Designated Public Sector Annual Status Report

Education Quality and Accountability Office

Name of Organization

Annual Status Report

Education Quality and Accountability Office

has established a multi-year

Name of Organization

accessibility plan to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and to meet requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the Integrated Accessibility Standards.

This Annual Status Report details the required annual update for (year) 2022 on the progress of measures taken to improve accessibility. The purpose of this report is to track our organization's progress and make the public aware of our initiatives.

This report is available online at _____

To request an alternate format of this annual status report, please contact:

Name (last name, first name)   EQAO's Information Centre

Email   info@eqao.com   Telephone number   888-327-7377   ext. _____

Accessibility Accomplishments in (year) 2022

General Accomplishments . . . . ☑ Applicable   ☐ Not applicable

Enter in general initiatives related to accessibility that may or may not be directly related to a regulatory requirement or initiatives that don't fall within a particular standard.

EQAO undertook an accessibility audit/assessment of its current business operations to help identify any gaps in its business operations.

Customer Service Accomplishments . . . . ☑ Applicable   ☐ Not applicable

Enter in initiatives implemented related to the Customer Service Standards. For example, this can include training employees, updating/establishing policies, follow up on feedback received.
- EQAO's accessibility policy has been updated as a part of its review cycle. EQAO employees were provided with training. The agency undertakes annual all-staff meetings to refresh all staff on accessibility compliance and the importance of keeping accessibility top of mind.
- EQAO meets with the Provincial and Demonstration Schools Branch at the Ministry of Education to discuss the needs of their students. During the past year, as a result of the branch's input, EQAO piloted an American Sign Language (ASL) version of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test with Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf in the fall administration period of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), and collected feedback.
- During the past year, EQAO implemented additional enhancements to accessibility to better serve the student community as well as schools and school boards in Ontario. The enhancements include the following:
  - Use of an interactive MS form to facilitate the ordering of alternative formats for the administration of EQAO assessments, including the OSSLT and the Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics.
  - Automation of the self-ordering of alternative formats (in EQAO's e-assessment platform) for the upcoming assessment administrations.
  - Personalized approval process when an alternative version is requested to ensure the students' needs are best served by the alternative version.
  - Addition of the software Job Action with Speech (JAWS) to the existing list of accessible software that is supported by the e-assessment platform. See list below:
    - Read&Write for Google Chrome extension
    - Kurzweil: downloadable version
    - Kurzweil: extensions for Firefox and Chrome
    - NonVisual Desktop Access (NVDA) screen reader
    - VoiceOver
    - Read Aloud
    - Job Action with Speech (JAWS)

- ChromeVox
- Natural Reader
  - Enhanced Power BI, which was tested for accessibility, and alternative text that is embedded in the tab ordering (when using the screen reader).
  - Development of an internal checklist (after consultations with other ministries) to improve usage of Power BI reports. A test is conducted to check the following elements to determine whether or not
    - the labels are correctly written and placed;
    - the audio or video content is properly audible or visible;
    - the colour contrast ratio is maintained;
    - the control actions for videos are working correctly;
    - the short keys for the menu are provided and working correctly;
    - the navigation between tabs is an easy task;
    - the application has followed all the principles and guidelines;
    - the heading is unique and conveys the meaning and structure;
    - the link text describes the content (to avoid creating ambiguity);
    - the multimedia caption is provided and meaningful;
    - the instructions are clearly given; and
    - the content is clear, concise and understandable.
  - The agency is also in the process of developing an internal Power BI visibility test to ensure Power BI reports are AODA compliant.
  - Data definitions have gone through testing for accessibility.
  - EQAO's secure site (the site used by schools and school boards to access EQAO resources) is in the process of becoming accessible.
  - EQAO is also moving to collect better data regarding the usage of accessible formats (e.g., who's using them, for how long).

Information and Communications Accomplishments . . . . ☑ Applicable ☐ Not applicable

Enter in initiatives implemented related to the Information and Communications Standards. For example, this can include creating accessible documents, updating websites to meet accessibility requirements, developing new policies to ensure information/documents are provided in alternate formats, follow up on feedback.

EQAO enhanced the way it communicates with its stakeholders by
- creating ASL videos of its 2022 OSSLT and continuing to ensure its public-facing products are accessible and/or are available in alternative formats.
- implementing Grade 9 alternative version sample tests available and accessible to all on the agency's website.
- posting clear and easy-to-understand user-guide updates about how to use the alternative access (to allow ease of access for schools and IT professionals).

Employment Accomplishments . . . . ☑ Applicable ☐ Not applicable

Enter in initiatives implemented related to the Employment Standards. This can include, for example, accommodating all candidates during the recruitment process and employment life cycle, steps taken to ensure accommodation plans and ensuring employees have accessible emergency information.

- EQAO made explicit in all its job postings its willingness to provide any type of accessibility that may be required during the whole employment cycle (from recruitment to retirement).
- Accommodations plans were also made available for any employee at EQAO, including provision of software to improve sight.
- Gender-neutral signage was placed in the accessible washroom at EQAO.

Transportation Accomplishments . . . . ☐ Applicable ☑ Not applicable

Enter in initiatives implemented related to the Transportation Standards. This can include, for example, installing signage for priority seating, training staff on appropriate use of a vehicle's accessibility features.

Design of Public Spaces Accomplishments . . . . ☐ Applicable ☑ Not applicable

Enter in initiatives implemented related to the Design of Public Spaces Standards. This can include, for example, installing accessible playgrounds, tactile walking surface indicators and establishing design guidelines that take into account accessibility.

Summary of Consultations . . . . ☑Applicable ☐ Not applicable

All designated public sector organizations must establish, review and update multi-year accessibility plans in consultation with persons with disabilities and, when applicable, with a municipal accessibility advisory committee. All municipalities with 10,000 and more residents must establish an accessibility advisory committee. Obligated organizations are also required to consult with the public and persons with disabilities when building new trails and outdoor play spaces. Use this section of the report to outline any consultation that took place during the year.

The multi-year accessibility plan was reviewed by a third-party company that includes persons with disabilities.

Next Steps

What will be the focus of the new year? Highlight key upcoming initiatives.

EQAO will continue to explore ways to provide services in more accessible ways.

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