

ANNUAL REPORT – 2011-2012



Accessibility at Algonquin College

2011 - 2012 Accessibility Report

Table of Contents

- Commitment to Accessibility 3
- Introduction 3
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 3
- Algonquin’s Accessibility Committee 4
- Accessibility Highlights 2011 – 2012 4
 - Accessible Customer Service 4
 - Accessible Lockers 5
 - Accessibility Maps 5
 - Accessible Information and Communication 5
 - AERO 6
 - Accessible Multimedia Project 6
 - Employment Standards Working Group 6
- Renovations to Improve Physical Accessibility 7
- Community Outreach 7
- Goals for 2012 – 2013 8
- Looking Forward 8

Commitment to Accessibility

At Algonquin College, accessibility means more than physically accessible buildings. Teaching, learning and working in an inclusive and accommodating environment, and valuing diversity are critical factors. It is what happens once you are inside our doors that truly matter.

The core principles of the AODA - Independence, Dignity, Integration, and Equality of Opportunity for people with disabilities - are closely aligned with the core values of the College - Caring, Learning, Integrity and Respect.

Caring

We have a sincere and compassionate interest in the well-being of the individual.

Learning

We believe in the pursuit of knowledge, personal growth and development

Integrity

We believe in trust, honesty and fairness in all relationships and transactions.

Respect

We value the dignity and uniqueness of the individual. We value equity and diversity in our community.

We believe that accessibility enables people to achieve their full potential. As such, ensuring that our facilities, programs and services are accessible is an integral part of our commitment to ensuring Algonquin is a barrier free environment that is accessible to all members of our community.

Introduction

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

In June, 2011, the Ontario government released the final Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (the "Final Regulation") under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. The Final Regulation came into force on July 1, 2011 and combines accessibility standards in three areas: information and communication, employment, and transportation.

This year, much of our effort in advancing accessibility has focused on raising awareness of, the [*Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 \(IASR\)*](#). We have continued to meet our obligations under the Customer Service Standards of the AODA. This has required delivering training in accessible customer

service for new employees and receiving and responding to accessibility-related feedback.

The following pages detail the work undertaken in the area of accessibility in 2011-2012. It highlights accessibility initiatives and improvements, and identifies where further work is needed. It also identifies the accessibility goals for 2012-2013.

Algonquin's Accessibility Committee

The AODA Committee oversees the accessibility initiatives of the College and supports the efforts of the Accessibility Office. The mandate of the committee is to provide advice on significant initiatives that improve and enhance accessibility; and to develop and implement policies, communication and educational initiatives that promote and enhance accessibility on all campuses.

The committee meets on a regular basis and is comprised of representatives from the following areas of the College:

- Leah-Anne Brown, Human Resources
- Brenda Mahoney, Learning Resource Centre
- Toni Connolly & Jason Timms, Centre for Students with Disabilities
- Lorenzo Bruno, Physical Resources
- Brent Brownlee, Ancillary Services
- Wilma McCormack, Academic Development
- Karen Murphy, Information Technology
- Alexandra Harness, Student Association
- Penny Aylesworth, Student volunteer
- Robert Blondin, Physical Resources

Accessibility Highlights 2011 – 2012

Accessible Customer Service

The *Accessible Services for Colleges – Customer Service Standards (ASC)*, an online training program on how to provide customer service to individuals with disabilities continues to be used in providing training to all new employees, both part-time and full-time. To date over 4000 College employees have undergone this training.

The Accessibility Advisor has worked with the Business Development department to revamp ASC to meet the training requirements for private industry. This revised tool will be marketed to the public in 2013 through Corporate Training.

The Accessibility Office website <http://www2.algonquincollege.com/accessibility-office/> continues to provide the College with a way to receive feedback on the quality of accessible customer service at the College. This website also allows the College to post announcements regarding service disruptions that could have an impact of people with disabilities.

Accessible Lockers

<http://www.algonquincollege.com/parking/accessibility.html>

Locker Services has installed four accessible lockers on Woodroffe campus. These lockers are designed specifically for wheelchair-using students, with a lowered profile, which allows a wheelchair close approach while using the locker. Magnetic-key locks are installed on all of these lockers to facilitate ease-of-use.

In addition to existing lockers, Locker Services has been pursuing more accessible technology by partnering with the School of Advanced Technology. Along with a group of electronic and mechanical engineering students, Locker Services is working to develop an electronic locker which can be opened simply by tapping a student card against a RFID panel. This student project won an OCE award at the Applied Research Day at Algonquin College in the spring of 2012. Research into improving and applying this technology is ongoing.

Accessibility Maps

<http://www3.algonquincollege.com/csd/resources/map/>

This year, in an effort to provide information on the location of accessible entrances, washrooms and elevators, an interactive accessibility map was created. Students and staff can quickly locate the nearest accessible entrance, washroom or elevator through this new resource.

Accessible Information and Communication

Training on accessible information and communication continues to be a key initiative of the Accessibility Office. In 2012, in partnership with the University of Ottawa and Accessibility by Design, a number of accessibility training courses were developed and piloted at the college. Courses include:

- Accessibility and Organizational Change
- Procuring Accessible Goods and Services
- How to Measure Accessibility
- Strategies to Effectively Address Barriers to Employee Performance
- WCAG 2.0

- How to Create Accessible Forms
- Accessible Video and Webinars with WCAG 2.0
- How to Create Accessible Documents – MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel

The courses were well attended by Algonquin staff and staff from the University of Ottawa and Le Cite Collegial.

AERO

Algonquin continues to be a pilot institution of the Alternative Education Resources for Ontario (AERO) the Ontario Digital Repository for alternate formats. Through AERO, Algonquin processed 685 requests for alternative textbooks for 156 students, which is an increase of over 100% from last year. 511 of these requests were received directly from the publisher. This represents 76% of the requests. The remaining 24% was produced in house. Again, the costs for this service was absorbed by the CSD funding envelop.

Accessible Multimedia Project

The Accessible Multimedia Project continued this year. Our partnership with St. Mary's University and the Liberated Learning Consortium was well utilized. As we move forward the 'digital college', we need to ensure that on-line courses and material are developed following universal design principles, and remain accessible to all students. At Algonquin there has been an increase in the number of videos being produced by professors and uploaded to BlackBoard. However, these are not captioned and create barriers for students with hearing loss. By working with the Consortium, we are now able to send audio and video material to a hosted transcription site, where it is captioned through the use of voice recognition technology and returned to us with the text embedded in the video. Captioning is currently about 90% accurate. In turn, we trained staff to edit this material before it is sent to the student who is deaf, as it is often key words and phrases that is incorrect, thus changing the meaning and context for the student with a hearing impairment. Once edited, the captioned version is sent to the student, and stored in our audio/video repository for future use. This year we have fully captioned 27 links/on-line videos for students who are deaf, as well as all 16 modules used in the Autism and Behavioural Sciences Program. As this material was required to accommodate a student, the cost for editing these videos has been covered by the CSD. Through collaboration with Learning and Teaching Services, a number of videos posted to the College website were also captioned.

Employment Standards Working Group

In January 2012, the Employment Standards Working Group, a sub-committee of the AODA Committee released the ***Inclusive Workplace Emergency Response Plan for Employees with Disabilities***. This tool was designed to provide College managers with the information they need to develop inclusive workplace emergency response plans, including individual emergency response plans for employees who self-identify as

having a disability and who have requested such a plan. It was developed in collaboration with the Safety and Securities department and fulfills the College's obligation under section 27 of the Employment Standards.

Renovations to Improve Physical Accessibility

The following renovations to enhance accessibility and remove barriers were completed in 2011 - 2012:

- Painting of yellow traffic stripes on stairwell nosing in C main stairwell and B Rotunda stairwell.
- Repair and repaint walls along wheelchair accessible ramp in A and B link on the ground floor.
- Design and installation of at least 1 wheelchair accessible desk in all of the 40 renovated mobile classrooms.
- Design and installation of wheelchair accessible drinking fountains in the new Student Commons.
- Repair sidewalks heaves (due to frost) to allow better accessibility for wheelchairs to buildings (particularly T building).
- Partially completed identifying and attaching "Priority Use" stickers on classroom desks for CSD.
- All new buildings incorporated the proposed AODA Built Environment Standards where financially feasible.
- Accessible laptop connection seating installed in the Rotunda.

Community Outreach

In October, Algonquin was pleased to host Rick Hansen and his delegation, as they came through Ottawa, celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Rick Hansen Man in Motion Tour. This festive morning provided the Accessibility Office an opportunity to highlight the accessibility of the College and the contributions made by our accessibility champions, both staff and students.

Algonquin was proud to host the first *Ottawa AODA Leadership Conference* in May 2012. This conference was opened by the College President, Bob Gillett and the City Manager of Ottawa, Kent Kirkpatrick. The conference was an opportunity for 160 senior leaders from the broader public sector to come together to share best practices and information on the AODA. Two panel presentations, one of the Employment Standards and the second on the Information and Communication Standards was presented and well received by the participants.

Goals for 2012 - 2013

- PC approval of the first AODA Multi-year plan
- Continued focus on raising awareness for the Integrated Accessibility Standards and the College's obligations through focused professional development
- Continuation of the Accessible Multimedia Project
- Continuation of hands on training on accessible document production
- Continued improved Way Finding
- Accessible procurement process approved by PC
- Alternate format process created and approved by PC
- Training for faculty on accessible learning delivery
- Review current HR policies and practices to ensure they are in line with the Employment Standards of the Integrated Accessibility Regulations.

Looking Forward

While Algonquin can take pride in its accomplishments in the area of accessibility and the achievements we have made, there is still work to be done in order to help the College become completely barrier free, physically, academically, attitudinally, and socially.

The final release of the IASR provides clarity regarding AODA requirements. We now know exactly what needs to be done, and by when we must comply. In order for the College to continue meeting its obligations, senior management must take ownership of the Standards that impact their area, and oversee the strategies required to meet our obligations on time.