# The University of Winnipeg
## Accessibility Plan
## 2016-2020

# Instituting the First and Second Standards Under the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)

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**Accessibility at The University of Winnipeg**

The University of Winnipeg is firmly committed to providing an inclusive environment for the UW Community.

Our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion is woven through our [Strategic Directions](#) reflecting many of the principles of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA). The University proactively works with its community to identify, remove and prevent barriers to participation for all Manitobans to teach, research and learn.

The UWinnipeg community itself is large, complex, and diverse. We are a community within communities, a system within systems. The term "UW Community" is used to reflect the unique nature and context of our various relationships and interactions, and includes students, faculty, staff, board members, and others. As we continue to grow in the spirit of the AMA we will use the term UWinnipeg Community to demonstrate our commitment to the principles and objectives articulated in the Accessibility Standards.

This Accessibility Plan is our statement of our commitment to compliance and provides a key building block toward the rolling out and implementation of the AMA and its five (5) Accessibility Standards.

# THE ACCESSIBILITY FOR MANITOBANS ACT

In December 2013, the Manitoba Government passed *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* ("the AMA") with the goal of making Manitoba fully accessible by 2023. The AMA sets out the process for compliance and achievement of accessibility for all Manitobans through the prevention and removal of barriers that adversely impact people with disabilities in regard to employment, accommodation the built environment, the delivery and receipt of goods, services and information, and any prescribed activity or undertaking. It also mandates every public sector body (which is defined in the Regulations to include an educational institution such as The University of Winnipeg) to prepare an accessibility plan every two (2) years that addresses disability inclusion in the identification, prevention and removal of barriers to accessibility in policies, programs, practices and provision of services.

The AMA established the following five (5) Accessibility Standards:

1) Customer Service;

2) Employment;

3) Information and Communications;

4) Transportation; and

5) Accessible Built Environment.

**Customer Service Standard – Compliant November 1, 2017**

Introduced in November of 2015, the Customer Service Standard required the University to introduce policies addressing training and communication focused on respectful and barrier-free customer service. To meet the Customer Service Standard, the University:

- meets the communication needs of the UW Community by providing access to accessible formats and academic/workplace accommodations such as ASL interpreters, transcription services, and adaptive technology;
- allows assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, walkers and oxygen tanks;
- welcomes support people, who are there to assist;
- welcomes people with service animals;
- ensures accessibility is maintained as intended (ramps, wide aisles, removal of clutter);
- lets customers know when accessible features and services are not available by posting a Notice of Service Disruption form, along with other channels such as social media;
- invites customers to provide feedback;
- trains all faculty and staff on accessible customer service, including reasonable accommodations under The Human Rights Code (Manitoba);
- ensures all public events are accessible; and
- declares our commitment to customer service and accessibility through the University of Winnipeg Human Rights and Diversity Office website.
  https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect/ama/statement-of-commitment.html

**Employment Standard – In Progress (Due May 1, 2021)**

On May 1, 2019, the Accessibility Standard for Employment called on employers to consider reasonable accommodation at various stages of employment as it applies to their organization. This includes recruitment, offer of employment, on the job, return to work, and training (due May 1, 2021). The Employment Standard also requires that individualized plans be created for employees who may need assistance during emergencies (due May 1, 2020).

To ensure the safety of our students, faculty, and staff with disabilities, in early 2020 the University created emergency response information to help those with barriers stay safe during emergencies. Additionally, we developed a process to create individual plans for those who require assistance during an emergency. This process includes gathering information about barriers, an individual meeting to create a plan to address any barriers, and gaining permission from those with barriers to share information with fire wardens and any other individuals providing help during an emergency. The availability of individualized emergency plans was promoted to our community and education was provided to senior leaders and management.

The University's website contains information and a form to gather information about barriers, linked from several key website locations to ensure maximum visibility. The main page is located here: https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/emergency-guidelines/resources/employee-emergency-information.html.

In further compliance with the Employment Standard, the Human Rights and Diversity Office has been working on an accommodation training module for staff members involved in hiring, training, managing, promoting, redeploying, and terminating employees, as well as those involved in developing and implementing employment policies and practices. The accommodation training will supplement existing training and include instruction about making employment opportunities accessible, how to interact and communicate with persons disabled by barriers (including those who require an assistive device(s), support person, or service animal), and a review of The Human Rights Code, The AMA, and the AMA Employment Standard. Staff will be trained in early 2021.

The Human Rights and Diversity Office will also complete its audit of employment practices in early 2021 to ensure full compliance with the Employment Standard and related best practices.


## PART 1 – BASELINE REPORT

### A. Overview of Accessibility at The University of Winnipeg

Being mindful of serving all members of our University community with dignity and respect, at The University of Winnipeg we view accessibility as a collaborative enterprise in which all units are involved in fostering a culture of inclusion for persons with disabilities. The first point of contact for faculty and all administrative staff requiring information and/or services pertaining to disability accommodation is Human Resources. For students, Accessibility Services (AS) and Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services (DHoHS) in the Accessibility Resource Centre (ARC) are available. These offices facilitate and promote the ongoing development of an accessible learning environment and provide students with disabilities the opportunity to participate fully in all aspects of campus life.

The Human Rights & Diversity Office (HRDO) also has a key role in reviewing institutional accessibility toward ensuring AMA compliance and ensuring that that every member of the University Community has the right to participate, learn and work in an inclusive and respectful working and learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment.

The AMA Steering Committee serves as the forum for supporting the consultative process, and discussing, proposing and reviewing strategies, with the principal objective of supporting and assisting the University community on the scope and impact of the AMA. At The University of Winnipeg, committee collaboration is an important component in the development and rolling out of the Accessibility Plan and to this end AMA Steering Committee has responsibility to:

- Bring institutional awareness of the AMA itself and the Accessibility Standards;
- Develop an understanding of barriers that may exist with regard to our students, staff, faculty and community members who access The University of Winnipeg's facilities, programs, courses, and services;
- Consider the full range of disabilities in identifying barriers and aids in the reduction of them;
- Serve as the principal institutional body to provide input to the Manitoba Government on the development of future Accessibility Standards;
- Encourage actions toward addressing barriers and gaps, including business practices and ways to shape greater awareness and knowledge, including new ways of identifying and meeting the needs of people with disabilities;
- Engage with appropriate individuals in the development of actions and practices to build awareness and understanding of changes as a result of the AMA;
- Provide appropriate education and information, as well as supports to implement the plans and actions;
- Ensure that all materials produced by the committee, whether written or otherwise, are clear and in plain language, concise, logical and unambiguous;
- Make information pertaining to AMA recommendations and plans to the University Community, in an inclusive and accessible manner;

- Develop The University of Winnipeg's Accessibility Plan (required to be prepared and submitted once every two years) and ensure that appropriate steps are being taken to address any gaps identified in the plan.

## B. Process for Developing our Accessibility Plan and Updates

The Unit Self Audit Process was a requirement toward identifying any barriers to accessibility for members of our University community. A detailed PowerPoint presentation was created that outlined relevant information required for completing the Unit Self Audit which accompanied circulation of the Self Audit Form to various units across University. During the process:

- All Units were invited to participate in the self-audit process with was conducted from October 28 to November 11, 2016
- A follow-up reminder was sent out on November 4, 2016
- The Self Audit PowerPoint presentation was posted on the Human Rights & Diversity webpage and further notification was provided by email to all units including two postings in the Faculty & Staff Bulletin
- A total of 22 self-audit forms were sent out and 16 were received; 3 units requested direct meetings
- Interviews were conducted with Deans from Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Science and the team at from the Technology Solutions Centre

The following other components were incorporated into the consultation process:

- An AMA webpage was created by the Human Rights & Diversity Office which included information on the AMA and  Accessibility Plan and consultations process
- A Focus Group was held on November 7, 2016 for students receiving services from Accessibility Services to get feedback
- Consultations took place with UWFA and UWSA
- Collaboration with the with Post-Secondary Institutions (PSI) network to create online training modules for introducing mandatory training on the First Standard
- Consultation with Campus disability groups – (ongoing during 2016-17 academic year)
- AMA University of Winnipeg Survey (faculty, staff & students) – November 23-December 7, 2016)

The University utilized the information obtained from consultations process to celebrate successes, identify barriers and prepare the Accessibility Plan.

***Updates to the Accessibility Plan***

In May 2018, all Units were asked to update their self-audit forms and to ensure that any outstanding staff training was completed. Many Units reported additional successes, as well as plans to address outstanding barriers. Individual Units were contacted again in 2019 to verify their information and to provide a further update. These updates have been incorporated into the Plan.

In May 2018, an Accessibility Survey was added to the AMA section of the Human Rights and Diversity Office website to facilitate the collection of feedback from students and staff.

In 2020, the Accessibility Survey was updated and promoted to staff and students to obtain additional feedback about any outstanding barriers. Feedback obtained from the survey is being reviewed and will help inform future plans for addressing barriers.

The Accessibility Plan has been continually reviewed and updated, most recently in 2020.

## B. Accessibility Achievements

The following list provides just a few examples of accessibility initiatives undertaken by The University of Winnipeg which tell of its strong commitment to removing barriers and toward creating an institutional culture that values inclusion and accessibility.

## 1) Institutional Achievements

- McFeetors Hall - won the 2010 City of Winnipeg Accessibility Award.
- Richardson Science Centre won the 2012 City of Winnipeg Accessibility Award; all of the labs ad classrooms are completely accessible.
- Construction of Leatherdale Hall (to be completed in Spring 2017); the new space will include ground level access to an existing elevator which will provide greater accessibility to our campus and is an example of The University of Winnipeg's commitment to making historic buildings accessible.
- Downtown Commons has been space made fully accessible with braille and/or picture signage throughout.
- A robust Accessibility Services (AS) department provides services to over 300-400 students with disabilities each year; feedback obtained from students in a focus group who are using these services confirmed that they are highly regarded and seen by students as a valued and essential element of their academic experiences.

- The expertise of staff within AS, particularly in regard to students with invisible disabilities is consistently viewed as an invaluable source of support by students using the service.
- Notices advising students of the availability of AS appear on all course outlines circulated to students at beginning of every term.
- Members of Security Services are made available for students who require assistance locating classes or getting to their vehicles or bus stops.
- A policy was created to address an accessibility barrier created when parkade elevators are out of order; at the time of registering for the parking spot, individuals with disabilities affecting their mobility may also register to receive notice by e-mail immediately with the offer of an alternate accessible parking spot to be used until elevators become operational.
- The University participates in Winnipeg's Pride Celebrations, including sponsoring a float in the parade; the invitation to students, faculty and staff includes an active offer of accommodation for anyone requiring assistance.
- An additional access ramp was recently purchased to ensure that during convocation ceremonies, all graduating students and anyone in the platform party will enjoy accessible and dignified entrances to and exits from the stage.
- All videos that are used in Video-on-Demand programs are captioned and transcribed when uploaded so that a transcript can allow for a searchable database on keywords and/or topics.
- Collaboration with the Accessibility Office aids in any requests for "captions" and which are uploaded and displayed as closed captions.

*Update*:
- All faculty and staff are required to complete online AMA training. Both Human Resources and individual unit managers monitor participation to ensure that training is completed. Additional in-person training is provided by the Human Rights and Diversity Office.
- The Service Animal on Campus Policy and Procedures were passed in November 2016 to provide additional guidance to the campus community about service animals, and faculty guidelines were created in 2018.
- An Accessibility Hub was launched in 2019 to provide additional information about available resources and accessibility supports both on and off-campus
- Emergency response information and an individualized plan process was created in early 2020 to ensure the safety of all community members in the event of an emergency
- A Sexual Violence and Human Rights Advisor (SVHRA) was hired in 2020 to support the activities of the Human Rights and Diversity Office. The new SVHRA assists with educational efforts, expanding online resources and social media, and supporting those accessing services

- The online feedback form for collecting information about barriers was updated in 2020 to allow for more details to be provided
- In 2020 there was record attendance at Human Rights and Diversity Office training including in the area of respectful workplace/human rights
- Training regarding employment equity, unconscious bias, and human rights (including the duty to accommodate) was provided to faculty/staff involved in performance review and hiring processes in 2019-2020, and ongoing
- In 2020 work began on a project to provide information and training to help better support students with learning disabilities
- In 2020 work began on a formal Employment Equity/EDI strategy to increase representation and remove barriers for members of equity-seeking groups (including persons with disabilities) amongst faculty and staff, which in turn will also improve the student experience and contribute to institutional success

2) **Unit Successes**

- **Human Resources** - ensures that the space booked is accessible for all individuals for all interviews or meetings that occur outside of the HR offices; HR website lists the updated Respectful Learning & Working Environment policy and Workplace Accommodation Policy. *Update*: An active offer of accommodation is included in job postings and accommodation is provided to applicants as required. In 2018, a Health and Wellness Specialist was hired to facilitate employee accommodations and return to work programs. Faculty/staff involved in hiring processes are trained in employment equity, unconscious bias, and human rights, including the duty to accommodate.

- **Academic Advising** - preliminary accessibility audit of the Student Services Centre was done before and just after Student Services moved into 489 Portage; this was completed by several staff members, including a staff member with a disability and a consultation was done with a student with a disability so several items have already been addressed. These included:
    - lowering the paper towel holders in the accessible washroom;
    - bringing in a second, lower reception desk;
    - installing an accessible door button on an entrance to the Centre;
    - arranging for a new Handi-Transit pick up location just outside the building;
    - developing processes to serve student with accessibility needs who cannot wait for a long period of time in a crowded waiting room.

- **Accessibility Services** - The Accessibility Resource Centre is a new custom-designed space which has many accessibility features. There are smooth floors for ease of

mobility; dimmable, non-fluorescent lights throughout; wider doorways for wheelchair access; two entrances making the space more open and easy to access from two different University buildings; it has a student resource centre with tables and student use computers with accessible technology for students to do homework in the space; it has four private test/exam rooms with accessible technology for student use during tests/exams.

- **Campus Living** - recently completed a review of application specifically focusing on the accessibility page; this page along with all others now only asks for the minimum information required in order to best support students during their stay in residence. With its move to the new Student Services Centre, the Campus Living Office can now be accessed through the use of accessible buttons on the doors to enter the space.

- **Aboriginal Student Service Centre** - has a highly successful *Transition Year Program* (in its 17th year) that was created to assist new University of Winnipeg Indigenous students in developing the academic and coping skills that will foster post-secondary success; The *University Preparatory Program* (UPP) is designed as a bridging program that makes post-secondary education possible for adult learners who do not meet university admission requirements; ASSC was relocated from the basement of Bryce Hall to the then newly created space in Lockhart - up until that point in time, ASSC was not accessible (no elevator or ramp access); In Lockhart, there is elevator, escalator, and ramp access.

- **International Student Services** - In 2016, ISS was relocated to 473 Portage Avenue (Student Lounge) and 475 Portage Avenue (Student Services Centre); the previous location (Sparling) was not accessible and required most events and activities to take place outside of the Centre; with the new location, the majority of the activities, workshops, and events are now held on-site.

- **Technology Sector and The Centre for Academic Technology** - Ongoing approaches to reviewing technology solutions through an accessibility and inclusion lens. *Update:* All Video on Demand content is streamed using the "Panopto" video platform that supports flexible close captioning options and allows for adaptive playback across all platforms and devices.  Videos undergo automated indexing through Automated Speech Recognition (ASR) and Optical Character Recognition (OCR) to allow viewers to search for content. Other functions include note taking, bookmarking, and adjustable playback speeds.  An improved audio system was provided to magnify sound in two theatre classrooms.  The On-Line Learning Management System "Brightspace" was developed utilizing global accessibility standards, and is interoperable with assistive technologies.  Screen mirroring function of new web

conferencing tools will be used by note takers to enhance services to hard of hearing students.  Windows and Mac workstations have built-in Accessibility Features including screen magnification.

- **The Centre for Academic Technology** – works closely with Accessibility Services, assisting with the integration,  implementation and ongoing support of accessibility technologies used in the unit to provide its services

- **Marketing & Communications -** Creation of various communications materials that support institutional accessibility initiatives and offerings, such as an [Accessibility Services brochure](#) and a campus accessibility map; consulted with Accessibility Services staff towards creating new way finding signage; adjusted the UWinnipeg website to comply with contrast recommendations provided by the WebAIM online accessibility tool. *Update*: A Siteimprove software licence was purchased in 2017 to identify website accessibility issues and many improvements were made. In 2018, DubBot was purchased to continue to identify and repair accessibility issues. DubBot has increased the website's accessibility score to 75%.

  Marketing & Communications is currently working on a revamped website design, which is anticipated to be implemented in early 2020 and will further enhance online accessibility.

- **Faculty of Education –** *Update*: The faculty's integrated and after-degree academic advisors hold information sessions throughout the year for those who prefer and require face-to-face meetings. Support staff are also available by phone or email as an alternative to online information.

  The faculty also established a policy of expanded admission to help recruit education students who reflect the diversity of the Manitoba population, including a special consideration category for persons with disabilities.

  The Post Baccalaureate Diploma Program in Education, School Counselling Stream has been made more accessible by incorporating a larger number of divisions in which students are placed. In addition, an Academic Advisor visits this classroom at the start of each term to have a conversation with students about setting up practicum placements in the upcoming term.

  Additional processes were developed to ensure better communication about out-of-order elevators in their area, that accessibility feedback is reviewed and responded to, to allow for alternative materials requests, and that support persons are welcomed.

- **Library**
Accessible Formats Service: If an alt-format title is requested for a book in the library collection, it can purchase it through the "Patron Driven Acquisitions" budget if an accessible e-version is available.  For obtaining course content in an accessible format, the Library refers users to the University's Accessibility Services - At least 50 of our DVDs and VHS tapes are closed-captioned. Documents (mostly in pdf format) that are added to the University's WinnSpace are run through OCR, and have embedded metadata that enhances accessibility.

Adaptive Technology: Two multimedia workstations with Adaptive Technology are available on a priority basis in the Reference area on the fourth floor with the following technology being available:

- JAWS Screen reader
- ABBYY Finereader: Scan any document for Optical Character Recognition (OCR) conversion
- WebbIE web browser: easy-to read, text-only browser
- *Adobe Acrobat* X *Pro accessibility* checker

Item Retrieval: Because some of our higher level shelving is not universally accessible, the Library offers to retrieve books for persons in wheelchairs or unable to reach. Users are encouraged to provide a list of call numbers to the staff at the Circulation Desk or the Librarian for Accessibility Services. Depending on timing and staff availability retrieval may be immediate, or take up to several hours.

*Update:*

An Accessibility working group was formed to coordinate and execute a Library-specific accessibility plan.

Reserves has established basic accessibility guidelines for materials shared through eReserves to facilitate use of screen readers.

Reference outreach: one-on-one research assistance in offered in the ARC once a week and in-depth reference consultations are offered in librarians' offices for students with disabilities.

Photocopying: assistance with photocopying is available for students with mobility impairments, and all printers are wheelchair accessible (rotating touchscreen can be swiveled to any viewing angle).

ASL interpreters offered by DHoHS are welcomed when visiting the library and for events held in the library. Service animals are also welcomed.

Physical Accessibility: the library is accessible via elevators. Two sets of accessible washrooms, a wheelchair-accessible printer, and two priority access workstations and one accessible quick-access workstation for persons using wheelchairs or mobility devices are available.

Quiet Group Study rooms: may be booked by students for two hours at a time. There is also an Accessible Quiet Room available for up to 5 people on a drop-in basis; equipped with power-operated door, height-adjustable tables, non-fluorescent lighting, sofa, telephone to Circulation desk, and a visual fire alarm.

Events: held in accessible locations and provisions are made for persons with disabilities, including appropriate seating and ASL interpreters.

- **Physical Plant – *Update:*** supports other units with physical accessibility issues such as during events, and work on improving the built environment is ongoing as part of their accessibility and universal design site assessment. For example, door operators were added to 25 washrooms on campus in 2017 and additional operators were added in 2019 including the Wesley Hall Basement Corridor and 4C10 (Centennial Hall). Physical plant also ensures that the Notice of Service Interruption form is posted when elevators are down. A recent comprehensive Facilities Condition Assessment produced a 10 year capital renewal plan which will assist with addressing accessibility deficiencies in each building.

- **Finance - *Update***: ensures that required forms are provided in alternate forms upon request, and that staff assist people who may have difficulty accessing their space.

## C. Accessibility Barriers

1. **Attitudinal Barriers** - includes stereotypes and assumptions which may often be the biggest barrier. These barriers may be based on stereotypes or assumptions that limit opportunities to people with disabilities. An example would be speaking to a support person who is accompanying a person with a disability, instead of communicating with the person

with a disability directly. The following are some Attitudinal Barriers that have been identified through the audit process:

- Staff at The University of Winnipeg are very respectful toward people with disabilities; however additional training has been identified as an opportunity to ensure any small gaps such as proper use of preferred language, and how to offer respectful assistance;

- Assumption that all students would be able to easily access our application and website which may not always be correct.

***Progress update***: the vast majority of staff members have completed online AMA training, and additional training about human rights obligations was offered in 2018-2020 (and ongoing). Understanding of technology barriers has improved and changes have been made to the website and documents to improve accessibility. Accommodation training will be provided in early 2021 to all staff involved in hiring, promotion, supervision, termination, and employment policy development. Training about the duty to accommodate students is being developed and will be offered to all faculty/staff in 2021.

2. **Architectural and Physical** - these barriers exist when the environment presents challenges that make it difficult for some people to easily get into a location. Examples could include where a door knob cannot be turned by a person with limited mobility or strength, or where a hallway or door is too narrow to allow a person who uses a wheelchair to pass through safely. The following are some Architectural and Physical barriers that have been identified:

- Library: Newspaper Shelving - Shelving unit too high & shelves are likely too heavy to lift; difficult to retrieve local newspaper from display boxes difficult to retrieve the daily paper from display; furniture in this area sometimes blocks fire exit – ***see update below***;

- McFeetors Hall: accessible units available but do not have accessible entrance buttons to be able to access the units or hallways;

- Student Career Services: Counter height in the reception area is too high for people who use wheelchairs or other seated mobility devises and an automatic door opener button would assist in the accessible washrooms at the Student Services Centre. ***– see update below.***

***Progress update:*** Physical Plant completed a comprehensive Facilities Condition Assessment which has produced a 10 year capital renewal plan. This contains a segment

specifically designated to accessibility deficiencies in each building, which will assist with budgeting and prioritizing accessibility projects on campus over the next 10 years.

It is currently proposed to add door operators over the upcoming year to the following areas on campus:

    a. Manitoba Hall Theatres
    b. Asper Theatre - Basement Hall way
    c. Uplink Computer Lab
    d. Lockhart 2L01 (Aboriginal Students Services Centre)

Installation of door operators in the Wesley Hall Basement Corridor and 4C10 in Centennial Hall are in process, or completed.

The Library moved newspapers to the low cases in the reading lounge on the 4th floor, so they are now more accessible.

The Student Services Centre staff come out from behind the counter to provide service to students for whom the counter is too high while renovations to adjust the counter height are being considered. The staff washroom now has a second, lower paper towel holder.

The Bill Wedlake Fitness Centre is considering a redesign of the space and purchase of replacement equipment, in the context of a multi-year plan. Several pieces of exercise equipment have been removed from the 2nd level of the Fitness Centre, opening up more space for users. A process to audit the space has been initiated with the collection of quotations from qualified service providers. The audit will contribute to development of long term plans including improved accessibility.

3. **Informational & Communicational Barriers** – such barriers exist when information is offered in a form that works for some people, but not all. For example, print on documents or on websites may be too small for some people to read, and public address systems often alert only people who can hear. The following are some Informational and Communicational  barriers that have been identified:

- When an individual is contacted for an interview or meeting, we must ensure that accessibility needs are addressed by an Active Offer for any services they may require (e.g. Screen reader, ASL interpreter or any other accommodation that they would require);

- Any training & development conducted by HR staff should also include an Active Offer for those attending who may need accommodation;

- Webpages are not always accessible, including alternate text on all images for persons who use screen reading software;

- Not all visuals in PowerPoint presentations are described;

- We do not have a formal feedback mechanism in place for customer service feedback although we do receive feedback and respond appropriately.

*Progress update:* Human Resources includes an Active Offer during the recruitment process; the website is more accessible following use of Siteimprove/DubBot; the Human Rights and Diversity website now includes a recently updated feedback survey form and an Active Offer of alternate formats.

4. **Technology Barriers** - These barriers occur when technology, or the way it is used, is not accessible. Examples include websites that are not accessible to people with visual impairments that use screen reader software; or accepting only online registration forms for programs. The following are some Technology Barriers that have been identified:

- The University's content management system, Cascade, does have some built-in accessibility features, including an accessibility checker that looks for basic 508 compliance, and a tool for inserting images that forces the use of an alt attribute in image tags.

- The Library subscribes to/purchases various online products, such as WorldCat Local, LibGuides, RefWorks, and various databases. These products may not all be accessible. It would be useful to conduct a review of the accessibility of these various products, and consider how accessibility might be incorporated into the purchase of future online products.

*Progress update:* Cascade server has been updated and now includes a plug-in which has allowed Communications to more easily identify and repair accessibility issues.

5. **Systemic Barriers** - Systemic barriers are usually created by policies and procedures. Often, a policy is applied to everyone equally but has a negative impact on individuals or groups of persons with disabilities (an example would be a policy which requires all students to complete exams in a specific time period, which would have a negative impact on students with learning disabilities). The following are some Systemic Barriers that have been identified:

- Library: Fines Policy - Considering adding provisions for waiving fines with official documentation of health/accessibility issues where those issues make returning items within the allotted period difficult – ***see update below;***

- Library: Reference Services Policy - Reference Service policy in draft stage. Does contain provisions for providing service to people with disabilities. Consider including people with accessibilities issues as one of the patron types to whom we offer In-depth reference appointments in the "Types of Reference Service" section of the document. – ***see update below.***

***Progress update:*** Library patrons can appeal their library fines and in cases where documentation of health/accessibility issues has been presented, fines are waived.  The fines policy is expected to be updated later this year and will include language confirming this practice.

One-on-one research assistance in offered in the Accessibility Resource Centre once a week and in-depth reference consultations are offered in librarians' offices for students with disabilities.

# PART 2 – ACCESSIBILITY PLAN (updated)

## A. Statement of Commitment

The University of Winnipeg's approach to accessibility is premised on collective responsibility where all members of our community play a role in fostering a barrier-free and welcoming working and learning environment. We believe that our collective commitment to accessibility planning accords the best opportunities and outcomes toward mainstreaming a culture of accessibility. Consistent with our Strategic Directions goals of access, academic excellence and student, staff and faculty recruitment and retention, we are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all members of our community, with equal access and participation for everyone. We are committed to identifying, removing and preventing barriers to full participation in society that may be experience by persons with disabilities, so as to maintain their dignity and independence.

## B. Policies

- Respectful Working and learning Environment Policy
- Workplace Accommodation Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Service Animals on Campus Policy

## C. Actions

The actions in our Accessibility Plan applies our wider community which includes faculty, staff, and volunteers, students on placement or independent contractors who interact with persons with disabilities who access our services or use our facilities. The members of our community share in the responsibility for complying with and toward demonstrating behaviours that are consistent with the First and Second Standards under the AMA and goals of our Accessibility Plan. In addition, faculty and administrative heads, upon consulting and collaborating, where necessary with Accessibility Services, Human Resources and/or the Human Rights Office are responsible for providing support, guidance and encouraging staff education and supporting our institution's compliance with the legislation. The AMA Steering Committee will retain a leading role in reviewing the process and deadlines, as the other standards under the AMA are rolled out.

In recognizing the needs of persons with disabilities, the University of Winnipeg remains committed to excellence when fostering an inclusive accessible environment when serving all members of our community. Therefore in compliance with the First and Second Standard we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

## 1) Communication

| Action | Expected Outcome |
|---|---|
| ▪ Communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability and in a consistent manner that takes into account the specific needs of their disability(ies)<br><br>▪ Relay telephone, e-mail, TTY, or another communication medium, if communication by telephone is not suitable or is not available<br><br>▪ Adhere to making requested documents, (as agreed upon by the University and the person with the disability),available in an alternate format that takes into account the person's disability(ies)<br><br>▪ Training all University of Winnipeg employees on how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities<br><br>▪ Providing resources and training to faculty and staff regarding the duty to accommodate students, including making education more accessible to students with learning disabilities | ▪ Allowing persons with disabilities to clearly communicate their needs and mainstreaming disability issues in all communications and documents provided<br><br>▪ Ensuring the success of all students, including those disabled by barriers |

## 2) Recruitment Processes

| Action | Expected Outcome |
|---|---|
| ▪ Notify employees and managers about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in recruitment process<br><br>▪ Inform job applicant during the recruitment process that accommodations are available upon request, should the applicant be selected for interview<br><br>▪ Consult with the job applicant and provide accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs stemming from the disability(ies)<br><br>▪ Notify successful applicant on all relevant University of Winnipeg policies for accommodating employees with disabilities<br><br>▪ Training of University of Winnipeg employees involved with hiring, promotion, supervision, termination, and employment policy development regarding accommodation and related requirements. | ▪ More streamlined and efficient recruitment process in which accessible becomes an integral consideration as all times<br><br>▪ Job applicants and employees are provided with any necessary accommodation, in compliance with The Human Rights Code and The AMA and regulations |

## 3) Assistive Devices

| Action | Expected Outcome |
|---|---|
| <ul><li>Ensure that University of Winnipeg staff are adequately trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by persons using our goods or accessing our services</li><li>Ensure that certain designated staff are familiar with the following assistive devices/services available on our premises for persons with disabilities:<ul><li>TTY</li><li>Telephone relay services</li><li>FM systems</li><li>CCTV</li><li>Digital recorders</li><li>Scanners</li><li>Assistive technology and software</li><li>Alternate format production</li><li>Academic accommodations for persons with disabilities</li><li>Accessible pedestrian routes inside and outside buildings</li><li>Multiple format campus accessibility maps showing accessible entry points, washrooms facilities and meeting more</li></ul></li></ul> | <ul><li>All persons using assistive devices or requiring a support person or service animal are able to fully and consistently access goods/services in a respectful way</li><li>More consistent application on benefits of using technologies toward improved accessibility of good and services for persons with disabilities</li></ul> |

### 4) Procurement of Goods & Services

| Action | Expected Outcome |
|---|---|
| - Encourage an accessibility criteria when procuring or acquiring goods and services form external partners<br><br>- Promote accessibility considerations when acquiring or purchasing good and services with RFPs to discuss issue persons with disabilities, if relevant to the procurement process | - Improved procurement process that acknowledges when disability considerations may be applicable |

### 5) Disability Accommodation

| Action | Expected Outcome |
|---|---|
| - Build disability accommodation into all communications interactions with employees who self-identify as having a disability<br><br>- Develop a process for employees returning to work or students returning to classes who require disability accommodations<br><br>- Make available, upon request, steps to be taken for return to work or return to classes while taking individual accommodation plans into consideration<br><br>- Training of University of Winnipeg employees involved with hiring, promotion, supervision, termination, and employment policy development regarding accommodation and related requirements | - Embedding disability accommodation into all practices including ensuring safety in the event of an emergency and course delivery/instruction |

| Action | |
|---|---|
| ▪ Training of University of Winnipeg faculty regarding the duty to accommodate students disabled by barriers, including those with learning disabilities<br><br>▪ Providing emergency response information and individualized plans for students/staff requiring assistance in the event of an emergency | |

## 6) Administrative and Financial Transactions

| Action | Expected Outcome |
|---|---|
| ▪ Provide accessible administrative and financial documents in alternate formats will to be made available immediately upon request<br><br>▪ Ensure that financial records generated electronically will be made accessible in various formats upon request<br><br>▪ Have a designated staff person, within each unit, available to answer questions regarding all administrative and financial documents in person, by telephone or email | ▪ More consistent practice in ensuring accessible operations in administrative and financial transactions |

## 7) Training

| Action | Expected Outcome |
|---|---|
| <ul><li>Ensure that accessibility awareness training is provided to employees and volunteers following commencement of their duties, and ensure that ongoing training is provided as policies, procedures and practices change.</li><li>Accessibility awareness training to include:<ul><li>The purposes of the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and the requirements of the the First Standard;</li><li>How to interact with persons with disabilities in a manner that respects their dignity and independence;</li><li>How to interact and communicate with persons in a manner that takes into account their disabilities;</li><li>What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing any goods and services;</li><li>University of Winnipeg's policies, practices and procedures relating to the First Standard</li></ul></li><li>Accommodation training (Second Standard) to include:<ul><li>How employment opportunities may be made accessible to persons disabled by barriers</li><li>How to interact and communicate with persons disabled by barriers (including those using assistive devices or requiring the use of a support person or service animal)</li></ul></li></ul> | <ul><li>Ensuring that all employees at the University of Winnipeg have baseline training on the AMA and the First Standard; mandatory online training and have access to voluntary accessibility related training workshops</li><li>Ensuring that all employees involved with hiring, promotion, supervision, termination, and employment policy development are aware of the duty to accommodate, and that all job applicants and employees are provided with reasonable accommodation</li><li>Ensuring that students are provided with reasonable accommodation during their studies and related activities</li></ul> |

| | |
|---|---|
| • A review of The Human Rights Code, The AMA, and the Employment Standard<br><br><br>■ Other staff/faculty training including:<br>    • Duty to accommodate students, including those with learning disabilities<br>    • General respectful working and learning environment obligations, including human rights<br>    • Unconscious bias training to reduce the impact of bias during the hiring process and employment<br>    • Employment equity program and best practices | |

## 8) Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

| Action | Expected Outcome |
|---|---|
| ▪ Registering and welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on campus<br><br>▪ Ensuring that other measures are made available to enable persons with disabilities the same opportunities, if the service animal is excluded by law<br><br>▪ Registering and welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person<br><br>▪ Support persons are not required to pay tuition or incidental fees for courses, unless the support person is also taking the course for credit<br><br>▪ Providing information to faculty regarding welcoming service animals in classrooms | ▪ Improved and consistent practice for person with disabilities requiring the assistance of service animals or service persons |

## 9) Notice of Planned or Unplanned Disruption

| Action | Expected Outcome |
|---|---|
| ▪ Provide notice of planned or unplanned disruption of services to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any that may be available<br><br>▪ Provide notice as soon as reasonably possible, in instances of unexpected temporary disruptions. Where advance notice is not possible, notice will be provided as soon as reasonably possible<br><br>▪ Ensure that notice will include the reason(s) for and information about the disruption, anticipated duration, description of alternate facilities or services, if available; and contact information<br><br>(See: **Appendix A** – Notice of Service Disruption Form) | ▪ Clear and consistent process for communicating notification on service disruptions(s)<br><br>▪ More accessible campus for those disabled by physical barriers |

**10) Feedback process**

| Action | Expected Outcome |
|---|---|
| ▪ Ensure that a feedback process is in place, in order to identify areas that require change and that it encourages continuous service improvements<br><br>▪ Feedback can be provided to any member of the AMA Accessibility Steering Committee or by using the Accessibility Feedback Form *(See: **Appendix B**)* which is available electronically or in an alternate format, if requested<br><br>▪ Names and contact information of members of the AMA Accessibility Steering Committee to be listed in the Human Rights & Diversity Office section of University website<br><br>▪ Allow for feedback to be provided in person, by telephone, in writing, by e-mail or any other method of communication that is accessible to the person(s)<br><br>▪ Where possible, feedback to be addressed immediately, while some complaints, suggestions or recommendations may require additional to address and must be reviewed<br><br>▪ Updated feedback from the 2020 survey is being analysed and will be passed on to the appropriate departments for follow-up including offering additional training to faculty/staff to help ensure that informational and attitudinal barriers are addressed, that technological barriers are minimized or eliminated where possible, and | ▪ Robust feedback process for dealing with queries and complaints on institutional accessibility issues |

| that elimination of physical barriers are prioritized. | |
|---|---|

**APPENDIX A**

# Notice of Service Disruption

**Duration of Disruption:**

**Commencing:** _____

**Ending:**_____

**Nature of Service Disruption:**

_____
_____
_____
_____

**Alternative Services:**

_____
_____
_____
_____

**Additional Information or Assistance:**

**Contact person:** _____

**Location:** _____ **Email:** _____

**Telephone:** _____ **TTY:** _____

This notice is posted in compliance with the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* (Regulation 171/2015)

**Date Posted:** _____

We  apologize for any inconvenience caused by this disruption.

**APPENDIX B**



**THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG** | **50 YEARS**     DISCOVER · ACHIEVE · BELONG

## Accessibility Feedback Form

1.    **Describe any accessibility barriers or obstacles at the University that you have observed or experienced.**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2.    **Describe any disability-related services or accommodations that you required but were not available through the appropriate department of the University (e.g. Accessibility Services, Human Resources, Physical Plant, etc.).**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3.    **Please provide suggestions for change involving the instructional/learning or work environment at The University of Winnipeg that would improve access or remove barriers for persons with disabilities.**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. **Please identify any policies, practices, programs or services that you are aware of that you believe create barriers for persons with disabilities.**

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____


**Optional** *(but required if you request us to contact you):*


Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

*Please use the last page of this questionnaire for additional comments and suggestions*


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**Please deliver your comments or completed questionnaire:**

**In Person:**

Print and deliver a copy of this completed questionnaire to the Human Rights & Diversity Office (HRDO)

**By Telephone:**

Referring to the questionnaire, you may arrange to provide your comments by calling: **204-988-7508.**

**By Email:**

Attach a completed electronic copy of this questionnaire to an email message to**:** s.belding@uwinnipeg.ca

**Online:** https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect/ama/accessibility-survey1.html

**By Fax:** 204-774-2935

**By Mail:** Send your completed questionnaire to:

Human Rights & Diversity Office (HRDO)
The University of Winnipeg
515 Portage Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9

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