

ACCESS RYERSON



Multi Year Accessibility Plan
2013 - 2015

ACCESSIBILITY IN THE
CLASSROOM

ACCESSIBILITY IN THE
WORKPLACE

ACCESSIBILITY ON
CAMPUS

RYERSON
UNIVERSITY



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A MESSAGE FROM...



President Sheldon Levy

If you are building a great university, you build one that is inclusive and welcoming. This is the right thing to do, and the necessary thing to do. Ryerson is known for diversity as a defining feature of our culture, and this means recognizing there is always more to do. The Access Ryerson initiative engages all of us in building a community of greater awareness and understanding.



Mohamed Lachemi Provost and Vice President Academic

Barriers to learning affect us all. When schools teach to many strengths and work to remove barriers, our whole community benefits. That's why Ryerson is striving to support access to education. Our campus is richer for its variety of people. The initiatives outlined in these pages seek to enhance all our contributions to higher learning. Access Ryerson envisions a diverse, thriving, and inclusive society – in which education plays a key role.



Julia Hanigsberg Vice-President, Administration and Finance

At Ryerson University, people come first. Living up to this principle entails ensuring that our students, faculty and staff enjoy seamless access to all of our community's spaces, resources and opportunities. Accessibility dovetails perfectly with this principle and needs to be at the heart of everything we do at the university. Accomplishing this goal won't be easy, but together through innovation, technology and by embracing diversity, equity and inclusion, the Ryerson community is building a university in which full accessibility is synonymous with the Ryerson experience.

A MESSAGE FROM...



Denise O'Neil Green
Assistant Vice-President/Vice-Provost, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

In my role as the Assistant Vice-President/Vice-Provost of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (AVP/VP EDI), I am responsible for the leadership, advocacy, and coordination of EDI related initiatives. That said, advancing accessibility principles and practices throughout the entire organization, from the top-down and bottom-up, is at the heart of what the EDI office is about: fostering a diverse and inclusive Ryerson community.



Heather Willis
Accessibility Coordinator, Human Resources

Melanie Panitch
Associate Professor, School of Disability Studies

City Building: The Architecture of Inclusion

In the role of city builder, Ryerson has achieved more than just the construction of new campus space. Consistent with this vision is the development of an inclusive university, which contributes to the broader community. Making higher education accessible to students who have historically been excluded increases their employment opportunities and strengthens their position to contribute to Canadian society. This in turn strengthens our society, as the perspectives of persons with disabilities contribute to the diversity of knowledge and experience. By making jobs at Ryerson more accessible, we're creating a workforce that better reflects the population we serve.

As a provincial policy, the Accessibility for Ontarians with

A MESSAGE FROM...

Disabilities Act has facilitated significant change. It has shifted the perspective of what disability means and brought the issues of access, fairness and equality to the centre of public attention. Fundamentally, it shapes how we define and perceive the experience of disability itself. Disability is not inherent in the individual; it is created by barriers to access and participation. When we relocate the “problem” from the individual to the environment, we are then able to identify, remove and prevent barriers where they exist.

Access Ryerson, Ryerson’s university-wide accessibility initiative is both welcoming and invitational. It welcomes students to “access Ryerson”, a university that aspires to be both physically accessible and socially inclusive. And it invites everyone to play a part in designing, constructing and enhancing the environment in which we all live, work and study. The materials – the bricks and mortar - are imperative in improving access to physical spaces. Equally important are the people willing to embrace the less tangible, but critically important social, cultural and attitudinal changes required to realize the transformational power of the Access Ryerson initiative.

We invite you to take on the lens. Notice and address barriers. Increase your understanding and skills. Become an inclusive practitioner.

Just as Ryerson is making its mark as a leader in city building, we can all be leaders in building inclusion as well. This plan cements our commitment to inclusion and provides a blueprint to build a fully accessible and inclusive Ryerson.

We would like to acknowledge the leadership and contribution of Larissa Allen, recently retired Assistant Vice President, Human Resources, for her contribution to accessibility at Ryerson. Thank you also to everyone who has carried Access Ryerson forward, and to all those who continue to work diligently toward inclusion in our community.

INTRODUCTION

Our Commitment to Accessibility

Ryerson University is committed to providing an accessible learning and employment environment for students, employees and members of the Ryerson community. We are committed to the principles of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), and aim to ensure that dignity, integration and equality of opportunity are embedded in all aspects of the university culture.

Ryerson's approach to furthering the principles of the AODA is that all members of the University have a shared responsibility to support access and inclusion. Underpinning this approach is a commitment to the practice of universal design which addresses accessibility systemically. Further, we continue to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility and full participation.

In short, Ryerson is committed to accessibility in the classroom, accessibility in the workplace, and accessibility on campus.



"I never thought of accessibility until I became disabled at age 46, and discovered a world in which I could no longer participate. Thanks to the stubborn work of disabled peers and allies, access is slowly improving [...] Receiving an Honorary Doctorate from Ryerson University in 2003 was one of the high points of my life to date!"

- Bonnie Sherr Klein, M.C. & LL.D. (2003)

Background

In 2002, the Ryerson Accessibility Advisory Committee (RAAC), with representation from faculties, administrative departments, and students, was established following legislation of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA). This committee's key responsibility was to consult with persons with disabilities and produce an annual Accessibility Report. In addition, RAAC met to discuss accessibility priorities and address barriers encountered by individuals as they arose.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) became law on June 13, 2005. The purpose of this current legislation is to develop, implement, and enforce mandatory accessibility standards

in key areas of daily living. The AODA applies to both public and private sectors, with the goal of creating an accessible Ontario by 2025.

The Customer Service Standard, the first standard of the AODA to be legislated in 2008, required Ryerson as a designated public sector organization to comply with this standard by January 1, 2010. In order to address this requirement, Ryerson established a Customer Service Advisory Committee to meet the requirements of the new standard and to ensure the necessary training was in place. As a result of this committee's recommendations, an accessibility website was created (www.ryerson.ca/accessibility), a statement of commitment was articulated, and an administrative policy was put in place. In addition, it was recommended that an accessibility coordinator be hired to oversee the implementation of the AODA and to advance accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities overall.

“Welcome to the minority of everyone. The barriers that hurt us hurt you! We’re not looking for what people without disabilities can do for us, out of charity. We’re trying to make the world better so that when you get your disability - if you haven’t yet - you’ll have more opportunity than we did.”

**- David Lepofsky, CM,
Partnering for Prosperity: A Discussion on
Economic Enhancement, Ryerson University
November 22, 2012**

“As the former Minister who had the honour of authoring the AODA in 2004, it is my privilege to be a part of a community at Ryerson University, where the ultimate goal of full accessibility is actively pursued.”

**- Marie Bountrogianni, Interim Dean,
The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing
Education, Ryerson University**

Under the leadership of the accessibility coordinator, Access Ryerson was established in 2011 with the intention of embracing a more comprehensive approach to the AODA legislation. Access Ryerson then set out to renew the university's accessibility commitment. The former Ryerson Advisory Committee's mandate was expanded beyond consultation and reporting, to implementing and enhancing our accessibility focus in keeping with the additional requirements of the AODA legislation. In addition, leadership commitment was established with the appointment of a steering committee led by senior management.

In July 2011, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) was legislated, which included the Employment, Information and Communications, and Transportation standards.

In December 2012, the Design of Public Spaces, formally a component of the Built Environment standard, was legislated as an amendment to the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. The final component of the Built Environment standard is in the last stages of development and is currently being reviewed through the public feedback process, in which Ryerson University is actively participating.

2012: A Year in Review

Ryerson has a lot to be proud of this year in terms of becoming a more open, diverse and inclusive environment. We saw the growth and development of the university's accessibility initiative, Access Ryerson, with a mandate to transform Ryerson into a leader of excellence in accessibility and inclusion for persons with disabilities.

With an emphasis on access and inclusion, Access Ryerson currently has working groups focused on a variety of areas including: communication, technology, employment, procurement, the built environment and universal design for learning.

A key element of our success over the past year has been collaboration, both internally and externally. Accessibility champions have emerged in all areas of the university and this collaboration has proven essential to our growth.

"Ryerson prides itself on being an integral part of our community. It is centrally important that Ryerson provide access to our campus and to our resources for the members of our community, regardless of their status. We are committed to finding ways that persons with disabilities, with low incomes and with other characteristics that might hinder their becoming part of our university are in fact welcomed."

**- John Isbister
Interim Provost and Vice-President
Academic**



A Selection of Accessibility Initiatives at Ryerson

Human Resources

- Led the implementation of the AODA Customer Service standards at Ryerson, including setting up an Accessibility website and providing training for all employees and service providers on providing accessible customer service.
- Created the position for our first Accessibility Coordinator who was subsequently hired.
- Established Access Ryerson and its related Advisory group, Steering committee and working groups.
- Proposed and had approved the new Integrated Employee Wellbeing and Accommodation Services (IEWAS), a unit ensuring that employees with disabilities are able to fulfill their potential at the university.
- Participated in the Global Business Leadership Network Summit, a result of HR's involvement in the Ontario Job Opportunity Information Network (JOIN).

- Improved the accessibility of all HR communications materials, including making our website more accessible, making forms into fillable PDF files, and sending memos by HTML email, allowing for a plain text option and reducing the number of clicks necessary to get to pertinent information.

After 13 years of high quality, high profile programming, the School of Disability Studies is ample proof that Ryerson leads the way in accessible undergraduate education in Canada. Now that's commitment!

- Kathryn Church, Director,
School of Disability Studies

- Piloted “Introduction to Deaf Studies”, taught by Dr. Kristin Snoddon. Facilitated communication between a deaf instructor and hearing, hard of hearing and deaf students, using: ASL team, notetaking and powerpoint.
- Advanced dialogue and practice/s on the cutting edge of critical mental health by hosting the first-ever international symposium on transforming universities into mad-positive spaces.
- Translated “Out from Under: Disability, History and Things to Remember” to the virtual world of “Second Life”. Supported by the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Fund and the Digital Media Zone, building cross-discipline relationships with Early Childhood Studies and Image Arts.

School of Disability Studies

- Collaborated with Media Services and Campus Facilities and Sustainability on an Enabling Access Fund grant application that would facilitate flexible lighting arrangements and a fully-accessible podium for the DST classroom SHE 560.
- Facilitated the Chang School’s delivery of the AODA Certificate; the inaugural graduates for this Certificate are rooted in the Disability Studies program;
- Launched the Ethel Louise Armstrong post-doctoral fellowship, a Ryerson first in its combination of private and endowed funds, and rare in its designation of a female scholar with a disability;



- A partnership with Abilities Arts for production of a performance event at our annual Summer Institute – and for installations such as Vincenzo Pietropaolo’s exhibit “Invisible No More”, hosted at Ryerson as part of our student awards.

- Supported The Mars Project, a film by Image Arts graduate Jonathan Balazs. Featuring Khari “Conspiracy” Stewart”, it is about hip hop, the mental health system, and alternative perspectives on madness.



The Ryerson Mental Health Committee

- Formed the Ryerson Mental Health Advisory Committee, a group that will develop a comprehensive mental health strategy with the aim to create and maintain a campus environment that fosters a broad vision of mental health and well-being
- Created a number of working groups with representation from faculty, staff and students focused on specific areas, including: Policies and Procedures, Communication and Awareness, and Curriculum and Pedagogy

“The Ryerson Mental Health Committee envisions Ryerson as a vibrant, flourishing university community that sustains mental health and wellbeing, ensuring that community members across the University are supported. The committee seeks to provide advocacy for mental wellness and celebrate community successes and leadership in the eradication of stigma, sanism and mental health discrimination on campus”

**- Su-Ting Teo, MD, Director,
Student Health and Wellness**

The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education

- Launched the Certificate in Advancing the AODA: Principles and Practices of Accessibility
- Developed and delivered a number of accessibility awareness workshops for employees at The Chang School

- Began to review and modify existing information technology platforms and digital materials to retrofit for AODA compliance
- Created and implemented video/ audio accessibility guidelines for online courses
- Began developing and implementing multi-year plan to retrofit online courses to meet AODA W3C Level compliance
- Hired Accessibility Specialist to provide technical assistance and to advise on digital accessibility



Ryerson University Library and Archives (RULA)

- A basic suite of adaptive software is available on the majority of the computers in the Library, and additional adaptive technology is available on select workstations and in private rooms on the third floor.
- Installed a printer in the Learning Commons that is more easily accessible to persons in wheelchairs or mobility devices
- Have begun streamlining the process for students requiring accessible formats
- Facilitated the provision of electronic course readings through e-reserves, increasing readily available accessible formats for students using adaptive technologies

“The Ryerson University Library and Archives (RULA) is integral to learning, teaching, scholarly research and creative activities. RULA is committed to providing equal access to services and collections to the all members of the diverse Ryerson community by providing services that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.”

-Madeleine Lefebvre, Chief Librarian

Access Ryerson Accomplishments

Universal Design for Learning Working Group

- Best practices and recommendations from the UDL report have been utilized in the workshops and programming provided by the Learning and Teaching Office (LTO)
- A session on UDL principles was offered through the new faculty orientation in January, 2013
- The LTO website has dedicated a resources page to UDL
- The LTO developed a Best Practices issue of an online monthly newsletter dedicated to UDL
- The UDL report was approved by the VP, Academic and the Provost

Information and Technology Working Group

- Redesigned accessibility website
- Captioning policy drafted and distributed for consultation
- Objective evaluation (following the WCAG 2.0 success criteria) and subjective evaluation (user testing completing a set of tasks in a system by using assistive device) has begun for the Blackboard and RAMSS systems at Ryerson

Employment Working Group

- Established standardized procedures to inform all candidates being interviewed and/or tested that accommodations are available if required
- Process for individualized emergency response information created along with instruction guide for employees and leaders
- Current practice research for accommodation plans collected

Communication and Awareness

- Vision statement and goals developed

Built Environment

- Vision statement and goals developed

Procurement

- Vision statement and goals developed



FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES & VALUES

AODA

The principles of the AODA are dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity. In the Ryerson context:

Dignity

Providing service with dignity means the customer maintains his or her self-respect and the respect of other people. Dignified service means not treating persons with disabilities as an afterthought or forcing them to accept lesser service, quality or convenience.

Independence

Persons with disabilities are enabled to do things on their own, without unnecessary assistance or intervention from others.

Integration

Services are provided in a way that enables persons with disabilities to benefit from the same service, in the same place, and in a similar way as others.

Equality of Opportunity

Goods and services are provided to persons with disabilities in a way that the opportunity to access goods and services, resources, and materials is equal to that given to others. This requires accessible formats and flexible approaches. It means inclusiveness and full participation.

Accessibility maximizes and promotes full participation at Ryerson.

- Darrell Bowden, Educational Equity Advisor, Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Services

Access Ryerson Principles

In addition to the principles of the AODA, the following are values underpinning the Access Ryerson initiative as the basis to our overall approach:

Accessibility at the Start

By providing the highest degree of accessibility possible at the outset, we ensure no new barriers will be created, avoiding problems later on. Every individual plays a role in ensuring accessibility from the start.

Accessibility, not Disability

By recognizing the relationship between social and physical barriers and disability, our focus is shifted to the environment and solutions to remove barriers, rather than to any perceived deficit of the person.

“The core principles of the access Centre for Students with Disabilities at Ryerson are facilitation, education, and inclusion, with an overall mission to participate, with the university, in creating an accessible learning environment for students. In order for each student to fully participate in their academic experience, we support inclusion through the facilitation of education and academic accommodations for Ryerson`s diverse mix of students with disabilities.”

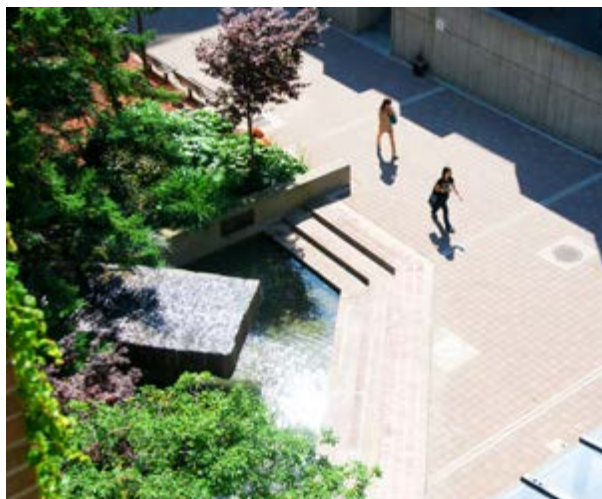
**- Christina Halliday Director,
Student Learning Support Services**

Disability as Diversity, not Deficit

The experience of disability is typically and historically perceived negatively as a deficit. Instead we consider the perspectives of persons with a disability beneficial to a wider and more inclusive perspective.

From Why to How

Rather than questioning why we need to be accessible, we want to ask, “How do we become more accessible?” Shifting the question is an integral step in shifting the culture into one that is fully inclusive.



Accessibility and Accommodation as Distinct Approaches

Individual accommodation is an essential component of accessibility, however these are distinct approaches. The more accessible an environment/organization/process is from the start, the less need there will be for accommodation. Although a legal obligation may only require “accommodation as required”, ideally permanent accessibility solutions will be sought, reducing the need for individual accommodation.

“Accessibility matters to me because if all classes, courses and texts were created with accessibility in mind it would address the diverse needs of our student population hence minimizing the need for accommodations.”

**- Paris Master-McRae
Administrative Assistant,
Student Advisor & Student,
School of Disability Studies**

Fairness and Equitable Treatment

We understand that equitable treatment does not necessarily mean treating everyone the same. Treating people fairly may require different approaches that do not imply a lesser standard of performance.

Leadership Commitment

Senior leaders are in a unique position to ensure accessibility is at the core of decision making. As champions of accessibility, senior leaders promote the accountability and advancement of accessibility in their areas of responsibility.

Shared Responsibility

Successful learning and employment outcomes are the result of a shared responsibility and commitment on the part of students, staff and faculty. There is the expectation that all members of the community will advance and contribute to the ongoing development of an environment that is accessible and inclusive, while actively working to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.

Collaboration

We recognize that barriers are rarely the sole responsibility of a single department, faculty or individual and can only be addressed with a collaborative approach.

Social Innovation

With creativity, energy and optimism, we set our sights on altering perceptions, behaviours and structures by inventing strategies for social change and using new and existing tools in innovative ways.



ACCESS RYERSON

ACCESSIBILITY IN THE
▶ **CLASSROOM**

ACCESSIBILITY IN THE
▶ **WORKPLACE**

ACCESSIBILITY ON
▶ **CAMPUS**

Mandate

To transform Ryerson into a leader of excellence in accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities, and in so doing, fulfill and exceed the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

Steering Committee

The primary function of the Steering Committee is to take responsibility at Ryerson for implementing the standards under the AODA and to address any major business issues associated. Another key function is to promote accessibility at the university. The Steering Committee provides oversight of the Ryerson Accessibility Advisory Group, including approval of terms of reference, recommendations, plans, projects and the budget of the committee. The Steering Committee also monitors the risks, quality, and timeliness of Advisory Group activities and establishes benchmarks.

Accessibility Advisory Group

The Accessibility Advisory Group reports to the Steering Committee, providing updates on progress, projects and programs on a quarterly basis, and

bringing issues and recommendations to the Steering Committee as required.

Coordinating Group

This committee consists of the chairs of the working groups and the co-chairs of the Advisory Group. The primary role of this committee is to discuss common issues and ensure communication of group goals in order that a coordinated approach is undertaken.

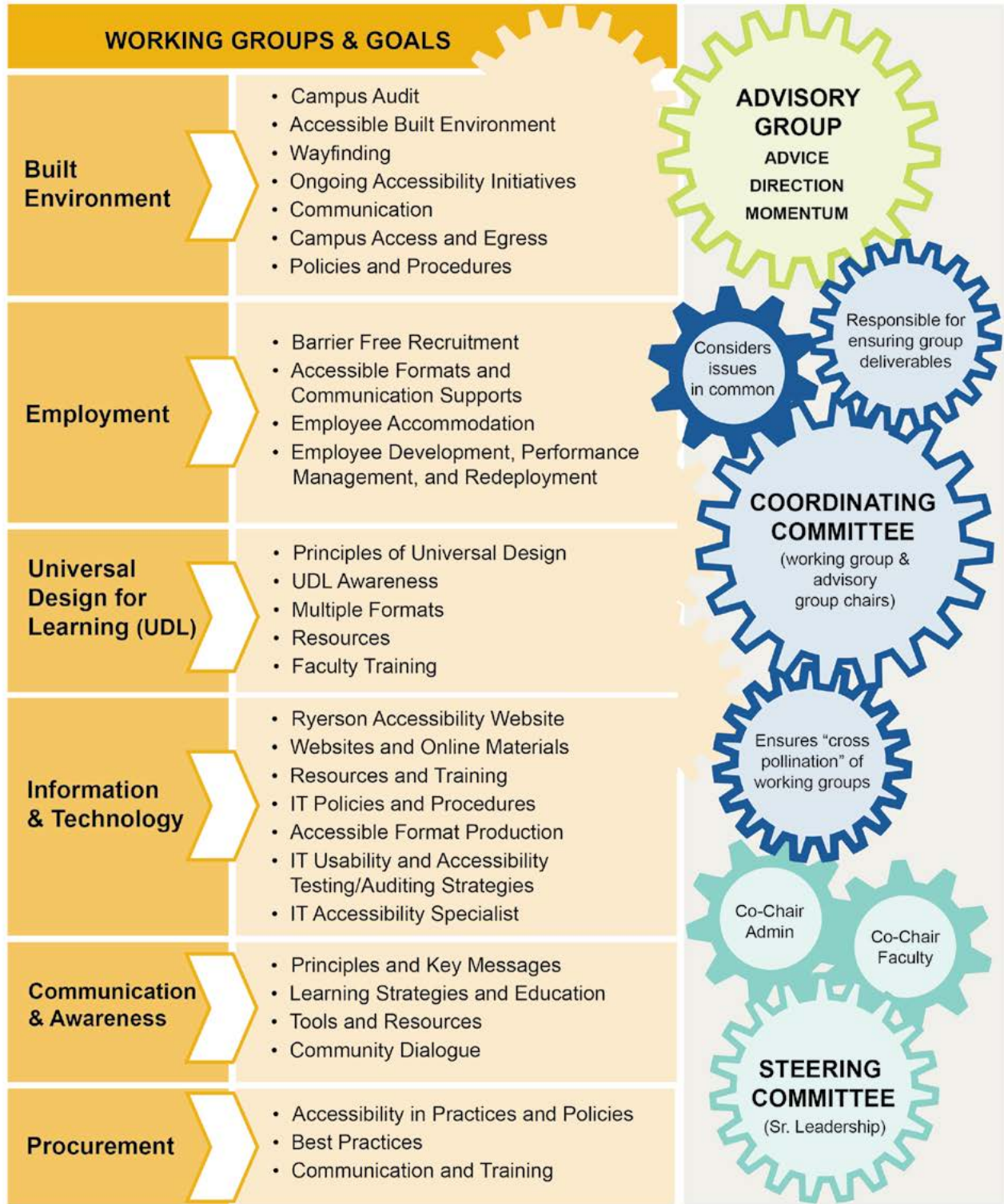
Working Groups

Working groups carry out specific activities focused on initiatives as identified by the Advisory Group and partners within the university. To date these include:

- ▶ Information and Technology
- ▶ Communication and Awareness
- ▶ Universal Design for Learning
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Built Environment
- ▶ Procurement

Current Access Ryerson participants are listed at www.ryerson.ca/accessibility.

Access Ryerson: Leadership and Organizational Structure



ACCESSIBILITY IN THE **CLASSROOM**
ACCESSIBILITY IN THE **WORKPLACE**
ACCESSIBILITY ON **CAMPUS**

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Vision

A campus where the physical environment and public spaces are accessible to all.

Commitment

Accessibility at Ryerson is a priority and as such accessibility criteria and features will be considered in all aspects of renovation, development and redevelopment of campus facilities and spaces.

Goals

Campus Audit

Establish a baseline of the university's accessibility level

How we'll get there

- Explore options for audit
- List current accessible features in all campus buildings and identify gaps

Policies and Procedures

Review and develop policies and procedures to support an accessible built environment

How we'll get there

- Review existing policies, practices and processes to identify barriers and make changes as appropriate to remove them
- Create protocols for incorporating accessibility considerations into design of new buildings, spaces and renovations

Accessible Built Environment Standard

Develop Ryerson specific "Facility Accessibility Design Standards"

How we'll get there:

- (FADS) document

Wayfinding

Improve wayfinding around campus

How we'll get there

- In partnership with CCS, incorporate accessibility features into an interactive campus map
- Install permanent alternate route maps at elevators

Ongoing Accessibility Initiatives

Continue to review and remove barriers as they become identified, while proactively engaging in a variety of ways and areas to increase and improve accessibility across campus

How we'll get there

- Improve wheelchair access around campus, e.g. washrooms, doors
- Improve accessibility to Ryerson pool for persons with disabilities

Campus Access and Egress

Improve accessible entrance and exit routes and systems across campus

How we'll get there

- Review and update Wheel Trans pickup/drop-off locations
- Review accessible parking
- Conduct audit of building entrance accessibility

Communication

Improve processes for communicating with the Ryerson community regarding facilities and public spaces

How we'll get there

- Link notifications of disruption to accessibility website
- Improve feedback mechanism for identifying accessibility barriers



EMPLOYMENT

Vision

A university employment environment that is fully accessible and inclusive to all stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff and prospective employees.

Commitment

We are committed to eliminating existing barriers in HR policies, programs, processes, systems, documents and communications and ensuring that new employment initiatives and services are designed to be inclusive, with no new barriers.

Goals

Barrier Free Recruitment

Design and provide all recruitment programs, services and systems in an inclusive manner

How we'll get there

- Develop and incorporate standards and guidelines for accessible recruitment spanning outreach, sourcing, advertising, selection processes and onboarding
- Ensure hiring managers and panel members are aware of the AODA requirement to consult with applicants about any accommodation needs related to interviews, testing and other selection processes, and to provide or arrange for the provision of suitable accommodation
- Ensure awareness of leaders of the AODA requirement to notify successful applicants of Ryerson policies for accommodating employees with disabilities
- Review and make any necessary revisions to current hiring policies, procedures, systems and services
- Provide all documents in accessible formats, including job postings

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Ensure all HR communications are available in accessible formats

How we'll get there

- Communicate and embed processes for creating accessible documents and communication material for all employees
- Inform and instruct employees about how to produce material in accessible formats

Employee Accommodation

Establish policies, programs and services for developing formal accommodation plans for new and existing employees with disabilities, and those returning to work from illness or injury

How we'll get there

- Review and revise the existing employee accommodation policy and procedures, integrating best practices gathered from research
- Establish Integrated Employee Wellbeing and Accommodation Services (IEWAS) unit with a team-based approach to identifying and implementing accommodations for employees with disabilities
- Embed accommodation planning information/discussion as a part of all onboarding processes
- Implement communication plan for newly revised accommodation policy and procedures

Employee Development, Performance Management, and Redeployment

Establish and embed standards for the design and delivery of accessible and inclusive learning, development, and performance management programs

How we'll get there

- Research best practices for accessible and inclusive development, performance management, and redeployment programs for employees with disabilities
- Develop standards and guidelines on accessible learning and eLearning design and delivery
- Develop standards and guidelines on barrier free performance management based on best practices
- Provide leadership to community of practice on accessible learning and eLearning design and delivery.
- Review collective agreement and policy provisions concerning redeployment and identify changes that need to be made or negotiated to make provisions and processes accessible and inclusive



“Accessibility is not a phenomenon but is an ongoing collaborative process. As an employee with a disability in the Employment Equity Unit, I believe that accessibility, accommodation and the AODA help to accelerate the meaningful contributions and to maximize the participation of employees or candidates with disabilities. It is important to create a workplace where every employee, with or without disability, can bring their best to Ryerson University, instead of struggling with all sorts of barriers, including attitudinal, ignorance and internalized ones.”

**- Sri (Sricamalan) Pathmanathan,
Employment Equity Assistant,
Human Resources**



UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

Vision

A Ryerson teaching community that adopts a universal approach to designing, developing and implementing courses that reach out to every student on campus.

Commitment

The UDL Working Group is committed to introducing universal design for learning principles through the Learning and Teaching Office's programs and services, expanding the current UDL web resources and developing faculty training.

Goals

Principles of Universal Design

Implement the principles of UDL in LTO workshops

How we'll get there

- Infuse the principles of UDL in all the programs and services offered by the Learning and Teaching Office

UDL Awareness

Increase faculty awareness and understanding of UDL

How we'll get there

- Dedicate a session in faculty orientation to present best practices in teaching using the UDL principles

Multiple Formats

Provide faculty training in multiple formats

How we'll get there

- The UDL working group members and the Learning and Teaching Office will offer workshops, online modules, videos and resources using multiple formats

Resources

Increase UDL resources on LTO website

How we'll get there

- Based on the recommendation in the UDL report, the LTO will increase the UDL resources on the LTO's website. The resources may include materials on syllabus, course delivery, student

resources, student assessment, course web pages, online delivery, faculty resources and self-assessments, and communication strategies

Faculty Learning

Develop online learning module to assist faculty in teaching

How we'll get there

- The LTO will develop an online learning module for faculty training on UDL principles based on the recommendation in the UDL report. The module will incorporate multiple formats of information on UDL



“Universal Design for Learning emphasizes great teaching practices that reach all of our students. These practices increase engagement, clarify content and motivate students. In the end, any teaching method that makes the classroom more accessible assists students with and without disabilities.”

-Maureen Reed, Director, Learning and Teaching Office

INFORMATION & TECHNOLOGY

Vision Commitment

A fully accessible information and technology (IT) environment for all Ryerson University stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff and the general public.

Commitment

We are committed to creating an IT environment that aligns with the POUR (perceivable, operable, understandable, robust) principles of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), including content (documents, images, audio, video, multimedia), systems (e.g., Blackboard, eHR, RAMSS, email, etc.), and processes, policies, and procedures.

Goals

Ryerson Accessibility Website

Revitalize Ryerson accessibility website into the central hub for information and resources about accessibility at Ryerson

How we'll get there

- Develop improved support and feedback mechanisms
- Improve communications and notices of disruptions, etc.

Accessible Websites and Online Materials

Create best practices and recommendations for Ryerson online systems/ web content providers and developers

How we'll get there

- Develop university wide online materials and web standards for Ryerson systems and websites.

Resources and Training

Develop thorough and up-to-date resources to support the Ryerson community in our efforts to embed accessibility in all areas of our digital practices

How we'll get there

- Create and provide a range of strategic and easy to follow resources and training solutions for students, faculty and staff
- Work with the Access Ryerson initiative, the Access Centre, and Library staff, etc., in the dissemination of resources and training solutions

IT Policies and Procedures

Review and create IT policies and procedures, ensuring that all content, systems and communications are accessible upon initial development and distribution

How we'll get there

- Develop guides for procedures such as assigning ASL interpreters into a Blackboard course, requesting course materials in accessible formats, requesting accommodations, etc.

Accessible Format Production

Improve service in providing accessible formats to students and staff

How we'll get there

- Develop clear and simple processes for requesting accessible formats
- Shorten, if not eliminate, the waiting time for students to receive accessible formats

IT Usability and Accessibility Testing/Auditing Strategies

Implement testing and auditing techniques for ensuring every IT supported Ryerson system is accessible to all

How we'll get there

- Develop processes to test and audit the usability and accessibility of IT supported systems and website

IT Accessibility Specialist

Increase university capacity to create accessible IT solutions.

How we'll get there:

- Hire an IT Accessibility Specialist to support the IT working group in ensuring an information and technology environment that is fully accessible to all community members, including the general public.



COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS

Vision

A university culture that appreciates the experience of disability as a matter of diversity rather than deficit; that embraces the principles and practices of embedding access from the start; and that recognizes the role we each play in creating a barrier-free Ryerson community.

Commitment

We are committed to promoting accessibility at Ryerson University.

Goals

Principles and Key Messages

Disseminate Access Ryerson principles and key messages

How we'll get there

- Adapt communication strategies to meet the needs of Ryerson's diverse constituents
- Promote the goals of the multi-year accessibility plan through the accessibility website
- Widely communicate the activities of the working groups to demonstrate Ryerson's progress and commitment to the community
- Organize events such as speaker series, discussion groups, conferences
- Develop awareness campaigns

Learning Strategies and Education

Develop strategies for embedding accessibility lens into new and existing Ryerson learning practices and workshops

How we'll get there

- Embed accessibility into existing and new eLearning modules
- Improve and expand existing AODA elearning modules
- Consult with HR Organizational and Employee Effectiveness to provide input into embedding accessibility awareness into existing learning strategies
- Collaboratively support the ongoing development of the accessibility website to ensure widespread distribution of information and resources

Tools and Resources

Develop and disseminate awareness tools and resources to all members of the Ryerson community

How we'll get there

- In collaboration with areas across the university, distribute templates, brochures, guides, toolkits that increase accessibility competencies
- Collect and make available accessibility resources and best practices

Community Dialogue

Create dialogue opportunities to solicit input concerning barriers and opportunities for accessibility, and encourage participation in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers on campus

How we'll get there

- Enhance the feedback mechanism
- Increase awareness across the Ryerson University community about both the experience of disability and the importance of accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities
- Generate culture change, promoting accessibility, eliminating stigma, and reframing the focus on disability to a focus on accessibility
- Engage in an ongoing dialogue with all members of the Ryerson community



PROCUREMENT

Vision

Integrated accessibility criteria and features when procuring goods, services and facilities for Ryerson University, ensuring that no new barriers to access are created.

Commitment

We are committed to embedding accessibility criteria into all procurement practices and policies, ensuring that processes, from the procurement of a chair to the procurement of a building, are accessible to the Ryerson University community.

Goals

Accessibility in Practices and Policies

Embed accessibility criteria into all competitive bids where applicable and ensure the procurement processes are communicated with the Ryerson community

How we'll get there

- Integrate accessibility into all procurement templates and into RFx evaluation criteria
- Ensure that no barriers are created
- Review current and future purchases with clients and staff

Best Practices

Collaborate with internal and external subject matter experts in establishing best practices for integration into procurement policies and procedures

How we'll get there

- Adopt the Ontario Government's best practices and definition of accessibility
- Integrate standard language into the development of future access requirements
- Include a requirement for suppliers to demonstrate their ability to provide accessible designs, services and/or goods that meet specific criteria
- Subject to the nature of the competitive bid, include questions such as: What are potential barriers that people with disabilities may face in using the services/goods being procured? Are the services, goods or designs going to be used by the public as well as staff, students and faculty?

Communication

Provide updates and direction integrating accessibility requirements in the procurement templates, documents and contracts

How we'll get there

- Collaborate with key client groups to determine what training is required
- Ensure training is included in the initial communications with key clients regarding competitive bids, with evaluation criteria to support “open, fair and transparent” procurement processes




“As an alumna (Sociology, 2010), staff member (RA/TA, School of Disability Studies), and student (Certificate: Advancing the AODA, Chang School) with a psychiatric disability, I feel it’s imperative that Ryerson’s Accessibility Plan be as ambitious as its Master Plan. Ryerson could become the leader in accessibility, setting an example for other schools of what is possible. Let’s dream big and create a truly welcoming, supportive and safe space for all students, staff and faculty.”

-Danielle Landry, Alumna/RA/TA, School of Disability Studies

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Imagine a future at Ryerson where...

- Events are fully inclusive
- Dismantling barriers is a welcomed and encouraged dialogue
- Faculty and staff have the resources and tools they need to be inclusive practitioners
- Students are able to participate in all aspects of university life
- There's less need for individual accommodation because accessibility just is
- Students and employees experiences are actively solicited through consultation, evaluation and feedback
- An inclusion lens informs the creation and revision of all policies and processes
- Where inclusion rather than exclusion is taken for granted
- Students and employees succeed because they have the supports they need. Equitable access is achieved by removing barriers to all university resources including information, communication, and the built environment.
- Access remains a primary goal but aesthetic considerations are always important
- Our university is recognized as a leader in advancing accessibility for all.



“For me, accessibility resonates both professionally and personally. Personally, as a disabled person, an accessible environment enables me to feel welcome in the world, and affirms that my contributions to society are worthy. Professionally, accessibility means striving to make my research and scholarship accessible to all, positioning the community as important as the academy, and transferring knowledge accordingly.”

- Kirsty Liddiard, Ethel Louise Armstrong Post Doc Scholar, School of Disability Studies

AODA TIMELINES

AODA Legislated Timelines for Large Public Designated Organizations

2013	General Requirements Sections 3 - 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility policies • Accessibility plans • Procurement or acquiring goods, services or facilities • Kiosks
	Information & Communication Section 15 & 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational and training resources and materials • Training to educators
2014	General Requirements Section 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training
	Information & Communication Sections 11 & 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible feedback processes • All new internet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 level A
	Employment Section 22 - 32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment • Employee accommodation • Employees returning to work • Performance management, career development and redeployment
2015	Information & Communication Sections 12, 17, & 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible formats & communication supports • Producers of educational or training material – textbooks • Educational libraries – print-based resources
2016	Design of Public Spaces Sections 80.6 – 80.44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor public use eating areas • Outdoor play spaces • Exterior paths of travel • Accessible parking • Obtaining services • Maintenance
2020	Information & Communication Section 17-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producers of educational or training material – supplementary print materials • Educational libraries – multi-media/digital resources
2021	Information & Communication Section 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 level AA (excluding live captioning and audio description)

AODA Legislated Timelines and Related Ryerson Initiatives for January 1, 2013

AODA Requirements	Leadership	Objective	Initiatives/Progress to Date
Accessibility policies Section 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility Coordinator • Accessibility Advisory Group 	Broad commitment reflecting both AODA requirements and Ryerson's commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer service policy and statement of commitment • Student accommodation policy • RULA • Employee Accommodation Policy • Employment Equity
Accessibility plans Section 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility Coordinator • Accessibility Advisory Group 	Create a public facing multi-year accessibility plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This document is Ryerson's multi-year accessibility plan
Procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities Section 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement Working Group 	Incorporate accessibility criteria and features into its procurement process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of guidelines, templates, training, communication
Self-service kiosks Section 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement Working Group • Built Environment Working Group 	Incorporate accessibility features into self-service kiosks it procures, designs, and/or acquires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible HR kiosks • RULA Printer
Educational and training resources and materials Section 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and Technology Working Group • Universal Design for Learning Working Group 	Provide educational or training resources or materials in an accessible format to persons with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student records • Program requirements • Course descriptions • Course availability • Accessible course packs
Training to educators Section 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design for Learning Working Group • Learning and Teaching Office 	Provide educators with accessibility awareness training related to accessible program or course delivery and instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online resources available on LTO site linked to accessibility website • Universal design for learning working group convened in 2012 • Best practices review complete • Recommendations in process

AODA Legislated Timelines and Related Ryerson Initiatives for January 1, 2014

AODA Requirements	Leadership	Objective	Initiatives/Progress to Date
Training Section 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and Awareness Working Group • Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Services • Learning and Teaching Office • Ryerson University Library and Archives • Human Resources • Accessibility Coordinator 	Provide training on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online training • Customer service modules • Presentations to faculty and departments • Participation in new staff/faculty orientation events • Communication and Awareness working group established
Recruitment, General Section 22 Recruitment, Assessment and Selection Section 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Working Group 	Every employer shall notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process included in HR Hiring Guide
Notice to Successful Applicants Section. 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Working Group • Human Resources 	Every employer shall, when making offers of employment, notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process included in HR Hiring Guide
Informing Employees of Supports Section 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Working Group • Human Resources 	Every employer shall inform 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process included in HR Hiring Guide

AODA Legislated Timelines and Related Ryerson Initiatives for January 1, 2014 (continued)

AODA Requirements	Leadership	Objective	Initiatives/Progress to Date
<p>Accessible Formats and Communication supports for employees Section 26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Working Group • Human Resources 	<p>In addition to its obligations under section 12, where an employee with a disability requests it, every employer shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process included in HR Hiring Guide
<p>Documented Individual Accommodation Plans Section 28</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Working Group • Human Resources 	<p>Process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Integrated Employee Wellness and Accommodation Services (IEWAS) unit in progress • Review and revision of current employee accommodation policy in progress
<p>Return to Work Process Section 29</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Working Group • Human Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Consulting 	<p>Have in place a return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Employee Wellness and Accommodation Services Initiative in progress
<p>Performance management Section 30</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Working Group • Human Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational Employee Effectiveness • HR Consulting 	<p>An employer that uses performance management in respect of its employees shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when using its performance management process in respect of employees with disabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Employee Wellness and Accommodation Services Initiative in progress

AODA Legislated Timelines and Related Ryerson Initiatives for January 1, 2014 (continued)

AODA Requirements	Leadership	Objective	Initiatives/Progress to Date
Career development and advancement Section 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Working Group • Human Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational Employee Effectiveness • HR Consulting 	An employer that provides career development and advancement to its employees shall take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans, when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Employee Wellness and Accommodation Services Initiative in progress
Redeployment Section 32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Working Group • Human Resources 	An employer that uses redeployment shall take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when redeploying employees with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Employee Wellness and Accommodation Services Initiative in progress
Accessible feedback processes Section 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility Coordinator • Information and Technology Working Group • CCS 	Ensure that the processes are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communications supports, upon request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility Website

AODA Legislated Timelines and Related Ryerson Initiatives for January 1, 2015

AODA Requirements	Leadership	Objective	Initiatives/Progress to Date
<p>Producers of educational or training material Section 17 (2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ryerson University Library and Archives Information and Technology Working Group Universal Design for Learning Working Group 	<p>Make accessible or conversion ready versions of the printed materials available (i.e. course packs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing current processes for continued improvement re: efficiency and response time for accessible formats
<p>Libraries of educational and training institutions Section 18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement WG Ryerson University Library and Archives Bookstore Information and Technology Working Group 	<p>Provide, procure or acquire accessible or conversion ready format of print, digital or multimedia resources or materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility Website
<p>Accessible formats and communication supports Section 12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access Centre Human Resources Ryerson University Library and Archives Information and Technology Working Group 	<p>Provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access Centre RULA Accessible Format Production

