



# Fanshawe College 2019 Accessibility Plan

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## Summary

This is Fanshawe College's seventeenth annual Accessibility Plan under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) Section 15, and the seventh annual plan report under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) Section 4. This document is in-conjunction with the College's Multi-year Accessibility Plan as posted on the College's website.

This Plan describes the measures that Fanshawe College has taken during the past year based on our 2018 Accessibility Plan and our objectives for 2019 to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities.

Plans for accessibility improvements are developed annually through the College's operational and capital planning processes.

The College's Accessibility Plan addresses:

1. Physical Facilities, Maintenance, Signage and Wayfinding
2. Academic Services
3. Student Services and Supports
4. Human Resources and Awareness for Staff
5. Information and Communication
6. Accessibility Planning Objectives for 2020
7. Accessibility Plan Communication

We will continue to build on our accessibility improvements over the next year.

## **1. Physical Facilities, Maintenance, Signage and Way-Finding**

### **Physical Facilities**

Accessibility is a high priority at Fanshawe College and all renovations are reviewed for AODA compliance, current building code compliance and the College continues to renovate beyond the code by adopting the current CSA Accessible Design standards. In 2015, the Ontario Building Code along with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (Design of Public Spaces Standard/Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment) enabled improved accessible/universal design of physical spaces.

### **Accessibility Improvements Completed – September 2018 to August 2019:**

The following renovations were completed to College facilities over the past year:

- New campus London South
- Technical enhancements employee training classroom K Building
- Various student lounge spaces with new furniture
- High tech classroom upgrades St Thomas (4 classrooms)
- New individual washrooms D1 east
- D1 south corridor, new ceiling tiles and lighting
- 65 classroom door refurbishments in A, C, D, E, H and G Buildings. This work includes 34 auto operators, new hardware, viewing panes, and swing clear hinges
- 5 new classrooms and 1 new computer lab in A building main floor
- Student homework lab, downtown campus LDA
- Enlarged double doors Z1089 lab
- Renovated Faculty lounge space, St. Thomas Campus
- New classroom for PSW, St. Thomas
- Residence camera upgrades
- Residence internet upgrades
- H cafeteria renovations and new coffee service (new furniture and seating options, LED lighting, paint and flooring)
- Improvements to student study spaces in A and D buildings
- New card access system at main campus
- New leased space Huron/Bruce Region
- High tech classroom upgrades (30 rooms)
- New Library alcove student study area

## **Maintenance**

With over 242 thousand square meters of space, (2.6 million square feet), Fanshawe takes emergency and preventative maintenance seriously. Emergency and temporary maintenance interruptions are carefully planned to minimize the impact on accessibility for our community.

The Facilities Management and Community Safety Department (FMCS) utilizes a preventative maintenance work order system to ensure all of our facilities are well maintained. FMCS employs 78 staff to support 5 units; Maintenance/Operations (30), Security (13), Environment, Health, Safety and Emergency Services (11, +140 volunteers), and Campus Planning/Administration (24).

FMCS completed 1,881 preventative maintenance work orders and over 10,567 service requests of which 1,732 were dispatch response requests (spills, out of service, etc.). When the College control center is notified of services affecting accessibility, they respond by dispatching staff to investigate/repair; post electronic notice for both students and employees; place signage at the location; and provide alternate access routes for re-directing pedestrian traffic. The same process is applied for planned maintenance.

## **Signage and Wayfinding**

Facilities Planning and Development conducted a number of sessions in the spring of 2018 to gather insights from diverse student, faculty and staff groups to shape a Wayfinding Master Plan and guidelines. The new plan will incorporate accessibility standards including the use of braille and optimal sign heights.

Implementation of the Wayfinding Master Plan is expected to commence in 2019 with new signs installed in 2019 and 2020.

## **2. Academic Services**

### **Centre for Academic Excellence**

The Centre for Academic Excellence (CAE) continues to support the College's accessibility plans by ensuring that accessibility is addressed through new course and program development, on-going program review and e-learning initiatives with the following resources:

- **The CODE Book** is a comprehensive, faculty-focused resource for developing a new course or revising an existing one, which includes a chapter that specifically addresses UDL guidelines as well as UDL teaching examples throughout the book
- The **FanshaweOnline (FOL) Course Blueprint** is an accessible and structured course content template that aligns with the Quality Matters standards for quality online courses. This research project, *Reaching through the Screen*, was developed and piloted in 2019, to enhance engagement in online course development and delivery. The FOL Course Blueprint is expected to be rolled out to the College in 2020.
- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL) reference materials** for course development are maintained on the CAE portal (e.g., overview, hyperlinks, images, tables, accessibility checker and fonts).

Additionally, in collaboration with Organizational Development and Learning and Learning Systems Services, CAE delivers faculty training sessions on the use and application of these resources for accessible course development and course delivery (e.g., *How to Build a Week's Worth of Online Content*, *Evaluation Strategies* and *How to Build Them Online*).

### **Library and Media Services**

In support of continued accessibility for the current Library collection, Library and Media Services continues to direct users to the Accessible Content E-Portal (ACE). The ACE repository has accessible texts in five alternative formats. A Library designate is provided with ACE tokens at the start of each academic term and these can be distributed to students, faculty and staff. These tokens are then used to independently search the ACE repository for books that have been digitized. If a particular item is not available in the repository, a digitization request can be submitted. Patrons who wish to borrow print materials from the collection may choose to use a self-checkout machine. Written instructions are provided and text can be enlarged if necessary.

Many of the library's subscription databases have read-aloud features and/or PDFs. Best efforts are made to purchase videos with Closed Captioning and SDH- Subtitles for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing. Online tutorials hosted on the LMS website allow patrons to use

audio, video and text to review material at their own pace. The Library also has the ReadSpeaker plugin added as well.

Students can arrange for one-on-one research consultations with Research Specialists.

The Library has 2 private study rooms available for students who are registered with Counselling and Accessibility Services. Each room features various adaptive software, including Read & Write Gold, Kurzweil and Dragon.

For the newly formed Academic Integrity Office, students are encouraged to register with Accessibility, if they have accessibility needs, and speak to their course instructors so that they can make secure and appropriate arrangements for assignments and tests. The Manager, Academic Integrity ensures that students having their accessibility needs met does not result in Academic Offenses.

The Copyright Officer is available to the Adaptive Technologist to help arrange or obtain licenses for alternate formats from publishers or our Print Shop. The course packs and course manuals the College produces are available in or can be made available in alternate formats for students. The Copyright office also can provide support for open educational resources, universal design, adaptations, closed captioning, and transcripts for licensing and copyright compliance purposes.

### **3. Student Services and Supports**

Student Services launched its ***Here for You*** campaign in January. This awareness campaign focuses on the many facilities and support services available to our students outside the classroom. Research in student engagement and persistence reinforces that a combination of academic challenges and a supportive campus environment lead to student success and higher graduation rates. The ***Here for You*** campaign will now make it easier for students to find peer tutors, arrange counselling sessions, join a club, learn about the many services available for students with disabilities and much more.

## **Counselling and Accessibility Services**

Fanshawe College's 2019-20 includes highlights of our activities and statistical information relative to Accessibility Services (AS) provided to 3,968 registered students with disabilities from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020. Keeping in trend with the last several years the number of students registered with a mental health diagnosis continues to grow and represent the largest disability category registered with Accessibility Services. We also note a continued increase in students presenting with complex issues that include mental health diagnoses and concurrent disorders.

In 2019-20, our AS Transition Counsellors provided preadmission information and counseling appointments to 93 prospective students with disabilities and their families. Additionally, the Registrar's Admissions Officers worked to provide information related to Accessibility Services to incoming students.

Approximately 1,383 students attended Accessibility intake appointments and orientation sessions. Classroom presentations pertaining to available Accessibility Services and supports was also delivered to all Apprenticeship programs and cohorts.

The Accessibility online orientation package offers a variety of videos relating to a range of accessibility-based topics including: how to register with Accessibility Services, who qualifies, available accommodations, the Accessibility Technology Lab, accommodated testing, and available transition events.

Building capacity across the College in UDL continues to be a focus. This year 319 requests for alternate format text books were processed with AERO filling 44 requests.

### **Mental Health**

Students with a psychiatric diagnosis continued to represent the largest population of students seeking accommodations representing 1,218 students this year. In addition, 522 students did not disclose a diagnosis but presented with documented functional limitations and symptoms consistent with a mental health issue.

Accessibility Services continues to work with Organizational Development and Learning to increase overall understanding of student mental health needs across the campus. Presentations on accommodating students with mental health continues to be a focus and numerous learning opportunities were provided to divisional areas, faculty orientations, Teaching Circles sessions, departmental meetings, student governance, lunch and learn sessions, and full day faculty training days on Mental Health First Aid were offered.

Academic Strategists are available to support students with concurrent disorders struggling with executive function, organization, and overall time management.

We continued to provide Mental Health First Aid training and individually designed faculty training around mental health awareness, the duty to accommodate, and to offer support and collaboration in developing complex accommodation plans.

Fanshawe continued to partner with community agencies and have CMHA crisis workers on campus providing after-hours crisis support for 7 weeks during the fall and winter terms. This service was well utilized and will continue in the fall of 2020.

Student Wellness programming including specialized psycho-educational and support groups for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and for students diagnosed with ADHD was offered weekly.

Other groups/presentations offered included: Strategies for Coping with stress, Dealing with Depression, Creating Healthy Relationships, Coping with Addictions, and a general Be Well group (to support overall emotional regulation). Groups are well attended and support students' overall wellness in a proactive manner to enhance their student experience and support increased academic success.

### **Services for Apprentices with Disabilities**

Accessibility Services supported 161 apprentices with identified disability challenges. Learning Strategies continued to be offered to apprentices with learning challenges. There continues to be a need to recruit and utilize specialized trade-specific tutors in a variety of apprenticeship areas. Accessibility Counsellors continue to support individuals in pre-apprentice programs with identified learning challenges to support transitioning to full apprenticeship programs. The Apprentice Intake position continues to work to enhance delivery of orientation sessions for apprentices and other sponsored students.

### **Diagnostic Psychological Assessments**

Students continue to present with the need for psycho-educational assessments for two reasons. Those with a history of learning challenges who have never been assessed/diagnosed are referred to investigate their learning profile and determine if an LD is present. Many others are seeking an updated Psych-Ed assessment to meet the OSAP and BSWD requirements. We were able to coordinate the completion of 215 Psych-Ed assessments in 2018-2019, with 176 being covered by the BSWD.

### **Test Centre**

The Test Centre provided accommodated testing to 1258 students during the 2019-2020 year representing 8883 tests. A priority of Accessibility Services is to promote and support universal design approaches within program areas.

### **Notetaking Support**

This year an emphasis was placed on matching students with notetaking needs through the transcription service, Note Taking Express, where possible. The majority of note taking needs were met this way but peer notetaking was offered as an alternative when required. Note taking requests and accommodations totaled 2,692 from 490 unique students. This number continues to drop as many requests for a peer note-takers are now successfully filled with increased collaboration from professors, and peer volunteers who are offered an honorarium at the completion of their duties.

### **Enhanced Service Accommodations**

Enhanced service accommodations, including professional note-takers, specialized tutors,

educational aides, and, academic strategists are offered to students with complex disability related academic needs. When specialized or enhanced services are required for academic accommodation, Fanshawe College recruits external contractors and matches them to students requiring these services. In most cases these specialized services are funded by the Bursary for Students with Disabilities.

### **Bursaries for Students with Disabilities (BSWD)**

In 2019-20, 615 unique students applied for the BSWD and 722 applications were approved. The database system continued to be extremely helpful in tracking and communicating information in a timely and efficient manner. We received approval for \$963,621 in service funding and \$553,849 for equipment and software for a total of \$1,586,055 in approved bursary funding.

### **Universal Availability of Assistive Software**

Fanshawe College continued with site license purchases for Kurzweil and Read&Write Gold. Both software licenses included a 'take home' feature, allowing any Fanshawe student at any of our campus locations to download the software onto their personal laptop or desktop computer. Assistive Technologists continued to support regional campuses in Woodstock, St. Thomas, Simcoe, and at the London Downtown campus to provide accessible technology services and training.

### **Area Campuses**

Fanshawe College is committed to supporting students with disabilities studying at our regional campuses in Simcoe, St. Thomas, Woodstock, London South, and the London Downtown Campus. Additional supports were also offered to satellite program sites in Clinton, Goderich and Kincardine. A Counsellor is on-site two days per week at each campus location, with urgent service assistance available on alternate days from our London campus staff. Satellite programs received scheduled on site and online supports and services.

### **Transitions**

Transitions workshops continued throughout the year and additional summer transitions programs were provided in Aug and Sept. Stepping into Fanshawe, a three-day transition program for students with mental health issues, specialized transition programming for students with ASD, and programming supporting mature students with disabilities were offered in addition to our regular transition programming. Core elements of all programs included navigating and accessing campus services, student panels or mentoring opportunities, information on managing stress and coping strategies, and connecting with the Accessibility team.

The Transitions Team continued to work with regional agencies and school boards offering activities in highs schools and the community to engage those with disabilities who are considering post-secondary education. Discovering your Potential consists of two days where high school students and resource teachers are invited to attend the college, visit classrooms and labs, meet with current students registered with Accessibility Services, participate in assistive technology demonstrations, learn about financial and support services, and tour various campus facilities. Over 450 students participated in spring and summer transition activities and workshops. Additional transition support was offered in fall and winter terms

through group programs, high school visits, case management services, and peer mentoring support.

### **Transition and Support for Students on the Spectrum**

Last year 123 students with ASD registered with Accessibility Services. Programming to meet the unique social and learning needs of this population continues to be developed and offered. Summer transition programming was offered to both students with ASD and their parents. Collaboration and partnership continue with the Autism and Behavioral Sciences academic program at Fanshawe College to foster new and innovative ways to help enhance the student experience for these students. An ASD support and social group continued to run the full year and was well attended and received. This group provides students with the chance to connect with peers who have similar interests as well as learn new strategies and ways to engage in their college community. Transition programming continues through liaising with local school boards to develop and offer early specialized transition programming for students with ASD.

### **Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students**

Fanshawe supports Deaf and Hard of Hearing students with a range of services including professional note takers and ASL interpreters. We continue to actively recruit and interview interpreters to ensure the needs of Deaf students can be met despite the regional shortage of interpreters.

Specialized orientation sessions are offered to this student group. Faculty are also provided with additional education and awareness materials on accommodating students who are Deaf in the classroom. Resources pertaining to Deaf culture and appropriate communication strategies are also available to faculty.

### **Fowler Kennedy Medical Clinic**

Fowler Kennedy continues to provide student health services for students and works collaboratively with Counselling and Accessibility Services in multiple ways to ensure wholistic student centered care. Consultation regarding referrals, psychiatric assessments, treatment plans, case management, and disability related health documentation are some of ways in which the FKC works with C&AS to support students' medical, mental health, and accessibility related needs.

### **Staff Recognition**

Counselling and Accessibility Services continues to recognize groups and individuals for demonstrating leadership in advancing the spirit of inclusion and full- participation for all students but especially those with disabilities. Certificates of appreciation are awarded to those being recognized as going above and beyond to encourage the participation of students with disabilities at the College

## **4. Human Resources and Awareness for Staff**

In early 2017, the College appointed an AODA Coordinator to champion accessibility and lead the College's commitment to creating an accessible and inclusive community. The Coordinator responds to feedback, recommends/develops processes and tools to assist

employees in meeting our accessibility commitment, and ensures the College is compliant.

The Coordinator is a member of the College's two AODA committees:

**The AODA Steering Committee (ASC):**

The ASC is comprised of senior leaders who are responsible for championing accessibility and providing oversight of activities relating to the implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and its Standards and Regulations, planning and compliance.

**The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC):**

The AAC is comprised of College stakeholders including student, staff and community representation. This committee makes recommendations to the ASC on the identification and removal of barriers relating to the goods, services and facilities of the College and provides input to the College's Accessibility Plans.

In November, the Executive Director, Innovation Village attended the AAC committee meeting to provide a presentation on the College's Innovation Village project. The committee provided some initial feedback and suggestions for accessibility and design. As a follow up members of both committees were invited to attend a specific meeting with the project consultants and the Fanshawe team in the new year.

**Organizational Development and Learning**

Continues to provide staff with professional development and awareness sessions about accessibility and inclusion.

Some of the courses available to the College staff are:

- Universal Design in Education (Introduction) and Universal Design for Learning (Advanced): Addresses issues of accessibility in the learning environment and incorporates Universal Design for Learning principles into the curriculum.
- Accessibility and Accommodations: Leveling the Playing Field: provides information on how to effectively support students facing barriers to learning by covering topics such as student disabilities, mental health and campus resources for supporting students with accessibility needs.
- Adaptive Technology in the Classroom: Includes a range of hardware and software that can aid a student in the learning process. This technology can assist a student with learning difficulties as well as physical disabilities. The goal of the presentation is to demonstrate some of the existing technology that students are using in the classroom, and explain why they might be using it.
- Diversity and Inclusion: Provides information on current diversity initiatives and best practices.
- Mental Health First Aid: Participants learn skills for providing initial help to people experiencing mental health problems such as depression, anxiety disorders, psychosis and substance abuse. These sessions help to minimize fear and participants are able to identify and develop simple and effective intervention strategies. In 2019, 33 staff participated bringing the total number of participants to date to 295.

OD&L launched Fanshawelearns in May 2019, curating online content that follows accessibility guidelines. New e-learning modules are also being created following UDL and accessibility parameters.

The College continues to train new employees, volunteers, those who participate in the development of College policy, and all others who provide goods or services on behalf of the College on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

All Academic staff are required to complete a module on accessible education principles and universal instructional design.

The Teaching and Learning site, a faculty teaching tool and guide, continues to be available. This site provides accessibility tips, tools and resources to support accessibility and accommodations for students in the classroom. Additional resources are continuously added to this site.

The College subscribes to LinkedIn Learning an online learning company that provides expert led courses on a variety of topics including how to create an accessible document.

## **5. Information and Communication**

The College continues to seek feedback from students, staff and the community on the accessibility of our goods, services and facilities. We continue to accept feedback through a variety of methods such as online, in person or by telephone.

### **Website Content**

The College's website continues to meet all accessibility requirements. New content on the website is checked for accessibility prior to posting. The entire website is scanned for accessibility compliance once a year. Training for new and existing web authors continues to ensure content meets accessibility guidelines. Training for staff who frequently create Adobe Acrobat (PDF) documents is ongoing.

## **6. Accessibility Planning Objectives for 2020**

To build on our progress over the past year, we have established the following Accessibility Planning Objectives for the coming year, in conjunction with the College's AODA Multi-Year Plan. While these objectives will be our priorities for the next year, other accessibility improvements are addressed as opportunities arise.

### **Innovation Village**

What is Innovation Village? Innovation Village (IV) will be a physical and virtual hub within the heart of Fanshawe College, where students will discover one-stop supports and

exceptional learning. IV will include collaborative workspaces, virtual reality and multimedia labs, a maker space, project rooms, research support and cutting-edge equipment. This will be a place that welcomes all and is student-focused. Students will do things differently in a non-traditional manner, where attitudes are open-minded, where community partners will access expert resources of students and professors through project work all with the view to fueling economic growth and social benefits. Through IV every student will be provided with a signature innovative learning experience and job skills for the future so they gain the technical and human skills required for a changing world of work.

Construction for Innovation Village will commence in January 2020 and work towards a 2023 completion.

### **Physical Facilities**

All new construction and renovations projects will meet the current Ontario Building Code and the AODA, Integrated Accessibility Standards and where these standards/regulations are lacking we will follow the CSA B651 12 Accessible Design for the Built Environment.

The following facility improvements are planned for the next year, September 2019 to August 31, 2020:

- New PA AV equipment Colvin Atrium
- Various student lounge spaces with new furniture
- International Centre expansion
- New LPT3 Classroom (moveable furniture, various monitors, group working areas) B1079
- Remedial sidewalk repair and curb-cuts
- Auto operators R1 residence
- Language and Liberal Arts reception area renewal
- Relocation of Accessibility Lab and Student Testing Centre to F3
- Implementation of new signage and wayfinding over 3-4 phases. Phase 1 to start as Fanshawe students, staff and community members arrive on campus, our exterior wayfinding.

### **7. Accessibility Plan Communication**

This Accessibility Plan and the College's AODA Multi-year Accessibility Plan are available to students, staff and members of the public on the College's website <https://www.fanshawec.ca/accessibilityplan>.

Both plans are available in an accessible format upon request.