How does AERO work?

STEP 1

A student buys a hard copy of a textbook. He or she then takes the receipt and the book to the college or university student disabilities services office or library and asks for the book in an alternative format. To qualify for this service, the student must:

- meet eligibility requirements for perceptual disability
- sign an agreement confirming that the electronic copy will be used only for their own academic purpose and will not be copied or shared.

STEP 2

The college or university checks the AERO database to see if the textbook is available. If it is, the file can be downloaded immediately and/or mailed to the institution. If not, AERO asks the publisher for a digital copy.

STEP 3

The textbook is converted to the appropriate alternative format and the student is notified by email when the textbook is ready.

For years universities and colleges in Ontario have been looking for a collaborative solution to obtain alternate format textbooks for students in a timely manner. AERO is the collaborative solution and will have a positive effect on the education experience of postsecondary students with print disabilities in Ontario.

Postsecondary Alternate Format Committee, a joint committee of the College Committee on Disability Issues and the Inter-University Disability Issues Association

AERO has been providing transcription service to perceptually impaired students in Ontario since 1982. It is a partnership between the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

For more information or to join AERO, please contact:
AERO@alternativeresources.ca
519-759-2522
Or visit **www.alternativeresources.ca**

On campus:

AERO

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION RESOURCES FOR ONTARIO

Ontario

FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Textbooks are a critical part of a student's success. Most students simply get their textbook list, go to the student bookstore and buy their texts. But for students who have a perceptual disability, it's not that simple. They often need to take an extra step to get their textbooks in a format they can use.

AERO – Alternative Education Resources for Ontario – makes it easier for everyone. This service helps students get their textbooks in the alternative format they need – faster and in better quality than ever before.

It [AERO] definitely has contributed to my success…especially getting my textbooks as early as I did last term. I was able…to get myself set up for success later in the term. The mp3s capitalize on one of my strengths. I have very high percentile verbal memory so hearing the textbooks helps to compensate for my weaknesses and capitalizes on my strength.

Alex, McMaster University

What is AERO?

AERO is a secure web-based online service that provides alternative-format textbooks. For example, students who are blind or have low vision can have their textbooks converted to Braille, large print or digital audio. If a textbook is not available, AERO works with the publisher and partners to provide the student with the text in the format he or she needs.

AERO allows us to submit all our publisher requests for textbooks in one place instead of using several publisher websites. This saves us time and creates a better workflow. Searching through the catalogue of existing titles and downloading is fast and seamless and this improves the amount of turnaround time in responding to a student's request.

Ryerson University Library

You can help.

Ontario invites you to participate in this important service. One of the most helpful things you can do to ensure all students have their textbooks in the format they need – when they need them – is to submit your course reading lists as early as possible.

Why should you participate?

There are many good reasons for college or university faculty to support AERO.

AERO will help you:

- provide timely, high-quality learning materials to students
- meet your obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- reduce duplication and workload
- reduce dependence on college or university IT systems
- share with other institutions internally produced accessible-format materials, saving time and money
- provide a robust backup system with high-security protocols to ensure the safe transfer of files and credentials
- provide a secure space to store production or institution specific files.

As a Canadian Higher Education Publisher, we are pleased and privileged to play an active role in the AERO project. Excellent customer service for all students continues to be a top priority for McGraw-Hill Ryerson and this initiative enables us to evolve and align our digital strategies and priorities in an efficient, cost-effective and secure environment.

Kim Brewster, Publisher, Higher Education, McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd.