



Graduate Students' Association
Concordia University

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GSA Accessibility Policy



Table of Contents

1. General	3
2. Training	3
3. GSA Spaces	3
4. Assistive Devices	4
5. Communication	4
6. Service Animals	4
7. Notice of Temporary Disruption	4
8. Support Material	5
9. Modifications to this or other policies	5
10. Advocacy	5



1. General

The Graduate Students' Association at Concordia University (GSA) is committed to ensuring that the GSA is an accessible organization and that all our members and may fully contribute to and participate in the GSA's activities. To this end, we will constantly strive to improve the organization's accessibility policies and practices.

The GSA is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which is fundamental law in Canada as it forms part of the 1982 Constitution Act, and Section 10 of the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms which states "Every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise of [their] human rights and freedoms, without distinction," including in the area of access to education and participation in educational-related areas, and all other applicable provincial and federal laws and practices. This policy document is focused primarily on structural barriers to accessibility, including access to Sign Language.

2. Training

The GSA will ensure that all directors, executives, staff, and volunteers receive appropriate training on accessibility issues. All new directors, executives, and staff will review this policy at the start of each term and familiarize themselves with the details involved. All directors and executives will make sure that all policy, bylaws, and other association decisions that are passed are consistent with this policy, and when additional research or training is needed to make an informed decision, make arrangements to receive such research/training. All staff members will work towards making GSA events accessible for all of its members.

3. GSA Spaces

The GSA will work with the Dean of Students to ensure that our office is housed in a fully-accessible location. We will meet all relevant accessibility standards for the design of new



spaces when constructing, or making major modifications to, GSA spaces. In all such instances, The GSA will consult with a qualified expert from Concordia University and/or an accredited outside expert from the field of accessibility building design.

All new design projects must be consistent with guidelines set out in federal regulations and with accepted standards for the academic sector.

4. Assistive Devices

The GSA will ensure that all of its directors, executive members, and staff and are trained in and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by GSA members, or that they will offer assistance at the direction of the GSA member with an assistive device.

5. Communication

The GSA will ensure that people living with disabilities may access all organization communications. The GSA website and all of our communications will be will be optimized in PDF format for screen readers. All GSA communications will include physical accessibility information next to other key event details (such as its cost and location). They will also include the email address and phone number of a point staff person at the GSA who will be equipped to answer more detailed questions about accessibility.

6. Service Animals

The GSA welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed at our office location, and the GSA will ensure that all our off-site events will be held at locations that permit service animals.

7. Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for patrons with disabilities (including, but not limited to, website access, access to the GSA office,



accessible parking, large print documents, etc.), The GSA will notify all station members in a prompt manner. A notice will be made available at the GSA offices, the GSA's website (assuming no impact from disrupted services), by email and at any off-site event. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services.

8. Support Material

The GSA will maintain public copies of this policy on its website, along with a link to [\[information regarding the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse\]](#). Physical copies may be provided on request to a staff or executive member.

9. Modifications to this or other policies

Any GSA policies that do not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed. Modification of this policy is at the discretion of the GSA, which may receive recommendations from GSA members, volunteers, executives, or directors. The GSA Council of Directors must ensure accessibility practices are upheld in accordance to human right standards and the best practices of Federal institutions, while adhering to Federal and provincial legal requirements to accessibility and anti-discrimination mentioned in "General" above.

10. Advocacy

The GSA aspires to be an accessibility leader at Concordia University and among other student organizations. To this end, we will provide tools, resources, and information about accessibility. We will advocate for the accessibility rights of all of our members within our organization and at a university level.