
TERMS OF REFERENCE

ToRID & Cte Name: **TOR32: ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENTS WORKING GROUP**

Issued by: Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Effective: 2023-11-14

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Accessible Environments Working Group (AEWG), formerly the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Advisory Steering Committee (ASC), is to champion and provide oversight of the activities relating to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), its Regulations and Standards.

The AEWG is part of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Oppression Task Force and will;

(1) report its findings and conclusions to the Task Force and,

(2) make recommendations to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) that:

- develops the College's philosophy and commitment to Accessibility;
- develops policy, processes and systems to ensure that Accessibility is included in the mission; vision, values, and strategic priorities of the College, and;
- directs, develops and aligns a consistent and sustainable approach to meeting the requirements of the AODA for current and future standards and accessibility principles in general.

The AEWG recognizes that the AODA, and its Standards and Regulations, are rules that organizations are required to follow by law and is distinct and separate from an organization's legal obligations under the Human Rights Code. The mandate of the AEWG is to focus on the identification, removal and prevention of barriers so that the College is accessible to all.

The AEWG recognizes that accessibility is more than just legislative and regulatory compliance. Accessibility must be situated within the broader anti-oppressive work of the College. Barriers for persons with disabilities will be fully addressed only through a culture of anti-ableism and anti-oppression that is authentically felt and put into practice broadly across the College community.

2. DEFINITIONS

Ableism: Refers to attitudes in society that devalue and limit the potential of persons with disabilities. It may be defined as a belief system, analogous to racism, sexism or ageism, that sees persons with disabilities as being less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute and participate, or of less inherent value than others. Ableism may be conscious or unconscious, and may be embedded in institutions, systems or the broader culture of a society. It can limit the opportunities of persons with disabilities and reduce their inclusion in the life of their communities¹.

¹ Policy on ableism and discrimination based on disability | Ontario Human Rights Commission. (n.d.). <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-ableism-and-discrimination-based-disability>

COLLEGE COMMITTEES

Accessibility: Allows a person with a disability to access goods, services and facilities in an integrated manner with dignity, equal opportunity and independence.

Anti-ableism: Anti-ableism refers to strategies, theories, actions, and practices that challenge and counter prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on differences in physical, mental, and/or emotional ability².

Disability: Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other service animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device; a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability; a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language; a mental disorder; or an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act³.

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR): Regulation that details the 5 standards (Information and Communications Standards; Employment Standards; Transportation Standards; Design of Public Spaces Standards; and Customer Service Standards).

3. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE

3.1. Membership

- President's Designate – Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (Chair)
- Equity Diversity and Inclusion Team Representative(s)
- VP, People and Culture or Designate
- Chief Infrastructure Officer or Designate
- Manager, Facilities Planning and Development, Campus Planning and Capital Development
- Learning Systems Services Representative
- Dean, Academic Quality, Strategic Integration or Academic Leadership Team Designate
- AODA Curriculum Advisor, Online and Blended Learning
- Director, Library and Media Services
- Director, Counselling and Accessibility Services
- Regional Campus Representative
- Director, Corporate Communications
- Recording Secretary (appointed by the Chair)

3.2. Term of Office

- The Term of Office for members is at the discretion of the Policy Sponsor, having due regard for continuity of the AEWG's membership.

² Research guides: Anti-Oppression: Anti-Ableism. (n.d.). <https://libguides.salemstate.edu/anti-oppression/anti-ableism>

³ What is disability? | Ontario Human Rights Commission. (n.d.-d). <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/pt/node/2871>

COLLEGE COMMITTEES

- Members of the AEWG may invite appropriate individuals to attend a meeting as a resource person for a specific item to assist with or be present for that item.
- In addition, the Chair may invite a non-member to attend a meeting in a resource capacity for those meetings where it would be particularly relevant and helpful to their role.

4. MEETINGS AND CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

4.1. Meetings

- Meetings are held no less frequently than once per semester or at the call of the Chair
- Any member may submit an agenda item with briefing note to the Chair
- The Chair arranges for secretarial support
- The Chair arranges for the agenda to be circulated in advance of each meeting
- Quorum is 50% of the members, including the Chair
- Recommendations are carried by consensus
- The secretary distributes an agenda and the minutes of previous meetings to all members approximately one week before the date of each scheduled meeting

4.2. Subcommittees

- The AEWG shall establish an Advisory Committee comprised of students, employees and key stakeholders. Every effort will be made to ensure appropriate representation by persons with disabilities. This committee is responsible for providing input and consultation to the AEWG on the identification and removal of barriers as they relate to goods, services and facilities.
- The AEWG may create ad-hoc working groups to address and implement AODA standards and regulations and/or any other related project work such as: the creation of Accessibility resources, tools and practices to assist faculty and staff, and to contribute to an accessible learning and working environment.

5. REFERENCES

Legislation

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (Ontario)

Ontario Regulation 191/11, Integrated Accessibility Standards

College Policy

A101: Accommodation of Applicants and Students with Disabilities

P203: Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

P204: Accommodation of Employees with Disabilities

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