

Capilano University

Accessibility Plan - 2025

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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 səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh), shíshálh (Sechelt), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.

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Accessibility Commitment and Acknowledgements

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

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

This document is available in a format compatible with a screen reader. Where another format is required, please email us accessibleCapU@capilanou.ca.

The Capilano University Accessibility Plan uses person-first language when referring to persons with disabilities. We acknowledge that some individuals prefer identity-first language and recognize the importance of asking for preferences and respecting those choices.

We value your feedback, which can be shared through email, in person, or by requesting a meeting. If you have questions regarding Capilano University's Accessibility Plan, please reach out by email - accessibleCapU@capilanou.ca.

If you are aware of any accessibility barriers, email accessibleCapU@capilanou.ca or complete the Accessible CapU [feedback survey online](#).

More information about accessibility at Capilano University can be found at [capilanou.ca/Accessible CapU](https://capilanou.ca/Accessible_CapU).

Introduction

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

Capilano University Accessibility Plan (Accessibility Plan, or Plan) reflects our dedication to remove accessibility barriers and foster an environment where all students, employees, and community members can fully participate, contribute, and thrive.

The Accessibility 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, systemic, policies, procedures and practices. Barriers exist when accessibility needs are not considered. Each barrier priority area includes specific goals and actions to drive meaningful change and embed accessibility, inclusion, and full participation in Capilano University's culture.

The Accessibility Plan also supports the University's long-term strategic vision by advancing equity, accessibility, and inclusion across our 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 further reinforced by the *CapU People Plan* commitment to inclusive leadership, employee well-being, and equitable access to opportunity. 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 insights, contributions, and dedication of the Accessibility Advisory Committee members, alongside the leadership commitment of the Senior Leadership Council. Extensive 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 barrier priorities and advancing accessibility, Capilano University aims to build 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 B.C. 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:

Goals – Accessible BC Act Obligations

- 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 receive and address ongoing feedback about 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 that identifies, removes, and prevents accessibility barriers.
 - Publish the Accessibility Plan on capilanou.ca/AccessibleCapU.
 - Provide the Accessibility Plan in accessible formats and when not, upon request.
 - Deliver annual status updates on the Plan's progress.

Actions – Accessible BC Act Obligations

- Utilized a dedicated position under the Associate Vice-President, Student Success, to support the implementation of the Accessible BC Act
- Invite Capilano University employees and students to review the Terms of Reference and submit a nomination form to join the Accessibility Advisory Committee. Prioritize representation from persons with disabilities, those that work in related support roles, and Indigenous ancestry.
- Conduct an intensive feedback collection phase. Use tools such as surveys, pop-up events, and town halls, promoted via postcards, posters, and online channels, to encourage broad participation.
- Create the Accessibility Plan based on the feedback collected, outlining goals and actions to address identified barriers.

Overview

Accessibility means designing products, devices, services, environments, technologies, policies, and rules so everyone, including people with a variety of disabilities, can use them (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. All feedback gathered through the University's barrier consultation process was reviewed and grouped into priority areas from which goals were developed. Each goal is supported by specific 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.

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: 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 (United Nations, General Assembly resolution 31/123). Attitudes remain a major accessibility barrier at Capilano University, ranking as the third most reported barrier in the accessibility consultation.

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: program and course development and renewal, course resources, e-textbooks, classroom technology, learning platforms (eLearn, PebblePad), 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, F., Burgstahler, S., Johnson, T., Nuss, D., Doherty, M. "Promoting Accessible Learning Environment for Students with Disabilities via Faculty Development," Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, 32(1), 91-99 Spr 2019).

Recognizing Existing Work

The Accessible CapU Committee acknowledges current efforts to support accessible teaching practices. Notable initiatives include:

- **Self-paced eLearn Training:** Helps instructors make eLearn courses more accessible, providing practical steps, real examples, and interactive learning.
- **Workshops on Inclusive Teaching Practices:** Equips instructors with strategies to create more welcoming learning environments with knowledge of inclusive teaching design.

Goal – Building Instructor Capacity for Accessible Teaching and Accommodations

In collaboration with the Centre for Teaching Excellence, 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.

Goal – Enhancing Accessibility in Program and Course Approval

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.

Goal – Accessible Course Materials

Capilano University will develop a framework of best practices for accessible course materials, emphasizing proactive accessibility to reduce the need for retroactive accommodations. This work will involve collaboration across departments to support instructors in selecting and using accessible resources.

Goal – Accessible Media Content

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

Goal – Early Access to Course Syllabi

Provide students with access to course syllabi before the start of the term to support academic preparedness and equitable learning opportunities.

Goals – Course Syllabus: Accessibility Statement | Academic Planning and Quality Assurance

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

Goals – Course Syllabus: Accessible Format | Academic Planning and Quality Assurance

Ensure that the Course Syllabi template in revision meets accessibility standards, for example, font use, size, proper headings, clear structure and screen reader compatibility and is available in accessible formats, making it usable for all students without retrofit.

Goal – Learning Environment Course Content

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

Goal – Accessible Instructor-Student Documents

Ensure that all instructor-student documents meet accessibility standards, making them usable for all students, including those who rely on screen readers or other assistive technologies. Include guidance on structuring documents for screen readers, for example, using proper headings, alt text for images, and tables instead of tabs.

Priority Three |

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

Goal – Ensure Website Accessibility

Integrate website accessibility into Capilano University's digital infrastructure by establishing clear 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.

Goal – Accessibility in Educational and Workplace Technologies

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

Priority Four |

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.

Goal – Recruitment and Hiring | People, Culture and Diversity - Completed

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, this demonstrating Capilano University's commitment to equitable recruitment processes and proactive compliance with accessibility standards.

Goal – Employee Accommodation Process

Capilano University enhance its process for managing accommodation requests from employees including prospective employees. The employer will provide a written process on developing employee accommodation plans which will be transparent and accessible on the Accessible CapU Hub. A designated person will manage confidential information in accordance with Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Goal – Manager’s Guides

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.

Goal – Accessible Employee Training

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.

Goal – Classroom Assignments Based on Instructor Accommodations

Assign classrooms that align with approved instructor accommodations.

Priority Five |

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).

Goal – Guide and Service Dogs

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.

Goal – Inclusive vs. Outdated Terms

Ensure all campus signage, materials, and communications use inclusive and modern language by identifying and replacing outdated terms such as “handicapped parking” with “accessible parking” and similar updates.

Goal – **Accessibility in the CapU Brand Refresh**, Marketing and Digital Experience
Capilano University's refreshed brand identity reflects its commitment to belonging, accessibility, and inclusivity. The rebrand prioritized accessibility by embedding inclusive design principles, aligning Web Content Accessibility Guidelines standards, and ensuring visual elements like typography, colors, and text meet accessibility requirements. Resources, including an accessibility guide and tools for evaluating visuals, for example, color-blindness simulators were used to support accessible content creation. This brand refresh showcases Capilano University's dedication to fostering a welcoming and equitable environment for all.

Priority Six |

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.

Goal – **Facility Accessibility**

Capilano University creates and maintained 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.

Goals – **Accessibility Concerns in Parking**

- 1) Reach out to Parking Services requesting a review of current parking equipment to address accessibility concerns that have been raised: 1) keyboards with faded or difficult to read keys and 2) screens affected by sunlight.
- 2) Centralized the Campus Map delineating parking to the Accessibility Hub.
- 3) Investigate whether the number of designated accessible parking spaces aligns with the amount of need.

Goal – Wayfinding

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

Goal – Maintain Physical Environment Accessibility Features

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 clear communication about outages and alternative access options.

Goal – Accessible Washroom Fixtures

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

Goal – Accessible Transportation Residence

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

Goal – Expand Bus Shelter Space at the Main Campus

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

Goal – Environmental Sensitivities

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

Goal – Provide Sensory-Friendly Environments

Explore the possibility of creating inclusive spaces and resources that accommodate the sensory needs of students and employees, fostering a supportive campus environment.

Goal – Water Bottle Filling Stations

Replace manual buttons on filling stations with an accessible option that addresses dexterity functional limitation.

Goal – Accessible Parking Birch

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

Goal – Registrar's Service Counter

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

Priority Seven |

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

Goal – Accessible CapU Hub

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.

Goal – Accessibility in Procurement | Procurement Manager

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 the Procurement Policy, B.313 is revised in 2028.

Goals – Procurement Policy and Procedure (B.313) Revision

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

Goal – Temporary Facilities/Services Disruption | Facilities Services

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."

Goal – Classroom Accessibility Assessment

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

Goal – Transparent Tuition and Fee Information

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

Goal – Accessible Course Registration for Screen Reader Users

Ensure that students using screen readers can independently and equitably navigate the course registration process by removing accessibility barriers.

Goal – Centralized Student Service Appointment Booking

Make it easier for students to schedule support services by creating a single web page with all appointment booking buttons in one place. This page will include a brief explanation of what each service offers to help students understand how it can support them.

Goal – Event Planning

Capilano University is committed to hosting inclusive and accessible events. To support this, Accessible CapU will develop and share an accessibility framework for event planning. This framework will include a clear statement explaining how attendees can request accommodations.

Goal – Event and Meeting Lead Time

AccessibleCapU promote awareness of the need to announce events and meetings with sufficient lead time to support equitable access and proactively address accommodation needs.

Goals – Inclusive Participation at Graduation

Make sure everyone can fully participate in Capilano University's graduation ceremonies by providing clear information on how to ask for accommodation and ensure communication supports, like sign language or captions, match the individual's needs.

Goal – Centre for Accessibility Services Name Change - Completed

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.

Goal – Advisor Hire, Centre for Accessibility Services - Completed

The Centre for Accessibility Services hired a third full-time Accessibility Services Advisor in response to increased student demand and significant appointment scheduling needs.

Goal – Academic Accommodation Process, Centre for Accessibility Services

Consider ways to increase flexibility in the accommodation request process, allowing students to access support and informational meetings without submitting a Request for Accommodation form, while retaining the option to submit a Request for Accommodation form when arranging academic accommodations. Enhance communication to provide clear, timely guidance on the process, fostering a more accessible and supportive experience.

Goal – Notification of Accommodation Letters, Centre for Accessibility Services

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 semester.

Goal –Services Service Disruption, Centre for Accessibility Services

When there is a temporary disruption in the Centre for Accessibility Services delivery, a notice of service disruption will be issued and include information about the disruption, a contact number, the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption will last, and a description of any alternative facilities or services available, where possible.

Goal –Testing Invigilation: Instructor Responsibilities, Centre for Accessibility Services

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.

Goal –Testing Accommodation: Invigilation Environment, Centre for Accessibility Services

Implement strategies that problem solves space share challenges which affect standards for the testing invigilation environments.

Goal – Exam Accessibility, Centre for Accessibility Services

Ensure students with disabilities have equitable access to final exam accommodation by embedding deadlines, such as the Accessibility Services Final Exam booking deadline, into university processes to promote awareness and timely support.

Goal – Duty to Inquire

Integrate the duty to inquire into University practices for both students and employees by ensuring that faculty, supervisors, and decision-makers are 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 Accessibility Services (for students) and Human Resources (for employees) will promote fairness, inclusion, and compliance with human rights obligations.

Priority Eight |

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

Goal – **Academic Concession Policy and Procedure**

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.

Goal – **Employee Accommodation Policy**

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

Goal – **Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities Policy and Procedure**

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

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