



The University of Winnipeg Instructor's Accessibility Guide

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Manitoba Accessibility and Human Rights

Accessibility Best Practices

The following practices will help ensure that UWinnipeg is compliant with AMA standards and guidelines:

- Inform students, in writing and orally, that resources are available using communication supports or in alternate formats, upon request;
- Inform students that accommodations are available to ensure courses are accessible and that instructors are available to meet with students and/or their accessibility advisors to ensure that accommodations are effective;
- Consider accessible format, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and UWinnipeg documentation guidelines when creating course content; and
- Consider accessibility when procuring, purchasing, or requesting resources.

UWinnipeg Statement of Commitment to Accessibility

The University of Winnipeg is committed to creating an inclusive environment for all members of its 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 experienced by persons with disabilities, so as to maintain their dignity and independence to the extent possible. The University of Winnipeg will comply fully with the Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

UWinnipeg Accessibility and Related Policies

- [Accessibility Policy](#)
- [Service Animals on Campus Policy](#)
- [Respectful Working and Learning Environment Policy](#)
- [Employment Equity and Diversity Policy](#)

Required and Recommended Accessibility Training

Mandatory

- The Accessibility for Manitobans Act – [Customer Service Training](#)
- AMA Employment Standard Training – accessed via your Nexus account
- AMA Information and Communications Standard Training – accessed via your Nexus account

Recommended

- Creating Accessible Learning Experiences for Students (formerly Accommodating Learning (and Other) Disabilities in the Classroom) – contact the HRDO at hrdo@uwinnipeg.ca or 204.988.7508. Training opportunities are also advertised in the *Your UWinnipeg* Newsletter.

- See also *AMA Information and Communication Additional Resources* on the HRDO website for other available accessibility training and resources.

Improving Accessibility in Courses

When designing courses to consider and include accessibility and flexibility, course developers and instructors need to:

- Clarify the goals that are set to challenge students through the course;
- Consider the learning objectives of the course; and
- Think creatively about the different ways in which students can achieve them.

Universal Design for Learning priorities

Accessible course content and instruction can be accomplished by applying Universal Design for Learning priorities and principles. These include:

- Multiple means of representation (e.g., text, audio, video, online);
- Multiple means of engagement (e.g., individual, group, in person, online); and
- Multiple means of expression (e.g., written, oral, video, poster).

Developing course content

When developing content, consider different ways that students could acquire the key concepts, theories, and principles of the course. For example:

- Integrate a variety of instructional strategies (e.g., lectures, activities, group work, and independent study);
- Present material in various formats (e.g., orally, visually, in print, online);
- Sequence information so that new material can be linked to and build upon prior learning; and
- Prepare course content, outlines, and study guides in advance to help students structure, review, and prepare their learning process and to organize information during class and throughout the course.

Where possible, provide a detailed course outline several weeks before the beginning of the course. Ensure that the outline describes the course goals and expectations, topics, reading list, technical vocabulary, and evaluation procedures. As the term progresses, notify students, orally and in writing, of any changes in the course content, scheduling, or deadlines.

Providing course materials and alternate formats of information

Instructors can help students gain access to the course materials in a variety of ways. When requests for alternate formats occur, ensure that you understand which format works best for each student. Some other actions to consider when providing course content include:

- Design course content using a variety of media (e.g., text, images or graphics applying accessible design standards, such as high-contrast graphics and images with alt-text descriptions, and video with captions);
- Create a course web site that meets accessibility standards and provides a place for students to obtain links to accessible course materials;
- Provide all materials in digital and plain text format where possible; and
- Work with Accessibility Services to provide course content in accessible or alternate formats, upon request.

Ensuring assessment and evaluation methods are inclusive

Consider different ways that students can demonstrate their understanding of the material, both orally and in written form. The goal is to enable all students to demonstrate learning by applying their strengths and abilities and by accommodating any functional limitations and requests. Some methods and options for accessible assessment and evaluation include:

- Throughout the course, provide quizzes, exercises, and other self-assessment mechanisms that don't impact grades, for students to assess their own understanding of the material and seek help where needed;
- Offer choices of assignment formats (e.g., oral or written summaries, videos, concept maps, posters);
- Provide options when presenting test material and test questions (e.g., using different forms of questions, offering digital format to allow for conversion to screenreaders); and
- Allow for variations in how students record test responses (e.g., orally, handwritten, digitally, with the assistance of a support person or note taker).

Departmental Accessibility Audits

Instructors are encouraged to participate in completing UWinnipeg's bi-annual departmental [accessibility audits](#). These audits assist in identifying accessibility barriers of all types. Audit results contribute to creating goals in UWinnipeg's [Accessibility Plan](#), a document intended as a multi-year plan focused on identifying, removing, and preventing accessibility barriers.

Understanding Disabilities

While some students might be comfortable discussing their disability, many others might not be. It's important for instructors to understand that students with disabilities are not required to disclose details about their disability or medical condition to instructors. Instructors must not question students or ask for details about their diagnosis, disability, or condition.

If an instructor is involved in providing accommodations, respectful discussion is encouraged on how to provide accommodations or support accessible learning, without questions about a student's disability or diagnosis.

- Referrals to tutoring services
- Alternative formats of print or paper course materials
- Assistance with Manitoba Student Aid and other funding programs

Instructors are encouraged to reach out to AS with any questions or concerns. AS offers annual orientation sessions to incoming students each September. They also provide a computer lab and space for students to study or write exams.

The UWinnipeg Library Accessibility Coordinator is available weekly at AS to provide accessibility support and one-on-one instruction on academic research.

For more information on AS, including information for instructors and access to the faculty portal, visit <https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility-services/>. Faculty are also welcome to visit AS on campus in 1M35 or call 204.786.9771.

Instructor Responsibilities for AS Accommodations

Providing accommodations is a collaborative process between students, instructors, and Accessibility Services (AS).

- Students have a unique and personal knowledge of their disability and its impact on their day-to-day functioning and the barriers that impact them.

assignments or submission of assignments in alternate formats, provision of course content in advance or in alternate format).

- If you believe that implementing requested accommodations described in a student's Letter of Accommodation will compromise academic standards,

WebAdvisor username and password. If you do not know this information or need to reset your password, contact the Technology Service Desk for assistance.

When you log into the portal to submit a copy of the test or exam and add the particulars, you can also request for the test package to be delivered to your Department Assistant. Delivery can take up to two days during busy exam periods.

Test Packages

Test packages can also be scanned and emailed or sent by courier to an off-campus workplace upon request (e.g., if you are sessional staff or have an off-campus office).

Once complete, your student's test response package is automatically filed for pickup from the AS front desk (room 1M35) between 8:30 A.M. and 4:30 P.M. Monday to Friday.

Alternatively, you may arrange for either your department assistant or TA to pick up the package on your behalf. If so, please e-mail us in advance with the full name of these individuals so that we may ensure the release of the exam to the proper person.

If you prefer your tests or exams to be delivered to your department, that information must be noted on the Particulars Test form.

For security reasons, tests and exams will not be sent through interdepartmental mail.

Questions?

Common questions from instructors include: “Who do I contact if a student mentions they’re having some functional challenges in class? What if a student discloses a disability, either directly or indirectly? What if I think a student may have a disability that is impacting their academic performance?”

It is important that any discussion with a student is conducted in a completely private and confidential setting. There may be several explanations for a student’s academic performance. This subject may be a sensitive one so it must be handled with care and discretion. At the same time, it is important to refer students to campus resources that they may not otherwise be aware of. It is appropriate for instructors to refer students to AS.

If you have any questions or concerns related to student accessibility or disability, please contact Accessibility Services at 204.786.9771 or accessibility@uwinnipeg.ca.