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INTRODUCTION:

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While Dalhousie University's Accessibility Plan is a high-impact, accessible initiative, it is a significant step towards creating a more inclusive and equitable environment for all students, faculty, and staff. The plan is a comprehensive document that outlines the university's commitment to accessibility and provides a clear roadmap for implementation.

Dalhousie's commitment to accessibility is a core value that guides all of our actions. We are committed to creating a campus environment that is accessible to all, regardless of their abilities. This plan is a key component of our ongoing efforts to improve accessibility and ensure that all students, faculty, and staff have equal access to our programs and services.

We have established a dedicated accessibility committee to oversee the implementation of this plan. This committee will work closely with various campus departments to identify and address accessibility barriers. We are also committed to providing ongoing training and support to ensure that all campus members understand their role in creating an accessible environment.

See Appendix 1 for a detailed description of the accessibility initiatives outlined in this plan. Dalhousie has a long history of commitment to accessibility, and this plan represents our most comprehensive effort to date. We are confident that this plan will lead to significant improvements in accessibility and create a more inclusive and equitable campus environment for all.

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In 2017, Nova Scotia adopted the Accessible Canada Act, becoming the first Canadian province to do so. The Accessible Canada Act is a landmark piece of legislation that sets a goal of making the province accessible by 2030.

Designated public bodies, including the Department of Education, are required to develop accessibility plans. The Department of Education has developed an accessibility plan for its operations. The plan is a key document that guides the Department's efforts to make its services accessible to all Nova Scotians.

The Nova Scotia Post-Secondary Accessibility Framework (June 2020) identifies the Department's role in making post-secondary education accessible in Nova Scotia. The Framework sets out the Department's commitment to making its services accessible to all Nova Scotians, including those with disabilities.

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M **D** : **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations have emerged through the analysis of the data collected, and are intended to be implemented in the short, medium and long term, in order to improve the accessibility of the services provided by the University of Palermo.

Each of the recommendations listed below will be a fundamental element in the implementation of the accessibility plan. In addition, the University of Palermo is committed to the implementation of the accessibility plan in the short, medium and long term, in order to improve the accessibility of the services provided by the University of Palermo. The University of Palermo is committed to the implementation of the accessibility plan in the short, medium and long term, in order to improve the accessibility of the services provided by the University of Palermo.

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Our commitment: Buildings and outdoor spaces on Dalhousie University's campuses provide meaningful access for intended users.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies, standards and guidelines

1.1	Adopt Provincial Built Environment Accessibility standards. Where feasible, Facilities Management (FM) will follow CSA B651, in the interim of NS Provincial Built Environment Accessibility Standards
1.2	Organize a study to identify areas across campus for designated quiet spaces
1.3	Integrate the Provincial Built Environment Accessibility Standards into the FM Built Environment Accessibility Audit Tool
1.4	Implement accessibility design and operational guidelines to guide campus development and operational procedures, including the review of Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) building features. Update documents to capture Provincial Built Environment Accessibility Standards, once released
1.5	Update interior and exterior signage standards and Dalhousie Design Guidelines, ensuring accessible wayfinding is incorporated into the Campus Master Plan and reflects Provincial Built Environment Accessibility Standards
1.6	Develop processes to use and document provincial alternative compliance mechanisms for renovations that are unable to meet Provincial Built Environment Accessibility Standards
1.7	Develop a strategy for Accessibility Plan implementation and funding, including a multi-year budget and annual allocation for built environment initiatives
1.8	Collaborate with government to develop a built environment cost assessment

RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus planning

1.9	Develop a process and review requirements to capture accessibility features for all projects throughout inception, design, construction, and project completion phases. If Provincial Built Environment Accessibility Standards cannot be met, then reasons should be documented following processes for alternative compliance mechanisms
1.10	Implement a blended approach strategy to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects to meet accessibility design and operational guidelines where applicable • New projects for building exterior approach, entrance, and washroom to ensure meaningful access (consultative approach used to prioritize teaching, research, mixed teaching and research, student experience and administration) • New capital projects - ensure they hold a higher standard of accessibility, including RHF building features where feasible
1.11	Prioritize renovation to ensure accessibility in residences on the Agricultural Campus (AC) This recommendation is supported in the AC Framework Campus Development Plan (Agriculture Campus Master Plan)
1.12	Increase collaboration with stakeholders when planning, designing, and implementing built environment accessibility features that intersect with university, municipal and/or federal infrastructure
1.13	Review existing planned FM elevator upgrade projects to meet accessibility design and operational guidelines where feasible
1.14	Review and update existing procedures and processes to identify and eliminate accessibility barriers and better support persons with (dis)Abilities in temporary building disruptions and emergency situations during: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary building and weather-related disruptions (procedures for snow removal, communication regarding projects and other unplanned events with accessibility impacts) • Evacuation procedures - including fire alarm upgrade, expansion of accessibility scope and updates to emergency evacuation signage to meet Nova Scotia Provincial Built Environment Accessibility Standards

Documenting, reporting and auditing

1.15	Implement a process for ongoing built environment audits to assess accessibility improvements
1.16	Develop common reporting and auditing tools, in collaboration with the Post-Secondary Accessibility Working Group (PSAWG)
1.17	Develop a response plan, portal, process, and funding plan for additional accessibility enhancements and requests

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RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1	<p>Develop and regularly audit comprehensive customer service accessibility standards and associated guidelines that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed by existing gaps between the standard and the current state of existing customer services spaces • Aligned with CSA B651 and the newly established provincial built environment standards and guidelines for new construction and renovation of customer service spaces • Monitored and evaluated, with appropriate mechanisms, resourcing and standing in place
3.2	<p>Ensure all customer service spaces meet accessibility standards by identifying short-term and long-term renovations that are required</p>
3.3	<p>Develop a multi-year budget and annual allocation process for accessible goods and services initiatives, identifying potential funding mechanisms for physical space improvements of current customer service spaces to meet the accessibility standard</p>
3.4	<p>Collaborate with government to develop a provincial customer service training module, specific to accessibility and consisting of post-secondary institution representatives and the Nova Scotia Accessibility Directorate</p>
3.5	<p>Complementing the provincial module, develop an accessible customer/client service training module customized for Dalhousie</p>
3.6	<p>Provide training for procurement teams on the relevance of accessibility to their work - map out the stages of standardization</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	
4.1	Generate a culture change about accessibility, focused on promoting accessibility, eliminating stigma, and reframing away from disability to a focus on accessibility
4.2	Widely communicate Dal's commitment to accessibility. This should be evident through key institutional messages and thoughtful and intentional programming including organized events such as speaker series, discussion groups, conferences, and awareness campaigns
4.3	Develop and maintain a central online resource promoting all information around accessibility and accommodations for faculty, sta , and students
4.4	Audit all non-academic educational/training programs currently in use and ensure that their content is accessible to faculty, sta , and students
4.5	Review and create policies and procedures, ensuring that all content, systems, and communications are accessible upon initial development and distribution
4.6	<p>Communicate and develop processes for creating accessible documents and communication material for all employees and students. Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing and supporting employees about how to produce material in accessible formats • Providing guidelines to assist with creating and maintaining accessible websites • Developing clear and simple processes for requesting accessible formats • Ensuring all educational, training resources or materials are provided in accessible formats, upon request • Ensuring feedback processes are accessible to persons with disabilities



4.7	Ensure educational programming regarding safe evacuation during emergencies includes accessible information and is embedded in existing educational campaigns during safety orientations and other initiatives
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TRANSPORTATION

Our commitment: Transportation provided to Dalhousie employees and students is accessible.

EMPLOYEES

Our commitment: Dalhousie University is an accessible and equitable employer, supporting the careers of employees with disabilities or others who experience barriers to accessibility, and ensures their employees reflect the diversity of Nova Scotians.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1	Develop and deliver training sessions and video resource sessions around accessibility for Dalhousie employees. Programming to include the Accommodation policy, Accessibility Principles, and the role and services provided by the Accessible Employment unit
6.2	Promote accessibility as a part of Dalhousie's Strategic Plan, Third Century Promise
6.3	Increase awareness of the existence of the (dis)Abilities Caucus, through letters of employment, new employee orientation, leadership training, onboarding modules and labour relationships
6.4	Create awareness around the role accessible employment plays in formal accommodations, in accordance with the Employee Accommodation Policy. This will be done through new employee orientation, leadership training, onboarding modules, labour relationships
6.5	Promote Employee and Family Assistance Program through letters of employment, new employee orientation, leadership training, onboarding modules, labour relationships and the benefits newsletter
6.6	Develop a policy and process for accessibility requests that promotes various mechanisms for employees to reach out when experiencing accessibility barriers (email, website, suggestion box, verbal) or when desired to provide any feedback
6.7	Recognize accessibility-focused work and contributions made by Dalhousie members throughout formal and informal channels, through workload adjustments, overload payments, formal and informal expressions of gratitude, Legacy Awards, Dal News, etc.
6.8	Incorporate language about accessibility in institutional communications to all employees, including student employees. This would include letters of employment, handbooks and information about services available through Accessible Employment
6.9	Invest in technology to support accessible employment
6.10	Establish a process between Dalhousie Environmental Health and Safety Office and Accessible Employment to require self-identified staff and faculty to enroll or deny participation in the Shelter-in-Place Program

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH INFORMATION

FOR PEOPLE

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5. Where feasible Facilities Management will ensure a high standard of accessible digital content in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. This will include ensuring that all digital content is accessible to people with disabilities. This will include ensuring that all digital content is accessible to people with disabilities. This will include ensuring that all digital content is accessible to people with disabilities.

Table 1: Recent Facilities Management projects that removed barriers and improved campus accessibility

Campus	Building & Location	Project Description	Accessibility Features
Studley	Student Union Building Basement Level	Bookstore service desk upgrade	Accessible service desk with knee clearance, colour contrast, and updated signage.
Studley	Henry Hicks Level 1	Universal washroom and female accessi- ble washroom	Accessible stall, sinks, toilets, grab bars, colour contrasting, lighting, and power operated doors on universal individual washroom.
Studley	Fitness Centre	Capital project, new building	Accessible parking, automatic door entrances, service desk, elevators, universal wash-rooms and change rooms, adult sized change table, visual fire alarms, signage with braille, and multi-height water fountains.
Studley	LSC Psychology	Classroom renewal	Options for accessible entrance into room, variety of accessible barrier free seating, accessible approach to lectern, height adjustable tables, colour contrasting features, upgraded lighting.
Agriculture	East Cox Institute	New building	New building built beyond NS Building Code accessibility requirements. Accessibility



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