



2013-2015 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

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Introduction to the AODA

In 2005, the government of Ontario passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Is it the goal of the AODA to remove barriers and make Ontario a welcoming and accessible place for persons with disabilities.

To help public, private and not-for-profit organizations identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility, the AODA sets out specific accessibility standards in five key areas of daily living:

1. customer service
2. information and communications
3. employment
4. transportation
5. built environment.

The accessibility standard for customer service came into force at Sheridan College in 2010. This resulted in a comprehensive training program undertaken by every employee to help ensure the College provides accessible customer service throughout our community. This commitment is reinforced in our Accessible Customer Service policy.

The information and communications, employment, and transportation standards were enacted as Ontario Regulation 191/11 - the Integrated Accessibility Standards (IAS) in 2011 with requirements being progressively phased in through to 2021. Broadly speaking, the IAS addresses how the College communicates with the public, students and employees. This includes not only websites, but also in classroom and workplace communications.

The standard for the built environment, which applies to facilities as well as outdoor spaces, is still in development at the time of writing. Once the standard is finalized, it will be incorporated into Sheridan's multi-year plans. Despite the lack of requirements in this area, infrastructure planning has been included here. It illustrates Sheridan's commitment to creating an accessible environment and exceeding AODA requirements where feasible.

Another important impact of this legislation is in the requirement that the College create a multi-year accessibility plan to aid us in meeting our accessibility goals. This includes both those required by the AODA and our accessibility goals above and beyond the scope of the AODA. As a result, this multi-year accessibility plan builds upon recent accomplishments of the Sheridan community and helps to chart the path forward in our efforts to identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

Sheridan's Statement of Commitment

It is Sheridan's mission to deliver a premier, purposeful educational experience in an environment renowned for creativity and innovation.

In fulfilling our mission, Sheridan strives at all times to provide educational services in a way that respects the dignity, independence, integration and equality of opportunity of people with disabilities. We are committed to giving people with disabilities the opportunity to access our services and allow them to benefit from the same services in the same place and in a similar way as other persons.

ACSA

In recognition of Sheridan's commitment to accessibility and to ensure the voices of our community are heard as we plan for an increasingly accessible and inclusive future, a new advisory council has been established.

The Advisory Council for Sheridan Accessibility (ACSA) is a voluntary advisory body established to provide input to the Organizational Accessibility Coordinator with regard to the preparation and implementation of Sheridan's multi-year accessibility plans.

ACSA membership is comprised of representatives from a variety of departments and strives to represent a cross-section of our campuses. The Council includes students, staff and faculty. For more information please refer to ACSA's Terms of Reference, available upon request to the Organizational Accessibility Coordinator.

Multi-year Accessibility Plan Objective

The objective of multi-year accessibility plans are to aid the College in identifying and removing barriers while also supporting the larger planning for AODA compliance and accessibility initiatives.

Multi-year accessibility plans and annual summary reports are developed by the Organizational Accessibility Coordinator with support from ACSA. Upon approval, they will be posted on Sheridan's website.

Planning Priorities

To aid in the planning ACSA has identified two ongoing goals to frame their work from 2013-2015 as well as identified specific areas of focus for 2013. New areas for 2014 and 2015 will be identified and communicated in subsequent annual reports.

General & Ongoing Priorities:

1. Address the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standard and exceed their requirements where feasible.

2. Identify barriers currently outside the scope of the AODA and incorporate them into planning for barrier removal.

2013 Priorities of Specific Focus:

1. College way-finding and signage
2. Awareness building surrounding accessibility, inclusion and the AODA.

Barrier Removal and AODA Compliance Strategy

Removing barriers is a crucial step in moving the AODA agenda forward. Identifying barriers for removal can be done through a wide variety of ways. This includes using feedback from members of our community and ACSA, as well as through formal and informal reviews of Sheridan practices and services. The Organizational Accessibility Coordinator collects this information and uses it to inform the priorities for multi-year accessibility plans.

2011-2012 Achievements

1. **Hired Organizational Accessibility Coordinator:** In the Fall of 2011, Sheridan College demonstrated its commitment to accessibility and the AODA by developing a new full-time position of Organizational Accessibility Coordinator. By doing so, Sheridan became the third of four Ontario colleges to commit resources in this way.
2. **Transportation Policy:** In compliance with the 2012 deadline, Sheridan revised its Accessible Customer Service Policy to entrench the provision of alternate transportation services to students with disabilities when traveling with the College. To view this amendment, see Appendix 1.
3. **Evacuation Chairs:** To provide better service to our community members during service outages to our elevators, the College purchased evacuation chairs to facilitate a safe exit when service cannot be restored in a timely manner. Relevant staff were provided with comprehensive training to ensure safe operation of these new devices. To view information on the procedures related to these devices see Appendix 2.
4. **Reached out to other Colleges:** To facilitate collaboration between Ontario colleges and share resources to support the unique compliance challenges of the college sector, Sheridan participates on a province-wide AODA committee.
5. **AODA awareness campaign:** To increase community understanding of the AODA and its impact on the College, an awareness campaign and website has been

6. specially designed to house AODA related and other accessibility related resources.
7. Individualized emergency planning process: In compliance with the 2012 deadline, the College developed a new procedure for providing individualized emergency plans for employees with disabilities. To view information on this procedure, see Appendix 3.
8. Increased accessibility of campus printing stations: In the Summer of 2012 new printers were purchased for all four campuses with significantly increased accessibility features and configurations. These models were identified as interim solutions which will service our students while we await the release of new models from our vendor. These models incorporate cutting-edge design features using the principles of universal design and will once again dramatically increase the accessibility of our printing stations.
9. Increased accessibility of IT service areas: This included new signage and establishing priority service areas at both the Davis and Trafalgar campuses.
10. Consulted on the purchase of a new learning management system: Resulted in the acquisition of new technology to greatly increase the accessibility of the online learning experience for our students and support the standardization of WCAG within community practices.
11. Infrastructure improvement: Facilities department completed two applications for federal funding totalling over 1 million for accessibility projects.
12. Enhanced communications: Worked with the Office of the Registrar to enhance communications ensuring prospective students are aware of the accommodations available to support them in the application and enrollment processes.
13. STC Renovation: Renovated ramp access to the main entrance of the STC campus to provide enhanced accessibility for persons using mobility devices.
14. Refined Customer Service Feedback process: Accessibility and response times were enhanced through increased communication and documentation of the process.
15. ACSA: Developed new accessibility advisory council, the Advisory Council for Sheridan Accessibility, to provide support in College's accessibility planning.
16. Facilities Communications: Developed an enhanced website for communicating facility and service disruptions to the public.

The Road Ahead: 2013-2015

	People	Information & Communications	Policies & Practices	Infrastructure	Ongoing
2013	<p>Offer Faculty training program on accessibility in the classroom.</p> <p>Enhance accessibility and AODA awareness using a formal campaign as well as informal initiatives.</p>	<p>Increase communications regarding the availability of alternative formats.</p> <p>Establish multi-year accessibility plans.</p> <p>Continue to prepare Sheridan websites for WCAG compliance.</p> <p>Consult on accessibility for LMS rollout.</p>	<p>Update procurement process and policy with requirements for accessibility features when procuring goods and services.</p> <p>Review current employee accommodation and HR lifecycle process in preparation for 2014 AODA requirements.</p> <p>Enhance accessibility of job application process.</p>	<p>Planned purchase of new printers for learning commons with added accessibility features.</p> <p>Inform College's wayfinding and signing initiatives to ensure accessibility.</p> <p>Inform College's residence planning to ensure accessibility</p>	<p>Ongoing stakeholder outreach and consultations to ensure appropriate planning and prioritization.</p> <p>Continue to respond to feedback on the Built Environment and incorporate the learnings.</p> <p>Ensure employees, students and prospective students remain updated on any AODA developments and the impact on service offerings, policies, practices and facilities.</p>
2014	<p>Provide employee training on the accessibility standards and the Ontario Human Rights Code. Enhance AODA and accessibility awareness</p>	<p>Revise feedback procedures to ensure they are accessible.</p> <p>Meet WCAG Level A standards.</p>	<p>Enhance accessibility in HR lifecycle and in the Return to Work process.</p> <p>Enhance employee accommodation process as per AODA.</p>	<p>Plans will be developed as new built environment requirements are released and finalized</p>	<p>Continue consultation with HMC Phase II planning to ensure accessibility features are prioritized.</p>
2015	<p>Enhance AODA and accessibility awareness</p>	<p>Revise the process for the provision of alternate formats of print-based library resources.</p>	<p>Continue to update and review AODA policies in line with changing needs</p>	<p>Plans will be developed as new built environment requirements are released and finalized</p>	

From Planning to Action

Every member of the Sheridan community has a role to play in increasing the accessibility of our community. Part of Sheridan's commitment to moving the agenda of accessibility forward, is in the creation of the role of the Organizational Accessibility Coordinator. This role serves to work across departments and with a variety of stakeholders to facilitate the removal of barriers and the implementation of innovative solutions.

This plan will be revised annually in consultation with ACSA to reflect the progress and priorities of the community.

Communication

This plan will be available on Sheridan's AODA website and information about its release will be communicated through the Sheridan Insider, Sheridan's employee newsletter, as well as SLATE, Sheridan's online learning management system for students.

Summary of Terms

ACSA: Advisory Council for Sheridan Accessibility.

AODA: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

IAS: Integrated Accessibility Standards.

WCAG: Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

This plan is supplemented by annual reports. For more information about this plan and related reports contact the Organizational Accessibility Coordinator or visit Sheridan's [Accessibility homepage](#).