The University of Manitoba

Accessibility Plan

2016-2017
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PREAMBLE

Under the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA), each organization is required to develop and publish a plan to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility. The plan will cover accessibility issues under each standard as it comes into effect, eventually covering all five standards (Customer Service, Employment, Information and Communications, Transportation, and the Built Environment). As per the AMA legislation, the University is obligated to produce its first plan by the end of 2016, and to update it every second year.
1. A MESSAGE FROM…

**President David Barnard:** At the University of Manitoba, we strive for an inclusive environment that supports all abilities. The University wishes to promote and support a community that embraces accessibility, diversity and inclusion, provides for equality of opportunity, and recognizes the dignity of all people.

We are committed to creating a welcoming campus for visitors and an outstanding work and learning experience for our students, faculty and staff. I commend the work of the Accessibility Steering Committee for their focus and dedication in ensuring the University meets the requirements of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

As outlined in Taking Our Place: University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020, we are committed to increasing student, staff, faculty and leadership diversity, especially with respect to the inclusion of women, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, gender and sexual minorities, and racialized minorities.

I recognize the importance of this endeavor and support the University in creating an inclusive campus for all.

“The only disability is when people cannot see human potential.”

Debra Ruh, advocate and founder of Ruh Global Communications, a strategic communications & digital marketing firm helping organizations strategically include People with Disabilities (PwD).
Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee:

Human Rights and Conflict Management Officer Jackie Gruber and
Associate Vice-President of Human Resources Greg Juliano

We are very pleased and excited to introduce the University of
Manitoba's very first Accessibility Plan. The University of Manitoba
has been leading the way towards accessibility for some time and
has embraced the legislation from the beginning.

For their commitment, time and hard work, we would like to thank
all members of the Steering Committee and the Customer Service,
Accessibility Planning and Information and Communication
sub-committees. We would especially like to thank Accessibility
Coordinator, Krystyl Bergen, for her dedication and initiative.

We dedicate the Accessibility Plan 2016 plan to those individuals
who strive for accessibility and inclusion throughout our
community.

This is just the beginning. We look forward to implementing the
remaining standards of the AMA and to the continued hard work
of our community members towards an accessible and inclusive
campus for all.
2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The University of Manitoba’s Commitment to Accessibility

On December 5, 2013 the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) became law. Under this legislation, the Government of Manitoba is developing a set of mandatory standards to address barriers to accessibility with respect to five areas: Customer Service, Employment, Information and Communication, Transportation, and Built Environment.

The University of Manitoba supports the AMA. Implementing the AMA will help remove barriers to education and lead to a more encouraging and welcoming environment for all students, faculty, staff, and all members of the community. We want to promote inclusion and diversity and achieve higher levels of accessibility.

On November 1, 2015 the Customer Service standard came into effect. The University is currently working on a plan with identified stakeholders to address this standard which includes broad based education and training to the community. The University will have until November 1, 2017 to become compliant with this standard.

While the AMA requires the Accessibility Plan be updated every two (2) years, the University of Manitoba is committed to updating the Accessibility Plan on an annual basis to consistently address, identify, prevent, and remove all barriers to accessibility.

Accessibility Plan Mission Statement

The University of Manitoba promotes diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in our programs, employment opportunities, and in the conduct of the University’s affairs. We believe in the inherent dignity of all people. We are committed to identifying and removing the barriers that prevent full and meaningful participation in all aspects of campus life. The University will comply with all applicable Federal, Provincial, and Municipal legislation with respect to accessibility and will implement the standards specified under the Accessibility for Manitobans Act.
2.2 Background and Description of the University of Manitoba

For more than 135 years, the University of Manitoba has delivered life-changing learning experiences for our students, and has conducted world-class research and shared our knowledge and discovery to shape our province, country and world.

As Manitoba’s only medical-doctoral university, we offer programs in areas as diverse as the humanities, the visual and performing arts, science, medicine, law, agriculture, engineering and architecture. This strong learning environment has helped nurture a climate of academic excellence. During our history, 97 students have been named Rhodes Scholars, the most from any university in Western Canada.

The University is located on Treaty One territory, on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe peoples and the homeland of the Metis Nation. The University and the Forks of the City of Winnipeg sit at the crossroads of the Anishinaabe, Metis, Cree, Dakota and Oji-Cree Nations.
The University of Manitoba’s campuses are spread out across Manitoba, as we have many campuses and research stations that house our programs and services. These locations include:

**Table 1. UM Campus Stations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campuses and Research Stations</th>
<th>Faculties/Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fort Garry Campus</td>
<td>All faculties/schools and affiliated Colleges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges in the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences at Bannatyne Campus (other than College of Nursing at Fort Garry).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bannatyne Campus</td>
<td>Rady Faculty of Health Sciences and Colleges (College of Nursing at Fort Garry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smartpark</td>
<td>Richardson Centre for Functional Foods and Nurtraceuticals-Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences, Campus Planning Office, External Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point Lands Field Research Laboratory</td>
<td>Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences, Department of Plant Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Norrie Centre</td>
<td>Faculty of Social Work, Inner City Social Work Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>485 Selkirk Avenue, Wpg, MB R2W 2M6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenlea Research Station / Farm</td>
<td>Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences, Department of Animal Science, Ruminant Research Unit, Swine Research Unit, Faculty of Agriculture and Food Science, National Centre for Livestock and the Environment, Department of Plant Science, Faculty of Science, Department of Physics &amp; Astronomy, Astronomical Observatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Lake Field Station</td>
<td>Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources, Department of Geological Sciences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As part of the University’s programs and services there are 2 (two) departments that provide supports to the community, Employee Wellness and Student Accessibility Services.
Employee Wellness

Employee Wellness collaborates with employees who have disabilities, healthcare providers, management, human resources, union representatives, and third party benefits administrators to identify suitable stay-at-work or return-to-work opportunities. These coordinated efforts take into account employee needs, work environment, operational needs and our legal responsibilities.

Some of the assistances that Employee Wellness offers are the day-to-day management of sick leave and long-term disability claims. The office focuses on attending to the wellbeing of affected employees and by so doing, reducing the stressors associated with disability (i.e. linking employees to external supports such as the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)). Employee Wellness develops and communicates return-to-work plans in collaboration with managers, employees and union representatives, and assists managers in determining when and what additional medical information is required. Overall, the role of Employee Wellness is to identify accommodations and transitional job options, monitor and evaluate individual accommodation and return-to-work plans, and promote communication between all stakeholders, while protecting confidential health information. This role also includes providing advice to human resources and managers in the application of the
University’s Attendance Management Program, providing funding to departments where appropriate, to support the provision of reasonable accommodations of employees with disabilities, and facilitating training programs related to disability management, duty-to-accommodate, mental health in the workplace, and attendance management.

The Employee Wellness Team works with all stakeholders to promote accommodations at work. Working together, they will consider any job, task, function or combination of functions or tasks, which are meaningful, productive and can be performed safely by an employee. The key objective is to provide accommodations to all employees that remove workplace barriers. Employee Wellness also administers the Reasonable Accommodation Fund (RAF), to support the provision of accommodations of employees with disabilities.

**Student Accessibility Services**¹

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) exists to support all students with disabilities to fully access their chosen course of study for which they are academically qualified². The majority of supports are provided through academic accommodations, such as extended time for exams. SAS also provides additional support to students by way of programming, and frequent referrals to other supports on campus. Students who have had support recommended and verified by a registered health professional can receive support through SAS. SAS offers accommodations and services based on a student’s individual needs and the academic standards of the student’s particular program.

There are three Fort Garry campus locations, the administrative office, the test/exam centre as well as the assistive technology lab. Supports are also available at Bannatyne campus through the Student Services at Bannatyne Campus office. Advising staff are available for in-person student meetings throughout the year at all U of M campuses. SAS maintains regular office hours at Fort Garry, Bannatyne and the William Norrie campuses.

Student Accessibility Services supports include transcription, note-taking, volunteer note-sharing services, and classroom equipment for improved accessibility. Other supports offered

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² Student Accessibility Procedure http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/media/Student_Accessibility_Procedures_-_2015_01_01.pdf
include ASL-English interpreters and academic attendants who assist on campus and in the classroom. SAS supports student success by providing assistance through meetings and workshops to students to manage aspects of their lives that interfere with academics, improve coping skills, become a self-advocate and learn disability-related job search strategies. 

The assistive technology lab provides training on assistive technology for coursework and exams as well as access to alternate formats for texts and course materials (like e-text, braille and audio). The test/exam centre provides distraction reduced space, and access to exam accommodations such as assistive technology.

The UM Office of Institutional Analysis reported enrollment figures of 29,929 (twenty-nine thousand nine hundred twenty-nine) for 2015-2016. The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario report on Disability in Ontario: Postsecondary education participation rates, student experience and labour market outcomes stated that, “for university students, the range across data sources is also fairly consistent and ranges from 5 (five) to 7 (seven) per cent” (p. 7). This means that within the last academic year it is possible that 2,095 (two thousand ninety-five) students registered at the UM may have had a disability.

Almost all, 96 (ninety-six) percent of the students registered with SAS have a permanent disability. The number of students who are registered with the SAS has increased from 1,047 (one thousand forty-seven) (2013-2014) to 1,100 (one thousand one hundred) (2014-2015) and 1,144 (one thousand one hundred forty-four) (2015-2016).

SAS has analyzed the percentage of registered students from all Faculty/College/School programs across campuses; these statistics can be as low as 1 (one) percent, and as high as 16 (sixteen) percent. A further detailed table showing these statistics can be found within the Student Accessibility Services 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 annual report.

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Table - Students Registered with SAS according to type of Disability 2015-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability Category</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Registered Population with SAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADHD</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asperger Disorder</td>
<td>156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Disability</td>
<td>103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquired Brain Injury</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical/Medical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic illness</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf/Hard of Hearing</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind/Low Vision</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/Unclassified</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1144</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above provides information on students registered with SAS according to disability type, which is the primary disability for the student. The category of students with mental illness or mental health disabilities continues to rise. The percentage of students who present with more than one disability has remained relatively stable (18 (eighteen) percent in 2014-2015 and 17 (seventeen) percent in 2015-2016). (Table taken from Student Accessibility Services 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 Annual Report)

As part of their caseload, the Accessibility Advisors accommodated 1929 (one thousand nine hundred twenty-nine) in-person student meetings. This number has decreased by 261 (two hundred sixty-one) over 2014-2015. Staff report higher levels of email requests and discussions.

Advising staff are available for in-person student meetings throughout the year at all U of M campuses. SAS maintains regular office hours at Fort Garry, Bannatyne and the William Norrie campuses.
2.3 2016: A year in review

Over the last year, the University has taken on several initiatives to show our dedication to accessibility and inclusivity. These initiatives are evident across both the Fort Garry and the Bannatyne campus to remove barriers such as:

- **Attitudinal barriers**, by spreading accessibility awareness and developing employee training that will improve customer service for people with disabilities.

- **Information and Communication** barriers, by developing an online feedback system to allow for anonymous comments or concerns about U of M accessibility, and in the process of developing a communication system for service disruption notifications that will inform the community.

- **Technological barriers**, by beginning to identify a strategy that will address the entire U of M web and digital media, which includes an information session that will help train each unit webpage organizer on online accessibility principles, as well as document accessibility.

- **Systemic barriers**, by writing and implementing support person policies for facilities on campus for the greater community.

- **Physical and Architectural barriers** by seeking opportunities for improved building access.
2.4 Accessibility at the University of Manitoba Achievements

The University has a history of improving accessibility and awareness through Student Accessibility Services, the Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management, and initiatives such as Access Awareness Day. Recently, the U of M has made significant strides in accessibility, including revision of the Accessibility Policy in January 2015 and the Bona Fide Academic Requirements initiative, which is currently underway.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

The achievements are organized into five sections as follows:

Services - Units, positions or programs that provide direct services and support to improve accessibility on campus.

Scholarly Advances - Identification of academic programs that pursue research and scholarship in the areas of accessibility and disability.

Policy and Procedures - Existing University and unit-specific documents that promote and govern accessibility on campus.

Promotion - Events hosted and articles written to promote the accessibility initiatives at the U of M.

Unit Audit Achievements - Highlights from the audit where current ‘active offers’ of accessibility are provided to the community.

SERVICES:

Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management

Each individual has the right to participate, learn, and work in an environment that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices. The mission of the Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management is to promote a respectful working and learning environment in which individuals are treated equitably and diversity is valued.

We work to prevent discrimination and harassment at the U of M by promoting, supporting and administering the University of Manitoba’s Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy in order that students and employees recognize and protect their important rights free from harassment and discrimination.
AMA Website

The University of Manitoba Accessibility for Manitobans Act website was created in November 2015 to bring awareness to the University community of the new legislation, and to provide the most current information on our responsibilities under the Act.

Student Accessibility Services (SAS)

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) exists to support all students with disabilities to fully access their chosen course of study for which they are academically qualified. In 2014, SAS launched an online system for students and faculty to access services and letters of accommodation. The letter of accommodation is sent through the SAS online portal via the University’s JUMP system. The SAS online portal includes letters of accommodation, test booking and details, as well as volunteer note-taker systems.

The SAS online system provides more security for sensitive information and reduces the requirement for paper based forms.

Assistive Technology Lab

SAS opened its Assistive Technology lab at 335 University Centre in February 2016. The lab was funded originally by the Information Systems Technology Students First Project and this year by the Richardson Foundation as part of a donation that supported classroom and laboratory upgrades across campus. There are study carrels with computers, which have different types of assistive technology, and a tutorial room space for students, which includes a large screen monitor for teaching. There are multiple assistive technology programs available, such as Dragon Naturally Speaking which converts voice into text. There are options for students who need text read aloud or highlighted to assist in their learning. The space will be used for exam invigilation for students using assistive technology and during peak periods.

6 Student Accessibility Procedure http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/media/Student_Accessibility_Procedures_-_2015_01_01.pdf
Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Manitoba’s Diversity and Inclusion Program seeks to identify and eliminate potential and real employment barriers and ensure all of our community members are able to fully and meaningfully participate in and contribute to all aspects of campus life.

- Assess employment practices that could provide barriers to persons with disabilities.
- Compare internal representation of persons with disabilities to labour market availability.
- Set short-term and long-term goals to address underrepresentation for persons with disabilities.
- Work with hiring managers to question standard job requirements to ensure they accurately reflect the needs of the unit.
- Enhance partnerships with agencies representing persons with a disability.
- Ensure that those who make hiring decisions have attended the awareness training.
- Ensure every Search and Selection Committee is diverse.
- Provide orientation sessions for all new employees to demonstrate the University’s profile and philosophy of an inclusive culture.
- Review and follow up on the exit interview responses to ensure areas of concern are brought forward and addressed.

University of Manitoba Students’ Union (UMSU) groups

The Following are groups/services provided through UMSU.

Accessibility Centre

Scheduled to open in 2017, the mission of the Accessibility Centre will be to promote and defend a more inclusive and barrier-free University for students with disabilities. The Accessibility Centre will also provide crucial services and programs for students with disabilities. In addition, the Accessibility Centre will also work with other like-minded student groups, especially student groups that advocate for mental health awareness for all students. The Service Centre will be located in the basement of Helen Glass (116 Helen Glass). This group space will provide a workplace for the Accessibility Centre’s Coordinator, UMSU’s Disability Representative for Students with Disabilities, a meeting place for the
Accessibility Centre’s executive team, and a safe space where many of the services and programs will be provided.

Active Minds

The mission for the Active Minds groups is changing the conversation around mental health. Active Minds at U of M is a student-led mental health awareness, education and advocacy group.

Beyond Abilities

The mission of the Beyond Abilities group is to bring students together in order to promote and defend a more inclusive and barrier-free University for students with disabilities.

Employee Wellness

Employee Wellness assists employees and departments as follows:

- Administering sick leave and attendance management programs.
- Facilitating and coordinating graduated return to work plans for safe return to productive employment. This may involve special accommodations.
- Developing and facilitating training programs related to disability management and return-to-work initiatives.
Centre for Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL)

The Centre's focus is to provide leadership, expertise, and support in fulfilling the teaching and learning mission of the University of Manitoba. This is accomplished in a variety of ways ranging from the support and development of the BFAR process to workshops and multi-day institutes on universal design.

UM Learn

UM Learn is the University of Manitoba branded BrightSpace learning environment solution developed and released by the D2L Corporation.

- The D2L Corporation has published the Learning Environment Web Content Accessibility Guidelines checklist outlines how their learning environment solution complies with Level A and AA of the World Wide Web Consortium’s Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0. WCAG 2.0 is the industry standard for creating accessible web content.

- The D2L Corporation has completed the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) on their learning environment solution. VPAT is an industry standard template for recording how a product or service conforms to Section 508 of the United States Rehabilitation Act.
• The University of Manitoba has purchased the ePortfolio integration that has the following documentation: ePortfolio WCAG 2.0.

• The University of Manitoba has purchased the ReadSpeaker docReader integration for UM Learn that allows documents uploaded to UM Learn to be read to students while the text is highlighted.

Libraries

Accessibility policies, issues, and practices at the Libraries are proactively initiated and managed centrally by Accessibility Services Implementation Team (“The Team”). The Team consists of eight members, of which seven members are representing ten unit libraries across two campuses and additional nine hospital libraries providing library services within the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, and Assistive Technologist as a non-library member from SAS. The Libraries maintains the University of Manitoba Libraries Accessibility Services Statement and a dedicated web guide. The Libraries also has established two accessibility hubs at Elizabeth Dafoe Library and Sciences and Technology Library on Fort Garry campus, and another hub at Neil John Maclean Library at Bannatyne Campus, to ensure that accessibility issues are addressed on both campuses. Library users can consult at any unit or satellite library regarding their accessibility needs. The Dafoe Library supports the largest user population and as such, it offers a dedicated and spacious Accessibility Support Room with a computer terminal equipped with assistive technologies, a height-adjustable table and a large-size table that accommodates group work. The use of the Room can be prearranged and scheduled by contacting the Service Desk. In addition to the dedicated accessibility support room at the Dafoe Library, all hubs support selected assistive technologies from dedicated computer terminals.

In 2015, the Libraries offered staff two workshops: “Working Towards an Accessibility Campus - The Libraries as a Key Player” sessions and, “Mental Health Training.” The Libraries also established “Procedures for Supporting Alternative Format Users” for print-disabled users in 2015.
Mental Health Strategy and Training

Mental health first aid is the help provided to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional treatment is received or until the crisis is resolved. The concept is based on the model of medical first aid.

This basic Mental Health First Aid course is encouraged for U of M employees who work primarily with adults (mainly staff). Those whose work is primarily student-focused are encouraged to attend the Mental Health First Aid for Adults who interact with Youth course. www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca

On campus van transportation system

The U of M is one of the only campuses in Canada to have a dedicated accessible van for student and staff transportation. Physical Plant provides the van and the driver for rides around campus. Student Accessibility Services coordinates the weekly schedule and connects with Physical Plant about shorter notice ride requests. This service is available during office hours and can be booked in advance for evening and weekend rides.

Reasonable Accommodation Fund

The University recognizes that ensuring equality of opportunity requires accommodation of individuals with special needs, and specifically accommodations for employees with disabilities. It recognizes its legal responsibilities to individuals with special needs and that this obligation exists until the provision of reasonable accommodations creates an undue hardship.

The purpose of reasonable accommodation in employment is to enable employees with disabilities to meet the essential responsibilities and duties of their position/job.

Mini U

Mini U welcomes children of all abilities and believes that every child deserves an opportunity to select the program that interests them most. Support staff and funds to subsidize a portion of registration fees are available for families with children with special needs to ensure they are provided with the best experience possible.
**SCHOLARLY ADVANCES:**

**Centre on Aging**

Each year the Centre hosts a one-day Spring Research Symposium, which promotes dialogue between University researchers and the community at large. The Symposium brings together researchers, students, seniors and representatives from community organizations, health and social agencies, and government.

**Interdisciplinary Disability Studies**

Disability Studies is an interdisciplinary Master’s Program that allows for a M.A. or M.Sc. degree. The focus of the program allows students to examine the policies and practices of various cultures and societies in order to understand the social, rather than the physical and/or psychological determinants, of the experience of disability. This focus shifts the emphasis from a prevention, treatment, or remediation paradigm to a social, cultural, political one.

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES:**

**Cooper Commission/Bona Fide Academic Requirement (BFAR)**

In January 2011, the Senate Executive Committee established an ad hoc committee to review and recommend how to balance the University’s legal obligation to offer reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, while protecting academic standards.

Professor Emeritus J. Cooper was appointed chair of the ad hoc committee, more commonly known as “the Cooper Commission.”

The committee met 18 (eighteen) times between February 2011 and February 2012. In that time, they conducted an extensive review of relevant documents and policies, studied the legal issues and consulted with the University’s experts and community generally to determine:
Types of accommodations:

- How decisions are made, and who must be consulted
- Evidence of disability
- Timeliness of decisions
- Privacy issues

The University of Manitoba has been recognized for its collaborative and innovative approach to disability related accommodations that required institutional-wide involvement and support. The Cooper Commission report, the recommendations, and the work of the Implementation working group have received notice across the country as best practices for accommodations.

The recommendations of the Cooper Commission have been completed or are underway in regards to:

- Development of an umbrella Accessibility Policy.
- Revised procedures for Student Accessibility.
- Creation of Student Accessibility Appeal Procedures available to both students and faculty.
- Establishing essential skills and technical abilities documents for programs subject to external accreditation.
- Undertaking a collegial process to develop bona fide academic requirements for programs not subject to external accreditation.
- Enhancing educational outreach for the University community.
- Developing guidelines for and the creation of Accommodation Teams and Accessibility Advisory Committees.
Accessibility Policy and Procedures

The purpose of the Accessibility Policy is to ensure that all members of the University community, including those with disabilities, are provided with an accessible learning and working environment. The policies were created as a result of the Cooper Commission report (February 2015).

- Cooper Commission Report
- Accessibility Policy
- Student Accessibility Procedures
- Student Accessibility Appeal Procedures

Free Tuition for Seniors

Students are not required to pay any fees if they are Canadian Citizens or Permanent Residents and are over 65 years of age. All application and tuition fees will be waived including course, student union, and associated fees.

Service and Therapy Animals on Campus

As per the Pets on Campus policy, service animals and therapy animals are permitted on campus.

“2.8 Therapy Animals may be permitted inside University Buildings to participate in University Events provided the prior approval of the Associate Vice-President (Administration) has been obtained. Examples of such University Events include, but are not limited to, “Dog Days” and “Mental Health Awareness Week”.

2.9 Service Animals are permitted on University Grounds and inside University Buildings as required by law.”

The Active Living Centre (ALC) Support Worker Policy and Expectations

In the summer of 2016, the ALC established a support worker policy for people who utilize the facility, which states that the support worker will not be charged to attend the facility.
The Black Hole Theatre Disability Policy

The Black Hole Theater Disability Policy not only provides complementary access for support workers, it also actively tries to make itself barrier-free to accommodate persons who are disabled by barriers who would like to see their shows.

PROMOTION:

UMToday Stories about Accessibility on Campus:

Many articles have been written highlighting the University’s commitment to improving accessibility for its community members. These articles appeared on the University’s news site, UM Today, and were promoted through this and other means across the University.

A list of articles follows:

- October 19, 2016: A new Symbol of access: How a social movement is changing the wheelchair icon
- October 4, 2016: All welcome at accessibility community consultation
- August 30, 2016: Identifying barriers to accessibility at the U of M: Survey Results
- August 2, 2016: Accessibility Audit Workshop offered
- May 20, 2016: The Accessibility for Manitobans Act at the U of M
- April 26, 2016: Getting their groove on
- April 25, 2016: Levelling the playing field
- March 30, 2016: Planning for accessibility: Resources
- March 29, 2016: Planning for accessibility: Beyond the law
- February 10, 2016: Information and communication accessibility learning event on March 15
- February 8, 2016: Creating opportunities for students with disabilities
- January 27, 2016: Leaders in accessibility
- October 21, 2015: Trailblazer: Bona Fide Academic Requirements (BFARs) process officially launched
- September 19, 2015: Human rights and conflict management in the workplace
- September 14, 2015: The University of Manitoba is leading the way
**Manitoba Employment Equity Practitioners Association (MEEPA) event**

The University hosted a MEEPA event on the AMA, where the Disabilities Issues Office presented. The presentations shared clear and proactive processes for the prevention and removal of barriers in the workplace that affect Manitobans with disabilities.

**ALC City of Winnipeg Access Award**

The City of Winnipeg Accessibility Awards celebrating the best in universal design and accessibility for 2016 the Active Living Centre was the proud recipient of the award.

**Access Awareness Days**

Access Awareness Days is an annual event at the University of Manitoba designed to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities on campus. Student Accessibility Services (SAS) aims to bring awareness to the U of M community of the challenges faced by people with disabilities. A variety of community organizations are invited to set up displays in University Centre to promote awareness of disability-related issues and services in the community.

In addition, there is an annual exhibition of student art entitled “Celebrating Abilities” displayed at the Gallery of Student Art in University Centre. The eclectic mixture of art includes photographs, sculptures, sketches, paintings, and Braille by students registered with SAS.

**Mental Health Awareness Month**

Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW) is to highlight and identify programs, resources, student groups and departments that are here to support students with mental health concerns. MHAW aims to raise awareness about mental health on university campuses and try to reduce the stigma that surrounds mental health and the student experience.

**Live Well at Work Week**

Live Well @ Work week has been created to acknowledge the ‘whole selves’ that staff and faculty bring to work each day. Mental, physical, emotional, spiritual and social well-being are celebrated at the Live Well @ Work events. Approximately 500 (five hundred) people enjoyed the 27 (twenty-seven) events that were held on the Bannatyne and Fort Garry campuses between June 13-17, 2016. Visit [www.umanitoba.ca/livewell](http://www.umanitoba.ca/livewell) for a listing of all for wellness resources for staff, faculty and students at the UM.
Presentation at the Human Resource Association of Universities in Western Canada, April 2015

The University of Manitoba participated along with the Disability Issues Office and the University of Winnipeg presenting on the AMA and how that will affect the post-secondary environment.

In Celebration of Manitoba Access Awareness Week (MAAWE) June 1, 2016.

The University presented at the MAAW event on the accessibility planning process regarding our collaboration with other partners.

Accessibility Event in March with Jutta Treviranus

The University of Manitoba, along with the Post-Secondary Institutions Network, hosted an Information and Communication Accessibility learning event with special guest Jutta Treviranus, Director of the Inclusive Design Research Centre (IDRC). Treviranus discussed good practices and shared resources for accessible web sites, learning platforms and libraries. She is an expert in the development of inclusive design of emerging information and communication technology and practices.
UNIT AUDIT ACHIEVEMENTS:

Active Offers

The term “active offer” is used generically to describe any steps used to promote access or participation by pro-actively offering alternate formats; advertising disability accommodations at events; and, providing respectful and courteous customer service. More information can be found at: http://www.accessibilitymb.ca/.

Active offer wording

“The University of Manitoba is committed to accessibility for persons with disabilities. Please contact us in advance if you have any particular accommodation requirements [contact name and email].”

“The University of Manitoba is committed to achieving accessibility for those disabled by barriers. Please contact [contact name and email] in advance if you require any accessibility accommodations to participate.”

Active Offer Achievements

• Learning and Organizational Development (LOD) Active offer
• Appeals committees’ Active offer
• Office of the University Secretary Active offer for alternative document requests
• RSVP’s for Visionary Conversations – External Relations Office Active Offer
3.0 ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY, COMMUNICATIONS, AND BARRIER

Multiple Information/Data Collection Methods

The University has considered all suggestions and is continuously identifying ways to improve our organization, building upon our goals as identified in the U of M's strategic plan of providing accessibility and reasonable accommodation.

There are many different types of barriers, both visible and invisible. Examples of areas for consideration include technological and systemic; attitudinal; physical and architectural; information and communications.

The University of Manitoba has heard from the community through multiple methods, in an effort to better understand the barriers to accessibility in our work and learning environment in order to identify ways to improve our organization. These methods include:

3.1 University of Manitoba Accessibility Survey May 2016

Identifying barriers to accessibility at the U of M: Survey results

The survey invited the University community to provide feedback on any barriers to accessibility in our work and learning environment. Suggestions outlined objectives for identifying ways we can improve our organization, building upon our goals as identified in the U of M's strategic plan, of providing accessibility and reasonable accommodation. The survey results were collected to inform our plan in identifying, preventing and removing barriers to accessibility at the U of M.

The response rates were high, with a total 556 (five hundred fifty-six) respondents, split between faculty 83 (eighty-three) at 15, staff 271 (two hundred seventy-one) at 49% and students 138 (one hundred thirty-eight) at 25%. 111 (One hundred eleven) at 11% chose not to identify in any of those 3 (three) categories.

The survey results showed a reoccurring theme of acknowledgement of the positive efforts in accommodations that removed barriers.
Survey respondents mentioned examples ranging from workplace accommodations to inclusive and accessible learning environments and university wide initiatives with compliance of the AMA, among others. Members of the community also stated that they appreciated the great supports of Campus life, Employee Wellness, SAS, and one-on-one instructor supports throughout both campuses.

**Demographics:**

31 people identified themselves as students and staff
5 identified as staff and faculty
1 identified as student and faculty
1 identified as students, staff and faculty

**3.2 Unit Accessibility Audits**

To help the University develop its plan to create a more accessible institution, a University-wide accessibility audit took place. Each unit was asked to identify a member who would be responsible for the unit audit.

The Unit Accessibility Audit workshop took place every week for almost three months. The workshops alternated between the Fort Garry and Bannatyne campuses, and provided the opportunity for the unit representative to learn about accessibility, and barriers so they were able to identify barriers within their own units.

**The 90-minute workshop session covered the following:**

- What is accessibility
- What is the AMA
- How to identify barriers to accessibility
- How to complete the unit accessibility audit

The session also provided an overview of accessibility principles, enabling participants to further the discussion about accessibility and the AMA within their units. Discussions and audits aided representatives in collecting the information needed to complete the accessibility audit.
Most common barriers found within the audits include:

- Educating staff and students
- Signage
- Accessible Washrooms – access and size
- Above grade access and service disruption
- Information and communication with scanned documents, font size, U of M documents not screen reader accessible
- Ramps: medical sciences and pathology
- Lack of automatic door openers
- Inaccessible Classrooms
- Disconnected lifts and elevators for accessing different floors in buildings
- Active offers
- Ad Astra
- Accessibility Policy for assistive and supportive devices
- Inaccessible websites
- Accommodations and assistive technology
- Entrances and exits
- Service animals, support persons, and assistive devices
- Parking
- Snow clearing
- Heights of things within the built environments
- Navigation around campus
- Lighting
- Information displays/Communication methods
- Emergency procedures
- Event planning
- Maintenance
- Ramps
## Most Common University Responsibility Barriers Identified

### ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Reoccurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Several employees (administrative and teaching staff) have expressed some uncertainty as to the etiquette and recommended manner of interaction with individuals with by various disabilities.</td>
<td>The University of Manitoba will be rolling out employee wide accessible customer service training in January of 2017</td>
<td>110x</td>
<td>To be completed by Nov 2017</td>
<td>Education/Training</td>
<td>110x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards people with disability and proper methods in helping in various situations</td>
<td>The University of Manitoba accessible customer service training and all other campus awareness initiatives will help to remove accommodation barriers</td>
<td>52x</td>
<td>This will be ongoing</td>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>52x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff are unaware of emergency procedures for persons with disabilities, and no alternative alarms for people who are deaf.</td>
<td>University plans out emergency procedures with all persons identified with a disability, and each unit’s fire marshal is educated on the procedure.</td>
<td>21x</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Emergency Procedures</td>
<td>21x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrier</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Reoccurrence</td>
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<tr>
<td>A common assumption that all students can access the course material distributed in one format. Students are unable to obtain online course material (i.e., PowerPoint presentations) in a “readable” format. In addition, there is a lack of support for hearing impaired users to participate in an Adobe Connect session. There is a lack of subtitles and captions in the videos on UM Learn.</td>
<td>The University of Manitoba accessible customer service training will help to educate all members of the community on sharing information in an accessible manner.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Alternative Format</td>
<td>5x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of maintenance creates barriers for people with low vision and impaired mobility. It also affects the morale of students and staff.</td>
<td>Physical Plant is involved in the AMA initiative and is working with caretakers to improve campus accessibility. The University of Manitoba accessible customer service training will also help to create an overall awareness of accessibility and campus quality.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>3x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION BARRIERS:

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<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Reoccurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of campus wide universal signage.</td>
<td>Campus Planning is aware of the Legislation and working on a campus wide signage plan.</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>60x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of accessible buildings is limited. How do people coming to campus know a) which buildings are accessible b) where the accessible access is.</td>
<td>Student Accessibility Services has an online hub for main campus accessibility. <a href="http://umanitoba.ca/student/saa/accessibility/campus-maps-and-accessibility.html">http://umanitoba.ca/student/saa/accessibility/campus-maps-and-accessibility.html</a> Will need to notify Physical Plant to update diagrams.</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Navigation</td>
<td>41x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrier</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Reoccurrence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offices on upper floors of buildings that are only accessible via stairs and elevators do not have a plan for communicating service disruptions, which is an issue when elevators are down.</td>
<td>A working group has been formed to implement a service disruption notification system; in the meantime, Physical Plant has notified caretakers to mark alternative accessible access point's will services are down.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Service Disruptions</td>
<td>9x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulletin boards, website postings, and all other visual information display methods are not accessible to all.</td>
<td>Working group has been formed to update UM Visual Identity Guide to include accessibility.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Communication Methods</td>
<td>3x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TECHNOLOGICAL BARRIERS:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Reoccurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website is not user friendly: small font sizes, cluttered, not everyone has access to the website, not all images/tables/charts are properly alt tagged, creates many barriers for those who are blind or visually impaired.</td>
<td>The University will be hosting an information session for web accessible expert for unit web managers, an information package on web accessibility will also be sent out to all units.</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Winter 2017</td>
<td>Websites</td>
<td>40x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of process in place to promote active offers of alternate formats for documents.</td>
<td>The University will be implementing an active offer for all units to offer documents in an alternative format.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Document Formatting</td>
<td>30x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many Entrances do not have automated door openers, which limit accessible access.</td>
<td>University is applying for funding to do a campus wide blitz for automated doors.</td>
<td>Mid 2017</td>
<td></td>
<td>Automated Doors</td>
<td>26x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrier</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Reoccurrence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Many Faculties have moved to web based exams, this presents a significant challenge to find appropriate space for accommodated exams. In addition, the program Exam Soft is used which has blocks that do not allow for screen readers. This means that a human scribe must be present at all screen reader exams.</td>
<td>More computer lab space is needed, which will require more planning and booking prior to exam times. The University will continue to investigate other solutions.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Assistive Devices</td>
<td>20x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some classrooms and lecture halls, especially those in older buildings, create barriers to accessibility. Classrooms are generally well equipped, although technology in some lags behind a modern standard.</td>
<td>Continuing to upgrade classrooms and A/V equipment.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Classrooms</td>
<td>12x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SYSTEMIC BARRIERS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
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<th>Cost</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Reoccurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of universal and accessible washrooms around all campuses</td>
<td>Each unit will identify a need for an accessible washroom, and provide alternative access to one in the meantime.</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Washrooms/Bathrooms</td>
<td>43x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Accessible Visitor Parking.</td>
<td>Campus Planning is aware, and working on a plan for more accessible parking.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accessible Parking</td>
<td>28x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of Support Person Policies around campus where applicable.</td>
<td>Active Living Centre and Blackhole Theatre have implemented support person policies, which this plan promotes.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Support Persons</td>
<td>11x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No University policy/process in place to promote the ability to offer documents in any other than the one being used.</td>
<td>Working group formed to address this at the University level.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Active Offers</td>
<td>4x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrier</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Reoccurrence</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of the Pets on Campus Policy, which addresses service animals.</td>
<td>This plan and other awareness initiatives will continue to promote the University of Manitoba Pets on Campus Policy.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Service Animals</td>
<td>1x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall lack of accessible entrances/ exits with barriers such as heavy doors, non-automated doors, broken automated door buttons, automated doors left off, poorly constructed ramps, stairs, etc.</td>
<td>Physical Plant will be starting an auditing process; all results collected in this audit are shared with Physical Plant to notify the team of all entrances and exits that are inaccessible.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Entrances/ Exits</td>
<td>54x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevators often out of order, resulting in restricted access that create physical and architectural barriers.</td>
<td>The Service Disruption working group is working to implement a notification system that will notify people as soon as possible regarding service disruptions so alternative accommodations can be made.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mid 2017</td>
<td>Elevators/ Lifts</td>
<td>35x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrier</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Reoccurrence</td>
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<tr>
<td>The heights of many campus service counter/ desks are too high for persons in wheelchairs.</td>
<td>The accessible customer service training will help to inform all employees who offer customer service to provide alternative accommodations, for example coming around the counter to offer services while funds are collected to replace counters with lower options.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Heights</td>
<td>28x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive snow on wheelchair ramps during winter and icy sidewalk conditions.</td>
<td>Physical Plant will be meeting in the new year to discuss priority snow clearing for accessibility.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Snow Clearing</td>
<td>9x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many buildings do not have ramps where there are stairs to get to a higher/lower level.</td>
<td>Physical Plant audit will identify these areas and plan accordingly.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Ramps</td>
<td>5x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3 Community Open House Consultations

This was the third opportunity for those who missed previous opportunities in providing feedback on accessibility at the University of Manitoba. University community members were invited to the Accessibility Community Consultations, which took place October 19 and 21, at the Fort Garry and Bannatyne campuses, respectively.

Feedback cards were also distributed to allow members of the community to provide input anonymously.

3.4 Accessibility at the U of M Communications Strategy

The Human Rights and Conflict Management Office, Marketing Communications Office (MCO), Change Management and Project Services (CMAPS), and SAS have created a communications strategy for accessibility planning and to inform the community about the barrier identification process.
The purpose of the communications strategy is to inform the wider University community about the AMA, and to communicate the expectations and requirements under the AMA. The communications strategy is also meant to position accessibility within the strategic priorities at the U of M. Information about the AMA requirements is disseminated to identified liaisons in different units and faculties and through workshops, community consultations and UM Today stories. All information will be gathered on the Accessibility Web Hub which is currently being constructed. Our primary target audience is all U of M faculty, staff and students, and our secondary target audience is the external community, especially other public sector organizations that may be looking to the U of M for leadership and guidance.

**Communications Tactics**

Communications tactics have included: accessibility and informational web banner and buttons disseminated to all units and faculties and appearing on the UM Home Page initiatives and events such as liaison workshops, community consultations, accessibility audit/inventory and community survey; posting of UM Today stories covering initiatives and events such as liaison workshops, accessibility audit/inventory and community survey; accompanying social media for stories and events; printed feedback cards to hand out at events; a centralized, online Accessibility Hub directly off the umanitoba.ca URL to communicate the prioritization of accessibility for the U of M, to gather all accessibility information and resources in one place, and to solicit continued feedback.

**Statistics**

Accessibility communications and UM Today stories were very well received by the university community. Overall readership totalled more than 7,000 page views. Below is a snapshot of selected statistics (Bona Fide Academic Requirements stories not included).

- planning for accessibility beyond the law/ 1,277
- identifying barriers to accessibility at the u of m survey results now available/ 1,243
- the accessibility for manitobans act at the u of m/ 1,066
- accessibility audit workshop offered/ 1058
- information and communication accessibility learning event/ 837
• all welcome at accessibility community consultation/ 447
• a new symbol of access how a social movement is changing the wheelchair icon and why we need to adopt it/ 446
• getting their groove on/ 280
• leaders in accessibility/ 230
• planning for accessibility resources/ 103
• Attendance at community consultations, accessibility events and workshops (approximate): 160 attendees

3.5 Barrier Removal and Prevention Strategy

The barrier removal and prevention strategy focuses on a number of priorities that categorize the barriers identified in the Unit Accessibility Audit. Barriers are categorized by what is the U of M’s responsibility versus the unit’s responsibility. This allows for some of the barriers to be removed at a smaller scale within the units and the most common barriers to start being removed at a larger University scale. Overall, the top priority identified throughout the Unit Audits is a lack of training and awareness about accessibility, and the legislation. This barrier has already been addressed with promotion of accessibility events and stories about accessibility and the AMA, and will be further addressed with mandatory faculty and staff training by November 1, 2017.

University of Manitoba Accessibility Procurement

The University of Manitoba is currently working on an accessibility purchasing commitment, to ensure the removal of barriers around campus. The University will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, except where it is not possible to do so.

Suppliers are required to comply with the AMA’s Accessibility Standards that are enacted through legislation, University of Manitoba policies, practices, and procedures related to accessibility, which may be in effect during the term of the Agreement and which applies to the deliverables to be provided by the Supplier.
Obligations of Purchaser

It is the responsibility of each unit or faculty purchasing a good, service, or use of a facility to consider and apply the appropriate accessibility criteria to their purchasing decisions. If it is not possible or realistic to incorporate accessibility criteria or features into your purchase, you must be ready to provide as an explanation upon request.

When determining your obligations under the AMA when purchasing goods, services or facilities, consider the following:

• Do the goods, services or facilities you are planning to acquire create barriers to persons with disabilities?

• Can a person with a disability use the service at all?

• Can people with disabilities configure the item to meet their specific needs and preferences?

• If you are hosting an event or providing a service within a facility, consider accessibility features of the space.
4.0 GOVERNANCE

Being a proactive organization, the University of Manitoba created a series of committees in response to the AMA. The first University of Manitoba AMA Steering Committee (UMAMASC) meeting took place in June 2015; the following subcommittees were struck shortly thereafter:

- Accessibility Planning Sub-Committee (July 2015)
- Post-Secondary Institution Network (October 2015)
- Information and Communication Sub-Committee (October 2015)
- Customer Service Training Sub-Committee (October 2015)

The mandate of the UMAMASC is to promote the University's compliance with each standard that is regulated under the AMA and that the Accessibility Plan is completed and/or reviewed every two years starting in 2016.

UMAMASC is co-chaired by the Associate Vice-President (Human Resources) and the Human Rights and Conflict Management Officer. Membership of the Steering Committee and the various subcommittees represents a diversity of viewpoints relevant to faculty, staff, and students across the University.

4.1 Accessibility Steering Committee

The UMAMASC will promote the University's compliance with each standard that is regulated under the AMA.

In addition, the committee’s mandate is to help the University implement relevant parts of the Strategic Plan in particular:

a) Provide accessibility and reasonable accommodation in all of our programs for students with disabilities. (Taking our Place: University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2015-2020, Priority 1, Goal I)

b) Increase student, staff, faculty and leadership diversity that reflects society, especially with respect to the inclusion of people with disabilities. (Taking our Place: University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2015-2020, Priority 4, Goal b)
Guiding Principles

The committee must have regard for the following principles in carrying out its mandate:

- **Access**: persons should have barrier-free access to places, events and other functions that are generally available in the community.

- **Equality**: persons should have barrier-free access to those things that will give them equality of opportunity and outcome.

- **Universal design**: access should be provided in a manner that does not establish or perpetuate differences based on a person’s disability.

- **Systemic responsibility**: the responsibility to prevent and remove barriers rests with the person or organization that is responsible for establishing or perpetuating the barrier.

Committee Roles and Responsibilities

The committee will:

- Consider the full range of disabilities in identifying barriers and contribute to an Accessibility Plan to encourage reduction of the barriers.

- Encourage actions to address barriers and gaps including business practices and ways to build awareness and knowledge on identifying and meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

- Identify the persons, units, organizations or resources required to implement the required plans and actions.

- To the extent possible, provide that all materials produced by the committee, whether written or otherwise, that are to be shared with the public, are clear and in plain language, concise, logical and unambiguous.

- Make information regarding its recommendations and plans available to the University community.

- Abide by these Terms of Reference and the Act as it relates to the committee’s roles and responsibilities.
4.2 Accessibility Plan Sub-Committee

As a postsecondary institution in Manitoba, the University is required to prepare an Accessibility Plan under the AMA. The mandate of the Accessibility Plan Sub-Committee is to develop the Accessibility Plan and participate in implementing change.

Members of the Accessibility Plan Sub-Committee have a good working knowledge of the University’s policies, programs and services and include people who have related life experience and people disabled by barriers.

The Accessibility Plan Sub-Committee worked with and relied on the expertise of the Disabilities Issues Office in the early stages of developing the Plan. Based on consultations with the community, priorities have been set and barriers identified with a course of action to address and remove the barriers identified.
4.3 Post-Secondary Institutions Network

Post-Secondary Institution Network

Post-Secondary Institutions (PSI) in Manitoba recognize the benefit of working together and sharing the costs of resources towards each institution’s compliance with the AMA. The idea of the PSI Consortium is to meet to share ideas and brainstorm on best practices, recognizing that we all have the same clientele. Therefore, we wanted to come together to share resources and develop creative and innovative solutions. Representatives from 9 (nine) PSI in Manitoba formed a network to discuss how best to support the accessibility legislation for the customer service standard. The initial focus of the PSI Consortium was to develop the customer service training webinars that can be used at all institutions that are specific to a university/college setting. The PSI Consortium recognized the value and importance of our members being able to have real life examples in their training. Terms of reference were written and the PSI Consortium will continue to meet as the remaining four standards are released. Members take turns hosting and chairing meetings; the first meeting took place at the University of Manitoba on October 13, 2015 and have occurred approximately every two months since.

Participating Post-Secondary Institutions are as follows:

- University of Manitoba
- University of Winnipeg
- University College of the North
- Assiniboine Community College
- Canadian Mennonite University
- Brandon University
- Université de Saint-Boniface
- Red River College
- Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology

In response to the Customer Service requirements the Accessibility Training subcommittee was struck in January of 2016. Its mandate is to adapt the training modules created by the Access for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) with content specific to Manitoba and to work on an in-person training facilitation guide. Training modules are scheduled to be released in early 2017 at all institutions.
4.4 Customer Service Sub-Committee

The Customer Service Sub-Committee will promote the University’s compliance with the Customer Service standard regulated under the AMA. Members reviewed drafts of the customer service training webinars prepared by the PSI Network and provided feedback to the group. Future focus of the sub-committee will be planning a “train the trainer” in-person facilitation for individuals in specific target groups, and devising a plan to ensure that volunteers are trained. Working groups for this committee include Customer Service Training Working Group, and Supplemental Materials Working Group.

4.5 Information and Communications Sub-Committee

The University of Manitoba has established the Accessibility for Manitobans Act Information and Communication sub-committee (UMAMAIC), co-chaired by a representative from the Marketing Communications Office and from Information Services and Technology. The sub-committee includes over 20 (twenty) representatives from units across the University who are integral to providing input and guidance on advancing accessibility within the U of M and achieving compliance with the AMA.

**Mandate**

The UMAMAIC will promote the University’s compliance with the Customer Service standard and the Information and Communication standard that is regulated under the AMA.

“We are very pleased that the Post-Secondary Institutions are working collaboratively on the customer service standard. Our goal is to have a fully accessible province, where all abilities are valued, diversity celebrated, barriers removed and human rights protected.”

Yutta Fricke, Executive Director, Disability Issues Office
Current Initiatives

**Web Accessibility Initiative:** One of the roles of the UMAMAIC is to develop plans to make the University’s websites more accessible and compliant with the standard. The sub-committee identified a need to develop an informational guide for the University’s senior leadership, Deans, Directors and Department Heads, to help facilitate understanding of what it means to create an accessible website, and some first steps that can be taken to prepare a unit’s website for these updates. The Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) outlines requirements and criteria for success for accessible web content under the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0.

A first draft has been created by some of the sub-committee members, and is under review from the sub-committee. The next step will be for the document to be “tested” by selected groups within the U of M, who will provide feedback on the document. This feedback will be discussed by the sub-committee and inform the final document that is distributed.

In addition to better understanding the requirements to enable an accessible website in the future, the sub-committee recommends that faculties and departments begin to remove out of date content, review, and update existing web content.

**Accessible Events Guide:** The UMAMAIC has identified the development of an accessible events guide as an important objective and one that can have immediate and far-reaching effects across the University. A member of the UMAMAIC is drafting a guide, in collaboration with the University’s Manager, Special Events, to be presented to the sub-committee for discussion and review. The final document will be distributed widely across the University and be made available on the University’s online accessibility hub.

**Training:** The sub-committee, in conjunction with the Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management, has identified the most pressing accessibility training needs for U of M staff and faculty. Current plans are in discussion to bring in an expert accessibility consultant to provide an informational session for the UMAMAIC, as well as for some key units within the University.

**Accessibility Procurement:** Members of the UMAMAIC have established a working group to address the need to establish accessible procurement principles, criteria and practices at the University of Manitoba. The working group includes the 3 (three) units responsible for purchasing and procurement within the University community, being the Office of
Legal Counsel, the IST Procurement Centre and Purchasing Services. The working group has identified the need for an accessible procurement information page on the University’s purchasing services webpage setting out the accessible procurement responsibilities and requirements for purchases made by University units and faculties. A first draft has been created and is under review. In relation to accessible procurement, the University has also developed a statement to be included in public procurement documents that describe the University’s commitment to the procurement of accessible goods, services and facilities.

**Service Disruption Working Group**

A working group has been formed to identify the process by which service disruption notices are communicated to the U of M community, or to those visiting our campuses. This working group includes members of the UMAMAIC, as well as areas integral to the process, such as Operations & Maintenance and Physical Plant. The working group has met on several occasions and discussions have included: placement of important notifications on U of M homepage and accessibility hub website; identifying the differences between planned and unplanned disruptions; identifying priority categories for these disruptions and creating a process for each level of priority; potential use of the U of M app; Physical Plant service desk and flow into the service disruptions; and best practices from other universities and institutions.

This group continues to meet and work on the issues identified, and aims to create a timeline for having an updated service disruption plan in place.

**Visual Identity Policy Working Group:**

Updating the U of M’s Visual Identity Policy has been identified by the UMAMAIC as integral to the advancement of accessibility within our University. Members of the sub-committee have formed a working group to make recommendations on updates to the Policy, which is overseen by the Vice-President (External Relations).

Within the Policy, it is noted that any revisions to the Policy require a review of, and possible updates to, its related documents including the Visual Identity Guide; Web Standards Guidelines; Social Media Guidelines; Best Practices Video and Copyright Guidelines. The Policy itself as well as these related documents are being reviewed by the working group who will make recommendations on updates, which will be shared with the UMAMAIC, and will be presented to the Vice-President (External Relations).
4.6 Employment Committee (Winter 2017)

The University looks forward to the release of the discussion paper on the Employment Standard by the Government and to inviting members of the University community to the sub-committee.

4.7 Collaboration and partnerships

University of Manitoba Students’ Union (UMSU)

UMSU, in collaboration with Beyond Abilities, Student Accessibility Services, and the U of M’s Accessibility Coordinator started the initial planning for UMSU Accessibility Week. This group met several times over the summer to find a time that works well within the overall University schedule and with consideration of exam time periods. The group discussed ideas for the week that would best engage students, and spread awareness. The University provided UMSU with an educational power point for their retreat weekend in August, 2016. Further, the University looks forward to sharing the customer service training modules with UMSU.

Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA)

The University of Manitoba and the WRHA, recognizing the joint partnership that they share, have worked together to support each other as they proceed forward with executing the AMA at their prospective institutions. The parties have been meeting since the summer of 2015 to share ideas and resources on how best to implement the AMA.

Public Resource Advisory Team Sector (PRATS)

The University of Manitoba is a member of PRATS along with the following organizations:

- Manitoba Hydro
- Disabilities Issues Office
- University of Winnipeg
- WRHA
- Education Advanced Literacy

PRATS meet on a regular basis to support the implementation of the AMA and share ideas and resources. These meetings were convened by the DIO to introduce new information or to exchange experiences among organizations.
5. GETTING READY FOR 2023

The University’s dedication to accessibility can be seen through many initiatives, including consideration and planning for the standards that are still to come, contributing to the overall goal to make all campuses inclusive and more accessible for all by 2023.

5.1 An Accessible Customer Service Standard at the U of M

As reflected throughout this plan, the U of M has started to remove barriers to improve customer service through many phases of community engagement. The survey that went out in May of 2016 to the whole U of M community, the unit accessibility audit process, and both campuses community consultations have provided the framework required to start removing the most common barriers. One of the most prominent themes found throughout the process is the overall lack of accessibility awareness, this barrier will be addressed through the customer service training modules developed by the PSI Network, and will help to combat attitudinal barriers on campus.

5.2 An Accessible Employment Standard at the U of M

The University is in the process on responding to the Employment standard with the Steering Committee and will form the Employment Sub-Committee once the discussion paper on the standard is released.

5.3 An Accessible Information and Communication Standard at the U of M

The Information and Communications Sub-Committee has formed, and has met several times. The sub-committee represents the necessary stakeholders to implement the standard, with the MCO and IST as the co-chairs. The sub-committee has looked to Ontario for indication of what the standard will require.
5.4 An Accessible Transportation Standard at the U of M

While this standard is still years away, the University has already started to incorporate and consult on accessibility through collaboration with the Office of Sustainability regarding the University's Sustainability Strategy 2016-2018. The creation of a Sustainable Transportation Strategy has been identified as a priority action. This strategy will build on the transportation planning framework established in the Visionary (re)Generation Master Plan and will contribute to the realization of high level goals set out in Taking Our Place: University of Manitoba Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

The Office of Sustainability requested participation of the Accessibility Coordinator in multiple brainstorming sessions for all modes of transportation, to improve the pedestrian environment at the University to embody accessibility and inclusivity.

5.5 An Accessible Built Environment Standard at the U of M

Barriers within the built environment affect customer service. The University has begun the process to identify physical and architectural barriers in relation to the current Customer Service standard. Many meetings with members of Physical Plant have occurred to plan for this standard, and the RFP process for the Built Environment Audit is in the early stages.

5.6 Acknowledgements

This Accessibility Plan includes information sourced from stories originally posted on the U of M's news site, UM Today, and various University of Manitoba websites.

Thank you to the University community for assisting with the creation of the Accessibility Plan. Your efforts will help to make the University of Manitoba more accessible.
5.7 Closing

Closing remarks

As outlined throughout the plan, the University is committed to this on-going process. We welcome feedback that will further improve accessibility and inclusivity at the University.

Feedback can be provided through the following: umanitoba.ca/accessibility. Any questions can be directed to the Accessibly Coordinator or the Human Rights and Conflict Management Officer.

“Accessible design is good design it benefits people who don’t have disabilities as well as people who do. Accessibility is all about removing barriers and providing benefits for everyone.”

Steve Ballmer, former CEO of Microsoft
APPENDIX A GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Accessibility** - Related to this legislation, accessibility means giving people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life. Accessibility refers to the ability to access and benefit from a system, service, product or environment.

**Accessible Formats** - Information provided in a way that is accessible to people with disabilities. Examples: large print, recorded audio or Braille instead of standard printed material.

**Accommodations** - Arrangements made to allow persons with disabilities to participate or benefit equally. There is no set formula for accommodating people with disabilities; the person involved must be consulted. Examples: healthy snacks at events accommodate individuals with dietary needs; flexible hours accommodate employees whose schedules are affected by homecare duties or medication.

**Active Offer** - Offering the public the opportunity to request an accommodation. Examples: inviting requests for disability accommodations in event advertisements; including the active offer on print materials: this information is available in alternate formats on request or advertising disability accommodations, for instance with a wheelchair access icon.

**Alt Tags** - Also referred to as alt attributes, alt tags provide a verbal description of a visual or graph for individuals with visual impairments who use screen readers.

**Alternate Formats** - Alternate ways of providing information beyond traditional printed material. Examples: large print, electronic text, CD ROMs, DVDs and Braille.

**American Sign Language (ASL)** - Interpreters use hand gestures and physical expression to translate spoken words into sign language for persons who are Deaf. American Sign language is common to English-speaking North Americans. In Quebec another form of sign language is used (LSQ).

**Barriers** - Related to this legislation obstacles that limit access and prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in society. Most barriers are not intentional. Barriers usually arise because the needs of people with disabilities are not considered from the beginning.
**Built Environment** - More than buildings, the built environment includes everything humans have changed in the natural environment, such as sidewalks, curbs, roadways and parks.

**Captioning** - Text at the bottom of the screen (television/video) allowing persons who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing to follow the spoken dialogue. It is also widely used in bars and sports facilities. Closed captioning is similar but the text must be decoded to appear on the screen.

**Computerized Note-Taker (Print Interpreter)** - A note-taker provides a summary of spoken words, maintaining the spirit and intent of the speaker to allow participants who are hard-of-hearing to follow a presentation (not verbatim). Note-takers type into a notebook or laptop computer connected to an overhead screen or video monitor.

**Descriptive Video Service (DVS)** - Narration is added to visual media to describe actions, characters, locations, costumes and sets, without interfering with dialog or sound effects. DVS allows people who are blind or visually impaired to enjoy television programs, feature films, online videos.

**Disability** - A disability is a condition that limits a person’s daily activities. Persons with disabilities may have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their participation on an equal basis with others. A disability, aging, an injury and other life events may temporarily or permanently affect mobility, dexterity (use of hands), vision, hearing, communication, understanding or mental health.

**Duty to Reasonably Accommodate** - The requirement established by The Human Rights Code (Manitoba) to remove barriers up to the point of undue hardship.

**Interveners** - People specially trained to communicate auditory and visual information to persons who are deaf-blind. Various methods are used depending on individual needs. These include visual sign language, tactile sign language, tactile finger spelling, Braille and large print notes.

**Large Print** - Printed information provided in a large font size (14 points or larger) for people who have low vision. For easier reading, select sans serif fonts.

**Oral Interpreters** - An oral interpreter is a person that silently mouth interprets speech. This is done when a person who is hard-of-hearing or Deaf is able to lip read but does not use sign language.
**Persons Disabled by Barriers** - Individuals with a physical or mental impairment prevented from full participation by a factor in the environment.

**Personal Care Attendants** - Attendants who assist persons with disabilities with the care of their physical needs. Tasks may include assistance with dressing, management of bodily functions and eating.

**Persons with disabilities** - Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, communication or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation on an equal basis with others.

**Reasonable Accommodations** - A wide range of modifications or adjustments to meet the needs of persons in a respectful manner. Usually simple and inexpensive, reasonable accommodations consider the needs of persons or groups who have characteristics protected under The Human Rights Code (Manitoba), such as a disability.

**Video Relay Service (VRS)** - Similar to IP Relay, VRS is the newest technology to facilitate communication for persons who are Deaf and use sign language. VRS uses internet-based video conferencing to communicate via relay operators using sign language.

**Service animal** An animal (typically a dog) trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability.

**Sign Language Interpreter** - A person who translates from one language (English) to another language (American Sign Language) using gestures and physical expressions (sign language). Interpreter services are critical to ensure accurate communication between individuals who are Deaf and hearing persons who do not use sign language.

**Support person** - A person accompanying a person with a disability to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs, or to access goods or services.
The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) - Provincial legislation introduced to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility. Standards will be developed in five key areas of daily living. These standards will outline specific measures to be taken by public sector and private sector organizations. Changes will result in improved accessibility for all Manitobans, regardless of (dis)abilities.

Universal Design - Refers to making things safer, easier, and more convenient for everyone. It involves a broad range of design concepts including design of products, spaces and environments to provide access in a way that respects all (dis)abilities.

APPENDIX B SURVEY DATA

Following are the original questions from the survey, along with survey results.

1. Considering a very broad range of needs and abilities, I feel that I am a person with a disability that requires an accommodation.

Yes 120 people, 21.6%
No 436 people 78.4

Question 1 Comment Themes:
- Temporary vs. permanent disability
- Physical
- Visual
- Mental health = all ranging
- Hearing
- Accommodation

2. I have experienced or witnessed attitudinal barriers.

[Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree]

Strongly Agree 74
Agree 207
Neither Agree Nor Disagree 104
Disagree 88
Strongly Disagree 37

3. I have experienced or witnessed informational and communication barriers.

[Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree]

Strongly Agree 56
Agree 221
Neither Agree Nor Disagree 109
Disagree 72
Strongly Disagree 31
4. I have experienced or witnessed technological barriers.

[Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree]

Strongly Agree 55
Agree 177
Neither Agree Nor Disagree 124
Disagree 97
Strongly Disagree 29

5. I have experienced or witnessed systemic barriers.

[Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree]

Strongly Agree 137
Agree 194
Neither Agree Nor Disagree 64
Disagree 53
Strongly Disagree 29

Questions 2-5:

Comment Themes

Major themes included:

- Attitudes (38 comments)
- Elevators (20)
- Navigation between buildings -> inside and out (18)
- Washrooms and Accessible Washrooms (18)
- Accessibility for classrooms (for students and instructors) and Lecture theatres (16)
- Websites (15)
- Old buildings (15)

Other themes that emerged: accessible doors or lack thereof (13); education (11); accommodation (10); better planning (10) inaccessible documents (10); positive experiences (8); assumptions made (7); mental health and lack of knowledge (8); snow and ice clearing and winter accessibility (5); accessible parking (5); scents (4); policy (3).
Overall in Questions 2-5 comments, attitudes and physical and architectural barriers were the most commonly discussed.

6. Question 6: Select your top 3 priorities for our accessibility plan:

[Attitudinal Barriers, Information and Communication Barriers, Physical and Architectural Barriers, Systemic Barriers, Technological Barriers]

Student Priority #1: Physical & Architectural 33.59%
Student Priority #2: Information and Communication 31%
Student Priority #3: Technological

Staff Priority #1: Physical and Architectural 47%
Staff Priority #2: Information and Communication 29%
Staff Priority #3: Technological 22%

Faculty Priority #1: Physical and Architectural 49%
Faculty Priority #2: Info and Communication 30%
Faculty Priority #3: Technological 25%

Overall Priorities:

#1: Physical and Architectural 43%
#2: Info and communication 29%
#3: Technological 22%