



# McMaster Accessibility Council

Third Annual Report

**DATE:** July 23, 2012

**SUBJECT:** McMaster Accessibility Council - Third Annual Report

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

**FROM:** McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC)

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Please find enclosed, for your review, the third 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 third year of operation.

Any questions or concerns regarding the enclosed report can be directed to Patty Solomon, Associate Dean and Director, School of Rehabilitation Science and Chair of MAC.

## Executive Summary

This third 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)*. At the time of writing this Report, approximately 14,000 members of the McMaster community, including Faculty, staff, students and external contractors, have completed the mandatory training. This represents an increase of almost 30% over the previous year. As of July 1, 2011, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) came into force and McMaster met the initial compliance date of January 2012 for certain specified initiatives. The IASR addresses accessibility in the context of Employment, Information & Communications and Transportation. Beginning with January 2012 and the establishment of emergency procedure plans, 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 provided the University, under the direction of MAC, with the opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to accessibility and promoting McMaster as a truly inclusive and diverse community.

Late in 2011, MAC revised its Terms of Reference and in early 2012, the meeting schedule was adjusted to facilitate strategic discussion and direction regarding the implementation of the AODA requirements. To this end, the Implementation Guidelines that were mentioned in the Second Annual Report were used to raise awareness and initiate work plan development to ensure that compliance dates are met.

Further to MAC's support for the creation of a full-time Accessibility Specialist position to be housed within the office of Human Rights & Equity Services (HRES), the

Accessibility Program within HRES has been a consistent resource to MAC in coordinating efforts across the University community to promote and enhance accessibility.

In the remaining months of 2012, the Implementation Guidelines will be distributed to the designated responsible Senior University Administrators to facilitate the development of work plans to meet the IASR compliance dates. With the necessary action plans in place, MAC will continue to provide advice and direction on the full actualization of McMaster's accessibility commitments and aspirations.

In terms of working towards, broader accessibility accomplishments, the Budget Committee's approval of \$334, 200 for accessibility-related capital projects will be allocated to accessibility priorities identified by MAC.

## 1. Introduction & Background

- 1.1 Disability awareness and accessibility continue to be important priorities at McMaster University. This priority commitment is supported through McMaster's Refining Directions strategic development plan, which identifies the University's third goal to "build an inclusive community with a shared purpose". 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 discussed in the Forward With Integrity initiative.
- 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 the 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 have to meet standards in five important areas:
  - Customer service (compliance January 2010)
  - Information and communication
  - Employment
  - Transportation
  - Built environment

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

- 2.1 MUCDA members recognized that as an advisory committee, it would not be sufficiently able to ensure University wide compliance with the new AODA. Consequently, MUCDA was disbanded and the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC) was formed in the summer of 2009. MAC was formed to serve as a long standing Council, with the goal to lead the University through each of the five AODA standards to final compliance in 2025. The Council is comprised of senior officials, 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; these include the President’s Advisory Council on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC) and its working groups. The advisory role of MUCDA was inherited by Access & Accommodation, one of PACBIC’s working groups (refer to *Appendix B* for the Access & Accommodation Working Group Terms of Reference).
- 2.4 Since its inception in 2009, MAC has worked on the implementation of the AODA. Initial tasks 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), Human Rights & Equity

Services, Human Resources Services and the 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 passed by the Board of Governors on March 4<sup>th</sup> 2010. The policy details the University's dedication to creating a fully accessible environment, in accordance with the AODA and the Customer Service standard. It outlines official university protocol and recommends guidelines for 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 The University continues to identify and promote best practices for providing notice of service disruptions across campus. Special attention is drawn to the efforts of the McMaster Libraries in providing notice of service disruptions, including full and partial library closings and materials relocation, on their website.
- 3.3 Facility Services also has a registration-based notification of service disruption in place whereby individuals who indicate an interest in the activities in certain buildings on campus, are sent email notification of pending service disruptions. It has been noted that although best efforts are being made, there is scope for improvements on the content of service disruption notices, especially those related to construction. Through the efforts of the Accessibility Program of the office of Human Rights & Equity Services, outreach initiatives identify that service disruption notices should be posted well in advance of the intended service disruption or construction, and should indicate the expected length of disruption and provide information regarding alternate routes of access.
- 3.4 An official McMaster website designated solely for accessibility at the University was first unveiled in late 2009 to provide the public and campus community

members with information about the AODA. The site also serves as the central portal for the online Customer Service training.

- 3.5 The central McMaster University Accessibility website currently provides information relating to the AODA generally and the Customer Service online training module in particular. As the remaining Accessibility Standards come into effect, McMaster is preparing to transform the accessibility website to a “one-stop-shop” for all information on services and resources regarding accessibility.
- 3.6 The overall objective of the centralized website is to harmonize the multitude of initiatives, resources and programs on accessibility at McMaster. The project has been undertaken by the Community of Practice (CoP) Accessibility Website Working Group and has adopted a community-based approach to the development of the site.<sup>1</sup> 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.
- 3.7 Currently, the CoP Accessibility Website Working Group is developing a prototype for website accessibility, both in content and in form. Integrating website accessibility standards into the Accessibility website will provide a working, live

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<sup>1</sup> The Working Group on Accessibility is one of two working groups that have been established by the CoP on Accessibility. The other working group is engaged in Faculty outreach. Working Group on Accessibility includes representation from the following university entities:

- Centre for Leadership in Learning
- Student Accessibility Services
- Office of Human Rights & Equity Services
- McMaster University Libraries
- Office of Public Relations
- University Technology Services
- Faculty of Social Sciences
- Faculty of Health Sciences

example of the features and functionality of a fully accessible website. Once complete, the project will meet the objectives of the legislative requirements under the Information & Communications part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

#### **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 IASR at McMaster University. The accessibility website outlines the implications of the Customer Service standard, general accessibility information, and serves as a portal to the online Customer Service Standard Training.
- 4.2 The University implemented its mandatory AODA training in February 2010, and the tracking of training compliance is ongoing. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) to address the areas of information and communication, employment and transportation became law on July 1, 2011, and the various provisions have rolling compliance dates. MAC has developed Implementation Guidelines as an internal document to facilitate timely and substantive compliance.
- 4.3 As of the date of this 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report, The Built Environment Standard has not been finalized, however, being cognizant of the requirements that will likely be contained in these regulations, MAC has been prioritizing areas for focus and strategizing over how the University will best meet the requirements of this legislation once in effect.



- 4.4 The online training provided by the Council for Ontario Universities (COU), was launched on February 8, 2010. As of July 2012, approximately 14,000 employees, graduate students and other members who serve the public on behalf of the University, have been trained on the basic principles of accessible customer service.
- 4.5 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.
- 4.6 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.
- 4.7 Through members of its Working Group, MAC continues to share information and implementation initiatives with other universities through the Council of Ontario Universities. Particular attention is drawn to the COU initiative to develop the training tools and strategies to facilitate compliance with the Information and Communications aspect of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. This tool is being developed for use by all universities and is expected to be operational in October 2012, in order to meet the training compliance date of January 2013.

## **5. Additional MAC Activities**

- 5.1 Perhaps the largest success of the Council has been the significant increase in awareness of accessibility throughout the campus. In its first two years of operation, McMaster Accessibility Council helped spread the importance of, and organizational commitment to accessibility wherever possible. In fact many divisions of McMaster, like the School of Social Work, have also responded positively to the AODA and hosted such events as Disabilities Awareness Day and a Spring Field Forum titled “Disabilities Matter: It’s the New Law”. Student Accessibility Services has continued to develop and implement various disability awareness initiatives. Also, McMaster’s Athletics and Recreation department organized an All Abilities Awareness Week, again in 2012, in which it informed the public of fitness opportunities for persons with disabilities and placed important attention on the Special Olympics and Paralympics.
- 5.2 In its continued effort to consolidate information, responsibility and action on matters of accessibility, MAC devised its Implementation Guidelines as a compendium document to the Annual Accessibility Plan. The Implementation Guidelines function as an internal tool document that tracks progress on accessibility initiatives across the University community.
- 5.3 In 2012, MAC revised its Terms of Reference to clarify its mandate and responsibility for implementation of the AODA standards. To this end, MAC also streamlined its meeting schedule, so as to synchronize meetings and decision making with fixed internal and external reporting dates, such as the Budget Committee meeting cycle, the filing of the annual updates to the multi-year accessibility plan and the Annual Report to the University President.

## 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 changes.
- 6.2 In anticipation of the release of the Built Environment Standard, an accessibility audit based on the Accessibility Guidelines (2008) will help to focus to University's commitment to include accessibility considerations in building construction and renovation.
- 6.3 Although MAC will not direct the particular details of the project, it has endorsed a project proposal by the Community of Practice (CoP) on Accessibility to revise McMaster's accessibility website. Such a revision will reflect best practices in terms of creating accessible websites that are compliant with the WCAG 2.0 AA standards indicated in the Information and Communications section of the IASR. Furthermore, the revised website will function as a comprehensive hub for accessibility-related information at the University.
- 6.3 In its presentation to MAC in January 2012, the CoP Accessibility Website Working Group indicated that a centralized accessibility website hub at McMaster would help to eliminate current challenges associated with the limited coordination and "silo-ing" of accessibility resources and information. MAC provided its endorsement of the Working Group's initiative to model best practices in terms of accessible website content and format. The re-vamped accessibility website is expected to launch in January 2013. To date the revision of the website has not required any funding contribution from MAC.

- 6.4 Further, on the subject of general website accessibility, Special Projects Funding<sup>2</sup> was allocated for the McMaster Web Accessibility Project. The Project set out to scan McMaster web pages, and identify any accessibility gaps which prevented the pages from conforming to W3C, WCAG 2.0 standards, which is the same standard outlined in the Information and Communications component of the IASR.<sup>3</sup> The Project also included an update to the McMaster web template, so as to allow any new pages to utilize an accessible template.
- 6.4 In order to meet the policy development requirements of the IASR, MAC will ensure that the existing Accessibility Policy, which was initially developed to address the Customer Service standard, is revised as necessary to meet the requirements of the IASR.
- 6.5 With multiple accessibility initiatives in need of compliance over the next two years, 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.

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<sup>2</sup> The Special Projects Funding was jointly supported by the McMaster Student Union and Student Affairs Department.

<sup>3</sup> The following web pages are now compliant with accessibility standards:

1. McMaster University home page
2. Daily News
3. ECE Website
4. Faculty of Humanities website
5. Faculty of Health Sciences website
6. UTS website
7. Outreach website for Faculty of Engineering
8. Faculty of Engineering website
9. President's website
10. Closed captions for videos on President's website
11. Faculty of Social Science - consultations ongoing
12. School of Business – consultations ongoing

- 6.6 Apart from the accessibility initiatives prescribed by legislation, MAC will continue in its oversight function to determine priorities for accessibility-related capital projects. In 2012, MAC's request of \$334,200 to the Budget Committee was approved to be spent on installing automatic door operators at certain locations across campus, as well as a campus-wide accessibility audit (refer to *Appendix D*). The audit will focus on identifying accessibility enhancements, as well as reviewing the extent to which campus buildings are in compliance with the McMaster Accessibility Guidelines (2008).

## 7. Conclusion

- 7.1 In its third year of operation, the McMaster Accessibility Council continued to build on its success of the previous two 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 2012-2013 academic year, it will continue to develop and employ proactive strategies to meet AODA compliance as well as foster a spirit of accessibility that extends beyond legislative compliance. 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 implementing engaging and interactive accessibility awareness training related to accessible program or course delivery and instruction.

- 7.3 Following the 2011 endorsement from MAC of a full-time Accessibility Specialist position to be housed with the office of Human Rights & Equity Services, the Accessibility Program has been developed as one of the core functioning programs 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.<sup>4</sup>

- 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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<sup>4</sup> The Accessibility Program, referred to as MACcessibility, will be formally launched in the summer of 2012, and several outreach initiatives are scheduled to introduce MACcessibility to the campus community.

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## **Appendix A - McMaster Accessibility Council Terms of Reference**



### **McMASTER UNIVERSITY 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 (Facility Services)

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 (Student Affairs) 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

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#### 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 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.

## Appendix C – University Policy on Accessibility



## Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

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

***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

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

- 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.



## 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.

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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:ombuds@mcmaster.ca)

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 2012-2012 I support of AODA and Campus Accessibility**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Budget</b>
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	DeGroot 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
Testing Space for Students with Disabilities	Mills Library	Creation of separate testing rooms, installing of camera for oversight and furnishings		\$300,000
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$334,200.00</b>