACBIC Access & Accommodation Working Group
Terms of Reference
Revised January 2012

A. Background and Context of Accessibility at McMaster

The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2001 S.O. 2001, c.32 (ODA) and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005 S.O. 2005, c.11 (AODA) promote the full participation of persons with disabilities in the province of Ontario. McMaster University is equally committed to this vision, taking active steps to respond to the needs of the University, local, provincial and national communities. In facilitation of its commitment, the University created the McMaster University Committee on Disability and Access (MUCDA) to assist the University in its mission, and to also promote full participation of persons with disabilities in the life of the campus community. In 2009 MUCDA was replaced by the Access & Accommodation Working Group of the President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC).

At an administrative level, issues of accessibility are considered by the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC), which is responsible for ensuring that the University meets its compliance obligations under accessibility-related legislation.

At an operational level, the Accessibility Program located with the office of Human Rights & Equity Services, functions to address accessibility challenges through the implementation of initiatives and identification of resources to realize the University's commitment to accessibility.

At the collaborative campus community level, the Community of Practice (CoP) on Accessibility aims to share experiences and strategies with respect to the promotion of accessibility throughout the University.

The Access & Accommodation Working Group has a formal direct reporting relationship with PACBIC, and it seeks to cultivate and sustain informal collaborative and information-sharing relationships with other entities across the University that are committed to enhancing inclusion and diversity and the elimination barriers.

B. Mandate

Consistent with the mandate of PACBIC, to provide a forum for discussion, reflection and learning on issues of inclusion, the Access & Accommodation Working Group, strives to raise awareness, identify issues and propose strategies that enhance

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inclusion through the promotion of accessibility and accommodation of the various constituent members of the campus community.

The Access & Accommodation Working Group endeavours to identify and recommend to the University the prevention and removal of the various barriers that persons with disabilities encounter on the main campus and other McMaster sites as well as through programs, policies, practices, and services provided by the University.

Recognizing that issues of accessibility and disability may overlap with other human rights issues, the Access & Accommodation Working Group strives to take a broad-based holistic approach to considerations of accessibility. To facilitate this approach, the Working Group shall develop in consultation with stakeholders, including persons with disabilities, recommendations to continuously improve upon the conditions of access at the University. This shall be achieved in accordance with the standards outlined in the AODA.

C. **Function**

1) Identify the barriers to inclusion for persons with disabilities in the University community;
2) Determine actions that will decrease barriers and increase inclusion and participation of students, staff and faculty with disabilities;
3) Report and make recommendations to PACBIC;
4) Assess progress and implementation of recommendations;
5) Establish and maintain lines of communication and collaboration between MAC, CoP and other accessibility-focused entities across campus.

D. **Working Group**

The committee shall consist of a cross-section of members of the three main campus constituencies, namely, students, faculty, and staff as well as representatives from the various student, employee and faculty groups. Membership is open to individuals from any sector of the University. Whenever possible, term of office should be 3 years, recognizing that students and temporary employees may serve shorter periods of membership. Members may serve multiple three-year terms. Membership recruitment is conducted on an ongoing basis.

The working group shall include a Convener, a Resource (from the Human Rights & Equity Services Office), as well as a roster of Accessibility Consultants, who have direct responsibility for accessibility and disability-related issues at the University. The Committee structure and terms of office shall be reviewed annually to ensure full representation from persons with disabilities and University departments.

E. **Operations**

1. The Working Group will, normally, meet monthly between September and June each year;
2. The Working Group shall keep and circulate minutes to group members;
3. The Working Group will report to PACBIC at the PACBIC general meetings;
4. Quorum for meetings will be five individuals
5. Any formal decisions made by the Working Group shall be arrived at through consensus.

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Appendix C – University Policy on Accessibility

McMaster University **Policies, Procedures and Guidelines**

Complete Policy Title: **McMaster University Policy on Accessibility -**	Policy Number (if applicable):
Approved by: **Board of Governors**	Date of Most Recent Approval: **January 20th 2010**
Date of Original Approval: **March 4th 2010**	Supersedes/Amends Policy dated: **-**
Responsible Executive: **Human Rights & Equity Services Services**	Enquiries: **Human Rights & Equity Services**

DISCLAIMER: If there is a Discrepancy between this electronic policy and the written copy held by the policy owner, the written copy prevails.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT:

1.   McMaster 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 organizations to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025.

2.   McMaster University is committed to fostering, creating and maintaining a barrier-free environment for all individuals providing equal rights and opportunities, including:

   a. promoting a respectful attitude for persons with disabilities;
   b. promoting awareness of the needs and abilities of persons with disabilities;
   c. informing the University community about the services available to persons with disabilities and seeking to ensure that such services are delivered in ways that promote equity; and
   d. providing support services, subject to certain limitations.

3.   McMaster University recognizes that barriers to participation exist and that

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adjustments to policies and practices of the University are required. This is accomplished through the prevention, identification and removal of barriers within the University systems, structures and policies. It is understood that where this Policy refers to "barriers" it is referring to barriers such as a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, and information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, or a policy or practice.

4.   The commitments in this Policy are intended to ensure that accessibility remains a priority in McMaster University's decision-making process and will serve to assist in ensuring that decisions are improving accessibility and not inadvertently creating barriers.

PURPOSE & SCOPE:

5.   This Policy provides a framework within which accessibility plans and initiatives are to be created in order to move the University towards the goal of building an inclusive community with a shared purpose. It is also the purpose of this Policy to endeavour to provide the foundation to create an environment that provides the widest feasible scope of access, which is the right or opportunity to reach, use or participate in the University's systems, facilities and services.

6.   This Policy applies to:

  ➢ McMaster University students,
  ➢ McMaster University employees,
  ➢ Applicants for employment with McMaster University, who may require employment accommodation through the recruitment, assessment, selection, and hiring process,
  ➢ Visitors and volunteers, and
  ➢ Contractors and subcontractors engaged by McMaster University.

PRINCIPLES:

7.   In order to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, the principles of approach are:

  ➢ Dignity - service is provided in a way that allows the individual to maintain self-respect and the respect of other persons.
  ➢ Independence - when a person is able to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others.
  ➢ Integration - service is provided in a way that allows the individual to benefit from equivalent services, in the same place, and in the same or similar way as other individuals, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable the individual to access goods or services.
  ➢ Equal Opportunity - service is provided to individuals in such a way that they

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have an opportunity to access goods or services equal to that given to others.
 ➢ Reasonable Efforts – taking approaches that meet the required needs of the individual.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

8.   The University will work to improve accessibility by developing an Accessibility Plan that conforms to this Policy. The University will also establish targets and goals related to improved accessibility and initiatives to achieve those targets. The University will monitor and report regularly on the implementation of the Accessibility Plan and the progress of achievement of specific goals and objectives.

9.   The University will identify and implement training and education requirements or opportunities to increase the awareness of accessibility and remove attitudinal barriers.

ACCOUNTABILITY

10.   All members of the University community are responsible for adhering to and following the commitments set out in this Policy. The Office of Human Rights & Equity Services is the administrative unit responsible for the administration of this policy.

11.   The University will monitor and evaluate accessibility initiatives and changes to applicable legislation and/or regulations. Changes to policies, plans and initiatives will be incorporated as required. The University will also report on performance in relation to established accessibility goals and targets.

12.   The Policy will be communicated to the University community and the University will make the Policy publicly available on its website.

GUIDELINES:

13.   McMaster University provides Guidelines on specific accessibility considerations with respect to the application of this Policy. This guide will be updated as required by Human Rights & Equity Services, in consultation with the McMaster Accessibility Council.

1. Use of Assistive Devices Guideline

Personal assistive devices are often used by persons with disabilities to help them with daily living. They are usually devices that people bring with them to the University and

may consist of any auxiliary aids such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and/or medical aids.

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, people may use their own personal assistive devices while accessing goods and services at McMaster University, subject to certain limitations.

Assistive devices may include but are not limited to:
- Manual and motorized wheelchairs, scooters, canes, crutches, walkers,
- hearing aids and personal TTYs
- magnifiers,
- oxygen tanks,
- computers and adaptive technology.

Principles:

McMaster University is committed to enhancing the accessibility of its education delivery, websites, telecommunications and other infrastructure. As part of this commitment, the University will ensure that persons with disabilities are permitted to use their own assistive devices to access goods and services of the University, subject to reasonable limitations.

Protocol:

Upon request, McMaster University will be prepared to assist, or arrange for assistance, while individuals are using goods or services of the University, subject to reasonable limitations.

Availability of Assistive Devices:

The University provides measures to assist persons with disabilities to benefit from the equivalent level of service, in the same place and in a similar way, as other individuals. Where an assistive device or support does not exist on campus, the University will make reasonable efforts to ensure that appropriate devices or supports are made available, subject to reasonable limitations.

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2. Guidelines for Service Animals & Support Persons

Purpose:

Service animals and support persons required to assist a person with a disability will be present and welcome at campus locations except where excluded by law.

Definitions:

Service Animal: Any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability. If they meet this definition, animals are considered service animals. A service animal is not a pet.

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that the person with a disability cannot perform for themselves.

For example, guide dogs used by some individuals who are blind, alerting persons with hearing impairments to sounds, pulling wheelchairs or carrying and picking up things for persons with mobility impairments, assisting persons with mobility impairments with balance.

Support Person: Any person who provides assistance to a person with a disability.

Principles:

McMaster shall not prohibit the use of a service animal by a person with a disability in the conduct of regular business or activities except where excluded by law, these include, but are not limited to, the following:
> Locations that would be deemed as a health and safety risk (e.g. operating rooms, nuclear reactor) and,
> Location where an education placement is performed and the owner/lessor of such locations has a policy or practice governing service animals or support persons contrary to McMaster's Policy.

Protocol:

Within the parameters of the Principles noted above, the service animal or support person must be permitted to accompany the individual with a disability to all areas of the University where members of the public (as applicable) are normally allowed to go. An individual with a service animal may not be segregated from other individuals.

If goods, services or facilities are defined as off-limits to service animals or support persons, the University will make every effort to provide alternate ways for persons

with disabilities to access such goods, services and facilities.

To find out if a specific area is off-limits to service animals or support persons contact the designated department head.

The University will provide notice in advance about whether an admission fee will be charged for support persons, if applicable.

In order to respect employees or students whose health may be impacted by the presence of service animals at McMaster, these individuals may request reasonable accommodation suitable to their health needs.

3.   Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Service

Purpose:

The University will provide notice to members of the public when there is a temporary disruption of facilities or services (planned or unexpected) that are usually used by persons with disabilities at the University.

Scope:

Service disruptions shall include information related to facilities (e.g. elevators, building ramps, accessible washrooms) or goods/services (e.g. events, lectures, amplification systems, TTY services).

Disruptions to all services, such as during a power outage or during a labour dispute, do not require this special notice. For information on large-scale business disruptions, please reference the University's Business Continuity Plan.

For information relating to University closure due to inclement weather please reference the University's Storm Policy.

Protocol:

Where a service disruption is unavoidable the University shall:
  ➢ Post a notice at the location, for example if an elevator disruption then a notice will be posted at the site on all floors,
  ➢ Provide advance notice, where possible, to all building occupants and/or affected participants using email distribution lists, website, internal electronic signage

All service disruption notices shall include:
  • Name of the service/event impacted
  • expected duration of disruption,
  • any alternate means of accessing the facility or service,
  • who to contact for assistance, and
  • any other relevant information for accessing the facility or service

In such cases, the person may be offered the following as a means of accessing the facility, event or service, such as:
• the goods and service delivery agent may provide the goods or service directly to the person with a disability at an alternate place and time, as deemed appropriate; or
• any other assistive measures available and deemed appropriate to deliver goods and services.

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Individuals can be added to building email distribution lists via the Department of Facility Services, http://ppims.services.mcmaster.ca/pplant/alerts.html

4.   Guideline for Providing Feedback & Complaints

Purpose:

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, McMaster University is required to establish a mechanism for receiving and responding to feedback from persons with disabilities about accessibility in relation to the way the University provides its services to them.

Protocol:

Complaints involving accessibility issues may follow the Anti-Discrimination Policy, which contains provisions for managing complaints alleging discrimination related to disability.

Where persons with disabilities have concerns or feedback regarding the services provided by the University they may bring such feedback forward to the following individuals/areas:

Students:
- Their Faculty office,
- Residence manager, if applicable or,
- Centre for Student Development, http://csd.mcmaster.ca

Employees:
- Their supervisor,
- Human Resources Services, www.workingatmcmaster.ca and/or union/employee association, if applicable

For both students and employees:

Human Rights & Equity Services
McMaster University, 1280 Main St. W.
MUSC Room 212
Hamilton, Ontario, L8S 4M4
Phone: 905-525-9140, ext. 27581
Email: hres@mcmaster.ca

Ombuds Office
McMaster University, 1280 Main St. W.
MUSC Room 210
Hamilton, Ontario, L8S 4M4
Phone: 905-525-9140 ext. 24151
Email: ombuds@mcmaster.ca

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Any feedback provided by an individual must be addressed in a timely manner. All responses must be provided to the originator in a format, which meets their needs.

Other applicable legislation and McMaster University policies include:
  ➢ Ontario Human Rights Code
  ➢ Occupational Health and Safety Act of Ontario R.S.O. 1990,
  ➢ Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
  ➢ Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA),
  ➢ Personal Information Protection & Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA),
  ➢ Employment Accommodation Policy
  ➢ McMaster Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities
  ➢ McMaster University Anti-Discrimination Policy
  ➢ Employment Equity Statement
  ➢ Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
  ➢ McMaster University Risk Management Manual, RMM#1002 Return to Work Program July 2009, and
  ➢ McMaster University Risk Management Manual, RMM#111 Contracting Work Safety Program / Due Diligence Program January 2009

Appendix D: Funded Projects for 2012-2013 I support of AODA and Campus Accessibility

Item	Location	Details	Quantity	Budget
Campus-wide Accessibility Audit	McMaster University Campus	A review of all campus buildings as per the McMaster University Accessibility Guidelines (Draft, 2008)		$10,000
Accessibility Plates	DeGroote School of Business (Internal and External entrance doors)	Replace the red access buttons with plates	8 x $400	$3,200
Automatic Door Operators	Burke Science Building (BSB) – Basement	Install door operators in the basement (interior hallway/stairwell) BSB	1	$7,000
	Council Chambers - Inner door of Gilmour Hall	Install door operator on the inner doors of the Council Chambers room	1	$7,000
	General Science Building (GSB)	Install door operators on the main entrance doors	1	$7,000
				$34,200.00

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