Job Description

Job Title:	Alternate Format and Technology Specialist
Department:	Office of the Associate Provost, Campus Support and Accessibility
Reports To:	Associate Director, Campus Accessibility
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 6
Effective Date:	September 2024

Primary Purpose

The Alternate Format and Technology Specialist provides leadership to the University in developing process for coordinating the production and distribution of alternative format materials to support student and employee accommodation plans, in accordance with copyright legislation and human rights. Reporting to the Associate Director, Campus Accessibility, the Alternate Format and Technology Specialist is responsible for the production of alternate format material and application of technology strategies in support of the overall adaptive technology program. This position supports equitable access to the academic and employment environment for students and employees with accommodation plans by ensuring access to learning and employment-related materials in alternate, accessible ways. Responsibilities include directing the production of alternate formatted materials, working directly with publishers and other repositories to obtain alternate formats, and providing support and recommendations to faculty, departments, and other units about access and alternate format needs of specific students and employees requiring print and technology accommodations.

The incumbent will provide strategy and technology support to staff, faculty, and students to mitigate the impacts of disability in the academic environment. The incumbent will provide direct training, workshops and demonstration of assistive software and hardware solutions for staff, instructors, and campus partners, particularly as it relates to offering alternate approaches to accessing the learning and work environment. The Alternate Format and Technology Specialist also oversees administers the Adaptive Technology Loan Program and directs the tasks of both work placement and work-study student staff assisting with alternate format production.

Key Accountabilities

Expertise in Alternate Format Production Processes and Regulations

- Provides leadership to the university in developing process for coordinating the production and distribution of alternative format materials, in accordance with copyright legislation and human rights (the duty to accommodate)
- Uses subject matter expertise to processes alternative format requests through Alternate Education Resources for Ontario service (AERO) and through publishers.
- Coordinates the production of in-house materials in alternative format.
- Provides direction to students, staff and faculty regarding technology concerns related to accessing course/employment materials.
- Advises student, staff, and faculty on how to access alternate course/employment materials from other campus departments when appropriate (e.g. the Library).

- Provide expertise to Campus Support and Accessibility staff members regarding alternative formats and how to create accessible documents.
- Directs the work in the alternate format production areas, which includes directing the work of work-study students tasked with the production of alternate format materials.
- Generates and delivers communications to students related to alternate format production, ensuring legal and other copyright requirements are upheld.
- Knowledgeable and up to date on the technology and alternate format needs of students with disabilities including best practices at other institutions, current trends, and forecasting future development in strategies to enhance student learning while meeting or exceeding industry benchmarks.
- Offer expertise related to copyright, and is well connected to Copyright@Waterloo and the Fair Dealing Advisory.

Assistive Technology, Assessment, and Support for Employees Requiring Accommodation

- Working with staff and faculty experiencing a broad range of functional limitations (disabilities) to support access to the workplace using appropriate assistive technologies.
- Conducting functional assessments with individual staff and faculty members to select and source adaptive technology solutions that support their disability, functional limitation, and work environment.
- Following all legislative and university policy around and relevant to accommodations planning (eg. AODA, Human Rights) and privacy.

Copyright Compliance

- Advises on the application of copyright law and AODA compliance.
- Develops strategies, polices, processes, training, communications, and instructions that support the university's academic accommodation endeavours as they relate to issues of copyright and AODA compliance, protecting the legal interests of faculty, staff and students.
- Remains current on copyright legislation, regulation, issues, interpretation, etc. relevant to alternate format production for students with a disability.
- Develops and update AAS policies and procedures related to copyright.
- Oversee copyright compliance in alternate format production. This involves seeking permission when permission is necessary, appropriately documenting permissions, and suggesting alternative strategies if clearance is not obtained.

Develops and Delivers Adaptive Technology Support

- Develop new content, programs and initiatives that are in response to the needs and priorities of students and campus partners, and in line with the strategic priorities of Campus Support and Accessibility that aim to promote and enhance student retention and success. This involves developing and facilitating small and large group workshops and training sessions.
- Applies expertise in the provision of individual instruction and training to students on specific technology applications and the application of learning strategies associated with specific technologies. This involves offering technical training to students requiring technology to access course materials in an alternative form (e.g. Kurzweil 3000).
- Develop content for online support materials that support students in accessing the learning environment.
- Provides hands-on training and support to faculty and supervisors on the application and use of assistive technology in the classroom or workspace, ensuring accommodation plans are upheld, enabling the University to fulfill its duty to accommodate.

Student and Employee Relations and Service

- Maintains accurate data on both alternate format and equipment loan program. Oversees and coordinates the assistive technology equipment loan program.
- Provides professional and exceptional customer service to clients and other key stakeholders. This involves an awareness and sensitivity to a variety of disabilities that might cause disruptions, challenges, and disputes.
- Provides suitable triage and escalates difficult/complex queries as appropriate.
- Address concerns (misuse of space/equipment/supplies etc.) using documented protocol.
- This position requires a demonstrated ability to show good judgement in terms of prioritizing tasks and following direction.
- Provides administrative and clerical support as required, and assist with projects as assigned.
- Maintains inventory of adaptive technology, lab equipment, and other supplies.

Handling Sensitive Materials

- Ensures access to secure documents are controlled appropriately.
- Maintains a current and accurate reflection of interactions with students through detailed case notes.
- Appropriately uses and maintains confidential health and education records in accordance with relevant Privacy legislation.
- Ensures data accuracy and document integrity.
- Appropriately uses and maintains confidential health and education records in accordance with University policy and relevant Privacy legislation.
- Effectively uses systems and technology to accurately and efficiently manage student medical information.
- Directs the return of clinical records to the intended party in a secure manner (appropriate storage and movement of confidential documents) when needed.

**All employees of the University are expected to follow University and departmental health and safety policy, procedures and work practices at all times. Employees are also responsible for the completion of all health and safety training, as assigned. Employees with staff supervision and/or management responsibilities will ensure that assigned staff abide by the above, and actively identify, assess and correct health and safety hazards, as required.*

Required Qualifications

Education

- Bachelor degree or equivalent education and experience.

Experience

- Experience with alternate format production for disability needs is required.
- Experience in a setting where strong organization skills and attention to detail is required.
- Experience with adaptive tools and assistive technologies that support persons with disabilities is required.
- Experience instructing one-on-one and small groups is required.
- Experience in a student-focused (secondary or post-secondary school context) environment is an asset.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Demonstrated knowledge of Canadian copyright legislation and AODA compliance as they pertain to the post-secondary education environment for persons with disabilities.
- High level of comfort with technology.
- General knowledge of databases is required.
- Demonstrated ability to:
    - Maintain a high standard of public relations at all times.

  - Manage a high work demand and meet deadlines.
  - Exercise judgement and discretion when handling confidential and sensitive information.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Strong organizational and attention skills.
- Ability to maintain trust and confidentiality, and adhere to regulations related to privacy.
- Familiarity with assistive software/hardware and the ability to troubleshoot computer issues an asset.
- Knowledge of copyright laws is an asset.
- Experience with conflict resolution and crisis intervention is an asset.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally, this position interacts regularly with AccessAbility Services staff, Employee Health and Accommodation staff; the Library , students, staff, and faculty/instructors across the six faculty units.
- **Level of Responsibility:** This position is responsible for providing accurate copyright advice at it pertains to supporting students and employees with disabilities. Responsible for coordinating the production and distribution of alternate format course materials. Also responsible for administrative functions within the AccessAbility Services Technology Lab. This includes data management and scheduling of work placement staff. The incumbent has a high degree of access to confidential materials, and as a result is responsible for the secure and confidential management of student medical documentation.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** This position has decision-making authority for the areas outlined above. This position works collaboratively with course instructors, managers, and other campus partners to determine the best and most appropriate way to fulfil alternative format requirements that have the ability to impact a student's academic career.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: This role in an office setting involves minimal physical demands and moderate sensory effort resulting in slight fatigue, strain, or risk of injury. Requires close attention to detail, thoroughness, and accuracy within a fast-paced service orientated environment. The Alternative Format Coordinator will be required to use computers, printers, braillers and other technology to support alternate format production.
- **Working Environment:** Involves moderate physical or psychological risk resulting from unavoidable exposure to hazardous, disagreeable or uncomfortable environmental conditions. This is due to higher than typical exposure to emotionally disturbing interactions with verbally and physically aggressive individuals, some dealing with a mental health crisis (including suicidal ideation and immediate risk of harm to self and others). Some after hours work may be required during peak times particularly in the weeks immediately before and after the start of each term.