

Annual Accessibility Report and Multi-Year Plan 2023-2024



University
of Windsor



Accessibility Reports Electronic and Alternate Formats

The University of Windsor's past and current Accessibility Reports are available on the Office of Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Mediation [\(OHRCRM\) website](#).

Please contact OHRCRM to request an alternative format of this plan:

- By written request to Office of Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Mediation, University of Windsor, 401 Sunset Avenue, Windsor ON, N9B 3P4;
- By telephone at (519) 253-3000, extension 3400;
- By e-mail request at HRCRM@uwindsor.ca

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Introduction and Background



The University of Windsor is situated on the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, which includes the Ojibwa, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi. As we make this land acknowledgment, it is also important that we continue to do the work to address systemic and historic injustices.



The University has a rich tradition of offering comprehensive, student-focused, post-secondary education in Southwestern Ontario. Assumption College, the predecessor of the University of Windsor, first welcomed students in 1857¹. On December 19, 1962, the University of Windsor was incorporated by the Ontario Legislature. In the more than 160+ years that have since passed, the small, liberal arts college has grown into today's non-denominational, comprehensive, teaching, and learning university, welcoming over 15,000 students each academic year and boasting alumni of over 160,000.



During the 2023-2024 academic year, the University of Windsor continued to advance the strong tradition of academic excellence while enhancing an inclusive, accessible work and study environment. This report captures highlights between September 1, 2023 and August 31, 2024 along with the Accessibility Multi-Year Plan update, which includes short and long-term goals toward achieving a barrier-free campus.



Planning for the Future: Office of Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Mediation

To ensure the University of Windsor's long-term sustainability and to prepare for the inaugural People, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy, changes were made within the People, Equity, and Inclusion (PE&I) portfolio in late 2024. The fundamental goal remains to support our people to achieve our vision of becoming a more equitable, inclusive, and just place to learn, live, and work. Services and resources formerly provided by the Office of Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility (OHREA) have transitioned to the new Office of Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Mediation (OHRCRM) within the PE&I office.

Please note that this report contains information during the 2023-24 academic year under OHREA's purview. However, the report was released after the transition to the new office, OHRCRM.

¹ <https://www.uwindsor.ca/47/our-history>

University of Windsor's Mission and Vision

In 2023, the University of Windsor's Board of Governors and Senate approved the institution's next strategic plan - [Aspire: Together for Tomorrow](#). This 5-year plan will guide decision-making, allowing the University to capitalize on opportunities to grow and thrive.



Mission Statement: To empower positive change through regionally and globally engaged inquiry, learning, scholarship, creative activity, and research.

Vision Statement: As a locally engaged, globally connected institution, the University of Windsor will enable people to transform their circumstances. As partners, leaders, and learners, we will engage in impactful research, relevant teaching, creative endeavours, and inclusive relationship building to foster positive change.

Values: Values are the underlying beliefs that guide our decisions and actions. They articulate what the institution stands for and how we intend to conduct ourselves. Our values are listed alphabetically.

- Academic Excellence
- Action on Indigenization, Truth, and Reconciliation
- Community Impact
- Engagement with Students
- Environmental Sustainability
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Openness to Change
- Prioritizing People
- Trustworthiness

The University of Windsor's Commitment to Accessibility

The University of Windsor remains committed to providing everyone with disabilities an inclusive environment in which to study, work, and engage in co-curricular and social activities. This commitment is reflected in our [Accessibility Policy](#). The vision of accessibility is for members of the greater campus community to work together to prevent, identify, and remove barriers for persons with disabilities and attain the goal of a fully inclusive University that strives to exceed, wherever possible, legislative requirements. Initiatives to support accessibility align with the overall institutional goals as outlined in the Aspire strategic plan.

Accessibility Feedback at the University of Windsor

Feedback is essential to help the University identify and remove barriers and achieve our goal of full participation at the University of Windsor. Members of our campus community are

encouraged to provide suggestions to improve accessibility and inclusion, to share their experiences of how inclusion and accessibility at our university have made a difference, or to identify an accessibility barrier through the streamlined web form. To complete an “Accessibility Feedback Form”, please visit [Accessibility Feedback \(Reporting a Barrier\)](#). Alternatively, members of our community can provide feedback to the Accessibility Specialist in the Office of Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Mediation at 519-253-3000, ext. 3400, or by email at hrcrm@uwindsor.ca.

Inquiry and Complaint Resolution: Office of Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Mediation

As part of the facilitation and resolution functions within the Office of Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Mediation (OHRCRM), staff members in OHRCRM respond to campus accessibility and human rights issues. Ongoing in 2023-2024, team members fielded numerous telephone calls, virtual meetings, and email inquiries. From an accessibility perspective, inquiries included items such as workplace accommodations, academic accommodations, accessible parking requirements, and accessibility questions/concerns in the built environment. Resolutions were facilitated or escalated for further discussion as appropriate.

Student Accessibility Services

[Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) staff provide numerous supports for a variety of student accessibility needs such as accommodations, referrals, resources, advocacy, and education throughout the University community. Reporting to the Office of Student Experience, the staff share their professional expertise with teaching and research staff and promote student autonomy, privacy, and independence. The staff members also provide education about the shared responsibility of all members of the campus community to provide equal access and opportunities to higher education for qualified students with disabilities. SAS is a valuable resource to the University community and an integral partner to the OHRCRM team and others on campus.

The Legislative Framework

The **Ontario Human Rights Code** (the “Code”) and the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act** (AODA) work together. They both promote equality and accessibility, use the same definition of disability, and are provincial laws. The Code promotes equal rights where everyone is respected, can fully participate, and is free from discrimination. Also, the Code



From OHRC: Working Together. YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EOicdh2C8A0&t=2s>

requires that organizations accommodate individual needs due to disability. The AODA complements the Code by setting accessibility standards that organizations must meet. Where there is a conflict between the AODA and the Code, the Code has primacy.

As defined by the AODA, the University of Windsor is a large, designated public-sector organization. As such, the University is required to establish, maintain, and document a multi-year accessibility plan. The plan is reviewed and reported annually, allowing for reflection on how well the organization is meeting requirements, along with identifying opportunities to exceed legislative expectations.

The [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#) was enacted by the province in 2005. The purpose of the AODA is to benefit all Ontarians by developing, implementing, and enforcing standards to achieve an inclusive and accessible society for Ontarians with disabilities by 2025. These standards apply to the private and public sectors. By achieving these standards, people with disabilities will have better access to the community, workplaces, and the economy. **The AODA framework shifts the primary emphasis from individuals with disabilities requesting accommodations to requiring organizations, businesses, and institutions to provide services that are barrier-free from conception.**



Image from Accessibility Services Canada. <https://accessibilitycanada.ca/aoda/>

There are five [Integrated Accessibility Standards](#) (IAS) that outline specific measures and implementation timelines to which organizations must comply. The current standards include: 1) Information and Communications; 2) Employment; 3) Transportation (not applicable to the University); 4) Design of Public Spaces, and; 5) Customer Service. The provincial government will add [three additional standards](#): 1) Accessible Education K-12; 2) Accessible Postsecondary Education; and 3) Accessible Healthcare. Recommendations for the new standards have received public feedback and are currently in the final report stage, which will help legislators draft new legal standards. Follow the link to view the [Postsecondary Final Report](#).

AODA Compliance Reporting

Filing an AODA Compliance Report is a legal obligation. As a designated public sector organization, the University is required to submit a report every two years. The University submitted the Report to the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility in December 2023 indicating compliance with requirements.

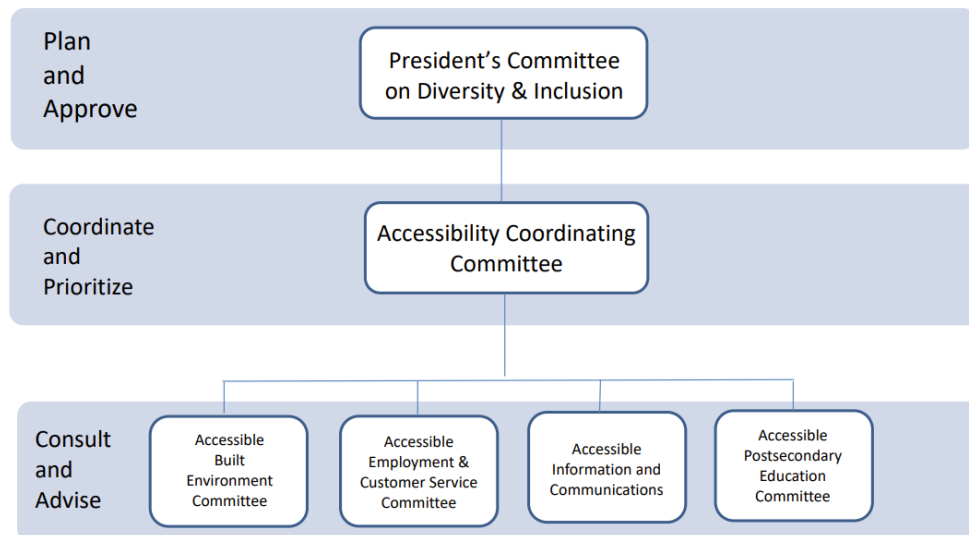
The University of Windsor's Accessibility Committees

The University of Windsor had developed a committee structure to support campus-wide efforts to promote and improve accessibility. This structure has evolved over the years to reflect the vision of the University, the response from employees and students, the progression of initiatives, and the current legislation.

The membership of these committees is comprised of representatives from OHRCRM and students, staff, and faculty from various departments and units from across campus. Employees and students with lived experience are encouraged to participate. This model facilitates education, contributing to purposeful change/action, information sharing, coordination of initiatives, and improved communication. Representatives on these committees also bring back knowledge gained from participating in these committees to their respective departments/units. The model that was in effect during the 2023-2024 academic year is described below:

- Four (4) AODA Standards-based committees:
 - Accessible Built Environment Committee (ABEC)
 - Accessible Employment and Customer Service Committee (AECSC)
 - Accessible Information and Communications Committee (AICC)
 - Accessible Postsecondary Education Committee (APEC)
- The Accessibility Coordinating Committee (ACC)
- The President's Committee for Diversity and Inclusion (PCDI)

The University of Windsor Accessibility Reporting Structure



The four standards-based committees (ABEC, AECSC, AICC, APEC) are responsible for reviewing the relevant portions of the AODA standards and their application to the University environment. The committees also work to surpass the requirements of the standards. Work includes identifying and removing barriers, developing inclusive practices, input to programs and policies, and educating the campus community about accessibility and inclusion.

ABEC Membership 2023-24

Dan Castellan (Chair)	Manager, Facility Planning, Renovations & Construction (Facility Services)
Cherie Gagnon (Vice Chair)	Accessibility Manager (OHREA)
Dave Andrews	Faculty (Kinesiology)
Nicole Canzoneri	Student Representative
Nadia Harduar	Sustainability Officer (Facility Services)
Lisa Kiritsis	Occupational Health & Safety Manager (Human Resources)
Bianca Lenarduzzi	Student Representative
Vicki Jay Leung	Reference Librarian (Law Library)
Veronika Mogyorody	Architect, Professor Emeritus (Centre for Teaching and Learning)
Charlie Simpkins	Director, Strategic Initiatives and Business Enterprise (OVPFO)
David Soderlund	Student Development Specialist (Student Accessibility Services)
Randi Lussier	Recording Secretary (OHREA)

AECSC Membership 2023-24

Diane Rawlings (Chair)	Department Head - Residence Services (Residence Services)
Cherie Gagnon (Vice Chair)	Accessibility Manager (OHREA)
Marcela Ciampa	Director, Organizational and Leadership Development (OVP-PE&I)
Audrey Moadus	Director – Staff and Labour Relations (Human Resources)
Lisa Milne	Access Services Administrator (Law Library)
Corinthia Natyshak	Academic Labour Relations Advisor (Office of the Provost)
Sandra Ondracka	Lancer Recreation Coordinator (Campus Recreation)
John Regier	Director - Facility Operations (Facility Services)
Nadia Rodwyn	Student Representative
Kari Scott	Advisor (Student Accessibility Services)
Nicole Vignone-Kiborn	Career Advisor (Career Development and Experiential Learning)
Randi Lussier	Recording Secretary (OHREA)

AICC Membership 2023-24

Mike Fisher (Chair)	Manager - Web Services and Systems Support (ITS - Web Support Services)
Cherie Gagnon (Vice Chair)	Accessibility Manager (OHREA)
Rob Aitkens	Web Development Team Leader (ITS - Web Support Services)

Meris Bray	Librarian (Law Library)
Linda Coltman	Student Representative
Anthony Gomez	Accessibility Advisor and Assistive Technologist (Student Accessibility Services)
Shelby Johnson	Multi-Media Coordinator (Public Affairs and Communications)
Mark Lubrick	Learning Specialist (Office of Open Learning)
Art Rhyno	Librarian (Leddy Library)
Randi Lussier	Recording Secretary (OHREA)

APEC Membership 2023-24

Nick Baker (Co-Chair)	Director (Open Learning)
Jessica Raffoul (Co-Chair)	Interim Director - Centre for Teaching & Learning (CTL)
Cherie Gagnon (Vice Chair)	Accessibility Manager (OHREA)
Jacqueline Brathwaite	Manager - Student Financial Aid (Student Awards and Financial Aid)
Jess Dixon	Head, Department of Kinesiology
Shetina Jones	Associate Vice-President, Student Experience (OSE)
Joyceln Lorito	Student Development Specialist - Learning Strategist (Student Accessibility Services)
Marcin Pulcer	Interim Executive Director, Information Technology Services (ITS)
Renée Wintermute	University Secretary (University Secretariat)
Randi Lussier	Recording Secretary (OHREA)

The Accessibility Coordinating Committee (ACC) ensures a coherent, coordinated approach to accessibility throughout the University community. The ACC reviews, coordinates, and prioritizes the activities of the three accessibility standards committees.

ACC Membership 2023-24:

Kaye Johnson (Chair)	Executive Director - Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility (OHREA)
Cherie Gagnon (Vice Chair)	Accessibility Manager (OHREA)
Nick Baker	Director, Open Learning (OOL)
Dan Castellan	Manager, Facility Planning, Renovations & Construction (Facility Services)
Mike Fisher	Manager - Web Services and Systems Support (ITS - Web Support Services)
Mike Houston	Director - International Student Centre (ISC)
Laverne Jacobs	Faculty (Faculty of Law)
Sukanya Pillay	Executive Director, Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities

Karen Pillon	Associate University Librarian (Leddy Library)
Jessica Raffoul	Interim Director – Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)
Diane Rawlings	Department Head - Residence Services (Residence Services)
Stephen Temesy	Student Alumni
Magdalena Ciunajko	Recording Secretary (OHREA)

The President’s Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (PCDI) brings together senior university leaders to discuss matters related to diversity and inclusion. PCDI receives updates and recommendations from the coordinating committees and subcommittees regarding the University’s compliance with relevant legislation and regulations regarding human rights, accessibility, and employment equity.

PCDI Membership 2023-24:

Robert Gordon (Chair)	President
Robert Aguirre	Provost and Vice-President Academic
Jhoan Baluyot	Acting Executive Director – Public Affairs and Communications
Clinton Beckford	Vice-President, People, Equity, and Inclusion
Jody Fraser	Associate Vice-President, Human Resources
Cherie Gagnon	Accessibility Manager (OHREA)
Gillian Heisz	Vice-President, Finance & Operations
Chris Houser	Interim Vice-President, Research and Innovation
Beverly Jacobs	Senior Advisor to The President on Indigenous Relations and Outreach
Kaye Johnson	Executive Director - Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility
Shanthi Johnson	Vice-President, Research and Innovation
Shetina Jones	Associate Vice-President, Office of Student Experience
Erika Kustra	Acting Associate Vice-President Academic
Diane Luu-Hoang	Employment Equity Manager (OHREA)
Heather Pratt	Executive Director – Research and Innovation Services
Renée Tromblay	Executive Director - Public Affairs and Communications
Patti Weir	Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic
Magdalena Ciunajko	Recording Secretary OHREA

Annual Accessibility Report 2023-2024 Achievement Highlights

Accessible Built Environment Highlights

Between September 1, 2023 and August 31, 2024, the University of Windsor completed several renovations and new builds that considered accessibility in the design. Key highlights are featured in this section.

a) Accessibility Upgrades (small to mid-size)



Small to mid-size accessibility upgrades are prioritized yearly by the Accessible Built Environment Committee (ABEC). The funds to complete these projects are available through an annual budget that is co-managed by Facility Services and OHRCRM. Upgrades assist with making buildings more accessible for everyone, including people who have mobility

limitations, are blind or partially sighted, Deaf or hard of hearing, of varying statures, have cognitive disabilities, and/or may have limited stamina or dexterity.

ABEC aims to uphold the principles of Universal Design and accessibility standards that exceed the Ontario Building Code as outlined in the [University of Toronto FADS](#). Universal Design means that all spaces and buildings are created so that the greatest number of people can access them to the greatest extent possible, regardless of age, stature, ability, or disability. This is intended to support access for all. ABEC also considers recommendations from the [Proposed Accessible Postsecondary Education Standards final report](#) (see page 8) to ensure the University is ready for new legislation when it is enacted. The committee recognizes that the recommendations have been developed by experts in the field and, therefore, are regarded as leading, inclusive practices. The accessible upgrade projects identified by ABEC in 2023-24 included the following:

Visual Alarms in Washrooms

Visual alarms help alert people who are hard of hearing/Deaf when there is a fire. Additional alarms were installed in the following locations:

- Biology Building – all washrooms (6)
- Chrysler Hall Tower – lower level universal washroom (1)
- Lambton Tower – lower level washrooms (2)



Jackman Dramatic Art Centre

Accessible Washroom Upgrade

- Addition of an automatic door opener and emergency call button



Additional Automatic Door Opener

- The addition was made to the hallway leading to accessible changerooms/washrooms



Biology Building

Installation of colour-contrasting stair stripping and tactile surfaces

- This will improve accessibility for individuals who have low vision and will add overall safety for all users.



Before Renovations



After Renovations

An automatic door opener was added to the accessible washroom on the 3rd floor.



b) Classroom Upgrades

Classroom renovations are led by Facility Services in consultation with various campus stakeholders. Accessibility is part of the decision-making criteria. ABEC often provides consultation on renovation plans.

General Furniture Upgrades:

Several classrooms received updated furniture and layout which included height-adjustable tables/desks. Some examples include: Odette School of Business – 210, Erie Hall – 2130, and office space in Education - 2221.

Education 2223

Renovations included:

- Multimodal classroom – multiple types of furniture, including standard single seats, bar height tables, and one height-adjustable table/desk
- Double monitors +/- 80" each for ease of viewing
- Extra acoustic panels to eliminate echo or background noise

Education 1121

Renovations included:

- Two projection screens on either side of the room for ease of viewing
- Accessible seating (addition of height-adjustable table in progress)
- Extra acoustic panels to eliminate echo or background noise
- Automatic door opener
- Height-adjustable computer console



Erie Hall 2125

Renovations included:

- Expanded space by combining Erie Hall 2125 and 2126
- Height-adjustable table/desk
- Two projection screens on either side of the room for ease of viewing
- Extra acoustic panels to eliminate echo or background noise



c) Human Kinetics Building - Accessible Entrance

As part of creating an inclusive campus, an entirely new, fully accessible entrance was built at the front of the Human Kinetics building on College Ave. This project was made possible in part by the EnAbling Accessibility Fund through Employment and Social Development Canada (ESCD). OHREA, HK Faculty, the Accessible Built Environment Committee, and Facility Services worked collaboratively for the successful grant application through which the University received \$722,800 towards the project. The University gratefully acknowledges the financial contribution from the federal government.



Construction began in the spring of 2023. The grand opening was held in July 2024 to acknowledge the great contributions of all parties who helped bring this long-awaited project to fruition. The University worked closely on the design and construction with local partners, JP Thomson Architects and TCI Titan Contracting.

Before image of the HK Building

The design of the new entrance reflects the principles of Universal Design so that virtually all people can enter the building through the same front door for meaningful, dignified, and equitable access.



Completed Accessible Entrance at the HK Building

The entrance includes the following features:

- 6 ft. wide path of travel at a 1:20 ratio. (Note: With over 8 ft. in height from the ground level to the patio, the ramp is long, but the gentle slope ensures a safer and more manageable rise for people using mobility devices.)
- Resting areas at each end
- Snow-melting system
- Directional, tactile surfaces
- Colour-contrast stair strips
- Enhanced lighting
- Handrails
- Wider front doors (38")
- Automatic door openers
- Ramp base located near the pick-up/drop-off zone, pedestrian crosswalk, and accessible parking in the north lot
- Biophilic design integrates landscaping elements that can promote a sense of well-being



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to Celebrate the Completion of the new Accessible Entrance.

d) Design Review for Campus Upgrade Projects and New Builds

Accessibility and inclusion continued to be a priority as the University re-designed and upgraded spaces on campus during the 2023-2024 academic year. In addition to the projects mentioned above, members from the ABEC Committee participated in the review of accessible upgrades to the CAWSC, new signage, and several other proposed upgrades that are still under consideration.

Accessible Employment and Customer Service Highlights

Accessible customer service initiatives aim to provide equal opportunity to obtain, use, and benefit from the goods, services, and facilities that the University provides. Customer service must be delivered in a way that accommodates a person's disability while respecting dignity and independence. In the same way, accessible employment initiatives strive to remove barriers to provide equal opportunities for people with disabilities.



a) Identifying Opportunities to Improve Accessibility

The Accessible Employment and Customer Service Committee (AECSC) has broad representation and identifies opportunities for improvement related to accessibility across campus. This feedback could be related to the built environment, processes, policies, guidelines, and technologies. During the 2023-24 academic year, the committee reviewed the following:

- University of Windsor Service Animals on Campus policy and related forms for implementation in 2025
- AODA Accessible Postsecondary Education Recommendations related to customer service and employment
- Accessibility Multi-Year Plan

b) Employee Accommodation Fund

OHREA continued to utilize funds made available by the University of Windsor's Strategic Priority Fund to support the Employee Accommodation Fund (EAF). The EAF is an additional source of financial assistance for units and departments to provide disability-related accommodations in the workplace for our employees. Over 30 applications have been approved since 2014.

In conjunction with the Employee Accommodation Fund, the Accessible Equipment Short-Term Loan Program continued to be coordinated by OHRCRM. Items are available for trial and/or to bridge the gap from the time of ordering a product to delivery, as well as to continue to use things no longer needed by another person. Items available to loan include products like a sit-stand tabletop desk adjuster and a ClearView screen magnifier.

c) If You See It, Report It

An awareness campaign was continued to support an accessible campus by calling on members of the community to report conditions that may present barriers, such as out-of-service elevators, non-functioning door actuators, or bicycles locked to wheelchair ramps. The campaign reminds the campus that it is a collective

responsibility to notify Facility Services when items need attention. With hundreds of automatic door openers in over 50 buildings, it takes everyone working together to help keep our environments accessible for all.

IF YOU SEE IT... REPORT IT!

With over 50 elevators and hundreds of automatic door openers on campus, identifying when equipment is out of service is very important. Help reduce the "out of service" time and keep our campus accessible for all! If you do not see a sign informing you of a service disruption, please contact:

Facility Services immediately at:
519-253-3000 Ext. 2850 or email repair@uwindsor.ca



d) Classroom Database – Accessibility Features

The University maintains a database of “bookable” classrooms on campus. A working group created a list of accessibility features to be audited in each of these rooms (approximately 150 classrooms in total). The list was based on accessibility standards that exceed current building codes. This information will be added to the database to assist with planning for faculty and students who have a disability. The audit was completed by trained students during the 2023-24 academic year. The next steps include updating the database and communicating to the campus community.

e) Employee Mental Health Strategy (EMHS)

The EMHS, led by the Office of the Vice-President – People, Equity & Inclusion, was officially launched in November 2023. Throughout the year, 22 key actions were identified for a successful implementation. The strategy engaged with the community by inviting volunteers to become Mental Health Champions. A coordinator was hired to ensure the strategy was delivered. To bolster the University’s commitment to employee well-being, the University became a signatory of the Okanagan Charter. Select the link to learn more about the progress of the [University of Windsor’s EMHS](#).



Accessible Education, Training, and Awareness Highlights

a) 11th Annual Accessibility Awareness Day (AAD)

Led by OHREA, the University of Windsor has hosted this annual, free event since 2013 to highlight and celebrate accessibility. The 2023 event started with virtual, 30-minute mini-workshops held on the first three Tuesdays in March from 11:30 am – noon and concluded with a hybrid event in the final week.



The three virtual sessions included:

- Student Changemakers
- Service Animals in Ontario
- The Proposed Postsecondary Education Standard of the AODA

All sessions were recorded, and the [AAD 2024 playlist](#) can be viewed on the University of Windsor's YouTube Channel.

In-Person Event:



Everett Soop – Indigenous cartoonist, journalist, and activist

Film Screening of “Soop on Wheels” and Panel Discussion
In partnership with Turtle Island Aboriginal Education Centre, AAD hosted a screening of Dr. Sandy Greer’s documentary, *Soop on Wheels*. This is a truth-telling and moving story of a First Nations man, Everett Soop, living with a disability and being an authentically Indigenous man in the late 80s and early 90s. His work as a cartoonist, journalist, and activist has since been widely recognized. The screening was followed by a panel discussion.

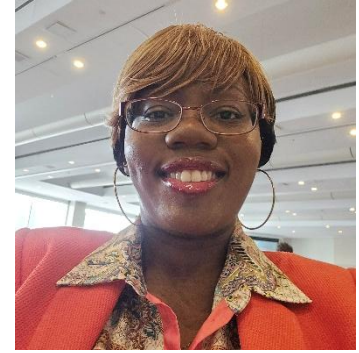
b) IDeA Competition

Inspired by the goal of the AODA to make Ontario the most accessible province by 2025, the University of Windsor held its annual Innovative Designs for Accessibility (IDeA) competition in February 2024. Since 2015, this initiative has provided an opportunity for students across campus to design original innovative solutions to address organizational/systemic, architectural/physical, information and communications, technology, or attitudinal barriers.

2024 IDeA Competition Winners

Many thanks to all the students who participated in the competition! The ideas were creative and innovative. Congratulations to the 2024 Winners!

- **First Place** – Femi Soluade, “Subtitles”
- **Second Place** – Laila Albalkhi, Dana Sleiman, “Educate²”
- **Fourth Place** – Shivani Sharma Ramesh Kumar, “WinSor – A Smart Sensor to Inclusive Living”



Political Science student, Femi Soluade, placed 1st in the 2024 IDeA Competition.

c) Additional training opportunities

Accessibility-related training and educational opportunities were provided by several departments across campus including the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), Human Resources, Information Technology Services (ITS), Office of Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility (OHREA), Office of Open Learning (OOL), Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR), and Student Accessibility Services (SAS). The training covered a variety of topics, including creating accessible documents, accessible in-person and online presentations, accessible websites and digital content, accessibility in the classroom, human rights & accommodations, and digital tools (Panorama, Read & Write, EquatIO).

Accessible Information and Communication Highlights

Many initiatives have been undertaken to ensure that information and communication are accessible to people with a range of abilities. This domain focuses on preventing and removing barriers in web development, digital tools, public affairs and communications, and policy development.

a) Digital Accessibility Feedback

The Accessible Information and Communication Committee (AICC) regularly identifies opportunities to improve digital accessibility and other matters related to information technology. Examples of items explored by this committee include:

- Improved accessibility for multi-factor authentication (MFA)
- Members of AICC participated in a provincial community of practice related to creating accessible PDFs and tools available. This will continue to be an important area to

develop as the new AODA Accessible Postsecondary recommendations call for institutions to ensure PDFs are accessible.

- Accessibility “Hub” review

b) Web Governance Solution



The University initially engaged Monsido as its web governance solution, which was later acquired by Acquia and rebranded as “Acquia Optimize.” A key advantage of this software is that Acquia also owns the Drupal

platform used for the University’s main website. This ownership is expected to enhance the integration of these products.

Acquia Optimize automatically scans the University’s centralized website to identify accessibility deficiencies. The software creates reports and provides content editors with tutorials on how to remediate errors. The software was fully implemented in the fall of 2023 at which time content editors across campus began training.

The University is required to ensure the institution’s website meets an established standard under the AODA. Currently, that standard is WCAG 2.0, level AA. With Acquia Optimize, the University can adjust settings to specifically test the central website content to that standard, supporting compliance with the AODA. It should be noted that current and new standards are under review, and requirements will likely change in the future. Tools such as Acquia Optimize will be a key resource to meet legislative standards.

Proposed Accessible Postsecondary Education Standard AODA



In June 2021, the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility (MSAA) released recommendations for two new standards under the AODA that will impact the University. These new standards are the Accessible Postsecondary Education (PSE) Standards and the Accessible K-12 Education Standards. Recommendations have been developed by an expert panel called the [Standards Development Committee \(SDC\)](#). These

recommendations cover a range of areas such as attitudes, finances, instruction, organizational barriers, training, physical barriers, campus life, and transition to post-secondary education. After public consultations, the SDC released the [final report](#) in April 2022.

The new Accessible PSE standard is not law yet, however, the recommended implementation timelines are fairly short, and, therefore, postsecondary education institutions are encouraged

to begin the work. To start preparing the University for these upcoming legislative changes, the Accessible Postsecondary Education Committee (APEC) was added to the University's Accessibility Reporting structure.

a) Consultations

Members of the committee participated in consultations led by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, which were attended by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility and the Council of Ontario Universities. Other committee members participated in discussions with communities of practice around the province. This committee, along with others across the sector, is considering what resources will be needed to achieve the recommendations, identify what is currently in place, and how stakeholders could work together to achieve the goals of the proposed standards.



b) Communication

This committee has served as a source of information for the campus on the proposed standard. Two members participated in a learning event sponsored by the Employment Equity Coordinating Committee in Winter 2024. In addition, the co-chairs and vice-chair have responded to requests from various departments and units that have started looking at how the recommendations could be implemented ahead of mandated timelines.

c) Data Review

The APEC committee reviewed data released during the 2023-34 academic year, including results from the Canadian Survey on Disability and the HEQCO Report on Accessibility Services. The committee is also identifying other data needed to better understand the experience of students with disabilities to inform strategic direction on approaching the AODA PSE Recommendations.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Update

2022-2027

The multi-year plan identifies actions to support improvement in accessibility across several domains. In identifying action items and timelines, the accessibility committees kept the overarching goals from the Aspire strategic plan at the forefront. Key elements from the strategic plan were codified to make the alignment clear.

As outlined earlier in the report, the Ontario Government released the final recommendations from the Standards Development Committee for a proposed Accessible Postsecondary Education Standard under the AODA. While the accessibility committees are mindful of the report and the expert recommendations, official legislation may influence the prioritization of actions and programming as outlined in the plan.

Our Mission	
To empower positive change through regionally and globally engaged inquiry, learning, scholarship, creation, and research.	
Our Vision	
As a locally engaged, globally connected institution, the University of Windsor will enable people to transform their circumstances. As partners, leaders, and learners, we will engage in impactful research, relevant teaching, creative endeavours, and inclusive relationship building to foster positive change.	
Our Values	
1. Academic Excellence	V1
2. Action on Indigenization, Truth, and Reconciliation	V2
3. Community Impact	V3
4. Engagement with Students	V4
5. Environmental Sustainability	V5
6. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	V6
7. Openness to Change	V7
8. Prioritizing People	V8
9. Trustworthiness	V9
Our Foundational Commitments	
1. Establishing and Implementing an Institutional Data Strategy	F1
2. Foster Resilience and Institutional Learning through Connection, Reconnection and Collaboration	F2
3. Continue to Foster and Build Welcoming, Inclusive and Engaging Physical and Virtual Spaces	F3
4. Telling Our Stories and Sharing Our Knowledge	F4

5. Ensuring that Faculty and Staff Have the Skills and Support to Maximize Impact, Growth, and Engagement	F5
6. Improving Institutional Processes and Coordination of Services	F6
Our Strategic Priorities	
1. Advancing Bold, Impactful Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity	P1
2. Advancing the Journey toward Truth and Reconciliation	P2
3. Becoming an Increasingly Equitable, Diverse, Inclusive and Just University	P3
4. Ensuring High Quality, Relevant, and Just Teaching, Learning, and Student Experience for Everyone	P4
5. Fostering an Engaged, Healthy, Safe, and Environmentally Sustainable Campus	P5
6. Generating Local and Global Impact through Partnership and Community Engagement	P6

A. Built Environment

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
Identify and prioritize addressing existing barriers in the built environment annually. University to commit to upgrade funds annually to address barriers.	Ongoing	The Accessible Built Environment Committee (ABEC) develops priority upgrade lists based on campus feedback and an accessibility audit completed in 2020 on 15 buildings. Upgrades are small to mid-sized. The budget is provided through annual funds co-managed by Facility Services and HRCRM as per the Accessibility Policy.	V6, V8, F3, P3, P5
Complete accessibility audit on additional buildings	2020-ongoing	ABEC to identify additional buildings to undergo an accessibility audit. In 2023, ABEC recommended an audit on 300 Ouellette (Computer Science) as it was a newly acquired building. Data to inform future renovations. The audit was presented to ABEC in Fall 2024.	V6, V8, F3, P3, P5
Complete addition of an accessible entrance to the Human Kinetics Building	2021-2024 Completed.	In July 2021, an application was made to the EnAbling Accessibility Fund: Mid-Sized Project grant. In 2022, the University was notified that it was one of the few successful applicants and was awarded \$722,000 toward the project. Construction began in spring 2023 with completion in early 2024.	V6, V8, F3, P3, P5
Identify dedicated accessible drop-off/pick-up points	2019-2025	Additional safe and accessible dedicated sites were identified for students and employees who are provided transportation to and from the University. Seven (7) locations have been identified (2023). Locations are to be added to the campus map. Additional potential sites were noted. Signage or curb cuts may be required. ABEC is to be consulted.	V6, V8, F3, P3, P5

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
Key2Access – navigational app	Installed in 2017, expanded in 2021-2022 2023-2025	OHREA selected the Key2Access App to assist with outdoor wayfinding. It was implemented on the main campus in 2017. This included modules in 5 doors in the CAW Student Centre which enabled users to open doors with their mobile devices. Additional hardware was purchased in 2021 was installed in 15 additional locations in 2022. The use of the remote entry to be included in the CampusGo app.	V6, V8, F3, P3, P5
Wayfinding App	2020- 2024 Ongoing	Facility Services engaged Mapsted to develop an app, CampusGo, for exterior and interior navigation. Facility Services consulted with the accessibility committees to ensure that the app met accessibility standards. Phase 2 – interior mapping (2023-25).	V6, V8, F3, P3, P5
Annual Classroom Upgrades	Ongoing	The classroom prioritization committee identifies classrooms to be updated during the summer for construction in the following year. Accessibility is part of the evaluation criteria and accessibility considerations are to be included in the re-design.	V1, V6, V8, F3, P3, P4, P5
Develop plans to support sustainability through collaboration with the Sustainability Office (Facility Services), OHRCRM, and ABEC.	2024-2026	Involving ABEC in the planning will contribute to sustainability by considering the life-cycle costs, which include “the social and economic benefits of inclusion and well-being (or the societal costs of exclusion)” ² . Projects must take into consideration the broad uses of the space and the range mobility of the users. This reduces the likelihood that renovations will be required or that	V5, V6, V8, F3, F6, P3, P5

² University of Waterloo (2023). [Inclusive Physical Space Framework](#).

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
		alternative entry points will need to be constructed in the future, thus creating something that can stand the test of time. The University of Windsor released its Sustainability Framework (2024-2029) and the first Sustainability Report 2024. Both documents consider the importance of embedding accessibility into planning and the development of future initiatives.	

B. Customer Service/Employment

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
Provide training to the University community on organizing an accessible in-person and online meeting or event.	2023-2026	Workshop offered during Accessibility Awareness Days 2023 event. Accessible Employment and Customer Service Committee to update Accessible Event Checklist to include online accessibility. Updated list to be communicated campus-wide. Additional training is to be provided on campus via workshops.	V1, V4, V6, V8, F3, F5, P3, P5
Review and update the Policy on Service Animals on Campus and develop a communication plan regarding the policy.	2022-2025	Presentation delivered to Managers' Forum (2023) Update policy to complement the new non-service animal policy overseen by with Campus Emergency and Preparedness Department. Develop forms for service animal registration with OHRCRM, SAS, HR, and ALR to assist with the accommodation process.	V6, F3, F6, P3

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
		Communicate updates to campus via information sessions and the DailyNews	
Update Mandatory Accessible Customer Service training.	2023-2027	Updates to current training to reflect current language and images. Note: A full review of training will be required based on the proposed AODA Accessible Postsecondary Standard	V1, V4, V6, V8, F3, F5, P3, P5
Provide funding assistance to departments/units for employee accommodations via the Employee Accommodation Fund.	Ongoing	Accessible Employment and Customer Service Committee reviews applications and provides recommendations to the Executive Director of the Office of Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility. Funds are transferred to the applicable department.	V6, V8, F5, P3
Update individual workplace emergency response information documents and processes.	2024-2026	OHRCRM, HR, Health & Safety, Campus Emergency and Preparedness Department, SAS, and Residence Services to work together to update individualized workplace emergency response information and processes for employees who have a disability. Revisions will reflect changes to the workplace, such as flexible work arrangements, and also consider the transient work environment common in PSE settings.	V8, F6, P5
Rec Buddies	2018-2019 Ongoing	Rec Buddies is a program that helps with keeping up with an exercise routine. This program has been presented to the BUILD program so that students who may have a learning disability or ADHD can have the support of a buddy to access fitness opportunities at the LSRC.	V4, V6, V8, F3, P3
Prescription to Get Active (PRxTGA)	2023 - Ongoing	The University of Windsor is participating in RxTGA which is a program that is a proven, evidence-based solution to assist physicians and counsellors in helping students become more physically active and improve overall health outcomes. This is delivered in collaboration between the Student Wellness Centre and the Lancer Recreation Program.	V4, V8, F6, P5

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
Increase accessibility in Residence	2023-2027	Several rooms provide basic accessibility amenities in current residences. A fully accessible suite is available in Cartier Hall. The new residence, Rodzik Hall, will be built in partnership with Tilbury Capital and will include 68 barrier-free rooms (completion date Fall 2025). ABEC to provide accessibility-related feedback on future developments.	V4, V6, V8, F3, P3, P5
Add accessibility features within each classroom to the Classroom Database	2023-2025	Features were identified by a committee and an IGNITE student will conduct the audit and provide data to ITS. (2023) ITS to add information to the database. (2024-25) Communication will be sent to the campus to notify the availability of information. (2025) This will help students, staff, and faculty plan when there are accessibility-related needs.	V1, V4, V6, V8, F3, P3, P4, P5
Create an Accessible Equipment and Furniture Bank	2022-2026; ongoing	Bank to house accessible equipment for short-term use. Items to include height-adjustable tables/desks, chairs, sit/stand desk tops, magnifier, voice amplifier, etc... May assist employees with temporary or permanent disabilities to try out equipment before purchasing and to support implementing accommodations in the classroom for students and faculty on a per-semester basis.	V1, V4, V6, V8, F3, P3, P5
Develop recommendations to enhance the accessible procurement processes	2024-2026	Accessibility Committees to review current AODA legislation, proposed AODA Accessible PSE Standard, and COU Accessible Procurement Guide. Recommendations will outline accessibility considerations when purchasing goods, services and facilities.	V1, V6, V8, F3, F6, P3, P5
Update Accessibility Policy	2024-2026	OHRCRM to update existing Accessibility Policy and Customer Service Guidelines. Policy to be reviewed by the appropriate accessibility committees and obtain necessary approvals.	V1, V6, F3, F6, P3

C. Education, Training, and Awareness

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
Develop and implement an awareness campaign(s) about accessibility. This includes: - DailyNews Articles - Workshops - Other learning events	2014-ongoing	Starting in 2019, each of the three accessibility standards-based committees will provide review and input under the new committee model of areas to advance awareness under their terms of reference. The new APEC Committee was added to this effort in Fall 2022.	V1, V6, V8, F3, P3
Hold an annual Accessibility Awareness Days (AAD) event to increase awareness about accessibility on campus and in the community.	Established in 2013 and ongoing annually	Events have been held every March since 2013. Since 2021, the event format generally consists of 30-minute virtual sessions every Tuesday of the month with an in-person session on the final Tuesday or enhanced virtual sessions.	V1, V4, V6, V8, F2, F3, F4, F5, P3, P5
Providing (1) Accessible Customer Service, and (2) AODA and Human Rights training to all employees, volunteers, and 3 rd party service providers.	Developed in 2015 and ongoing	Customer Service training is provided to all new hires. AODA & Human Rights training was launched in 2015 and is ongoing. This is mandatory training as per the AODA. Updates to the training will be required under the new Accessible PSE Standard (AODA)	V1, V6, V8, F3, F5, P3, P5
AODA Training to Educators	2022 - 2027	Ongoing training is available through the Centre of Teaching and Learning and the Office of Open Learning.	V1, V6, V8, F3, F5, P3, P5

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
		The University applied for an eCampus grant to develop an online training program and was awarded funds. In partnership with 9 other universities and colleges in Ontario. An online course entitled UDL for IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility) available in eCampus Ontario Open Library. This course is to be developed as a microcredential course for the University of Windsor campus. To be offered through the Learning Management System.	
Host annual OHREA Awards to celebrate achievements in human rights, social justice, employment equity, mental health (since 2017), and accessibility.	Established in December 2015. Awards concluded in 2024	OHREA Awards were held annually in December, close to December 10 th (U.N. Human Rights Day). OHREA Awards were a virtual event in 2022 and 2023 with announcements through the University of Windsor social media accounts.	V1, V6, V8, F4, P3
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization (EDID) Awards to honour and celebrate those who have made contributions toward building a more diverse, equitable and inclusive campus and community.	2023 – ongoing	EDID Awards is administered by the Office of the Vice-President of People, Equity and Inclusion.	V1, V6, V8, F4, P3
Student Mental Health Strategy Implementation	2018-2023	This is a campus-wide initiative with representatives from numerous faculties and departments working together to develop a strategic framework for student mental health on Campus. Strategy revealed in October 2018 and recommendations prioritized for the following five (5) years.	V1, V4, V6, V8, F3, F4, F6, P3, P4, P5

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
Employee Mental Health Strategy (EMHS)	2022-2026; ongoing	Development of EMHS 2022-23. Implementation to begin in 2024 The development of this strategy is one of the key actions emerging from the Employee Engagement Survey results and is a Foundational Commitment of the Aspire Together for Tomorrow Strategic Plan	V6, V8, F3, F4, F5 F6, P3, P5
IDeA Competition	Established in 2016, ongoing annually	This is a campus-wide student competition that provides an opportunity for students to submit their ideas to improve accessibility and remove barriers.	V1, V4, V6, F3, F4, P1
Increase understanding, respect, and inclusion for people who identify as neurodivergent	2022-2023;	The ADHDe Project , a student-led initiative, received Provincial funding through the Provincial Government's EnAbling Change Fund to develop resources, presentations, and social media campaigns to promote the goals of the project. This campaign is a permanent resource on UWindsor's website and available for free on eCampus Ontario's website . A campaign can be relaunched in subsequent years by interested students.	V1, V4, V6, V8, F3, F4, F5, P3, P4, P5

D. Information and Communications

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
Implement a Web Governance Solution to promote website accessibility	2021-2025; ongoing	The University engaged Acquia Optimize (formerly Monsido) as the organizational web governance solution. This software automatically scans the University's centralized website to identify accessibility deficiencies. The software creates reports and provides content editors with tutorials on how to remediate errors. The software was implemented mid-2023 with content editor training beginning in Fall 2023. Training and updates will be ongoing.	V6, V8, F3, F6, P3, P4
As per the AODA, all internet websites and web content under the management of the University must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA, other than success criteria 1.2.4 Captions (Live) and success criteria 1.2.5 Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded).	2021-2023	Using the newly acquired Acquia Optimize software, the scan showed the centralized website was able to meet this AODA Standard to a 93-95% compliance rate. The University also maintains infrastructure, templates, policies, procedures, and training in alignment with AODA standards. The University developed a website compliance plan with the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility in 2022 and reported compliance in December 2023.	V1, V6, V8, F3, F6, P3, P4
Development of strategies to ensure all videos and audio content added to the University websites are closed-captioned, including videos and audio used for e-learning.	2019-2020; Ongoing 2020-2021	Educational resources and workshops have been made available that demonstrate how to caption using publicly available software/platforms, along with software available to the University campus. Microsoft Teams, the platform used by the University for virtual meetings, is equipped with live captioning. The Office of Open Learning supports the YuJa Enterprise Video Platform, which is integrated with the LMS. Videos created with	V6, V8, F3, F6, P3, P4

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
		the YuJa software capture or uploaded to YuJa are automatically captioned.	
Create an electronic form for Student's Perception of Teaching	2023-2024	The Office of the Provost led this initiative and requested consultation from an accessibility advisory group.	V1, V4, V6, V7, V8, F3, F6, P3, P4
Acquire inclusive software to support students and employees who: 1) have literacy support needs, or; 2) will benefit from the digitization of scientific formulas and mathematical equations	2020-2025 2024-2025	Read & Write and EquatIO software licenses have been purchased for 5 years for the entire campus. The launch of the software was announced in the summer of 2020 through the DailyNews. Online training and in-person training began in the Fall of 2020. Ongoing training on this software has been provided by the Office of Open Learning and Student Accessibility Services. Software and usage are to be evaluated to determine contract renewal and potential funding sources if approved.	V1, V6, V8, F3, F5, P3, P4
Promote awareness of creating accessible documents and digital content. Workshops and training on the topic are provided to campus.	2019-2020 and ongoing	Accessible Content Cards were launched through the DailyNews and posted on OHREA's website. Creating Accessible Documents (led by OHRCRM & SAS) and Creating Accessible Online Content (led by ITS & OOL) workshops are offered through Human Resources PD training and will be offered on an ongoing basis. Additional training on accessible formats is regularly offered through CTL/OOL.	V1, V6, V8, F3, F5, P3, P4
Accessible Signage	2019-2020 and ongoing	The Accessibility Audit (2020) report identified opportunities to improve signage. Accessible Content Quick cards were a first step in informing the campus on how to create accessible documents, such as signage.	V6, V8, F3, F6, P3, P5

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
	2020-2021	Summer students from the VABE program researched best practices, laws, and regulations related to accessible signage. A report was created with guidelines and recommendations for the campus to use on new builds or renovations.	
	2023-TBD	University to develop new outdoor and wayfinding signage. Indoor signage to follow.	
	TBD	Updated signage policy led by Facility Services to include accessibility standards.	
Accessibility Hub	2022-2025; ongoing	The Accessibility Hub will act as a landing page with links to accessible resources on campus and the local community. It is intended to reduce barriers to locating important accessibility information. Phase 1 (2022-23) – Development of content and structure Phase 2 (2024) – Launch and collect feedback on content and revise. Phase 3 (2025) – Complete updates and maintain ongoing	V6, V8, F3, P3

E. Accessible Postsecondary Education

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
Review 185+ recommendations from the Standards Development Committee for the new PSE Standard	2022-2027; Ongoing	APEC to lead the review of recommendations that will inform legislation and communicate to leadership and affected units/departments.	V1, V6, V7, V8, F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, P1, P3, P4, P5

Action Item	Timeline	Comments	Aspire Objectives
Prepare for new AODA PSE legislation through high-level planning	2022-2027	APEC Committee to provide high-level recommendations that could inform an institutional strategic plan for the implementation of recommendations and, eventually, legislation once enacted.	V1, V6, V7, V8, F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, P1, P3, P4, P5
Prepare for new AODA PSE legislation through specific learning events that promote the goals or objectives of the recommendations.	2024-2027	Develop a learning event for faculty General information to be included in AAD events Additional workshops are to be made available through CTL, OOL, OHRCRM, and other on-campus and community partners.	V1, V4, V6, V7, V8, F2, F3, F5, V6, P1, P3, P4
Develop a strategic plan to prioritize the implementation of new resources to promote accessible teaching practices based on AODA Accessible PSE Recommendations / Standard (when enacted into law)	2023 - Ongoing	CTL and OOL with the support of OHRCRM, APEC, and other stakeholders.	V1, V4, V6, V7, V8, F2, F3, F5, V6, P1, P3, P4

Closing Comments

The highlights in this report and the commitments outlined in the multi-year plan underscore the dedicated efforts of numerous campus community partners to prioritize accessibility. Collaboration has become increasingly vital to achieve the best possible outcomes. This synergy drives our progress forward. By preventing, removing, and reducing barriers, we open the possibilities to full participation in our learning, working, and social environments.

As detailed in this report, many staff, students, faculty, retirees, and alumni have actively participated in the accessibility committees and supported the work between meetings. Their time, expertise, and dedication are deeply appreciated. Additionally, numerous individuals not formally connected to the accessibility committee structure contribute daily to making the campus a welcoming environment for everyone. While there is still work to be done, these collective efforts reinforce our ongoing commitment to fostering a culture of inclusion. Many thanks to all!