



# Ontario Tech University Multi-Year AODA Accessibility Plan 2020-2025



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# Executive Summary

## Message from the Provost and Vice-President, Academic



Ontario Tech University is a forward-thinking and future-oriented institution. Building on our founding commitment to focus on student development and preparation for an ever changing world, we want everyone who travels to our campuses – physical and virtual – to feel welcomed and able to engage fully within the Ontario Tech community.

Higher education in Canada and around the world currently finds itself enveloped in a major paradigm shift. This shift from a singular reliance on traditional face-to-face lectures, labs, and tutorials to technology-enabled virtual forms of delivery was well underway before the onset of the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Our new post-pandemic reality, however, compels us to move increasingly to hybrid and online platforms to support our educational programming and day-to-day work activities.

Through multi-year plans like this one, we simultaneously recognize the need to invest in new and emerging technologies while remaining committed to constantly updating and improving our policies, procedures, and processes related to the Accessibility for Ontarians Disabilities Act (AODA). This work is extremely important and its value cannot be overstated.

Ontario Tech has always aimed to create a respectful environment for all and our work to create a more accessible physical and virtual environment for our students, staff, faculty and alumni is consistent with our “sticky campus” commitment. We are committed to supporting each and every member of our campus community in an effort to reach their full potential. Only then will we be able to realize our collective strength as a vibrant University community.

**Dr. Lori Livingston**

## Introduction

In 2005, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) was enacted. This piece of legislation established accessibility standards to ensure that all Ontarians had fair and equitable access to goods and services. Since that time, all Ontario organizations have been required to develop and proactively review their policies, procedures and processes, as it relates to people with disabilities. This analysis requires the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to improve accessibility at Ontario Tech University.

On July 1, 2016, the *Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation* (IASR) was brought into force and legislated six (6) accessibility standards that all Ontario organizations must follow to comply with AODA. The accessibility standards include: General, Information & Communications, Customer Service, Transportation, Employment, and the Design of Public Spaces.

## Statement of Commitment

Ontario Tech University is committed to creating a campus community that is inclusive of all individuals and ensures equal opportunity among its members to achieve success in their academic and/or employment endeavours. The University recognizes that successful learning and employment outcomes are the result of a shared responsibility and commitment on the part of students, faculty and staff, and expects that all members of the community will advance the ongoing development of an environment that is accessible and inclusive, while actively working to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.

## Multi-year Accessibility Plan

As part of the mandate to improve accessibility at Ontario Tech University, the University has developed a multi-year plan that is available online and in alternative formats, as necessary. The primary goal of the plan is to provide a strategic roadmap of commitments that will direct the University's accessibility strategy over five (5) years. Additionally, the plan will outline past accessibility achievements, and it will detail how the University plans to address the ongoing obligations of AODA and IASR.

The Multi-year Accessibility plan is divided into two (2) sections. The first section outlines past achievements the University took to eliminate and prevent barriers at the University. The second section of the Multi-year Accessibility Plan will set out further commitments to advance and support the University's overarching accessibility strategy.

This multi-year plan will be updated every five (5) years, with annual status updates.

# Section One: Past Achievements

## General

Ontario Tech University is committed to remove and prevent barriers as it pertains to people with disabilities through the establishment of policies, procedures and processes. This includes the:

- Accessibility Policy;
- Accessible Customer Service Policy;
- Ontario Tech University's Statement of Commitment;
- Procedures for Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities;
- Procedure for On-Campus Medical Cannabis Use by Students;
- Use of Audio Recording of Lectures by Students with Disabilities Directive;
- Use of Memory Aids by Students with Disabilities Directive;
- Procedures for Accommodating Employees and Job Applicants with Disabilities; and
- Procurement of Goods and Services Policy, Procedure and Guidelines; and
- Hired a Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

## Customer Service

In accordance with the IASR, Ontario Tech University has remained in compliance with the Customer Service Standard. Past activities that support customer service accessibility include:

- Review of the Accessible Customer Service Policy;
- Development of, and subsequent review and update to the Procedure for the Use of Service Animals on Campus;
- Development of departmental and institutional processes for notices of temporary disruptions;
- Accessible Customer Service Training provided for applicable staff members;
- Establishment of a multi-format feedback mechanism; and
- Establishment of the Student Accessibility Services Portal that provides registered students with online portal access to independently renew accommodations, schedule accessibility service appointments and tests.
- Review and revision of the documentation requirements for students with mental health disabilities, following the 2016 Ontario Human Rights Commission letter outlining recommended measures.

## Information and Communications

In accordance with the IASR, Ontario Tech University has remained in compliance with the Information & Communications Standard. Past activities that support information & communications support include:

- Built-in web capability to solicit and log accessibility-related feedback;
- Establishment of an online “Assistive Technology” request process for all registered students through Student Accessibility Services;
- “Alternate Format Request” process for all registered students through Student Accessibility Services;
- Computerized note takers, American Sign Language Interpreters, real time captioning and captioning of media content delivered in courses are provided to students with documented hearing loss through Student Accessibility Services;
- Accessible Content E-Portal service was introduced in the Campus Library;
- Captioned video and text transcripts of multimedia services was introduced in the Campus Library (available upon request);
- Published training materials for educators on Accessible Instructional Design and Universal Design for Learning through the Teaching & Learning Centre; and
- The University website was updated to meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance. Continuous scanning is conducted through a 3rd party tool to assess accessibility functionality.

## Employment

In accordance with the IASR, Ontario Tech University has remained in compliance with the Employment Standard. Past HR activities that support the Employment Standard include:

- Notice of accommodation availability template, developed and implemented across the University;
- Developed and implemented a Procedure for accommodating employees and job applicants with disabilities;
- Partnered with a 3rd party disability service provider to support employees with disabilities throughout the employment lifecycle; and
- Managed AODA employee training compliance for the University.

## Procurement

Ontario Tech University has remained in compliance with the IASR and has considered accessibility in its procurement activities. Past initiatives that support accessibility through procurement include:

- Review and updating of the Procurement of Goods and Services Procedure to include accessibility requirements and best practices; and
- Consulted with persons with disabilities when procuring information and communications supports on their behalf.

## Self-service Kiosks

Responsible departments have considered accessibility, during the procurement, deployment and maintenance of the Q-Nory and Information kiosks. Department specific training has been developed to support accommodation efforts.

## Design of Public Spaces

In accordance with the IASR, Ontario Tech University has considered accessibility in its design of public spaces. Over the past several years, Ontario Tech has made many improvements by removing barriers, and as a result it has provided a heightened level of accessibility to the campus community. Past initiatives that support accessibility through the design of public spaces include:

### 2014

- Fume hoods – six (6) height adjustable hoods;
- Accessible safety showers at three (3) locations;
- Journey LU/LA model elevator installed at Regent Theatre and UOIT-Baagwating Indigenous Centre to provide an accessible route to patrons;
- Twenty-four (24) electric powered height adjustable desks;
- Stonhard floor coating in four (4) labs, providing heightened traction for users;
- Traffic seating units installed for hallways;
- Hydration station install to replace fountains; and
- High density shelving in library spaced for barrier-free access.

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## 2015

- Addition of exterior building ramps to meet IASR requirements;
- Retro-fitted two (2) stalls in existing main floor washrooms at various locations to provide barrier free access, including accessible doors and fixtures;
- Installed grab bars in twelve (12) washroom locations on campus;
- Widened existing frame openings within House 20 for barrier free access; and
- Installed ninety-two (92) sit to stand height adjustable desks on campus.

## 2016

- Installation of height adjustable tables in various classrooms;
- Accessible counters added to Student Life reception desk;
- Creation of all gender washrooms in ENG1012, UA1408, & UB2066 including automatic door operators & push to lock levers;
- Installation of automatic door operator at various locations; and
- Upgraded parking lots to Type 'A' accessible parking spaces.



## 2017

- New offices -IASR compliant, update lighting and install lighting control ,forty-two (42) power door operators;
- Constructed the parking lot located at the Campus Ice Centre in accordance with the parking requirements set out in the IASR;
- The Assisted Use Carrel Room was relocated to LIB416 to support the use of adaptive technologies in the Campus Library;
- Built the Software and Informatics Research Centre in compliance with the IASR; and
- Stonhard floor coating in four (4) lecture halls.

## 2018

- Replaced eighty-eight (88) - 36” Column Push Plates installed at various downtown buildings;
- Stonhard floor coating in three (3) labs; and
- Photoluminescence glow strips and running man exit signs added to five (5) downtown buildings.

## 2019

- One hundred (100) - 36” Column Push Plates installed in Science, Business & IT and Engineering buildings;
- Addition of exterior ramps at House 22 to meet AODA requirements;
- Creation of all gender washroom House 22;
- Installation of 6 height adjustable tables in Library;
- The Office of Campus Infrastructure and Sustainability conducted preventative maintenance on service equipment at least annually;
- Accessibility considerations have been incorporated into the Campus Master Plan and the 10 year Upgrade Plan to identify opportunities to enhance or comply with the IASR; and

## Other

### Accessibility Working Group

The Accessibility Working Group was established at Ontario Tech University in September 2010 with the intent of creating a campus that is inclusive to people of all abilities. The mandate of the Accessibility Working Group is to provide oversight and coordination of activities related to accessibility at the University and commits to the achievement of the goals that have been identified within the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

**Under the Ontario Tech Accessibility Policy, the Accessibility Working Group is responsible for:**

- Developing strategic and operational priorities for responding to the AODA Accessibility Standards at Ontario Tech University;
- Developing plans and reports related to the implementation of AODA Accessibility Standards and facilitating their implementation in key areas of the University;
- Recommending changes to policies and associated procedures to ensure ongoing adherence to the AODA Accessibility Standards;
- Identifying and facilitating the development of resources and support to advance Ontario Tech's accessibility goals;
- Monitoring the progress of AODA Accessibility Standards implementation across the University; and
- Overseeing the preparation and filing of the accessibility reports to the Ministry of Seniors & Accessibility regarding Ontario Tech University's compliance with AODA as required.

The Accessibility Working Group is comprised of individuals from across the University who represent their respective department(s) as well as a guest member from the City of Oshawa.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Member</b>
(Co-Chair)	Shay Babb, Copyright and Compliance Officer, USGC
(Co-Chair)	Tina Murray, Manager, Student Accessibility Services
<b>Committee Member</b>	Chris Woods, Manager, Web and Digital Media Services, Communications and Marketing
<b>Committee Member</b>	Julie Day, Human Resources Partner, Human Resources
<b>Committee Member</b>	Krista Hester, Assistant to the Provost, Academic
<b>Committee Member</b>	Ken Bright, Director, Campus Infrastructure and Sustainability
<b>Committee Member</b>	Mhairi McLachlan, Manager, Information and Client Services, Office of the Registrar
<b>Committee Member</b>	Susan Forbes, Manager, Teaching & Learning Centre
<b>Committee Member</b>	Owen Davis, President, Ontario Tech Student Union (OTSU)
<b>Committee Member</b>	Emily Tufts, Associate University Librarian, Scholarly Resources, University Library
<b>Guest</b>	Accessibility Program Coordinator, City of Oshawa

The Committee met two times over the last quarter to review and recommend changes to policies and procedures. During this time, the Accessibility Policy, Accommodation for Employees and Job Applicants with Disabilities Procedure and the Procedure for the Use of Service Animals on Campus were updated and communicated to all University members. These foundational documents provide the baseline to Ontario Tech’s compliance with the AODA and IASR.

# Section Two: 2020-2025 Strategic Accessibility Action Plan

The compliance table below identifies the priorities that the University has identified as initiatives that will help it continue to meet the requirements under the AODA and to prevent and remove barriers by 2025.

## General

We are committed to maintaining the accessibility compliance framework in an effort to address the elimination of barriers in a way that respects the dignity and independence of all University members.

Legislative Requirement	Responsible Departments	Commitment	Review on or before
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 3, 4</i>	University Secretary and General Counsel (“USGC”)	Maintain the institutional accessibility compliance framework.	Ongoing
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 3, 4</i>	Provost Office	Commitment to broaden and diversify the university community through the celebration and promotion of equity, diversity and inclusion in a blended learning environment.	Ongoing
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 3, 4</i>	OTSU	Will support and champion campus accessibility through its own mission and mandates.	Ongoing
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 7 and 80.49</i>	USGC Provost Office	Support the review and update of existing employee training procedures on the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act (“AODA”) and its regulations, along with the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to AODA.	December 31, 2022

Legislative Requirement	Responsible Departments	Commitment	Review on or before
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 7 and 80.49</i>	USGC	Conduct a specialized accessibility training session for members of the Accessibility Working Group.	December 31, 2022

## Customer Service

Ontario Tech University is committed to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility for people with disabilities and providing goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Legislative Requirement	Responsible Departments	Commitment	Review on or before
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 80.46, 80.47, 80.48</i>	USGC Student Accessibility Services (“SAS”) Teaching & Learning Centre (“TLC”) Office of the Registrar	Review accessibility-related customer service policies and procedures and update, if necessary.	December 31, 2023
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 80.50</i>	USGC SAS TLC Library Office of the Registrar	Review university-received feedback on an annual basis with the accessibility working group. The working group should review all feedback with a view of optimizing existing processes through consideration of those with disabilities.	December 31, 2023
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 80.51</i>	USGC SAS TLC Library Office of the Registrar	Keep apprised of changing technologies that can enhance accessibility at the University.	Ongoing

## Information and Communications

Ontario Tech University is committed to ensuring that its information and communications are accessible to people with disabilities.

Legislative Requirement	Responsible Departments	Commitment	Review on or before
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 11</i>	USGC lead – all departments	Review the institutional feedback process with a view of accessibility optimization.	December 31, 2023
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 12</i>	Library	Revise collection management guidelines and include accessibility as an evaluation criteria. Develop procedures and participate in e-resource evaluations.	January 2, 2023
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 12</i>	Library	Review and explore opportunities to increase the availability of adaptive technology in the Library.	March 31, 2022
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 13</i>	Office of Campus Safety	Review and update existing emergency procedure, plans and public safety information.	Ongoing
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 14</i>	Communications & Marketing TLC	Achieve WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance across all university websites and web content.	January 1, 2021
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 14</i>	USGC lead – all departments	Review and update existing university websites for alignment of accessibility messaging.	December 31, 2022

<b>Legislative Requirement</b>	<b>Responsible Departments</b>	<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Review on or before</b>
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 15</i>	TLC SAS Office of Registrar	Continue to comply with s. 15 of the IASR.	Ongoing
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 16</i>	SAS	Continue working with Alternate Education Resources Ontario (AERO) project and students who may request alternate forms of educational and training material.	Ongoing
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 16</i>	TLC – Lead USGC SAS	Support and/or collaborate on educator accessibility training initiatives. Provide this training in an alternative format (if requested).	December 31, 2021
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 17</i>	TLC	Comply with s. 17 of the IASR.	Ongoing
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 18</i>	Library	Procure or acquire print, digital or multimedia resources in compliance with s. 18 of the IASR.	Ongoing

## Employment

Ontario Tech University is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

Legislative Requirement	Responsible Departments	Commitment	Review on or before
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 22, 23, 24</i>	Human Resources	Will maintain existing accessibility notices throughout the employment lifecycle. Prepare communications for ongoing employee awareness.	December 31, 2020
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 25</i>	Human Resources	Develop an employee accessibility communication strategy for onboarding employees.	October 31, 2020
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 26</i>	Human Resources	Work with employees to determine the appropriate information and communication supports, when requested.	Ongoing
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 27</i>	Human Resources	Create a disability management function to manage 3rd party prepared accommodation plans and support employees with disabilities.	February 2020

## Procurement

Ontario Tech University is committed to accessible procurement processes.

Legislative Requirement	Responsible Departments	Commitment	Review on or before
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 5</i>	USGC	Review and address the gateways for the procurement and acquisition of goods and services to ensure that accessibility has been considered.	December 31, 2021



## Self-service Kiosks

Ontario Tech University is committed to incorporating accessibility features/ considering accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

Legislative Requirement	Responsible Departments	Commitment	Review on or before
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 6</i>	USGC	Seek public feedback regarding existing self-service kiosks. Provide the data to stakeholders for future considerations.	December 31, 2022

## Design of Public Spaces

Ontario Tech University will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces.

Legislative Requirement	Responsible Departments	Commitment	Review on or before
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 80.1-80.44</i>	Office of Campus Infrastructure & Sustainability	Conduct accessibility improvement audits of campus spaces and prioritize accordingly.	Ongoing
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 80.1-80.44</i>	Office of Campus Infrastructure & Sustainability	Height adjustable equipment installation in classrooms and spaces across campus.	Ongoing
<i>Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg 191/11, s 80.24-80.25</i>	Office of Campus Infrastructure & Sustainability	Stair tread nosing and landing textile strips for the following campus building locations:  Science, Library and Engineering  Faculty of Business & IT Building, 55 Bond St & 61 Charles St	December 31, 2020  December 31, 2021

## Preventative and Emergency Maintenance Procedures

As required under section 80.44, ongoing accessibility audits are conducted to support the proactive identification and maintenance of on-campus physical spaces. Ontario Tech University will ensure that all accessibility lifts and elevators have an annual preventative maintenance service. All public spaces are managed through a campus maintenance management request process that is managed by facilities management or 3rd party service providers. Signage is placed conspicuously on site and on the university's public website.

## Notice of Temporary Disruptions Procedures

To notify the campus community of temporary disruptions, Ontario Tech University will ensure that signage is placed conspicuously on-site and on the university's public website. Notice of the disruption will include the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and the description of alternatives available (if any).

## Other

Legislative Requirement	Responsible Departments	Commitment	Review on or before
<i>Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act, SO 2005/11, s 14(1)</i>	USGC	File accessibility compliance reports in accordance with the timing indicated by the Director.	January 1, 2021 and biannually thereafter until 2025.

## For More Information

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact:

**Telephone Number:** 905.721.3173

**E-mail:** aoda@ontariotechu.ca

**Website:** accessibility.ontariotechu.ca

**Attention:** Manager, Compliance Risk & Ethics

Standard and accessible formats of this document are available upon request.