

Terms of Reference

Provost's Advisory Committee – Accessibility Plan

Context

On December 3, 2025, the University of Saskatchewan published its first university-wide Accessibility Plan, as part of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Framework for Action. The guiding principles, priorities and actions of this Accessibility Plan are a catalyst for meaningful, timely actions and outcomes to foster accessibility in our university. Creation of the Accessibility Plan means that USask made a commitment to “strive to create spaces where everyone can take part in learning, working, and community life” and recognizing that “accessibility means removing physical, social, and systemic barriers caused by ableism. It also means designing spaces, systems, and services with and for disabled people — including those with visible, invisible, episodic, or contested disabilities.” (*Accessibility Plan, 2025*)

The Accessibility Plan fits strongly within our university's landscape of related priorities. Actions are being undertaken as part of USask's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) commitments including policy approval and strategy development as well as anti-racism and anti-oppression initiatives. In addition, the University's priorities for Indigenous strategy are articulated in ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan.

Principles

The principles inspiring the work of the Provost's Advisory Committee – Accessibility Plan (PAC-AP) at USask are adopted directly from the university's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy alongside the principles underpinning the Accessibility Plan.

Mindful of the USask EDI policy, the work of the PAC-AP supports “the university community in bringing to life the principles of diversity, equality, human dignity, and manācihitowin and reflecting them back in our daily interactions and decisions. The university believes equity, diversity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging strengthen the community and enhance excellence, innovation, and creativity in all domains.” (USask EDI Policy)

Bringing greater depth, the work of the PAC-AP recognizes accessibility to mean will embody the principles set out in the Accessibility Plan (*Accessibility Plan, 2025*):

- 1) Universal design means creating spaces, tools, and systems that work for as many people as possible without needing special changes for each person. For example, captioned videos help people who are Deaf or hard of hearing, but they also help people in noisy places, those learning English, and anyone watching without sound. Designing for accessibility benefits everyone, and while Universal Design is important, it does not replace disability-led expertise or accommodations for specific access needs.
- 2) Intersectionality means that people can face barriers in different ways because of overlapping parts of who they are — like their disability, race, gender, or culture. Addressing intersectionality means understanding how forms of oppression such as racism, sexism, and classism add to ableism in university systems. For example, someone who identifies as a person

of colour and uses a wheelchair may experience both racism and ableism, which may compound barriers to their participation at the university. These insights guide accessibility planning at USask.

Purpose

The PAC-AP provides advice to the Provost and Vice-President Academic regarding:

- Priorities and actions stemming from the Accessibility Plan including recommendations on institutional strategy and transformative actionable steps to assist USask in achieving a more respectful, accountable, equitable, diverse and inclusive community. Building on the Accessibility Plan, the next steps will be guided by the understanding that: “As the needs of the university community change, so will the strategies and actions in this plan. Future updates will be shaped by continued engagement, new data, and lessons learned through implementation.” (*Accessibility Plan, 2025*). This will include identifying and monitoring outcomes.
- Assisting USask in amplifying accessibility, which will involve critically reviewing policies, processes, and practices (existing and emerging) to understand how they contribute to systemic ableism and providing recommendations that will further accessibility. This may include connecting with the Accessibility Committee and/or units outside the Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic as appropriate.

With a view to supporting the principle of intersectionality, the PAC-AP identifies meaningful ways to engage people with disabilities from intersectional backgrounds in discussions about the implementation of the Accessibility Plan at USask.

The Provost and Vice-President Academic and designates are responsible for helping to identify pathways through which the PAC-AP provides input on policy, practices, and initiatives where the perspectives of faculty, staff, and students with disabilities are essential and have historically been absent.

Membership

- Co-Chairs: Deputy Provost (Ex Officio)
Member of the PAC-AP (selected by the members of the PAC-AP)
- Up to two faculty members appointed by the Provost
- Up to two staff members appointed by the Provost
- One Dean or Executive Director appointed by the Provost
- USSU Vice-President, Student Affairs
- GSA Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs
- Representative from Access and Equity Services appointed by the Provost
- Representative from Facilities appointed by the Provost
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Project Specialist from the Provost’s Office

By design, the membership of the PAC-AP is diverse in university role (faculty, staff, student, senior leader). In addition, and whenever feasible, members will be drawn from a range of colleges and

administrative service units with consideration given to amplifying diverse identities. Membership is voluntary and by invitation only.

Members of PAC-AP are responsible for attending and participating in meetings and for sharing information with their own localized university stakeholder groups with a view to keeping others informed.

Membership will normally be for a two-year period except for student members whose terms will normally be for one year. The Provost and Vice-President Academic may choose to reinvite members to serve additional terms. In those cases where a member is unable to fulfill the full length of their term for any reason, the member can resign and the co-chairs will seek a replacement.

In addition to the core membership identified above, the PAC-AP will, as it sees fit, engage other members of the USask community or members of the external community to aid in its work. This may include but is not limited to resource people from across the university, in particular Campus Planning and Real Estate, Capital and Business Planning, and Operations and Maintenance, and members of USask senior leadership.

Meetings

The PAC-AP will meet a minimum of once per academic term in fall and winter. The co-chairs will prepare and circulate an agenda ahead of each meeting. The Deputy Provost will provide administrative support to organize the meetings and take notes at each gathering.

Reporting

The PAC-AP will provide a written update on activities and progress to the Provost and Vice President Academic no less than once per year. The Provost and Vice-President Academic and designates will help identify mechanisms through which the broader university will receive information or have access to updates on the work of the PAC-AP.

Review of Advisory Committee

Recognizing the evolving context of governance and structures at the University of Saskatchewan and the link this committee has to the Accessibility Plan, the Provost reserves the right to review the committee terms – including membership, structure and mandate – on a regular basis to ensure the committee is aligned with the needs of the Provost at the time of the review. It would be expected that the terms would normally be reviewed at least every three years and formally renewed every six years.

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Approved by the Provost and Vice-President Academic: 1 May 2026