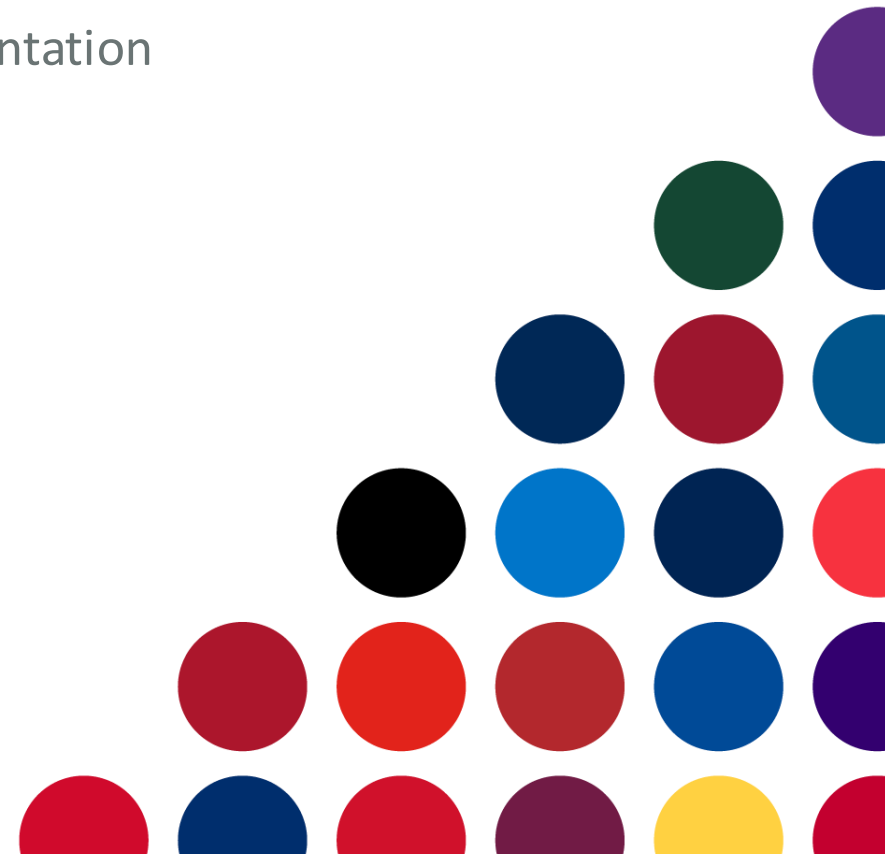


Postsecondary Education Accessibility Standards

Overview of Working Groups to Support Sector-Wide Implementation

July 2024

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Deck Overview

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Overview

- PSE Standards Development Committee prepared [185 recommendations to government](#) covering nine categories of barriers to PSE faced by students.
 - Government held consultations for sector representatives in fall 2023.
- University sector must work together to implement the recommendations once finalized by government.
- Work will be led by the sector's Reference Group on Accessibility: Co-chaired by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV) and the Council of Senior Administrative Officers (CSAO) and includes senior representation from a variety of areas including student affairs, libraries, HR, EDI, AODA coordinators, public affairs and the Inter-University Disability Issues Association (IDIA).
 - RGoA will strike working groups to tackle the barrier themed recommendations (*see slide 6*).
- Five-phase work plan has been developed to support the sector's implementation of the soon-to-be finalized recommendations (*see next slide*)



Overview of Work Plan



Phase 1: Government Consultation Sessions – **COMPLETED**

- ✓ Engagement of participants (Fall 2023)
- ✓ Preparation meetings
- ✓ COU submission of recommendations to government (May 2024)



Phase 2: Assess Potential Impacts to Universities – **ONGOING**

- ✓ Establish focus and membership of Working Groups (July 2024)
- ☐ Request Working Group Member Nominations (July 2024)
- ☐ Convene Working Groups (September 2024)



Phase 3: Environmental Landscape & Workplan Development (Fall 2024)



Phase 4: Resource Development (Winter 2024)



Phase 5: Sharing Resources With Sector (TBD 2025)



Overview of Recommendations

Following government engagement sessions, RGoA put forward six recommendations to MCU/MSAA:

1. Provide **targeted funding for accessibility priorities** related to supporting the implementation of the PSE Standards;
2. Enhance the **Accessibility Fund for Students with Disabilities** (AFSD);
3. Enhance the **Bursary for Students with Disabilities** (BSWD);
4. Provide funding to institutions to support the **multifaceted evaluation of accessibility-related technology and the development of a repository** of the findings, reducing duplication of effort across the sector;
5. Support the **creation of a repository of accessible learning** objects;
6. Provide financial assistance to institutions to **improve available data on students with disabilities while streamlining processes**, reducing duplication and leveraging existing leading practices on data collection.



Role of the Working Groups

Cross-affiliate Working Groups to assess the recommendations on the following to help inform the development of sector-wide resources and the prioritization of work.

Each Working Group would develop a Terms of Reference to identify clear deliverables as the project takes shape. Some Working Groups may cross-collaborate on overlapping considerations, such as:

 Potential impacts on the operations of universities

 Potential impacts on relevant stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, vendors, etc.)

 Prioritization of work focus based on:

- Implementation of timelines in the PSE Standards (adjusted based on feedback from MCU/MSAA re: legislated timelines) and how these intersect with available technologies and expertise in both French and English
- Legal and procedural feasibility
- Prerequisite items prior to compliance with PSE Standards (if applicable)
- Work and level of effort required by the sector to develop resources



Role of RGoA in Standards Implementation

The Reference Group will help oversee the composition and mandate of cross-affiliate working groups that will assess the recommendations to help inform the development or sector-wide resources and the prioritization of work.

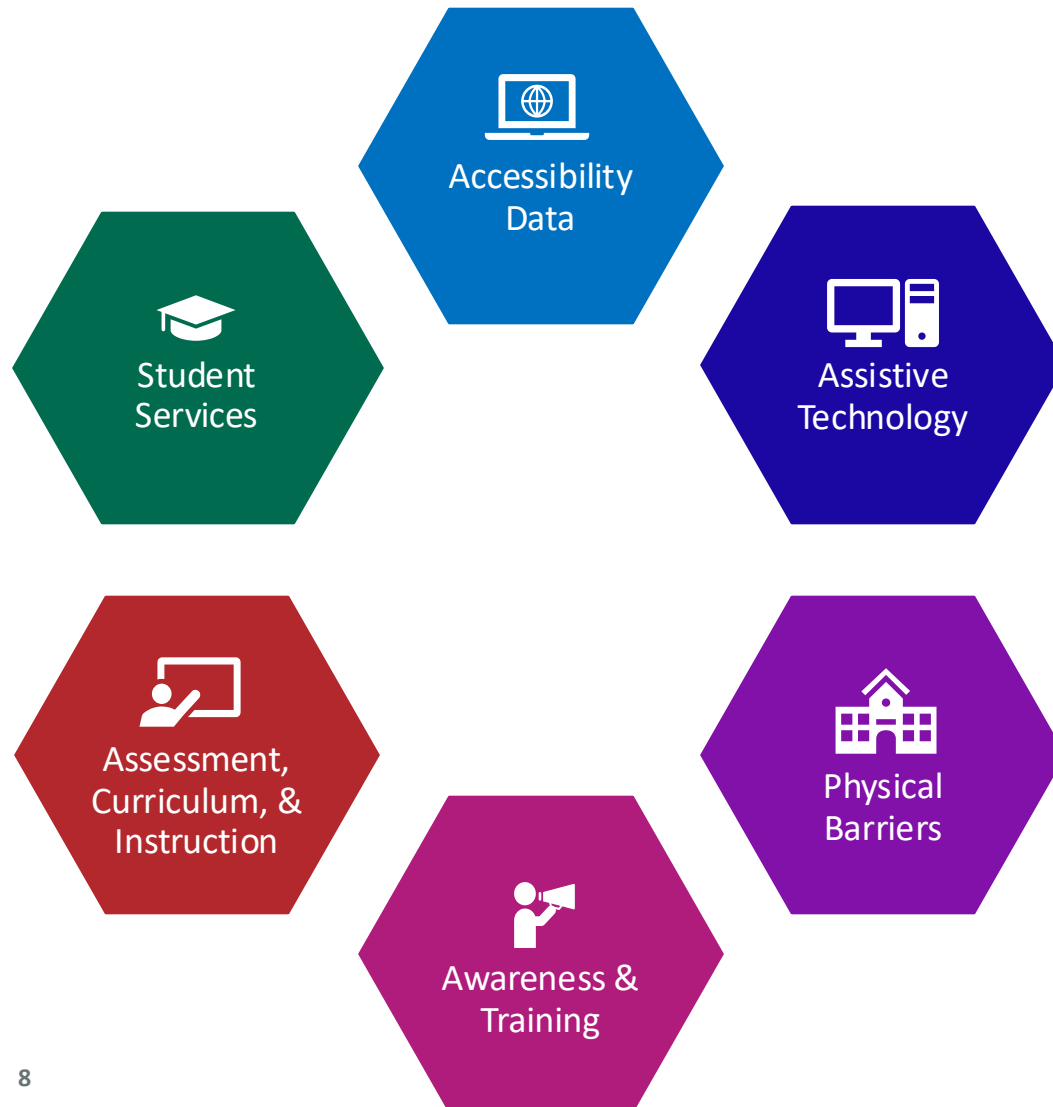
Reference Group members are free to join any of the Working Groups at their discretion but are not obligated to do so.

The Reference Group will advise on additional review and approval processes within the sector before any products or resources are considered final.





Focus of Working Groups (max of 10 members each)



Suggested focus of Working Groups derive from:

- MCU Engagement Sessions on PSE Standards
- COU's Recommendations to Government
- PSE SDC's 185 Recommendations + 9 Barrier Themes
- Stakeholder Consultations

Unless otherwise noted, we recommend that all Working Group memberships are extended to:

- ✓ AODA Coordinators Sub-Group
- ✓ Ontario Council on Student Affairs (OCSA)
- ✓ Reference Group on Accessibility (RGoA)
- ✓ Inter-University Disability Issues Association (IDIA)
- ✓ EDI Reference Table
- ✓ Reference Group on Aboriginal Education (RGAE)



1. Student Services & Admissions

Suggested Guiding Principle(s):

- ✓ Avoid duplication of efforts across PSE institution and sector
- ✓ Reduce administrative burdens from SWD and ASO staff
- ✓ Ensure SWD data is kept confidential and secure

Recommended Sector Deliverables:¹

- ☐ Identify bottlenecks and social barriers for SWD
- ☐ Streamline student supports and processes (e.g. obtaining medical documentation)
- ☐ Provide non-academic accommodations
- ☐ Reduce financial barriers via expansion of student's eligibility requirements for institutional aid
- ☐ Ensure equitable support for part-time students with disabilities

Recommended Working Group Deliverables:

- ☐ Executive brief
- ☐ Administrator guide for ASOs
- ☐ Educator brief
- ☐ Knowledge dissemination materials (for students)

Recommended WG Composition:*

- Registrars (OURA)
- Ontario Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (OASFAA)
- *Others – at suggestion of Reference Group*

Corresponding COU Recommendation(s):

- ✓ **Recommendation #2** Enhance the Accessibility Fund for Students with Disabilities (AFSD).
- ✓ **Recommendation #3** Enhance the Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD).

Corresponding PSE SDC Barrier Theme(s):

- ✓ **Theme #6 Organizational Barriers:** Application and admissions processes to meet accessibility standards; clear policies and procedures for academic accommodation in all academic settings; business continuity plans. (R)
- ✓ **Theme #7 Social realms:** Accessible supports to participate in non-academic campus life; increasing quality and availability of services; proactively seek and appoint students with disabilities to governance bodies. (R)
- ✓ **Theme #9: Financial barriers:** Adopt uniform definition of part-time students with disabilities; reconsider eligibility requirements for institutional aid; review fee structures and policies (e.g., to ensure premium rates are not charged, equity in policies, review graduate funding guidelines). (R)





2. Awareness & Training

Suggested Guiding Principle(s):

- ✓ Consider intersectional and human rights¹ approaches to training
- ✓ Consider Indigenous and EDI-informed approaches to accessibility training
- ✓ Develop training with, and facilitation led by, people with disabilities

Recommended Sector Deliverables:³

- ❑ Developing standardized, mandatory² training for employees, educators, and staff (including training on different types of disabilities)
- ❑ Implementing review process that would come into effect every 3 years

Recommended Working Group Deliverables:

- ❑ Executive brief
- ❑ Tri-annual AODA Review Process (e.g., guiding principles)
- ❑ Training Guide for Staff, Educators, and Administrators
- ❑ Knowledge dissemination materials (for students)

Recommended WG Composition:*

- COU Academic Colleagues (faculty)
- Council of Ontario Educational Developers (COED)
- Council of Senior Administrative Officers (CSAO)
- Council of Senior Human Resources Officers (CSHRO)
- Ontario Universities Strategic Communications Council (OUSCC)
- *Others – at suggestion of Reference Group*

Corresponding COU Recommendation(s):

- ✓ **Recommendation #1** Provide targeted funding for accessibility priorities related to supporting the implementation of the PSE Standards.

Corresponding PSE SDC Barrier Theme(s):

- ✓ **Theme #3 Awareness and Training:** Standardized, mandatory training for employees, educators, staff; renewed every three years. (R)





3. Accessibility Data

Suggested Guiding Principle(s):

- ✓ Avoid duplication of efforts across PSE institution and sector
- ✓ Reduce administrative burdens from SWD and ASO staff
- ✓ Ensure SWD data is kept confidential and secure

Recommended Sector Deliverables:¹

- ☐ Collaborate with MCU to improve available data on students with disabilities
- ☐ Streamline data collection processes
- ☐ Leverage existing leading practices on data collection

Recommended Working Group Deliverables:

- ☐ Environmental scan of existing student data collection processes (across PSE & MCU)
- ☐ Gaps Analysis
- ☐ Best practices on data collection
- ☐ Executive brief
- ☐ Administrator guide for ASOs
- ☐ Knowledge dissemination materials (for students)

Recommended Working Group Composition:*

- Council on University Planning and Analysis (CUPA)
- Council of Senior Human Resources Officers (CSHRO)
- Ontario Council of Chief Information Officers (OUCCIO)
- Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL)
- *Others – at suggestion of Reference Group*

Corresponding COU Recommendation(s):

- ✓ **Recommendation #6** Collaborate with institutions to improve available data on students with disabilities while streamlining processes, reducing duplication and leveraging existing leading practices on data collection.

Corresponding PSE SDC Barrier Theme(s):

- ✓ **Theme #2 Attitudes, Behaviours, Perceptions and Assumptions:** Develop change management strategy to respond to recommendations; annual reporting; feedback processes; data, metrics and performance measures. (R)





4. Accessible Tech

Suggested Guiding Principle(s):

- ✓ Ensure adaptive technologies are readily available for students

Recommended Sector Deliverables:

- ☐ Repository of vetted accessible tech for teaching and learning
- ☐ Repository of accessible learning materials with cross-institutional content licensing

Recommended Working Group Deliverables:

- ☐ Accessible tech rubric and best practices
- ☐ Executive brief
- ☐ Administrator guide
- ☐ Educator guide
- ☐ Knowledge dissemination materials (for students)

Recommended Working Group Composition:*

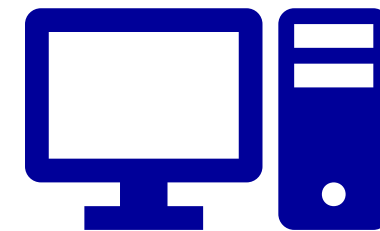
- COU Academic Colleagues (faculty)
- Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance
- OUPPMA (Procurement)
- Ontario University Council of Chief Information Officers (OUCCIO) (IT)
- Council of Ontario Educational Developers (COED)
- Ontario Council of University Research (OCCUR)
- *Others – at suggestion of Reference Group*

Corresponding COU Recommendation(s):

- ✓ **Recommendation #4** Collaborate with institutions to support the multifaceted evaluation of accessibility-related technology.
- ✓ **Recommendation #5** Support the creation of a repository of accessible learning objects.

Corresponding PSE SDC Barrier Theme(s):

- ✓ **Theme #5 Digital Learning and Technology:** Accessible and usable technology/assistive devices; mitigation of technology barriers. (R)





5. Assessment, Curriculum, & Instruction

Suggested Guiding Principle(s):

- ✓ Universal design for learning
- ✓ Ensure curricula and procedures are collaborative and flexible
- ✓ Accessible learning formats are available
- ✓ Recognize impact barrier on student learning

Recommended Sector Deliverables:¹

- ☐ Template Universal Design for Learning Guide
- ☐ Template Disability Assessment
- ☐ Template Accessible Curriculum Guide
- ☐ Template Accessible Instruction Guide

Recommended Working Group Deliverables:

- ☐ Executive brief
- ☐ Administrator guide
- ☐ Educator guide
- ☐ Knowledge dissemination materials (for students)

Recommended Working Group Composition:*

- COU Academic Colleagues (faculty)
- Council of Ontario Educational Developers (COED)
- Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL)
- Ontario University Council for E-learning (OUCEL)
- Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV) (esp. VPs of Teaching and Learning)
- *Others – at suggestion of Reference Group*

Corresponding COU Recommendation(s):

- ✓ **Recommendation #4** Collaborate with institutions to support the multifaceted evaluation of accessibility-related technology.
- ✓ **Recommendation #5** Support the creation of a repository of accessible learning objects.

Corresponding PSE SDC Barrier Theme(s):

- ✓ **Theme #4 Assessment, Curriculum and Instruction:** Minimum standards for teaching and learning; quality assurance; educational materials and resources; resources and/or guides on accessible and inclusive pedagogy.





6. Physical Barriers

Suggested Guiding Principle(s):

- ✓ Universal Design

Recommended Sector Deliverables:

- ☐ Templated accessibility criteria and assessment for all campus spaces
- ☐ Templated accessibility feedback model

Recommended Working Group Deliverables:¹

- ☐ Template Universal Design Guide
- ☐ Accessible Spaces Criteria and Assessment
- ☐ Feedback system re: physical barriers on campus
- ☐ Executive brief
- ☐ Staff guide
- ☐ Knowledge dissemination materials (for students)

Recommended Working Group Composition:*

- Council of Ontario Finance Officers (COFO)
- Council on University Planning and Analysis (CUPA)
- Ontario Association of Physical Plant Administrators (OAPPA)
- Committee on Space Standards & Reporting
- *Others – at suggestion of Reference Group*

Corresponding COU Recommendation(s):

- ✓ **Recommendation #1** Provide targeted funding for accessibility priorities related to supporting the implementation of the PSE Standards.

Corresponding PSE SDC Barrier Theme(s):

- ✓ **Theme #8 Physical and architectural barriers:** Minimum technical specifications for built environment; develop new built environment standards; standards applied to experiential learning off campus; inclusive design principles in policies, practices and procedures; tracking and reporting spending on maintenance and upkeep. (R)





Next Steps



Working Group nominations submitted to COU (August 2024)



COU to orient new Working Group Members and appointed Chair (August 2024)



Develop Working Group Terms of Reference (September 2024)



First touch-base meeting between WG Chairs and RGoA (September 2024)



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