

ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL STATUS REPORT

2021-2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Durham College (DC) is committed to ensuring that all those who visit us – whether virtually or in person – have access to a positive and inclusive environment in which to work and learn. To support this commitment, DC has established a multi-year plan to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and to meet requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards.

This Annual Status Report outlines the progress of measures taken during the 2021-2022 year to improve accessibility at DC and develop a positive working and learning environment in the context of our values of respect, diversity and inclusion. The college has welcomed the proactive approach of the AODA in setting standards to identify and remove barriers that ultimately ensure the success of our entire community.

We are pleased with the progress towards an inclusive campus during the past year, through the annual prioritization of removing barriers in the built environment and through progress on initiatives outlined in our multi-year accessibility plan and the objectives from the 2021-2022 progress report.

ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2021-2022

- » **Objective #1: Continue with audit of the physical spaces on DC campuses.**
 - » Continue to respond to the FCAPX external accessibility assessment survey results from 2020, broken into phases of physical updates (five-year plan).
 - » Priority areas identified and updated. For example:
 - » Tactile Walking Surface Indicators (TWSIs) installed on curbs/stairwells to alert individuals with vision impairment of potential hazards while walking.
 - » Fire strobe lights installed in Whitby campus residential labs.
 - » Front-facing service counters that were found to be inaccessible rectified by August 2022.
 - » River rock accessibility hazard identified and removal in progress from the front of the Campus Recreation and Wellness Centre.
 - » Audit of braille wayfinding in progress – technology checked to ensure accuracy, in-person audit with student in progress.
 - » The addition of new mobility device charging stations in progress – locations across campus currently being determined by committee with assistance from the Access and Support Centre.

- » **Objective #2: Implement new portal for legislated training resources and communicate requirements to employees to complete the updated legislated training modules with updated content to align with current AODA standards.**
 - » New eplatform developed and soft launched in 2021 for all training resources to be held in one place and made accessible for employees.
 - » Troubleshooting of system errors currently in progress before full launch.
- » **Objective #3: Continue with communications plan to effectively communicate AODA projects and procedures to students and employees.**
 - » Communications plan was devised and implemented for 2021-2022 year.
 - » Announcement shared to highlight National Accessibility Week.
 - » Call for new accessibility committee members prioritized and communicated, resulting in several new members.
- » **Objective #4: Continue the process of updating all college forms to be consistently formatted and accessible.**
 - » Of the 476 forms, 223 have been updated and formatted to meet accessibility standards.
 - » Strategic Enrolment Services is in the process of developing web-based forms with selection criteria for students to make searching and completing forms easier. This is the next iteration of the forms to make them more accessible and user-friendly for students. Employees will continue to use forms created in PDF format, as they have access to the necessary Adobe programs.
- » **Objective #5: Review AODA post-secondary recommendations report.**
 - » Report currently in review by working groups to identify sections that their members can focus on over the next year.
 - » Accessibility policies being reviewed through a new lens, taking into consideration the recommendations outlined in the report, to ensure the next iteration of policies align.
 - » Some highlights include:
 - » 11 software programs are in the process of being audited through the Access and Support Centre with a goal to meet with campus software representatives and have a summarized report available in October.
 - » Service animals policy updated with recommendations taken into account.

» **Objective #6: Continue initiatives to sustain compliance with AODA requirements.**

- » New how-to videos, training and webinars created and posted for employees to incorporate closed captioning, and be provided asynchronously to be accessed when required.
- » DC website – Site Improve auditing tool scoring the same as previous year (99%) based on AA accessibility standards as of July 2022.
- » SmartCane purchased, program in process to upload campus wayfinding. Access and Support Centre and Communications + Marketing are speaking with Google support team to map the campus. This team within Google has been delayed due to COVID. When the program resumes, the college will pursue this initiative further.
- » The Access and Support Centre purchased a new form of assistive device for students to use. The device is a webcam called the Tobii Eye Tracker 5. It tracks the students eye motions on a computer screen and allows for hand and voice free interaction with a computer device.
- » To support additional faculty capacity with UDL, the Centre for Teaching and Learning will be releasing a self-registration course titled Universal Design for Learning: Inspiring Equity and Inclusion in Higher Education. This course was designed for the eCampusOntario Virtual Learning Strategy by George Brown College, and the focus is exploring the three principles of UDL and equity education frameworks such as anti-oppressive practice. This course is set to launch in September 2022.
- » The Centre for Teaching and Learning will be hosting virtual synchronous UDL professional development workshops focused on UDL Basics. Faculty can access these workshops through the CTL Monthly workshop calendar beginning in September on the CTL website: <https://durhamcollege.ca/ctl/events/>.
- » Student Academic Learning Services has made a concerted effort this year to be mindful of AODA standards in regards to changes in their practices, including:
 - » Increasing accessibility in workshops and academic supports by maintaining the option for either in-person or remote attendance;
 - » Updated academic resources to accessible format (ex. colouration, font size/style, improved screen reader ability).
 - » Converted PDF content to HTML for better readability, but still providing links to the PDFs.
 - » Only using images that support content (no images that are purely decorative aside from the title and page banner images) and ensuring all images have ALT text.
 - » Simplifying HTML layouts.
 - » Only using H5P objects that meet accessibility guidelines (not all H5P objects do).
 - » Manually captioning all videos to ensure accuracy and correct timing.
 - » Frequently using accessibility checkers.

NEXT STEPS / OBJECTIVES FOR 2022-2023

In addition to what is described in the multi-year plan, the following key initiatives have been identified as objectives for the Accessibility Coordinating Committee to lead in the upcoming year.

1. Continue with accessibility improvements using a phased approach to physical spaces on the DC campuses as a result of the 2020 audit.
2. Launch new portal for legislated training resources and communicate requirements to employees to complete the updated legislated training modules with updated content to align with current AODA standards.
3. Continue with communications plan to effectively communicate AODA projects and procedures to students and employees.
4. Continue the process of updating all college forms to be consistently formatted and accessible.
5. Next phase of AODA post-secondary recommendations report: approach and implementation.
6. Continue initiatives to sustain compliance with AODA requirements.

