Accessibility Policy

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Policy Title: Accessibility Policy

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**Position Responsible
for Maintaining and
Administering the
Policy:**   Director, Office of Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility

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Accessibility Policy

1. Policy Statement

The University of Windsor is committed to providing students and employees with disabilities an inclusive environment to study, work and play. The vision of accessibility at the University of Windsor is for members of the Campus community to work together to identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities and attain the goal of a fully-inclusive University.

The policy is drafted in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11 (AODA) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11(Regulation) which forms part of the AODA. The University of Windsor is committed to meeting the requirements of the legislation and where possible surpassing the requirements of the legislation.

This policy reflects the University of Windsor's ("the University") continuing commitment to ensuring that students and employees with disabilities have equal opportunity to succeed in academic and employment pursuits. The purpose of this policy is to provide an overarching framework that documents the University's accessible policies, programs, guidelines, procedures and services.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all University students, employees, volunteers and to any individual or organization that provides goods, services or facilities on behalf of the University, in accordance with the legislation.

3. Exceptions to the Policy: None

4. Cross-References

a) [Accessibility for Ontarian with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) (AODA)
b) [Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11](#)
c) [Accessibility Standard for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07](#)
d) [Blind Persons' Rights Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter B.7](#)
e) [Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001](#) (ODA)
f) [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
g) [Worldwide Web Consortium Accessibility Guidelines](#)
h) [University of Windsor – Accessible Customer Service Policy](#)
i) [University of Windsor – Employment and Educational Equity Policy](#)
j) [University of Windsor - Emergency Evacuation of Buildings and Assistance to Persons with Disabilities](#)
k) [University of Windsor – Human Rights Policy](#)
l) [University of Windsor – Purchasing Policy](#)
m) [University of Windsor Senate By-Law 31 – Student Affairs](#)
n) [University of Windsor Senate By-Law 33 – Student Rights and Freedoms](#)
o) [University of Windsor Senate Policy F1 – Faculty Duties & Responsibilities](#)
p) [University of Windsor Senate Policy S2 – Special Needs Policy](#)
q) [University of Windsor Policy – Presence of Service Animals on Campus](#)
r) [University of Windsor Senate By-Law 51: Academic Evaluation Procedures](#)

5. Definitions

Accessible Formats may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Accessibility Plan describes the annual plan that addresses the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities in the University's policies, programs, practices, guidelines and services.

Accommodation describes a process or a series of adjustments that are customized to the needs of an individual with a disability.

Braille is a tactile system of raised dots representing letters or a combination of letters. It is used by people who are blind or deafblind and is produced using Braille transcription software.

Communication Supports may include, but are not limited to: captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

Disability is defined, per Section 2 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11 and the Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19, as follows:

a. "Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of

physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
b. A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
c. A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
d. A mental disorder, or
e. An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997."

Disability as Universal is an expansive category used in inclusive design and barrier removal that addresses needs of people of all ages and abilities at all stages of life.

Equal Opportunity means having the same chances, options, benefits and results as others from the way services are provided: there should not be significantly more effort required to access or to obtain a service nor should there be an expectation that lesser quality or more inconvenience be tolerated.

Equal Treatment incorporates the principles of dignity, independence, equal opportunity, integration and inclusion.

Independence means respecting an individual's autonomy in exercising choice, subject to cost and safety considerations as defined by the regulatory standard of undue hardship.

Integration means inclusiveness and full participation. This is a fundamental human right. This principle anchors the University's mission statement and all of its academic and administrative policies, procedures and practices.

Kiosk means an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

Service Animals are defined, per Section 4(9) of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07, as follows:

"An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability:

a. If it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
b. If the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability."

Support Person is defined, per Section 4(8) of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07, as follows:

"A support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services."

Tactile Signage means signage understood through sense of touch. Characters and pictograms are raised to 0.8 to 1.5 mm above the surface and have Grade 1 Braille located directly below the associated pictograph or large text.

Transcriptions are the conversion of speech into written or electronic text document.

Unconvertible means information or communications are unconvertible if it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications, or the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

Undue Hardship - the *AODA*[1] states that the undue hardship standard as defined in the *Code* is the standard required by the *Regulation*. The *AODA*[2] also states that reasonable efforts must be used to ensure policies, procedures and practices are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, equal opportunity and integration.

"Reasonable efforts" for a university funded by government grants and fee paying students incorporates considerations of the more exacting standard of undue hardship as defined by the *Code*[3] and includes quantifiable costs based on available and foreseeable funding as well as health and safety considerations.

6. Procedures

Statement of Commitment

In fulfilling our academic mission, the University is committed to the full inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of university life.

In accordance with the University's Employment and Educational Equity Policy, Human Rights Policy and Special Needs Policy, the University continues to foster an environment that encourages a diversity of perspectives. This diversity of perspectives, including opinions and experiences of persons with disabilities, is vital to ensuring a strong academic community.

The policy is drafted in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards (Ontario Regulation 191/11) and addresses the following:

   a) Accessibility Plans and Policies
   b) Accessibility and Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities
   c) Training Employees and Volunteers
   d) Self Service Kiosks
   e) Accessible Information and Communication
   f) Accessible Employment
   g) Accessible Transportation

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[1] Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Section 38, Service Ontario e-Laws, 2012 01 August, <http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_05a11_e.htm#BK50>

[2] Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Section 3(2)(1)

[3] Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter H.19, Section 24(2), Service Ontario e-Laws 2012, 01 August, <http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90h19_e.htm>

As stated previously in this policy, the University of Windsor is committed to meeting the requirements of the legislation (AODA) and where possible surpassing the requirements of the legislation. To this end, this policy also includes responsibilities outside of the scope of the Integrated Accessibility Standards. Fulfilling the obligations of these responsibilities is necessary for achieving the goal of a fully inclusive University. These responsibilities include:

h) Accessible Built Environment
i) Accessible Customer Services
j) Accessible Training, Education and Awareness

a) Accessibility Plans and Policies

The University will develop, maintain and document a multi-year Accessibility Plan outlining our strategy to prevent and remove barriers and to meet the requirements under the Regulation. The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated annually, in consultation with the University's Accessibility Committees. Once approved, the Plan will be posted on the University's website. Upon request, a copy of the Accessibility Plan will be provided in accessible formats.

Progress on the Plan will be included in the University's Annual Accessibility Report. The status report will be posted on the University's website. Status reports will also be made available in accessible formats, upon request.

b) Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

The University will ensure that accessibility criteria and features are incorporated when it procures or acquires goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so. Where it is impracticable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features, the University shall provide an explanation upon request. Details of employees' responsibilities for purchasing accessible goods, services and facilities can be found in the University's Purchasing Policy for more details.

c) Training Employees and Volunteers

All University employees, volunteers and third parties providing goods and services on the University's behalf shall be required to undergo training on the requirements of the AODA accessibility standards and on the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities. The training provided shall be appropriate to the duties of the employee, volunteer or third party. Training shall take place as soon as is practicable and upon completion, the University shall keep a record of the training provided, including the dates on which accessibility training took place.

d) Self Service Kiosks

The University shall have regard to the accessibility for persons with disabilities and shall incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

e) Information and Communication Standards

i. Feedback

The University's ultimate goal is to ensure that students with disabilities successfully complete their University education and that their accomplishment in doing so is made more memorable because of faculty and staff's dedication to promoting a supportive, inclusive and barrier free environment. It is also important to provide faculty, staff and volunteers with disabilities the same type of environment in which to conduct business.

The University will continue to ensure that its process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communications supports, upon request.

The University provides a database for everyone's feedback on the Campus Accessibility website called "We Need to Hear from You" (www.uwindsor.ca/campusaccess) to set priorities in its planning, training and policy revisions. If preferred, written suggestions and/or concerns can be directed to:

Accessibility and Human Rights Manager
310 Sunset, University of Windsor
Windsor, ON N9B 3P4, Tel: 519-253-3000 x. 2046
ohrea@uwindsor.ca
www.uwindsor.ca/ohrea

The University will endeavour to communicate its actions to rectify verifiable standard gaps in its services, programs and facilities upon receipt of a written/email/telephone complaint.

ii. Communication

When communicating with a person with a disability, University employees, volunteers and third party contractors shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. Guidelines for communicating with people who have various types of disabilities are provided in Appendix A of the Accessible Customer Service Policy.

iii. Terminology

When referring to people with disabilities, University employees, volunteers and third party contractors shall use terminology that adheres to guidelines provided in the University of Windsor's Accessible Customer Service Training.

iv. Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Upon request, the University will provide, or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. Accessible formats and communication supports shall be provided in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

The University will also notify students, staff, faculty and visitors about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

v.   Accessible Websites and Web Content

The University will ensure that its internet and intranet websites, including web content, conform to the World Wide Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). By January 1st 2014, all web content shall conform with WCAG 2.0 Level A, and by January 1st 2021, all web content shall conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA. Where possible, the University will work to have web content conform with WCAG 2.0 AA prior to January 1st 2021.

vi.   Unconvertible Information and Communications

If the University determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the University will provide the person requesting the information or communications with:

- An explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- A summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

vii.   Emergency Procedures, Plans and Information

The University shall provide all existing public emergency procedures, plans and public safety information, upon request, in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports in a timely manner.

f)   Accessible Employment

i.   Recruitment

The University will notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in the recruitment process.

ii.   Recruitment, Assessment or Selection Process

The University will notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate further in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the University will consult with the applicant and will arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

iii.   Notice to Successful Applicants

When making offers of employment, the University will notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

iv.   Informing Employees of Supports

The University will inform employees of the policies used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations, that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. The University will provide this information to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment and provide updated information to all employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations.

v.   Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employee

Upon an employee's request, the University shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for: (1) information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and (2) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

The University will consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

vi.   Workplace Emergency Response Information

The University shall make new and existing employees aware that individualized workplace emergency response plans are available to employees with disabilities, upon request.

The University will, upon request, assist employees who have a disability in developing their individualized workplace emergency response plan, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary, and if the University is made aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability. The University will provide this information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation by a request from the employee. The individual emergency plan for the employee should be incorporated into the department's emergency plan and procedures.

Where the employee requires assistance, the University will, with the consent of the employee, provide the workplace emergency response information to the Building's Fire Evacuation Committee or any other person(s) designated by the University to provide assistance to the employee. All information shall be kept confidential.

The University, on the request of the employee with the disability, will assist in the review of their individualized workplace emergency response plan if the employee moves to a different location in the organization or when there are necessary changes to the employee's plan.

vii.   Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

A written process for the development and maintenance of documented individual accommodation plans shall be developed for employees with disabilities, if requested. These plans shall include information regarding accessible formats and communications supports. If requested, the plans shall include individualized workplace emergency response information.

viii.   Return to Work Process

The University will maintain a documented return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. The return to work process will outline the steps the University will take to facilitate the return to work and will include documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.

This return to work process will not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute (e.g. the *Workplace Safety Insurance Act,* 1997).

ix.   Performance Management and Career Development and Redeployment

The University shall take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans when providing career development, performance management and when considering redeployment.

All of the aforementioned employment standards shall be in place by no later than January 1st 2014.

g) Accessible Transportation

The University is committed to providing services in an accessible manner. If, at any time, the University provides transportation services to students, employees or members of the public, accessibility needs shall be taken into consideration.

h) Accessible Built Environment

Ensuring that the built environment on Campus is accessible is necessary to having an inclusive experience for employees, students and visitors. The University is committed to ensuring new builds are constructed in a universally-designed manner that is accessible to persons with disabilities. The University is also committed to retro-fitting existing buildings, structures and the built environment to remove physical barriers.

For new builds, the University will consult with the Accessible Built Environment during the planning stages to review proposals. The Accessible Built Environment Committee will work to identify any potential barriers in the plans and will also provide recommendations about accessible additions to the proposals or plans. Where possible, the University will use the Government of Ontario's *Proposed Built Environment Standard* as a guide for the planning and building of new spaces and structures.

For existing spaces that require upgrades and retro-fits, the University commits an annual amount of $100,000 for accessibility upgrades. The University's Accessibility Committees are responsible for prioritizing the retro-fits and upgrades and include the priority in the University's Annual and Multi-Year Accessibility Plans.

i) Accessible Customer Service

The University approved and implemented the Accessible Customer Service Policy, HR-09-001, in 2010, in accordance with the AODA's Regulation 429/07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. The Accessible Customer Service Policy requires that the University provide educational awareness programs

and training for employees and volunteers on disability and accessibility. A number of educational awareness training programs have been developed and are available to employees and volunteers. These training programs include online learning modules and in-person training sessions.

In some instances, new employees or volunteers may have completed accessibility awareness training programs with previous employers. In such instances, staff in the Office of Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility will review and discuss the training programs with the individual. Depending on the detail and content of the training the employee has previously undertaken, there may be the option for the employee to complete a condensed version of the accessibility awareness training. Determination of appropriate type of training to be received shall be handled on a case-by-case basis.

j) Accessible Training, Education and Awareness

i. Universal Instructional Design

The University will continue to develop and update training and course materials in order to provide the materials in formats that are universally designed. Resources shall be made available to Instructors to assist in the development of designing or redesigning courses within the Universal Instructional Design framework. These resources shall include information for Instructors to develop online, face-to-face and blended (mixture of online and face-to-face) courses universally designed.

ii. Library Resources

The University will make accessible formats of library materials available, upon request. University employees will consult with the individual making the request to determine the appropriate accessible format. The individual requiring the accessible format shall pay no additional cost for the material.

7. Review Process for the Policy

The Office of Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility is responsible for reviewing this Policy annually and recommending amendments to ensure on-going compliance with regulated accessibility standards and legislated obligations.

8. Process for Communicating the Policy

The policy will be posted on the University of Windsor's policy website, within two weeks of the approval of the policy, and Public Affairs and Communications will be asked to disseminate the information to the campus through the Daily News if appropriate (some policies will not be advertised through Daily News). A memo will also be sent to the departments directly affected by the policy.

Contact Information: Inquiries regarding the policy should be directed to the Accessibility and Human Rights Manager, email: ohrea@uwindsor.ca, telephone (519) 253-3000 extension 2046.