

Accessibility Plan 2026



CAPILANO
UNIVERSITY



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1. Acknowledgements



Honouring the Land



Capilano University is named after Chief Joe Capilano (1854–1910), an important leader of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) Nation of the Coast Salish Peoples. We respectfully acknowledge that our campuses are located on the unceded territories of the sə́lilwətaʔ (Tseil-Waututh), shíshálh (Sechelt), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.

Accessibility Commitment and Acknowledgements



With thanks to the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Senior Leadership Council, and the Capilano University community for their instrumental contributions to the development of this Plan.

The Capilano University Accessibility Plan models accessibility standards by adhering to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and the Government of Canada Guidelines for creating accessible documents.

This document is available in a format compatible with screen readers. To request an alternate format, please email - accessibleCapU@capilano.ca.

The Plan uses person-first language, emphasizing the person before the disability. We recognize that some people prefer identity-first language as an expression of identity, culture, or community. We respect the importance of asking for preferences.

If you are aware of any accessibility barriers or would like to share feedback, please email accessibleCapU@capilano.ca or complete the Accessible CapU [Accessibility Feedback Form](#).

Questions about the Accessibility Plan can be directed to accessibleCapU@capilano.ca.

More information about accessibility at Capilano University can be found at capilano.ca/Accessible_CapU.



2. Accessibility Plan



Introduction

Capilano University is committed to building a culture of accessibility, inclusion, and full participation, where all members of the Capilano community are supported and responsive to access needs.

The Capilano University Accessibility Plan (the Plan) reflects this commitment by identifying and removing accessibility barriers and fostering environments where all students, employees, and community members can fully participate, contribute, and thrive.

The Plan is guided by the principles of equity, respect, and universal access. It addresses reported barriers in key areas: attitudes and awareness; curriculum, teaching and learning; digital technology; employment; information and communication; physical and sensory environments; service delivery; and systems, policies, procedures, and practices. Barriers arise when accessibility needs are not considered. Each priority area includes specific goals and actions to drive meaningful change that embeds accessibility, inclusion, and full participation across the University and its culture.

The Accessibility Plan also supports the University's long-term strategic vision by advancing equity, accessibility, and inclusion across learning and working environments. It aligns with Envisioning 2030 and Illuminating 2030, which call for "a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of our operations and outreach," and is reinforced by the CapU People Plan commitment to inclusive leadership, employee well-being, and equitable access to opportunities. Together, these frameworks underscore the University's responsibility to foster a community where all members can fully participate, contribute, and thrive.

The creation of this Plan is made possible through the contributions of the Accessibility Advisory Committee members, alongside the leadership commitment of the Senior Leadership Council. Broad and ongoing consultation with the Capilano University community was instrumental in shaping an approach for accessibility that reflects shared priorities and aspirations.

This Accessibility Plan is more than a document—it is a commitment to action, collaboration, and continuous improvement. By addressing identified barriers and advancing accessibility, Capilano University works toward a truly inclusive and equitable community for everyone.



Accessible BC Act Obligations

Capilano University's Accessibility Plan is a response to the *Accessible British Columbia Act*, which came into force on June 17, 2021. The Act requires public sector organizations, including post-secondary institutions, to develop and implement accessibility plans in collaboration with persons with disabilities and the wider community. The *Accessible BC Act* is a significant step towards ensuring the rights and accessibility for persons with disabilities in British Columbia.



To meet these requirements, Capilano University identified the following goals as the foundation for its first Accessibility Plan:

Accessible BC Act Obligations

🎯 Goals

1. Form the University's first Accessibility Advisory Committee, ensuring at least fifty percent of members identify as persons with disabilities or work in related support roles, with at least one Indigenous member.
2. Establish a process to collect and act on feedback about accessibility barriers to produce the Accessibility Plan.
3. Develop a workflow to address ongoing feedback about accessibility barriers identified through the Accessible CapU webpage feedback form or dedicated email.
4. Develop, implement, and maintain Capilano University's multi-year Accessibility Plan using feedback to identify, remove, and prevent accessibility barriers.
 - Publish the Accessibility Plan on capilanou.ca/AccessibleCapU.
 - Provide the Plan in accessible formats, or upon request where needed.
 - Deliver annual status updates on the Plan's progress.

Overview

Accessibility means designing products, devices, services, environments, technologies, policies, and rules so everyone, including people with a range of disabilities, can use them, according to Accessibility Services Canada.

The Capilano University Accessibility Plan aims to ensure that the University's programs, services, facilities, technologies, information and communication, practices, policies, and systems are designed and delivered with accessibility at the forefront. Embedding accessible design into every aspect of University life fosters equitable access, inclusion, and the ability to respond effectively to the diverse needs of our community.

The Plan reflects the voices and priorities of our community. Feedback gathered through the University's barrier consultation process was grouped into priority areas from which goals were developed. Each goal is supported by actions to guide implementation. This approach ensures the Plan is grounded in the lived experiences of students, employees, and community members, and that every contribution has shaped the direction forward.



3. Priorities, Goals, and Actions



Priority areas span curriculum, teaching, and learning to digital technology, communication, and employment with goals that include inclusive course design and delivery, meeting accessibility standards for web and digital tools, providing communication in accessible formats, and centralizing resources through the Accessible CapU Hub. Priorities also focus on improving physical and sensory environments, integrating accessibility into policies and practices, fostering positive attitudes and awareness, and driving continuous improvement through feedback and monitoring.

This Plan is both a starting point and a framework linking consultation to priorities, priorities to goals, and goals to meaningful, measurable actions toward an accessible Capilano University.

Priority One Attitudes and Awareness

Attitudes and Awareness: behaviours, perceptions, assumptions, judgment, or misconceptions.

A major lesson of the International Year of Disabled Person, 1981 was that the image of persons with disabilities depends to an important extent on social attitudes; these were a major barrier to the realization of the goal of full participation and equality in society by persons with disabilities, according to the United Nations General Assembly's resolution 31/123, 1976. Attitudes remain a significant accessibility barrier at Capilano University, ranking as the third most reported barrier based on the feedback gathered.

Goal—Attitudes and Awareness

Foster a culture of accessibility and inclusion at Capilano University by embedding accessibility principles into all areas of operations, promoting awareness and shared responsibility, and ensuring equitable access for all members of the community. This includes cultivating leadership commitment, integrating accessibility into recruitment and onboarding, and building awareness through events, training, and inclusive policies that drive systemic change.



Priority Two

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning: program and course development and renewal, course resources, e-textbooks, classroom technology, learning platforms, assessment, instructional practices, academic accommodation.

Faculty members' positive attitudes, active engagement, and receptiveness to inclusive instructional practices may contribute to the retention and success of students with disabilities. However, most faculty members are not adequately prepared to effectively implement inclusive instruction, and many remain uninformed regarding the functional impact of specific disabilities on academic performance (Hsiao et al., 2019).

Building Instructor Capacity for Accessible Teaching and Accommodations

Goal

Build capacity for accessible course delivery by equipping instructors with the knowledge, tools, and support needed to integrate accessibility into their teaching practices. By embedding accessibility into curriculum design, instructional delivery, and professional development, Capilano University aims to remove barriers in learning environments, ensuring all students can engage equitably without the need for individual accommodations.

Enhancing Accessibility in Program and Course Approval

Goal

Identify points within Capilano University's course and program development and approval processes—both new and revised—where accessibility standards can be embedded. This includes incorporating universal design principles, inclusive pedagogy, and the use of required texts and resources in accessible formats. Update the Program and Course Guide: Revisions to Current Curriculum and New Course Proposals to reflect these standards.

Accessible Course Materials

Goal

Develop a framework of best practices for accessible course materials, emphasizing proactive accessibility to reduce the need for retroactive accommodations. This framework will guide instructors in selecting and using accessible resources.

Accessible Media Content

Goal

Instructors take proactive steps to provide accessible media content learning materials, including video with captions, transcripts, audio descriptions, images, and graphics with alt text and descriptive captions.

Early Access to Course Syllabi

Goal

Provide students with access to Course Syllabi before the start of the term to support equitable learning opportunities.

Course Outline Template: Accessibility Statement

Goal

Include a statement in the Capilano University Course Outline template to notify students about the availability of academic accommodations through the Centre for Accessibility Services.

Course Outline Template: Accessible Format

Goal

Ensure that the Course Outline template and Course Outlines-Syllabi meets accessibility standards, including font use, size, headings, structure and screen reader compatibility and availability in accessible formats, making it usable for all students without retrofit.

Learning Environment Course Content

Goal

Ensure all instruction in Capilano University's in-class and online learning environments is accessible by allowing audio and transcript capture. Support instructors to offer these tools to meet diverse learning needs and accessibility standards.

Accessible Instructor-Student Documents

Goal

Ensure course documents meet accessibility standards, making them usable for all students, including those who rely on screen readers or other assistive technologies.

Priority Three

Digital Technology

Digital Technology: electronic systems, devices, hardware, software, platforms, devices, navigation.

Assistive technology should not be a luxury, but a basic human right. It is an essential tool for building inclusion and progress (Rick Hansen Foundation, 2025). For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible (IBM, 1991).

Ensure Website Accessibility

Goal

Integrate website accessibility into Capilano University's digital infrastructure by establishing accountability and conducting an annual review to ensure ongoing compliance with the most up-to-date Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Embed accessibility oversight into university operations to sustain equitable access to digital content and services for all users.

Accessibility in Educational and Workplace Technologies

Goal

Ensure that Capilano University's learning and workplace technologies are procured, designed, and implemented with accessibility in mind, addressing digital barriers for students and employees. Accessibility features will be enabled by default wherever possible, ensuring equitable access without requiring users to activate them manually.



Priority Four Employment

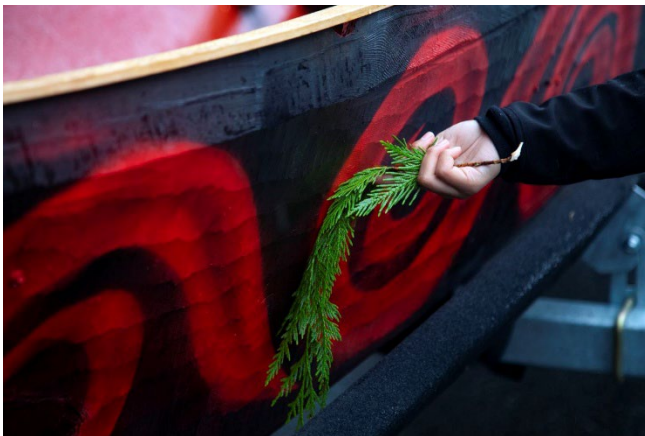
Employment: working conditions, hiring practices, employee accommodations.

Capilano University recognizes that equitable employment practices include respecting the right to accommodation under the Human Rights Code. The accommodation process is collaborative and respectful, supporting employees and applicants in fully participating at work. Capilano University has been recognized as one of British Columbia's Top Employers for six consecutive years (2019-2024), an honour that reflects its commitment to diversity, belonging, health and well-being, and workplace culture that supports employees' growth and inclusion.

Recruitment and Hiring

🎯 Goal

Add a statement to the Capilano University job posting introduction that includes instructions on how applicants can request accommodations throughout the application and hiring process, demonstrating Capilano University's commitment to equitable recruitment processes and proactive compliance with accessibility standards.



Employee Accommodation Process

🎯 Goal

Enhance the process for managing accommodation requests from employees and prospective employees, by providing a transparent and accessible written process for developing employee accommodation plans. A designated person will manage confidential information in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Manager's Guides

🎯 Goal

Equip managers with guidance to effectively support employees through medical leaves and workplace accommodations, fostering an inclusive and empathetic work environment while ensuring consistency and operational efficiency.

Accessible Employee Training

🎯 Goal

Strive to make all employee training sessions inclusive and accessible, for example by providing a statement in advance inviting accommodation requests, such as for alternate format materials.

Classroom Assignments Based on Instructor Accommodations

🎯 Goal

Assign classrooms that align with approved instructor accommodations.

Priority Five Information and Communication

Information and Communication: finding and reading information, people interaction, documents, tables, images, videos, alternative text descriptions, font, web forms, assistive technology compatible, digital literacy.

Accessible communication refers to the practice of creating and delivering information in a way that is easily understood and usable by all individuals, regardless of their abilities or disabilities (The Oxford Review).

Guide and Service Dogs

Goal

Publish a statement on the Accessible CapU Hub to acknowledge Capilano University's welcome of certified guide and service dogs, confirming their access to all public areas, including classrooms, offices, and common spaces, in compliance with applicable legislation.

Inclusive vs. Outdated Terms

Goal

Ensure signage, materials, and communications across all campuses use inclusive language by replacing outdated terms such as handicapped parking with accessible parking.

Accessibility in the CapU Brand Refresh

Goal

Capilano University's refreshed brand identity reflects its commitment to belonging and accessibility. The brand refresh incorporated inclusive design principles, aligned Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, and ensured visual elements like typography, colours, and text meet accessibility requirements. Resources, including an accessibility guide and tools for evaluating visuals, such as colour-blindness simulators, support the creation of accessible content. This brand refresh showcases Capilano University's commitment to a welcoming and equitable environment.



Priority Six

Physical/Sensory Environment

Physical/Sensory Environment: buildings, parking, sidewalks, acoustics, washrooms, lighting, signage, workstations, classroom audio-visual control systems.

The built environment refers to the human-created or altered physical surroundings in which we live, work, and play. The built environment influences our day-to-day activities and the way we live our lives. When spaces are not accessible, they can restrict participation and limit opportunities, creating equity barriers.

Facility Accessibility

🎯 Goal

Capilano University creates and maintains physical spaces that support meaningful access for all. Since March 2020, new construction and upgrades have been guided by the Capilano University Accessible Facility Design Criteria: Inclusive Strategies to Increase Meaningful Access for All Students and Instructors, along with applicable codes, and accessibility standards.

The University meets—and, where possible, exceeds—minimum requirements while balancing available resources, infrastructure realities, and competing priorities. Projects are prioritized to address the most pressing accessibility needs first, with higher milestones planned as opportunities and funding allow. A basic–better–best model guides evaluations, weighing impact, feasibility, and alignment with accessibility goals, ensuring steady progress and transparent communication about timelines, scope, and decision factors.



Accessibility Concerns in Parking

Goal

Improve accessibility of parking.

Wayfinding

Goal

Make it easier to navigate Capilano University campuses by improving wayfinding signage and by developing maps which show accessible routes and features such as elevators, ramps, automatic doors, and washroom.



Maintain Physical Environment Accessibility Features

Goal

Build on recent efforts to improve accessibility at Capilano University by establishing a system for routine maintenance and timely repairs of key accessibility features such as elevators and automatic doors. Ensure a proactive approach to upkeep while providing communication about outages and alternative access options.

Accessible Washroom Fixtures

Goal

Adjust soap dispensers and electronic and paper hand dryers in washrooms which are too high for users of wheelchairs.

Accessible Transportation Residence

Goal

Enhance accessibility at the Capilano University residence bus stop to ensure equitable access for all users, including those who use wheelchairs.

Expand Bus Shelter Space at the Main Campus

Goal

Provide adequate shelter at campus bus stops to accommodate students waiting during adverse weather conditions.



Environmental Sensitivities

Goal

Enhance awareness and accommodation responsiveness to the needs of the Capilano University community with environmental sensitivities, fostering an inclusive environment through guidelines.

Provide Sensory-Friendly Environments

Goal

Explore creating inclusive spaces and resources that accommodate the sensory needs of students and employees.

Water Bottle Filling Stations

🎯 Goal

Replace manual buttons on filling stations with accessible options to accommodate dexterity limitations.

Accessible Parking Birch

🎯 Goal

Source what prevents Birch accessible parking from being more direct to the main door instead of in front of a set of stairs.

Accessible Parking Payment Infrastructure

🎯 Goal

Ensure parking payment infrastructure reduces weather-related barriers by incorporating universal design, including shelter for external ticketing machines.

Registrar's Service Counter

🎯 Goal

Determine if the Registrar's Service Counter needs redesign to meet accessibility standards.



Priority Seven

Service Delivery

Service Delivery: accessible design and delivery, responsive approaches, access support.

The aim of the Accessible Service Delivery Standard is to ensure that events, activities, advice and the process of buying goods are provided in accessible ways that support the inclusion of people with disabilities (*Accessible BC Act*, Province of British Columbia).

Accessible CapU Hub

Goal

Establish the Accessible CapU Hub as a centralized, online resource designed to provide students, employees, and the wider Capilano University community with access to information and resources that support accessibility. It will be a one-stop location for navigating accommodations, understanding accessibility principles and policies, accessing training, and promoting inclusive practices throughout the University. The Hub is a key initiative in Capilano University's commitment to fostering an inclusive environment where everyone has equitable opportunities to participate, contribute, and thrive.



Accessibility in Procurement

Goal

To increase accessibility in Capilano University's procurement processes, the Procurement Manager will be consulted on the feasibility of implementing immediate interim actions that integrate accessibility into procurement decisions. These steps will lay the groundwork for a more inclusive approach when B.313 Procurement Policy is revised in 2028.

B.313 Procurement Policy and B.313.1 Procedure Revision

Goal

When the policy is renewed in 2028, a comprehensive B.313 Procurement Policy and B.313.1 Procedure will be established that embeds accessibility from the start of all procurement processes.

Temporary Facilities/Services Disruption

Goal

Notify students, employees, and the public about any temporary disruption in facilities and services affecting accessibility, for example, parking, doors, elevators, pathways, ramps, washrooms, in line with Accessibility Standards Canada, CAN-ASC-5.2.1–7: Communication.

Classroom Accessibility Assessment

Goal

Expand on the Capilano University Accessibility Facility Design Criteria document, Section 8.6 and 8.7 to conduct university-wide classroom inventory-assessment of accessibility, including seating, desks, lighting, physical access, and approach, and proximity to a washroom. Use the findings to identify barriers, prioritize improvements, and recommend changes for more inclusive learning environments.

Transparent Tuition and Fee Information

Goal

Ensure students have access to complete, upfront tuition and fee details before course registration, eliminating uncertainty and financial barriers.

Accessible Course Registration for Screen Reader Users

Goal

Registration ensure that students using screen readers can independently navigate the course registration process by removing accessibility barriers.

Centralized Student Service Appointment Booking

Goal

Make it easier for students to schedule support services by creating a single web page with all appointment booking buttons in one place. Include a brief explanation of each service to help students understand its purpose.

Event Planning

Goal

Develop and implement an accessibility framework to support inclusive and accessible event planning across the University including a statement explaining how attendees can request accommodations.

Event and Meeting Lead Time

Goal

Communications provide leadership to promote awareness and consistent practices for announcing events and meetings with sufficient lead time to support equitable access and accommodation planning.

Inclusive Participation at Graduation

Goal

Support full participation in Capilano University's convocation by providing information on requesting accommodations and offering communication supports—such as sign language or captioning—aligned with each individual's needs.



Centre for Accessibility Services Name Change

Goal

The renaming of Accessibility Services to the Centre for Accessibility Services enhances visibility, reflects Capilano University's commitment to addressing access barriers, and aligns with provincial priorities on accessibility, inclusion, and equity. This change underscores the Centre's role as a collaborative hub providing expertise and support to ensure equitable access for students and employees across the University.

Accessibility Services Advisor Hire

Goal

Expand service capacity by hiring an Accessibility Services Advisor to meet increased student demand.

Academic Accommodation Process

Goal

Continue to strengthen the accommodation request process by offering flexible ways for students to access support and information before submitting a Request for Accommodation form, while retaining the option to submit the form during an academic accommodation appointment. Enhance communication to provide clear and timely guidance, supporting a positive and accessible student experience.



Notification of Accommodation Letters

Goal

Streamline and automate the delivery of Notification of Accommodation letters to instructors to ensure timely, organized, and efficient communication, enabling seamless implementation of academic accommodations from the beginning of the term.

Services Disruption

Goal

When there is a temporary disruption in the Centre for Accessibility Services delivery, a notice will be issued including information about the disruption, a contact number, the reason, expected duration, and any alternative facilities or services available, when possible.

Testing Invigilation: Instructor Responsibilities

Goal

Ensure instructors understand and fulfill their responsibilities in supporting the testing accommodation process by providing timely materials, instructions, and accurate access details, minimizing delays for students.

Testing Accommodation: Invigilation Environment

Goal

Implement strategies that solve space-share challenges which affect standards for the testing invigilation environments.

Exam Accessibility

Goal

Ensure students with disabilities have equitable access to final exam accommodation by including the Centre for Accessibility Services Final Exam booking deadline into university processes.

Duty to Inquire

Goal

Integrate the duty to inquire into University practices for both students and employees. Faculty, supervisors, and decision-makers will be trained to recognize when disability-related needs may be affecting participation or performance and to respond with supportive inquiry rather than assumption or discipline. Under the BC Human Rights Code, educational institutions and employers share a duty to inquire when there are reasonable indications that a disability may be affecting an individual's participation or performance. Embedding this duty into university procedures—such as conduct, complaint, and appeal processes—and establishing referral pathways to the Centre for Accessibility Services (for students) or People, Culture and Diversity (for employees) will promote fairness, inclusion, and compliance with human rights obligations.

Priority Eight

Systems, Policies, Procedures, and Practices

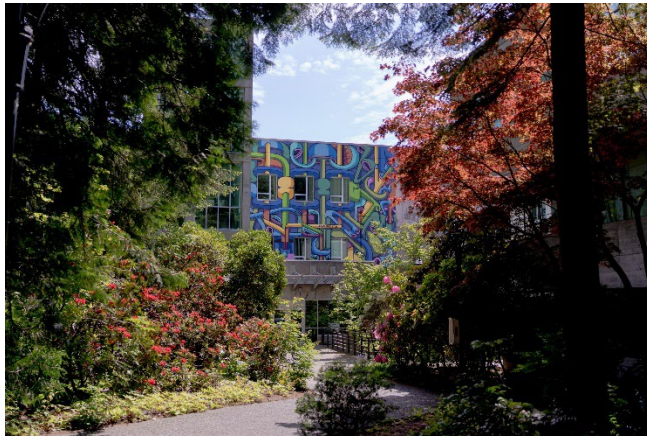
Systems, Policies, Procedures and Practices: admissions, attendance, course load, registration, withdrawal, employee and student codes of conduct.

Systems, policies, procedures and practices are key mechanisms for removing barriers and enabling equitable access and participation across the university, in accordance with the Accessible Canada Act and the Accessible British Columbia Act.

Academic Concession Policy and Procedure

🎯 Goal

Support student well-being and academic success by establishing an Academic Concession Policy and Procedure that provides clear, consistent, and equitable guidelines for addressing disruptions to studies caused by illness or other extenuating circumstances, ensuring fairness in academic processes.



Employee Accommodation Policy

🎯 Goal

Capilano University will establish an Employee Accommodation Policy and Procedure to formally recognize and address its duty to accommodate its employees.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities Policy and Procedure

🎯 Goal

Revision completed on the S1999-09 Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities Policy and S1999-09.1 Procedure, to reflect current accessibility best practices, legislative requirements, and university commitments.

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CapU Squamish Campus

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