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|  BRANDON UNIVERSITY | Accessibility Policy | First Approved: November 26, 2016 |
| Board of Governors Policy | Approved by <i>Board of Governors</i> Administered by <i>President & Vice-Chancellor</i> <i>through:</i> <i>Vice-President (Administration & Finance), and</i> <i>Vice-President (Academic & Provost)</i> | Updated: Reviewed: |

This policy shall govern Brandon University as it supports and promotes accessibility for all members of the University community, including those with disabilities.

1.0 Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students (full-time, part-time), all employees (full-time, part-time, casual, contract) volunteers, and visitors to the campus.
- All other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the University.

2.0 Policy

2.1 Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 2.1.1** Establish Brandon University’s commitment to fostering a diverse, inclusive and accessible learning and working environment.
- 2.1.2** Ensure that Brandon University proactively meets its legal obligations based on the grounds protected by Manitoba provincial human rights law, *The Manitoba Human Rights Code*, and *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* for all members of the University community, including those with disabilities.
- 2.1.3** Define the approach Brandon University will use to prevent, identify, and remove accessibility barriers.
- 2.1.4** Provide a clear outline of the obligations and responsibilities Brandon University is committed to fulfilling as well as to provide guidance for the implementation of this policy.

2.2 Statement of Intent

Brandon University recognizes the diversity of its students and employees and is committed to providing a learning and working environment in which all members of the University community are treated in a fair and equitable manner while respecting the inherent dignity of all people. It is the responsibility of each member of the Brandon University community, including faculty, staff, and students to play a part in creating an equitable and inclusive environment – in the identification and minimizing of barriers, and in the accommodation processes.

Brandon University is committed to identifying and removing accessibility-related barriers to create an inclusive and accessible environment. *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)* mandates that public sector organizations, such as universities, help remove barriers by providing a more encouraging and welcoming environment for all students, faculty, staff and visitors. By promoting inclusion and diversity, Brandon University will also achieve higher levels of accessibility.

2.3 Accessibility Plan

2.3.1 The role of the Accessibility Plan is twofold:

- i. To examine Brandon University's working and learning environments to identify any circumstances where barriers exist; and,
- ii. To recommend the ways to eliminate or provide accommodations for navigating these barriers for students and/or employees within the limits of undue hardship.

2.3.2 Framework for the Accessibility Plan: The Accessibility Plan will examine the accessibility of products, processes, procedures, services, systems, structures and environments in the following areas:

- i. academic services for all students;
- ii. non-academic student support services for all students;
- iii. physical facilities used by or for use by students and/or employees, including individuals with disabilities;
- iv. Human Resources including recruitment of and service support for employees, including those with disabilities;
- v. equipment and adaptive technology for students and employees, including individuals with disabilities;
- vi. publications, communications and information resources for students and employees; and
- vii. awareness issues for students and employees on academic and workplace accommodation.

2.3.3. Content of Accessibility Plan: The Accessibility Plan will include:

- i. a report on the measures the University has taken to identify, prevent and remove barriers that disable people;
- ii. the measures the University intends to take in the period covered by the plan to identify, remove and prevent barriers that disable people;
- iii. the measures in place to ensure that the University assesses the following to determine their effect on the accessibility for persons disabled by barriers:
 - a. any proposed policies, programs, practices and services of the University,
 - b. any proposed enactments or by-laws that will be administered by the University; and
 - c. All other information prescribed for the purpose of the accessibility plan.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act:* Under this legislation, the Government of Manitoba has mandated that public sector organizations, such as universities, help remove barriers by providing a more encouraging and welcoming environment for all students, faculty and staff.

- 3.2 Manitoba Human Rights Code:** provincial legislation which prohibits unreasonable discrimination in areas such as employment, housing, accommodation, the provision of services or contracts, and signs and notices.
- 3.3 Accessibility:** 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.

In achieving accessibility, regard must be had for the following principles:

- 3.3.1 Access:** Persons should have barrier-free access to places, events and other functions that are generally available in the community;
 - 3.3.2 Equality:** Persons should have barrier-free access to those things that will give them equality of opportunity and outcome;
 - 3.3.3 Universal design:** Access should be provided in a manner that does not establish or perpetuate differences based on a person's disability;
 - 3.3.4 Systemic responsibility:** The responsibility to prevent and remove barriers rests with the person or organization that is responsible for establishing or perpetuating the barrier.
- 3.4 Barriers:** are 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. Barriers include, but are not limited to; attitudinal barriers, information or communications barriers, technological barriers, systemic barriers, or physical and architectural barriers.
- 3.5 Disability:** as defined in *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)*, disabilities may include, but are not limited to, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health issues and chronic illness.
- 3.6 Undue hardship:** Undue hardship is defined as more than minimal hardship and must be based on actual evidence, not assumptions or prejudices. While financial implications tend to be a contributing factor in determining undue hardship, *The Manitoba Human Rights Commission* considers the nature, size and scope of an organization when determining if undue hardship is valid.

4.0 Accountability

The Vice-President (Administration & Finance) and the Vice-President (Academic & Provost) are responsible for the communication, administration and interpretation of this policy. Both are responsible for advising the President and Vice-Chancellor that a formal review of this policy and secondary documents is required.

All members of the University community are responsible for complying with this policy.

5.0 Secondary Documents

The Chief Human Resources Officer and Associate Vice President (Student Services & Enrollment Management) and University Registrar, or designate may approve procedures which are secondary to and comply with this policy.

6.0 Review

- 6.1 Formal review of the policy will be conducted every three (3) years. The next scheduled review date for this policy is January 2020.
- 6.2 In the interim, this policy may be revised or rescinded if the Board of Governors deems necessary or if there are changes within legislation which require such.
- 6.3 If this policy is revised or rescinded, all secondary documents will be reviewed as soon as reasonably possible to ensure that they:
 - 6.3.1 Comply with the revised policy; or
 - 6.3.2 Are in turn rescinded.

7.0 Previous Policies

- 7.1 This policy supersedes all previous Board/Senate policies on the subject matter herein;
and
- 7.2 All previous administration policies on the subject matter contained herein.

8.0 Cross Reference

8.1 Sources

- 8.1.1 Manitoba Human Rights Commission
<http://www.manitobahumanrights.ca/index.html>
- 8.1.2 Manitoba Human Rights Code
<http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h175e.php>
- 8.1.3 The Accessibility for Manitobans Act
http://www.accessibilitymb.ca/pdf/accessibility_for_manitobans_act.pdf
- 8.1.4 Disability Issues Office <http://www.gov.mb.ca/dio/>
- 8.1.5 York University
- 8.1.6 University of Manitoba

8.2 Documents

- 8.2.1 *How to Create Your Accessibility Plan*