



# **ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY**

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**Policy Title:** Accessible Customer Service Policy

**Policy Number:** HR-09-001

**Established:** May 2009, Employment Equity Office, Human Resource Department

**Approved by:** VP, Admin & Finance, Board of Governors, and Senate

**Last**

**Approval Date:** NA

**Revision Date:** NA

**Positions Responsible for Maintaining and Administering the Policy:** VP, Administration & Finance; Executive Director of Human Resources; and Employment Equity Manager

**Contact:** Anne Carrick, Employment Equity Manager and Accessibility Coordinator, (519) 253-3000, x. 2057

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- 1. Policy Statement:** The Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation 429/07 (*Regulation*), effective January 2008, stipulates how faculty and staff are to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities, including those who use support persons, guide dogs and assistive devices; and what to do in the event of service disruption and inability to access services. The *Regulation* requires all faculty and staff to complete training on or before December 31, 2009.

2. **Purpose:** This policy reflects the University of Windsor's ("the University") continuing commitment to ensuring that persons with disabilities have equal opportunity to succeed in their academic pursuits, and that they continue to enjoy equal access to full participation in the scholarly, recreational and social life of the University. The objective of this policy is to identify what the equal treatment provisions of the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) ("the Code") through the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(2005\)](#) ("AODA") and the [Accessible Customer Standard Regulation 429/07](#) ("the Regulation") require as a minimum legal standard in program design and service delivery to persons with disabilities.
3. **Scope:** The policy applies to all employees, volunteers and contractors who provide goods and services on behalf of the University.
4. **Exceptions to Policy:** None
5. **Cross-References:**
  1. [Accessibility for Ontarian with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#)
  2. [Accessibility Standard for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07](#)
  3. [Blind Persons' Rights Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter B.7](#)
  4. [Canadian Hearing Society](#)
  5. [Ministry of Community and Social Services](#)
  6. [Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 \(ODA\)](#)
  7. [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
  8. [Worldwide Web Consortium](#)
  9. University of Windsor – [Athletics and Recreational Services](#)
  10. University of Windsor – [Centre for Teaching and Learning](#)
  11. University of Windsor – [Employment Equity Office](#)
  12. University of Windsor – [Leddy Library](#)
  13. University of Windsor – [Residence Services](#)

14. University of Windsor – [Student Disability Services](#)
15. University of Windsor – [Accessibility](#)
16. University of Windsor – [Campus Access](#)
17. University of Windsor – [Employment and Educational Equity Policy](#)
18. University of Windsor - [Emergency Evacuation of Buildings and Assistance to Persons with Disabilities](#)
19. University of Windsor – [Human Rights Policy](#)
20. University of Windsor Senate By-Law 31 – [Student Affairs](#)
21. University of Windsor Senate By-Law 33 – [Student Rights and Freedoms](#)
22. University of Windsor Senate Policy F1 – [Faculty Duties & Responsibilities](#)
23. University of Windsor Senate Policy S2 – [Special Needs Policy](#)
24. University of Windsor Senate Policy A4 – [Audio Recordings of Lectures by Students with Disabilities](#)
25. University of Windsor Policy – Presence of Service Animals on Campus
26. University of Windsor Senate By-Law 51: [Academic Evaluation Procedures](#)

## 6. Definitions:

- ◆ **Accommodation** describes a process or a series of adjustments that are customized to the needs of an individual with a disability.
- ◆ **Accessible** means ‘useable’ for people with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, learning difficulties, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech difficulty, photosensitivity, or any combination thereof. This definition is excerpted from the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Jacobs, Ian, “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, [Worldwide Web Consortium](#), 1994, 03 April 2009, <<http://www.w3.org/>>

- ◆ **Alternate Accessible Formats** refers to alternate ways to adjust printed text or oral speech. Commonly used examples are large print, electronic text (Word or html), Braille, and sign language interpreters. A more comprehensive list is available at the [Ministry of Community & Social Services](#)
- ◆ **Alternative Measures** are those steps or actions which bring about equivalent results, taking into account the individual's needs, the circumstances and the timeliness of the response. An alternative measure is generally temporary until full integration can be achieved, unless it constitutes individual accommodation.
- ◆ **Assistive Devices** is equipment people bring with them to assist in daily living such as a walker, scooter, cane, magnification or specialized learning software.
- ◆ **Assistive Measures** include technologies, equipment or people such as amplification systems, real time captioning or an attendant.
- ◆ **Assistive Technologies** (or **adaptive technologies**) is equipment or software such as screen reading, audio recording and voice recognition which people with disabilities use to obtain information and to communicate with others. A more comprehensive list is available at the [Ministry of Community & Social Services](#).
- ◆ **Communication** is the interactive process between two entities (people, systems) where information is provided, sent or received.
- ◆ **Customer** is the term used in the [Regulation](#) to describe patrons, stakeholders or anyone in receipt of goods and services. The primary recipients of a university's services are its students, prospective students, their family members and members of the broader community, including alumni who

use the teaching, research, library, conference, cultural and sports facilities. Faculty and staff may also become internal “customers” when they use these same services and facilities.

◆ **Dignity and Independence:** The *Regulation* states that:

*“the goods or services must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities; that they must be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary (whether temporarily or on a permanent basis) to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services; and be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services.”<sup>2</sup>*

This means that persons with disabilities are to be treated as valued and deserving of effective and full service as any other person.

◆ **Disability** includes disabilities of differing severity, visible as well as non-visible. Under the *AODA Regulation* the definition of “disability” is the same as the definition in the [Code](#)<sup>3</sup>:

- (a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or

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<sup>2</sup> Ontario *Regulation* 429/07 made under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Accessibility Standard for Customer Service, Section 3(2)(1-3), [Service Ontario e-Laws](#), 31 July 07, 03 April 09, <[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2007/elaws\\_src\\_regs\\_r07429\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2007/elaws_src_regs_r07429_e.htm)>

<sup>3</sup> Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter H.19, Section 10(1)(a-e), [Service Ontario e-Laws](#), 2006, 03 April 2009, <[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_90h19\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90h19_e.htm)>



visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,

- (b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
  - (c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
  - (d) a mental disorder, or
  - (e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*; (“handicap”)
- **Cross Disability** – the Ontario Human Rights Commission recognizes a cross disability approach and how disability intersects with various identities related to age, gender, race, sexual orientation and other *Code* grounds.
  - **Disability as Universal** – an expansive category used in inclusive design and barrier removal that addresses needs of people of all ages and abilities at all stages of life.
  - ♦ **Equal Opportunity** means having the same chances, options, benefits and results as others from the way services are provided: there should not be significantly more effort required to access or to obtain a service nor should there be an expectation that lesser quality or more inconvenience be tolerated.

- ◆ **Equal Treatment** incorporates the principles of dignity, independence, equal opportunity, integration and inclusion.
- ◆ **Guide dog** is a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications as defined in Section 1 of the [Blind Persons Rights' Act](#).<sup>4</sup>
- ◆ **Independence** means respecting an individual's autonomy in exercising choice, subject to cost and safety considerations as defined by the regulatory standard of undue hardship.
- ◆ **Integration** means inclusiveness and full participation. This is a fundamental human right. This principle anchors the University's mission statement<sup>5</sup> and all of its academic and administrative policies, procedures and practices.
- ◆ **Service Animal** – The *Regulation*<sup>6</sup> defines a “service animal” as an “animal for a person with a disability”
  - (a) *if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or*
  - (b) *if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability*
- ◆ **Support person** means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in

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<sup>4</sup> Blind Persons' Rights Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter B.7, Section 1(1), [Service Ontario e-Laws](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90b07_e.htm#s1s1), <[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_90b07\\_e.htm#s1s1](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90b07_e.htm#s1s1)>

<sup>5</sup> University of Windsor Mission Statement: The University of Windsor is Canada's most personal comprehensive university. It combines a strong and focused emphasis on the learning experience of every student with a very broad range of graduate, undergraduate, and professional programmes. Uniquely accountable in specifying learning outcomes for each academic programme, the University has an exciting commitment to research in a richly diverse community. A special focus on automotive, environmental and social justice interdisciplinary research reflects the priorities of the surrounding region.

<sup>6</sup> Ontario *Regulation* 429/07, Section 4(9)(a-b)

order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.<sup>7</sup>

- ◆ **Undue Hardship** – The [AODA](#)<sup>8</sup> states that the undue hardship standard as defined in the *Code* is the standard required by the *Regulation*. The *AODA*<sup>9</sup> also states that reasonable efforts must be used to ensure policies, procedures and practices are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, equal opportunity and integration.

“Reasonable efforts” for a university funded by government grants and fee paying students incorporates considerations of the more exacting standard of undue hardship as defined by the *Code*<sup>10</sup> and includes quantifiable costs based on available and foreseeable funding as well as health and safety considerations.

## 7. Procedures:

### 7.1. Statement of Commitment

In fulfilling our academic mission the University is committed to the full inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of university life.

In accordance with the University’s [Employment and Educational Equity Policy](#), [Human Rights Policy](#) and [Special Needs Policy](#), the University continues to foster an academic, social and physical environment that ensures people with disabilities are integral to the diversity of perspectives vital to an academic community.

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<sup>7</sup> Ontario *Regulation 429/07*, Section 4(8)

<sup>8</sup> Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Section 38, [Service Ontario e-Laws](#), 2006, 06 April 2009, <[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_05a11\\_e.htm#BK50](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_05a11_e.htm#BK50)>

<sup>9</sup> Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Section 3(2)(1)

<sup>10</sup> Ontario Human Rights Code, Section 24(2)

Through incorporation of the principles of universal design<sup>11</sup> and instruction, the University is committed, where possible, to the elimination of existing barriers<sup>12</sup> and the prevention of future ones.

This commitment further enhances our ongoing capacity to provide equal treatment for all students, faculty, staff and volunteers with disabilities.

## 7.2. Education and Training

The University undertakes to provide ongoing professional development opportunities for decision and policy makers on the AODA, the equity principles that inform its framework and related standards.

The University undertakes to continue to provide educational awareness programs and training for employees and student volunteers on disability and accessibility; the AODA; the [Customer Service Standard](#) and the relevant sections of the [Information and Communication Standard](#) in anticipation of its passage into law in 2011.

### 7.2.1. Current Staff

The University undertakes to provide instruction to front line staff, faculty and student volunteers on accessible “customer” service as specified in the *Customer Service Standard*, and in particular, to focus on how to communicate with people with disabilities taking into account:

- the nature of their disability;
- their unique needs as individuals; and,

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<sup>11</sup>North Carolina State University, [The Center for Universal Design](http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about_ud/about_ud.htm), 2008, 06 April 2009, [http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about\\_ud/about\\_ud.htm](http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about_ud/about_ud.htm)

<sup>12</sup> As a member of the Federal Contractors Program, and an Ontario-based postsecondary institution, the University of Windsor is required to identify and remove systemic barriers and publish annual accessibility plans describing how and when this is done.

- a cross-disability approach in designing and remediating study/work environments, systems and policies

#### 7.2.2. New Staff

The University will regularly provide accessibility awareness training on customer service and related standards to new faculty, staff and volunteers in accordance with the *Customer Service Standard*.

#### 7.2.3. Documentation

Documentation of training content and dates of provision will be submitted annually to the Accessibility Directorate as prescribed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

#### 7.3. Alternate Accessible Formats and Assistive/Adaptive Technologies

Through its learning support services, the University undertakes to provide alternate accessible formats and assistive/adaptive technologies when requested so that students, faculty and staff with disabilities can be successful in all their interactions from recruitment to graduation and employment.

An increase in the inventory of some alternate accessible formats and assistive/adaptive technologies is subject to foreseeable funding. Through systems review and equity audits, the University will continue to eliminate administrative practices that limit efficient and effective use of available formats and technologies.

Through continued collaboration with learning support services and research of best practices, the University will strive to acquire those assistive technologies that maximize universal access.

The University will strive to broaden accessibility without compromising its obligation to meet individual accommodation needs as required by the *Code*.

#### 7.4. Web-Based Communication

In its web-based communications, the University will accelerate its efforts to make its applications accessible in compliance with [WCAG](#) and the anticipated requirements under the *AODA Information and Communication Standard*.

#### 7.5. Interpreters

The University undertakes to provide interpreters where no other options are more readily available. Students are requested to contact Student Disability Services; employees are requested to contact Accessibility Services. Considerations will be determined based on needs and individual circumstances.

Information on retaining the services of an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter is available through [Student Disability Services](#) and the [Canadian Hearing Society](#).

#### 7.6. Assistive Devices

The University strives to ensure that people with disabilities who use assistive devices are unrestricted from doing so except when subject to policy considerations of operator safety, privacy and conflict of interest as exemplified by the University of Windsor [Senate Policy A4: Audio Recording of Lectures by Students with Disabilities](#).

The University will ensure training is provided on an ongoing basis to familiarize current and prospective front line staff and volunteers in the use of various assistive devices and related policies.

##### 7.6.1. Campus Resources for Assistive Devices and Adaptive Technologies

- Student Disability Services provides a courtesy scooter in the event of a temporary mobility device breakdown. Refer to the complete [Listing on Assistive Devices and Adaptive Technologies](#) available from Student Disability Services.

- The Centre for Teaching and Learning, on a reservation basis, provides a range of adaptive technology to support classroom learning, instruction, conferences and university and student sponsored events. A complete listing of their equipment and services is available at [www.uwindsor.ca/ctl](http://www.uwindsor.ca/ctl).
- The Leddy Library offers accessible and attendant services to assist students, faculty, staff and members of the public with disabilities to access materials in library stacks. [Services for Persons with Disabilities](#), located on the Leddy Library website, provides a complete listing of accessible terminals, washrooms, elevators, adaptive equipment and services.
- The Law Library offers accessible and attendant services to assist students, faculty, staff and members of the public with disabilities to access materials in library stacks. A complete listing of accessible terminals, washrooms, elevators, adaptive equipment and services is available on the [Law Library website](#).

### 7.7. Service Disruptions

In making their transit arrangements, persons with disabilities need to book transit and/or arrange to be driven by someone in order to attend classes, laboratories, participate in meetings, conferences and social events.

#### 7.7.1. Planned Disruptions to Services

Where a disruption is planned, the University, through the responsible department, undertakes to conspicuously post

- the nature of the disruption; e.g. scheduled maintenance of an elevator
- the date of anticipated resumption of service
- alternate arrangements for the duration of the disruption

The University will strive, where possible, to provide a minimum of **72 hours notice** using one or more of the methods listed in [Appendix A – List of Communication Methods](#) below.

#### 7.7.2. Planned Class /Laboratory Cancellation

For planned absences instructors will provide notification **at least 72 hours** in advance in accordance with [Senate Policy F1: Faculty Duties & Responsibilities](#) with the following exception. In cases where the dates for tests, handing in assignments, and all other activities (except unannounced quizzes), which will affect the final course grade need to be altered for a compelling pedagogical or administrative reason, instructors must provide notification of at least two calendar weeks in advance. Notification of the rescheduled date must be provided to students at least two calendar weeks prior to that date. (See [By-Law 51: Academic Evaluation Procedures](#))

#### 7.7.3. Unplanned Disruptions

Unexpected disruptions do occur. The University will strive to notify those affected where possible. For power outages, labour disputes, chemical spills, lockdowns refer to the [Emergency Evacuation Procedures](#).

#### 7.7.4. Best Efforts to Notify

Using an appropriate combination of communication methods listed in Appendix A, the University will make its best efforts to reach those individuals with disabilities likely to be negatively affected because of disability by a planned and/or unplanned disruption.

#### 7.8. Guide Dogs and Service Animals

The University welcomes people with disabilities accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal in public areas.<sup>13</sup> These include

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<sup>13</sup> Subsection 4(2) of the Ontario *Regulation 429/07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, states: "If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, the provider of goods



classrooms, lecture and examination halls, libraries, campus restaurants, bars and eating areas. Service animals may be excluded from food preparation areas.

[Residence Services](#) welcomes residents accompanied by service animals subject to the provision of the appropriate documentation through Student Disability Services. It is recommended that students' visitors and/or family members accompanied by guide dogs or other service animals notify Residence Services in advance.

Access to research laboratories is subject to academic departmental discretion. On those occasions where members of the public are customarily admitted, service animals are welcome.

Refer to the Policy on the Presence of Service Animals on Campus.

#### 7.8.1. Environmental Sensitivities

An occasion may arise where a service animal triggers an allergic reaction in a person with environmental sensitivities. In most cases, preventative actions serve to minimize repeat exposure. These include schedule changes, use of adjoining or different rooms, laboratories and/or lecture halls.

#### 7.8.2. Comfort Considerations

It is the established practice of the University that courtesy and comfort considerations extend to a person with a disability accompanied by a service animal. Generally, pre-arranged appointments serve to minimize prolonged standing or waiting. In the event this is unavoidable, a person with a disability accompanied by a guide dog shall receive immediate and preferential service from University staff.

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*or services shall ensure that the person is permitted to enter the premises with the animal and to keep the animal with him or her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises".*

## 7.9. Support Persons

It is the established practice of the University to permit an attendant or support person to accompany a student taking an examination; participate in counseling sessions; meet with a health care professional; participate in recreational activity – in short, avail themselves of the services and programs offered at the University.<sup>14</sup> Further, the *Regulation* also states:

*The provider of goods or services may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.*<sup>15</sup>

For details in respect of recreational athletic services, go to [Athletic & Recreational Services](#).

### 7.9.1. Waiving of Parking Fees for Support Persons

When accompanying students, faculty, staff or visitors with disabilities, Parking Services will waive parking fees for support persons. It is the responsibility of the host organization/department to request this waiver, in advance, and to notify Parking Services. Reimbursement post event is subject to verification.

For additional information on hosting accessible meetings or events, go to:

- [Ministry of Community & Social Services – Plan an Accessible Meeting](#)

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<sup>14</sup> Section 4(4) of the Ontario *Regulation 429/07*, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, states: “If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the provider of goods or services shall ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises”.

<sup>15</sup> Ontario *Regulation 429/07*, Section 4(5)

- [Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat – Guide to Planning Inclusive Meetings & Conferences](#)
- The University's Guidelines on Hosting Accessible Meetings is under development.

#### 7.9.2. Waiving of Admission Fees for Support Persons

The *Regulation* states:

*“If an amount is payable by a person for admission to the premises or in connection with a person’s presence at the premises, the provider of goods or services shall ensure that notice is given in advance about the amount, if any, payable in respect of the support person”.*<sup>16</sup>

The University recommends a minimum a 30% reduction.

Cost of admission to University Players productions by support persons who show provincially recognized identification may be waived in full.

Fee waiver does NOT apply to tuition, student registration, residence, graduation, licensing, incidental and ancillary fees associated with tuition.

#### 7.10. Feedback Process

The University's ultimate goal is to ensure that students with disabilities successfully complete their university education and that their accomplishment in doing so is made more memorable because of faculty and staff's dedication to promoting a supportive, inclusive and barrier free environment. It is important to also provide faculty, staff and volunteers with disabilities the same type of environment in which to conduct business.

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<sup>16</sup> Ontario Regulation 429/07, Section 4(6)

The University provides a database for everyone's feedback on the Campus Accessibility website called "We Need to Hear from You" ([www.uwindsor.ca/campusaccess](http://www.uwindsor.ca/campusaccess)) to set priorities in its planning, training and policy revisions. If preferred, written suggestions and/or concerns can be directed to:

Accessibility Coordinator  
Chrysler Hall Tower, Room 208B, University of Windsor  
Windsor, ON N9B 3P4, Tel: 519-253-3000 x. 2057  
[acarrick@uwindsor.ca](mailto:acarrick@uwindsor.ca),  
[www.uwindsor.ca/equity](http://www.uwindsor.ca/equity)  
[www.uwindsor.ca/accessibility](http://www.uwindsor.ca/accessibility)

The University will endeavour to communicate its actions to rectify verifiable standard gaps in its services, programs and facilities upon receipt of a written/emailed/telephone complaint.

## **8. Review Process for the Policy**

The policy will be reviewed every 5 years. Under the following circumstances the policy may be reviewed before the 5 year term:

- changes in legislation that affect the policy
- a specific incident triggers a review of the policy
- a request is made by a governing body, such as the Board of Governors, to review the policy

## **9. Process for Communicating the Policy**

The policy will be posted on the University of Windsor's policy website, within two weeks of the approval of the policy, and Public Affairs and Communications will be asked to disseminate the information to the campus through the Daily News if appropriate (some policies will not be advertised through Daily News). A memo will also be sent to the departments directly affected by the policy.

Contact Information: Inquiries regarding the policy should be directed to Anne Carrick, Accessibility Coordinator, [acarrick@uwindsor.ca](mailto:acarrick@uwindsor.ca), Extension 2057.

**10. Appendices:**

- (1) [Appendix A](#) – List of Communication Methods (p. 21)

**COPIES OF THIS POLICY ARE AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATE  
FORMATS: [CLICK HERE](#)**

**Appendix A**  
**List of Communication Methods**

- 1) in class announcements
- 2) daily news publication
- 3) telephone call
- 4) posted signs and notices
- 5) mass departmental e-mails and voice mail
- 6) website (CLEW; Facility Services )
- 7) electronic bulletin boards
- 8) targeted outreach through Student Disability Services, Occupational Health and Safety, Campus Community Police, Residence Services, Faculty etc
- 9) where authorized, public address announcements and local media
- 10) I.T. Services HelpDesk