

ACCESS AND INCLUSION

ACTION PLAN 2018–2020

*University of Melbourne Student Union
(UMSU)*

UMSU
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
STUDENT UNION

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MESSAGE FROM CEO AND PRESIDENT



Justin Baré



Desiree Cai

The University of Melbourne Student Union is committed to advocating for equality and dignity for all students, and our objectives relating to student participation and experience mean that we must reflect the diversity of the student body. In 2012 students supported UMSU’s proposal to establish the UMSU Disabilities department to advocate for the rights of students with disability and to offer programs and services in support of students.

While UMSU is a representative organisation it is essential that we also examine how we engage and interact with students, volunteers and staff with disability, and ensure that we are an organisation that is for, in every sense, students with disability.

In 2016 UMSU embarked on a process that has culminated in the development of our inaugural Access and Inclusion Action Plan 2018–2020. This Plan reflects a significant collaborative exercise undertaken by students and their representatives, and UMSU staff.

By including people of all abilities we will draw on a broader range of experiences, skills and perspectives in students, our volunteers, student representatives and staff.

The insights and energy that flow from being a more diverse organisation will enable us to better achieve our strategic goals. Students with disability expect and deserve the same opportunities as everyone else, to feel connected to other people, to be involved in activities which provide meaning and purpose, to participate fully in University life, and to pursue the things they are interested in.

UMSU commits to playing our part by acknowledging the contribution that people with diverse abilities bring to UMSU and in providing opportunities for people of all abilities. UMSU’s student representatives, volunteers and staff will be encouraged to implement this plan as part of their roles, so that we can continue to deliver inclusive and responsive services to students, and to ensure that we collaborate with and represent students effectively.

The primary focus of this initial Plan will be to further build an organisational culture that supports students, volunteers, staff and others to fully participate in UMSU’s activities, programs and the opportunities we offer. UMSU is deeply committed to furthering this work through the implementation of this Access and Inclusion Action Plan 2018–2020.

Justin Baré
Chief Executive Officer

Desiree Cai
UMSU President

INTRODUCTION

UMSU has a long history of fostering a diverse and inclusive community of students, staff and visitors. We are a non-profit organisation run by students with the support of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and staff. UMSU provides support, advocacy and opportunities for creative and social pursuits for students enrolled at the University of Melbourne. It is with this social purpose in mind that UMSU — as a student-led organisation — decided to establish an Access and Inclusion Action Plan.



The inaugural introduction of a three year Access and Inclusion Action Plan (AIAP) 2018–2020 by the University of Melbourne Student Union is to support UMSU’s commitment to enable an environment for employees, volunteers and students that promotes inclusivity, thoughtfulness and safety.

This AIAP is very much focused on establishing a baseline for our access and inclusion work, centering on education, disability confidence awareness and laying firm foundations for the provision of equitable access to UMSU activities for all students.

Being the first AIAP a particular focus will be providing UMSU staff and office bearers with resources and policy frameworks to ensure consistency and robustness in our service delivery to all students on campus at all times. Our objective is to build upon this Action Plan in the years to come, increasing our maturity in access and inclusion, thus advancing equitable opportunities for all in society.

DISABILITY DEFINED



In Australia, the rights of people with disability are protected within the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992, and disability is defined within this act as a:

- (a) total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- (b) total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- (c) the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- (d) the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- (e) the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- (f) a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or

(g) a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour¹.

Our AIAP is informed by the provisions within the DDA as well as other legislation, standards and guidelines such as the Disability Act 2006² (Victoria) and the Disability Standards for Education 2005³.

Furthermore, in alignment with UMSU's objective to provide all students with equal opportunity to participate in on-campus activities, our Access and Inclusion action Plan is guided by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁴.

This Convention places emphasis not only on principles of human rights, but to build capability so that persons with disabilities have agency to contribute to social and public life.

1. Australian Government, Federal Register of Legislation, 'Disability Discrimination Act 1992', retrieved 20 October 2017, <<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00339>>.
2. Government of Victoria, 'Disability Act 2006', retrieved 20 October 2017, <[http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/51dea49770555ea6ca256da4001b90cd/0B82C05270E27961CA25717000216104/\\$FILE/06-023a.pdf](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/51dea49770555ea6ca256da4001b90cd/0B82C05270E27961CA25717000216104/$FILE/06-023a.pdf)>.
3. Australian Government, 'Disability Standards for Education 2005', retrieved 20 October 2017, <<https://www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005>>.
4. United Nations, 'Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities', retrieved 20 October 2017, <<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>>.

UMSU ACCESS AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

The purpose of the UMSU Access and Inclusion Plan is to define and articulate the key actions for implementation by UMSU, with the aim of enabling an environment for employees, volunteers and students that promotes inclusivity.



UMSU's approach to access and inclusion focuses on the development of an organisational culture which best supports students, staff and visitors with disability to fully participate in UMSU's activities and programs. The key areas of focus for UMSU's Access and Inclusion Action Plan are:

1. Culture and Engagement
2. Equity of Opportunity
3. Building Disability Confidence
4. Community Engagement
5. Student Union and Facilities
6. Governance and Communications

As part of the process of developing this Action Plan, UMSU established an Accessibility Working Group consisting of both UMSU student office bearers and staff. Other key stakeholders within UMSU's organisational structure were also consulted with, in areas such as Communications and Marketing; Advocacy and Legal; Clubs, Volunteering and International; Arts and Entertainment; and Human Resources.

What follows is our framework for actions aligned to the mentioned six focus areas for the period 2018–2020, affirming UMSU's commitment to access and inclusion for our student community.

1. CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT

Demonstrating our commitment to access and inclusion by supporting students and employees with accessible communications and services.

TABLE 1 – CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT

ACTION	TIME-FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURING OUR PROGRESS
1.1. Appointment of a Champion for Access and Inclusion	2018	Office of the CEO	Establishment of a Champion and Terms of Reference
1.2. Establishment of a central point of contact for students for support with access and/or adjustment requests related to equitable participation in UMSU activities and programs	2018	Governance & Compliance – Events	Policy, procedure and communication channels in place to promote this service to students
1.3. Establishment of a funding system for adjustment requests by students participating in UMSU activities and programs	2018	Governance & Compliance – Events	Sign off on budget line item by Office of the CEO UMSU departments to receive guidelines on access to funds to meet adjustment requests made by students
1.4. Review of diversity messaging across all UMSU media	2018	Communications & Marketing	Revise and expand on the use of inclusive language for all communication channels Ensure alternate formats to web content promoting UMSU activities are available
1.5. Access and Inclusion resource information for student volunteers	2019	Communications & Marketing, Volunteering and Student Representation	Increased disability confidence and use of inclusive language by student volunteers
1.6. Audit of web accessibility of UMSU core content and forms (service provision)	2018	Communications & Marketing, Governance & Compliance – Events	Ensure compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Ensure full accessibility of web forms Offer web forms in alternative formats Ensure captioning on videos
1.7. Audit of accessibility practice for exhibition and student theatre applications by students with disability	2018	Arts & Entertainment	Increased participation by students with disability in art exhibitions and student theatre productions and workshops

2. EQUITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Providing workplace adjustments and other support to UMSU employees to ensure equity in the workplace.

TABLE 2 – EQUITY OF OPPORTUNITY

ACTION	TIME-FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURING OUR PROGRESS
2.1. Design of Workplace Adjustment policy and procedure to support UMSU employees	2018	Human Resources	Development and implementation of policy and procedure Communication plan to ensure staff awareness
2.2. Establishment of a centralised monitoring and funding system for workplace adjustment requests	2018	Human Resources	Increased number of staff identifying and sharing information regarding disability Increased efficiency in implementing adjustments for staff Increased number of requests for adjustments
2.3. Recruitment and Selection review to support UMSU employees	2018	Human Resources	Identification and removal of barriers in the recruitment and selection process for prospective employees
2.4. Audit current Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy and Procedure	2018	Human Resources	Confirmation that EEO policy is freely accessible and ensuring the removal of any (potential) barriers within policy and procedures Confirmation that appropriate grievance procedures are established and accessible to all

3. BUILDING DISABILITY CONFIDENCE

*Supporting UMSU employees and
volunteers to be disability confident
through training, tools and resources.*

TABLE 3 – BUILDING DISABILITY CONFIDENCE

ACTION	TIME-FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURING OUR PROGRESS
3.1. Disability Confidence training for UMSU staff, student office bearers and volunteers	2018, 2019, 2020	Human Resources, Volunteering and Student Representation	Minimum of one training session held annually Increase in disability confidence of staff and student office bearers
3.2. Access and Inclusion resource guide for UMSU employees	2018	Human Resources, Communications & Marketing	Increase in disability confidence of staff and student office bearers
3.3. Establish universal design principles and include in existing policy and update procedure for internal reference	2018	Communications & Marketing	Communications & Marketing staff to adhere to policy and procedure
3.4. Ensure availability of style guide to student volunteers to ensure accessibility of communications	2019	Communications & Marketing	Consistent use of UMSU style guide by student volunteers
3.5. Establishment of dedicated resource to assist with internal access and inclusion matters for UMSU staff and student office bearers	2018	Human Resources	Number of assistance requests made
3.6. Establishment of a mentoring program of networking and engagement opportunities between UMSU employees and students with disability	2019	Human Resources	Increase in disability confidence for participating staff members (as mentors)
3.7. Audit of UMSU internal communication channels	2018	Human Resources, Communications & Marketing	Increase in effectiveness and inclusiveness of communications to all UMSU staff
3.8. National Relay Service training for UMSU staff providing services to students relayservice.gov.au	2018, 2019, 2020	Human Resources	Increase in disability confidence of staff
3.9. Audit of annual student volunteer induction process to ensure access and inclusion guidelines are included	2018	Governance & Compliance – Events	Completion of audit and revisions made to ensure increased access and inclusion awareness by student volunteers

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engaging in collaborative practices with stakeholders outside of UMSU employees and students to influence and effect change for the wider university community.

TABLE 4 – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ACTION	TIME-FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURING OUR PROGRESS
4.1. UMSU Access and Inclusion Champion to participate in advocacy and partner events outside of UMSU	2018, 2019, 2020	Office of the CEO	Frequent attendance at external events
4.2. Participation in internship program for students with disability	2019, 2020	Human Resources	Offer one paid internship opportunity annually from 2019
4.3. Audit of access and inclusion policy and process for Summer School applications	2018	Coordinator – Volunteering and Student Representation	Increased participation of high school students with disability in the Summer School program
4.4. Development of Advocacy & Legal services third party referral 'passport' (information collected from client regarding adjustments or accommodations) in relation to assisting students with disability	2018	Advocacy & Legal	Implementation of (guidelines/checklist) to assist staff and students with the referral process Increased student satisfaction with the third party referral process
4.5. Audit of UMSU emergency procedures, including staff and Office Bearer Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs), and general evacuation compliance and procedures for Union House - policy and process	2018, 2019, 2020	Office of the CEO	Completion of audit and revisions made to ensure emergency and evacuation procedures meet access and inclusion guidelines and fulfil UMSU's compliance responsibilities Annual review in collaboration with University of Melbourne
4.6. Forge links with other Student Unions in Australia to share best practice and exchange thought leadership in access and inclusion	2018, 2019, 2020	Champion and AIAP implementation Working Group	Organise one exchange with other student unions per year

5. STUDENT UNION AND FACILITIES

Access and opportunities for students with disabilities to equitably access the facilities of Union House and participate in UMSU activities and events.

TABLE 5 – STUDENT UNION AND FACILITIES

ACTION	TIME-FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURING OUR PROGRESS
5.1. Audit of current accessibility and inclusion checklist for all events and programs	2018	Governance & Compliance – Events	Review and revise checklist to be rolled out to all event organisers, ensuring dignified access Removal of barriers (if any) to event participation Increased student satisfaction in relation to access and inclusion of events and programs
5.2. Audit of accessibility features of event venues listed in communications	2018	Governance & Compliance – Events	Consistent inclusion of accessibility features of event venues in program material
5.3. Establish guidelines in regard to disability awareness, accessibility and inclusion by retail tenancies in Union House	2020	Office of the CEO, Governance & Compliance – Events	Annual formal review with University of Melbourne in regard to guidelines for retail tenancies dignified access and service provision
5.4. Audit wayfinding practices at Union House	2018	Communications & Marketing	Improved satisfaction of students in regard to navigation of grounds and premises at Union House

6. GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

TABLE 6 – GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

ACTION	TIME-FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURING OUR PROGRESS
6.1. Annual report to Diversity Council Australia	2018, 2019, 2020	Champion and AIAP implementation Working Group	Public reporting of a dashboard of progress against our current actions
6.2. Annual communication to all UMSU staff and students	2018, 2019, 2020	AIAP implementation Working group, Communications & Marketing, Office of the CEO, UMSU President	Publication of dashboard for progress of our current actions

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We acknowledge the Elders, families and descendants of the Wurundjeri people who have been and are the custodians of the land on which these events take place. We acknowledge that the land in which we meet was the place of age old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal and that the local Aboriginal peoples have had, and continue to have, a unique role in the life of these lands.

