2023 – 2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Introduction

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the achievements and actions fulfilled by the Ontario Online Learning Consortium (OOLC) to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and the strategies and opportunities underway to ensure full compliance with the standards of Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005. This plan covers a five-year period (2023-2028) and is reviewed and updated at least once every five years by the OOLC. It is posted on our website and employee Intranet.

Description of Ontario Online Learning Consortium

The Ontario Online Learning Consortium is a provincially funded non-profit organization funded by the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities that supports innovation, collaboration, and digital by design education in Ontario's colleges, Indigenous institutes, and universities. Officially registered as the Ontario Online Learning Consortium (OOLC) and operating as eCampusOntario we:

- Support the development and delivery of quality online learning experiences across all of Ontario.
- Lead in research, development, and sharing of exemplary practices in online and other forms of technology-enabled learning.
- Support member institutions in fostering innovation, collaboration, and excellence on behalf of Ontario students, academic employees, and stakeholders.
- Contribute to the evolution of teaching and learning by responding to emerging technology and the development of state-of-the art online courses, programs, and learning.
- Provide the sector with platforms, programs, and services that are responsive to shifts and opportunities in the educational and employment landscape.

Statement of Commitment

The Ontario Online Learning Consortium ("the OOLC", operating as eCampusOntario), is committed to providing opportunity, access, and accommodation throughout all aspects of our employment and service delivery. We are committed to administering our people programs, practices, and systems in ways that respect and promote dignity and independence for people with diverse abilities and needs. Requests for accommodation are individually addressed in a timely manner, in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 ("the AODA"), and in alignment with our priorities to facilitate capacity, contribution, and collaboration in our workplace and activities. The OOLC is committed to ensuring that all employees are trained on accessibility standards for information and communications, employment, and customer service, including general requirements set out in legislation and applied through our policies, practices, and procedures.

Integrated Accessibility Standards

1. General Requirements

The AODA and IASR outline general requirements that apply across all standards therein, including those applicable to the OOLC.

Under these general requirements, the OOLC has:

- Established and implemented accessibility policies that govern how we achieve or will achieve accessibility under the requirements of each applicable standard in the AODA/IASR. These policies detail the functions and responsibilities to be taken by the OOLC and its employees to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities across these standard areas.
- Developed and published a multi-year plan that outlines our initiatives to achieve accessibility and facilitate opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Prepared and filed an accessibility compliance report confirming that current accessibility requirements under the AODA/IASR have been met.
- Provided training to all employees on the AODA/IASR through an eLearning module, focusing heavily on accessible customer service. Employees are required to complete training on their first day of employment, in addition to acknowledging the employee handbook and Code of Conduct contained therein.

Under these general requirements, the OOLC will:

- Monitor for amendments made to the AODA/IASR, update our policies and procedures accordingly, and make them available to all employees through our workforce management system and employee handbook.
- Advance the strategies outlined in our multi-year plan and review and update its contents at least once every five years.
- Complete and file an accessibility compliance report by the deadlines set out for businesses and non-profit organizations.
- Offer training opportunities that suit the specific responsibilities of employees and focus on all standard areas relevant to their role.

2. Information and Communications

The OOLC strives to ensure that all shared information, including website postings, online portals, files, documents, social media posts, and promotional content is easy to read, navigate, and understand for all users.

Accessible Formats and Communication Support:

The OOLC provides suitable and timely accessible formats and communication support upon request. This provision is applicable within our process for feedback and the provision of emergency procedures and safety plans.

Prior to any planned visits or OOLC-hosted events, conferences, and presentations, the OOLC notifies attendees of the availability of accessible formats and communication supports and emergency procedures. In-person conferences are accompanied by real-time automated transcription and livestreaming. Event registration provides participants with the opportunity to request accessible formats and communication supports before attending. The OOLC communicates with people with disabilities in a timely manner to determine suitable formats and supports that consider individual needs. Accessible formats and communication supports are provided at a cost that is no more than the regular price charged to other attendees.

On request, copies of documents, including job postings and content posted on our websites is provided in an accessible format or with communication support

determined through consultation with the individual making the request.

Websites and Web Content:

The OOLC makes its internet and intranet websites and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level AA.

Websites owned and maintained by the OOLC contain Audio Eye plugin installation that enables users to modify how content is displayed, including the enlargement of font sizes and adjustments to colour and contrast. All audio-visual content contains audio or visual descriptions and files uploaded as Portable Document Formats (PDFs) are tagged to support headings and alt text for images. Flyers, banners, and other promotional materials are always structured using headings and subheadings for easier navigation.

As we update our website, the OOLC will also endeavour to advance the accessibility features within, including establishing descriptive URLS for each of its pages to ensure greater context and readability. Content will also be reviewed and revised to ensure clarity and simplicity throughout.

3. Employment

It is the practice of the OOLC to notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities during its recruitment processes.

The OOLC informs its employees of its policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including, but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

The OOLC provides the required information to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment and will offer updated information to its employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

The OOLC has created a written procedure for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities, including the implementation of an Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Plan form, return to work procedure, and

inclusive policies for performance management, career development and advancement, and redeployment.

All employees of the OOLC are asked to self-identify their needs by completing part of an Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Plan form each year. Employees are asked to notify the OOLC if their needs ever change. Information provided is kept confidential and available only to parties deemed necessary with consent from the employee. Employees who have disclosed a need for assistance are able to actively participate in the development of their Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Plan with their manger, the person(s) designated by the OOLC to provide assistance to the employee, and other necessary parties.

4. Customer Service

In fulfilling its values, the OOLC is committed to providing its programs and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities, including customers. The OOLC takes progressive efforts to provide people with disabilities the same opportunities to access and benefit from our services in a timely manner, in the same place, and in a similar way to other customers.

All OOLC employees complete AODA training, which stipulates the customer service standards that must be adhered to. Successful completion and record keeping of training ensures employees understand how to communicate with a person with disability in a manner that takes into account their disability. This includes being taught how to use integrated service, responsive communication, and "person first" terminology." The OOLC will look to offer training to employees that expands on sensitivity awareness, diversity and inclusion, and creating a respectful workplace, so that employees will be able to better fulfill their responsibilities in creating an inclusive and accessible environment and accommodating persons with disabilities.

The OOLC provides customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to our facilities. The notice will include information regarding the reason, anticipated duration, and alternative facilities or services, if available. Customers are notified as soon as possible through posting at public entrances and service counters on our premises, on our website, or by email or phone.

The OOLC maintains policies and procedures for providing fully accessible telephone service to customers (also applicable to video/virtual conferencing, meetings, and calling), serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices, and welcoming people with disabilities who are

accompanied by a service animal or support person. Customers are spoken to in clear and plain language over the phone and during virtual meetings, and offered communication through email, if telephone or virtual conferencing communication is not suitable to their needs. At no time is a person with a disability who is accompanied by a service animal or support person prevented from having access to their service animal or support person while on our premises. The OOLC will work to ensure all employees are trained and familiar with various assistive devices and how to interreact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal or support person. In addition to its statement of commitment, the OOLC will post its full policy on providing services to people with disabilities on its website.

Under its Projects and Innovation team, the OOLC has established an Accessibility Specialist role responsible for partnering with member institutions to provide equal access to digital materials for learners, educators, and academic employees through training, support, and guidance on accessibility best practices and tools. Through their expertise, the team collaborates with other OOLC teams and employees to develop and maintain training and support materials aimed at ensuring all stakeholders are able to access our programs, services, and resources without technological, information, or communication barriers. Together, all of our teams work with our members to build a community of practice for accessibility through strategy and awareness.

5. Policies

The OOLC has updated its Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) Policy to ensure alignment with accessibility and human rights legislation, including:

- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)
- Integrated Accessibility Standards, O. Reg. 191/11
- Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0

The People and Culture team ensures that all employees follow the guidelines set out in its policies and procedures, consistent with its commitment to equity, decolonization, diversity, and inclusion.

We are committed to developing policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Policies will be reviewed regularly, and changes will only be made with consideration for the impact on people with disabilities.

6. Training

The OOLC provides training on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the AODA/IASR and on the *Human Rights Code* as it relates to persons with disabilities. Training is completed by all employees, including any individuals or volunteers who deal with the public, third parties, or customers on behalf of the OOLC. Training is completed as soon as practicable and no later than 30 days after an individual commences their duties with the OOLC. Employees are able to familiarize themselves with the purpose of the AODA and to whom it applies, and how its standards apply to our workplace and workforce. A testing component at the end of the training verifies understanding; successful completion of this evaluation by the employee and the date of completion is recorded by the OOLC's People and Culture team.

Organization-wide refresher training is used an opportunity to review these standards with all employees and was last fulfilled in 2023. Refresher training, including accessible customer service training will be offered to all employees a minimum of once every three years. The OOLC will also offer training to employees on updates made to our accessibility policies which will require acknowledgement of understanding.

7. Feedback

The OOLC welcomes and encourages feedback as it helps our organization to continuously learn, improve, and remove barriers to inclusion for people with disabilities. The OOLC uses the input of the public improve the administration of its programs, practices, and systems in a way that continually respects and promotes dignity and independence for people with diverse abilities and needs.

Where an individual encounters any barriers to accessibility while interacting with our services or content, any part of our talent acquisition process, or if they would like to share their experiences, suggestions, or concerns, they may do so using any of the methods below. Within this process, the OOLC requests the contact information and preferred method of communication of the individual and informs them that they can expect a response within five business days.

For feedback related to the OOLC's services, content, or talent acquisition:

Email: inquiry@ecampusontario.ca

Telephone: 647-348-9805 (your call will be directed to the Office of the CEO)

Mail: Administrator, Office of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
372 Bay Street, 14th Floor
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5H 2W9

In addition to sharing experiences, concerns, suggestions, or any other feedback on our service delivery, general requests for accessible formats and communication support can also be made by using any of the methods above.

These processes will be posted on our premises, website, LinkedIn page, and within our job postings. To streamline our feedback process, the OOLC will develop an AODA Feedback Form intended to improve the accessibility of our services and better meet the needs of our customers.

Non-Applicable Standards

1. Transportation

The OOLC is not a transportation service provider and does not have any legislative requirements under the Transportation Standards of the AODA/IASR.

2. Design of Public Spaces

The OOLC office space at 372 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario does not have on-site parking, a loading zone, nor a gender neutral/accessible washroom. This office is located within the Sterling Tower, which was part of Toronto's late 1920s building boom, and on August 18, 1976, it was adopted by the City Council of Toronto as an architectural/contextual heritage property. As a result, the OOLC's ability to make accessible design adjustments in accordance with the design of public spaces standards outlined in O. Reg. 191/11 is limited. Section. 80 of O. Reg 191/11 outlines exemptions for properties governed by the Ontario Heritage Act, RSO 1990, c O. 18.

If an accessible design accommodation is requested that cannot be made available, the People and Culture team will consult with the individual making the request in a timely manner to determine a suitable alternative, such as remote collaboration, meeting in person at an off-site location, or an alternative accessible option.

Contact Details

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact us by:

Email: inquiry@ecampusontario.ca

Telephone: 647-348-9805 (your call will be directed to the Office of the CEO)

Mail: Administrator, Office of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
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Accessible formats of this plan are available free upon request.