

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion **Action Plan**





Strengthening our leadership in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is a key priority for Mohawk College, and is integral to our core values.



As a college, we are committed to nurturing an equitable, diverse and inclusive environment for everyone who learns and works at Mohawk. We believe the rich diversity among our students and the communities we serve should be reflected within our workforce, and that as educators we have a responsibility to act and show leadership in advancing the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion in our community.

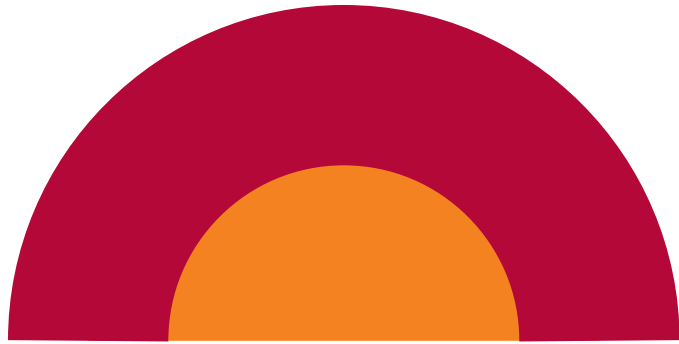
Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan is the result of a year-long process of research, consultation and collaboration between departments and individuals at all levels of the organization. It is a plan that builds on our successes to date and contains specific actions leading to outcomes that can be measured and verified over time.

Mohawk College's EDI Action Plan will remain a work-in-progress and frequently be reassessed to ensure it is meeting its objectives. This is a plan that will take time to implement. EDI is a strategic priority for the college and it will take the collective efforts of every employee and the broader college community to make its vision a reality.

For more information about Mohawk's EDI Action Plan, visit mohawkcollege.ca/EDI.

Regards,
Ron J. McKerlie
President & CEO, Mohawk College

How the EDI Action Plan was developed



Mohawk's EDI Action Plan is the result of a year-long process of research, consultation and collaboration between departments and individuals at all levels of the organization, but it is also a plan that builds on the college's past successes.

Timeline



2015–2018: Building the foundation

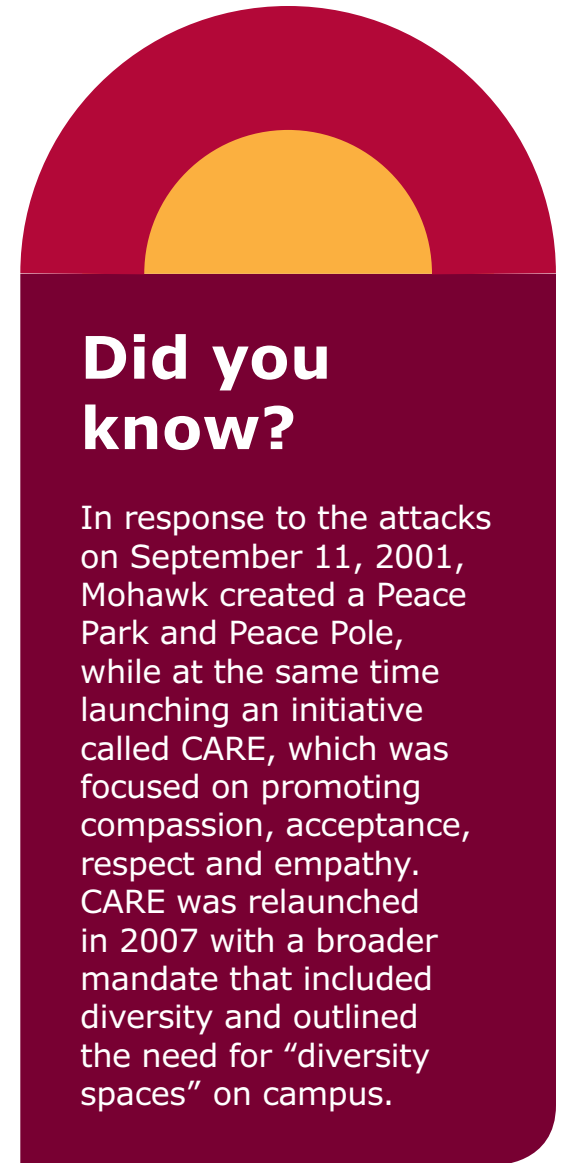
Mohawk has always placed a high value on the principles of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The college took significant steps in 2015 to create a much stronger vision with the formation of the Welcoming Communities Task Force.

This Task Force included membership from major regional employers and education partners including ArcelorMittal Dofasco, the Hamilton Police Service and McMaster University, among others. The group came together to share and discuss best practices and propose new solutions and partnerships that would make Hamilton, and Mohawk, a more welcoming community for newcomers.

Mohawk released the Welcoming Communities Task Force report in the spring of 2016. The report included 34 recommendations that were collectively aimed at:

- helping newcomers make a successful transition to Hamilton,
- creating stronger connections in Hamilton for newcomers,
- building intercultural competency within Hamilton businesses and organizations, and
- moving Hamilton from friendly to welcoming by promoting the value of global citizenship.

In response to those recommendations, Mohawk developed a multi-year plan that involved many programs, activities and initiatives focused on improving the experience for international students. While many of the initiatives were completed, the process revealed that there was still more the college needed to do to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for newcomers and every member of the campus community.



**2018:
Making a stronger
commitment to
Equity, Diversity
and Inclusion**

By early 2018, Mohawk had made progress on many fronts.

- ✔ The Welcoming Communities multi-year action plan was well underway.
- ✔ The college had hired a Director & Special Advisor for Equity and Inclusion.
- ✔ All members of the Senior Leadership Team were required to complete an intercultural competency assessment and training.
- ✔ And the college began offering equity, diversity and inclusion workshops to all employees.

Under the leadership of the Director & Special Advisor for Equity and Inclusion, the college adopted five Equity, Diversity and Inclusion commitments to accelerate the college's progress and strengthen its leadership position among other colleges and employers in the region and across the province.

These five commitments were developed through consultations with employees and students and are based on best practices from other employers who are seen as leaders in this field. These commitments are intended to guide the college's decisions on issues such

Mohawk's EDI commitments

1. Attract and retain talent reflective of the community.
2. Create an inclusive workplace.
3. Strengthen inclusive competences.
4. Develop and implement an Equity and Inclusion framework.
5. Expand the use of universal design for learning and use of accessibility tools.

as professional development and training, eliminating systemic racism and other forms of discrimination, addressing gender equity, advancing accessibility and attracting and retaining talent reflective of our community. Since adopting these five commitments, the college has been contacted by several universities and colleges interested in using them to develop their own equity, diversity and inclusion commitments.

Did you know?

Mohawk established its first Human Rights Policy and Procedure in 1982.

2019: Building awareness and understanding

In August 2019, Mohawk deepened its commitment to EDI by formally endorsing the Government of Canada’s Dimensions Charter, committing the college to the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of academic and research activity.

The Dimensions program was created to help postsecondary institutions address systemic barriers, particularly those experienced by members of under-represented or disadvantaged groups, including, but not limited to, women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, racialized groups, and members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities. Institutions that endorse the Dimensions Charter commit to embed equity, diversity and inclusive principles in their policies, practices, action plans and culture.

Mohawk also began to create awareness of the purpose and intent of its EDI commitments with employees in 2019. Departments were required to submit EDI-focused activities. Universal Design for Learning became mandatory for all course outlines and curriculum including training of new instructors in this regard. The college also began training programs to advance employee’s use and knowledge of how to create accessible spaces, communications and documents. As well, the college re-established the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Steering Committee.

Later in 2019, the college adopted the Leadership Accord on Gender Diversity, developed by Electricity Human Resources Canada, a non-profit organization supporting the human resources needs of Canada’s electricity and renewable energy sector. By signing the accord, Mohawk committed to promoting the values of equity, diversity and inclusion and to ensuring women are informed about opportunities available to them, and are fully supported and provided with equitable opportunities to grow and develop to their full potential.

And then came 2020.

Did you know?

Mohawk launched its first annual College Accessibility Plan in 2003. The plan was a result of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, which became the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act in 2005.

**2020:
A year of
upheaval,
uncertainty
and change**

By 2020, Mohawk had entered the final stages of its 5-year strategic plan and began to turn its attention to the next strategic plan and the priorities that would guide the college's actions through that period.

Then Canada, and the world, faced the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 became an all-hands-on-deck crisis that absorbed the college's resources and put a significant strain on its systems and processes. While the college did not abandon its EDI priorities, it was forced to temporarily reprioritize, adjusting to a new set of circumstances that had no foreseeable end.

By the end of May 2020, the world had begun to adjust to life during a pandemic. Businesses re-opened and we slowly emerged from our first lockdown. Then on May 25, a video emerged of a Black man named George Floyd who was killed while being taken into custody by police in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

George Floyd's death shone a spotlight on the issue of Anti-Black Racism in the United States and around the world, including Canada. People of all races came together to speak out against Anti-Black Racism and the injustices that occur in all parts of our society, including academia.

For Mohawk, like many other institutions, the events of summer 2020 became a catalyst for change. Mohawk added its voice to the call for change by

[issuing a statement in support of Black Canadians](#) who experience racism as a part of daily life. We then re-engaged with our community, many of whom were asking what the college was doing to make change happen.

In the weeks that followed, the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Committee was established and the delivery of EDI-focused training for employees was prioritized. We held a series of events for employees and students called Critical Conversations on Anti-Black Racism that encouraged discussion and deepened people's understanding of the issue and the people impacted by it. The Critical Conversation events were expanded to include other topics such as awareness and action to end gender-based violence, anti-Asian racism, gender inequity and creating 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusive environments.

By the year's end, every department had submitted an EDI action plan that would become part of the first college-wide EDI Action Plan for 2021. The college also hired a Manager of Workplace Equity and Inclusion to coordinate the college's EDI efforts within the Human Resources department.

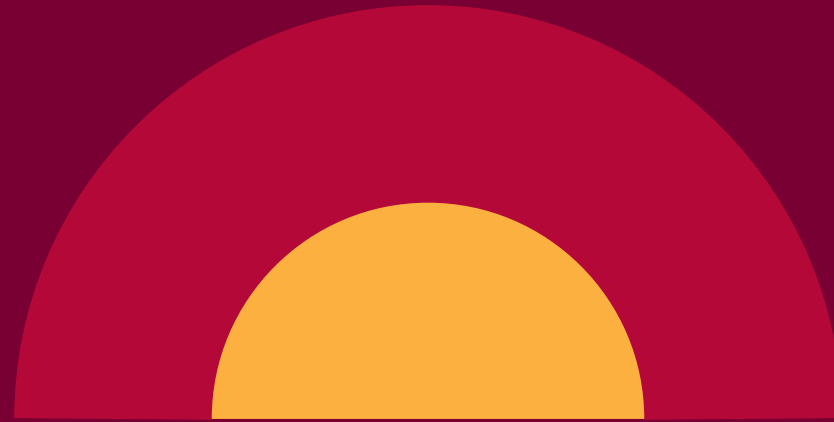
2021–2022 and beyond

Mohawk has made significant progress towards achieving its EDI goals but there is still more that needs to be done to ensure there is equitable access and equitable opportunities for everyone in our community.

Our first college-wide action plan identifies specific actions that target each of the college's five EDI commitments, including:

- Launch five internal task forces of underrepresented groups to identify barriers and gaps to participation and representation. Task force membership will be determined by Summer 2021.
- Establish an EDI Advisory Committee, including staff, students and community representatives. Committee to launch Summer 2021.
- Develop an EDI framework and corresponding equity lens to be used to identify, address and eliminate biases in policies, programs, services and opportunities. Consultations on the framework to begin Spring/Summer 2021.
- Complete an internal AODA audit by Fall 2021 to ensure fulfillment of all accessibility requirements. The action plan for addressing the audit findings is to be ready by Winter 2022.
- Complete an employee demographic survey to establish baseline data to set future goals and measures. The survey will be completed every two years thereafter.
- Provide mentorship opportunities for employees who identify as a member of an underrepresented group to support leadership development and the potential for progression.

To oversee and support these and other efforts outlined in the Action Plan, the college has created the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. In addition to the implementation of the Action Plan, the office provides strategic leadership on all initiatives related to EDI and Human Rights. Supported by a grant from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion will coordinate the efforts of the task forces and assist with the demographic survey.



EDI Action Plan

Commitment 1: Attract and retain talent reflective of community

We will put processes and systems in place that remove barriers in all Human Resource policies and practices to ensure that Mohawk employees are representative of the diversity within the Hamilton community.

Goal	Tactic	Metrics	Timeline
Increase the representation of Women, Indigenous Peoples, Black and Racialized Persons, Persons with Disabilities, and Persons who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ at all levels of the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an employee demographic survey to identify areas of underrepresentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of employees in the college workforce from underrepresented groups employed, relative to the external community 	Winter 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and remove barriers in the recruitment and selection process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in the number and extent of the gaps in representation 	Spring 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set targets for closing any identified gaps in employee representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of new hires relative to external community 	Spring 2022

The goals and tactics outlined in the college’s EDI Action Plan represent a broad overview of the college’s commitments to EDI. More detailed departmental plans will be available under the [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion section on MyMohawk](#).

Commitment 2: Create an inclusive workplace

We will create an inclusive campus to ensure an open, accessible, equitable and safe environment for everyone.

Goal	Tactic	Metrics	Timeline
Ensure the sense of belonging for underrepresented groups is at least equal to the overall sense of belonging for all college employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administer an annual employee survey to assess sense of belonging and barriers to inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess sense of belonging of underrepresented groups and look for increase over time 	Fall 2022
Ensure working and learning spaces are accessible, inclusive, welcoming and responsive to the needs of underserved individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an organizational accessibility audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility audit to provide assessment and recommendations to meet AODA standards 	Fall 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an implementation plan to address the recommendations of the accessibility audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress in implementing recommendations from the audit 	Summer 2022

Commitment 3: Strengthen inclusive competencies

We will provide professional development opportunities for employees to build their equity, inclusion and intercultural competencies that will advance individual and collective growth in cultural fluency.

Goal	Tactic	Metrics	Timeline
Require all employees involved in the hiring process to take bias-free hiring and decision-making training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement bias-free hiring and decision-making training courses, tools and resources Develop and implement a series of equity and inclusion courses from basic to advanced EDI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of sessions delivered Number of employees who have participated in EDI training/courses and professional development Change in perspective as assessed by pre- and post training assessments 	Beginning Summer/Fall 2021
Increase the number of staff who participate in intercultural competency training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create opportunities for employees to increase awareness and understanding of Indigenous histories and realities at the college, and the challenges faced by Indigenous learners, employees, vendors and community members when engaging with the college 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of sessions delivered Number of employees who have participated in these sessions 	Fall 2021

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Commitment 4: Develop and implement equity and inclusion framework

We will ensure that policies are reviewed and updated to identify and remove systemic barriers to participation and advancement of underrepresented groups utilizing an equity and inclusion framework and equity lens.

Goal	Tactic	Metrics	Timeline
Develop and implement an equity and inclusion framework and equity lens to guide the college in the implementation of EDI goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a series of consultations with employees, students and the college community to gather feedback and input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft EDI framework and equity lens completed 	Fall 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a number of task forces to help identify issues and barriers experienced by underserved and underrepresented groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formation of task forces Work Plan developed Research and data collection completed 	Summer 2021 Winter 2022 Summer 2022



Commitment 5a: Expand use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

We will enhance learning experiences through the adoption and use of UDL for learning principles and techniques.

Goal	Tactic	Metrics	Timeline
Increase the number of faculty trained on UDL and the number of programs/courses that are designed using Universal Design for Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train Continuing Education instructors on UDL in course design and delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of employees trained on UDL and programs created using UDL 	Fall 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build UDL principles into all programs and courses by offering customized professional development sessions for faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students report more inclusive learning environments 	Spring 2022

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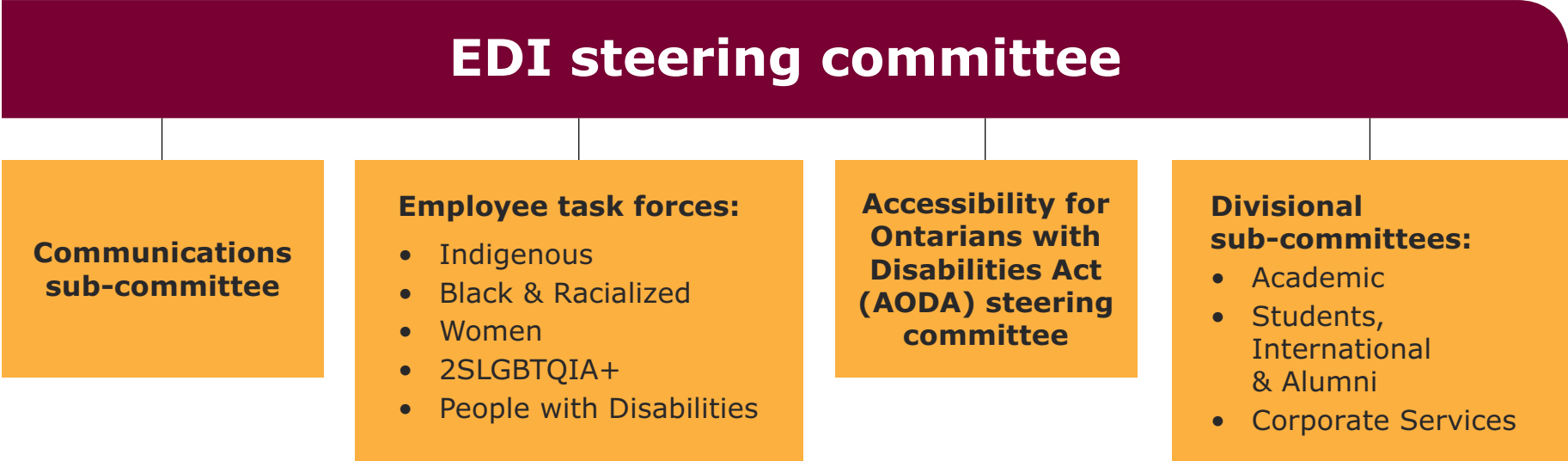
Commitment 5b: Advance employees' knowledge and skills creating accessible spaces and documents

We will advance employees' knowledge of creating accessible spaces, information, communication and documents.

Goal	Tactic	Metrics	Timeline
Increase the number of employees incorporating accessibility principles, guidelines and tools in their day-to-day work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an organization wide Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Audit to review and assess compliance of all five accessibility standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed audit of AODA standards and recommendations to advance accessibility Create tools for assisting employees in how to incorporate accessibility principles into day-to-day work Track the number of employees enrolled in courses and workshops focused on creating accessible documents, curricula and spaces 	<p>Fall 2021</p> <p>Winter 2022</p> <p>Summer 2022</p>

Governance

To oversee the implementation of the EDI Action Plan, the college has established the following Governance structure.



Divisional priorities

Mohawk College’s three divisions – Academic, Corporate Services, and Students, International and Alumni, will have specific EDI activities that they will focus on implementing. The divisional priorities will bring together the work being done through the departmental action plans. The divisional sub-committees will collaborate and share with the broader group and contribute to the outcomes of the college-wide action plan.

How can you get involved?

Mohawk's EDI action plan is a multi-year, strategic priority that will require the participation and support of every employee and the broader college community. If you are interested in getting more involved with the implementation of Mohawk's action plan, you can do the following:

- 1** Employees can apply to join one of the task forces or committees. Application details including terms of reference for task forces and committees will be shared through the college's website and posted to MyMohawk.
- 2** Participate in EDI-focused training and events.
- 3** Check the college's [EDI webpage](#) for the latest news and information from the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
- 4** Take the time to become informed, aware and knowledgeable. For students and employees there is lots of information and resources available on MyMohawk under the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion section.
- 5** Employees are encouraged to get involved in the initiatives and activities identified in their departmental action plans.



mohawkcollege.ca/EDI

