

Accessible Staff Training Guidelines

Red River College

Developed by the Co-Advisory Group and Project Team for Accessible Staff Training, 2019-20

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An Introduction to RRC's Accessible Staff Training Guidelines

What are guidelines?

Guidelines are statements that help people to know what to do, and what not to do.

These guidelines have been made to ensure that training for staff at Red River College is accessible. The guidelines have been made by people with disabilities and people who work closely with the disability community, as well as a staff team.

Guidelines are not laws and they are not made to punish anyone. They are meant to help organizers and presenters to become better at providing accessible training.

We will use our guidelines to audit our workshops throughout 2019-20. We will highlight any areas that need improvement, and we will make changes. Some guidelines can be addressed immediately and others may take more time. We will also provide recommendations to others when we cannot make the changes ourselves.

Although this focuses on training delivered by the Centre for Learning and Program Excellence, other departments at RRC that deliver training to staff are strongly encouraged to meet these guidelines as well.

Feedback and questions about these guidelines are welcomed. Please contact Taryn Presley at tpresley@rrc.ca, (204) 632-2484, or in room FM28, Notre Dame Campus.

10 Top Accessibility Tips For Facilitators

1. Review your presentation materials and update them where needed ensure that they are accessible.
2. Learn how to use the Accessibility Checker on Microsoft Word, PPT etc.
3. Be open and ready to share your materials 5 days in advance, upon request, so that the learner can re-format them or preview them as needed for accessibility.
4. Ensure you have completed the RRC Accessible Customer Service training course, as mandated by the Accessibility for Manitobans Act.
5. Know your venue by coming to your session early and find how it can be adapted for accessibility (e.g. tables, chairs, technology etc.)
6. Pay attention to your presentation style and instructional techniques to ensure that you do not create unintended barriers for some. Ask for feedback, review any audits, and make enhancements as needed.
7. Become familiar with the concept of Universal Design for Learning and apply its core principles to your facilitation approach.
8. Learn what alt-text is, and start incorporating it into your materials where needed.
9. Have a service orientation and allow individuals to be empowered by asking, “how can I help”?
10. Don't be afraid to address accessibility barriers. Most changes are small and practical, and people with disabilities know what they need and can work with you to problem-solve and make it happen!

Communication 

Instructional Techniques 

Presentation Materials 

Venue 

Food and Beverage 

Staff Training Guidelines: Communication

Guideline	Yes, No, Not Sure or Not Applicable	Your Notes
Contact person is provided for accessibility questions		
Multiple methods for feedback are provided		
Registration method - more than one option		
Plain language is used		
Offer to accommodate is provided		
Request for food allergies and dietary restrictions is provided		
Request for other allergies e.g. smudging is provided		
Statement is made that the workshop is scent-free so please avoid wearing scents		
Invitation to request a volunteer is provided		
Invitation to request reserved seating is provided		
Invitation to see room in advance offered		
Information about emergency texting system is provided		
Invitation to provide accommodation requests 5 days in advance is provided		

**Staff Training Guidelines:
Communication**

Accessibility checker used		
Alt-text correctly used		
Directions to training room provided		
Emergency evacuation protocols are communicated in advance		
If a large event, volunteers have completed Customer Service training		
Technology platforms including registration and learning management system are accessible		
ASL-English interpretation provided on request or by default if large-scale		

Staff Training Guidelines: Instructional Techniques

Guideline	Yes, No, Not Sure or Not Applicable	Your Notes
Facilitator has completed Accessible Customer Service training		
Organizer has visited venue in advance to minimize barriers and make plan to adapt		
On request, the slides, presentation materials and handouts are provided 5 days before class		
If using video or audio files, captioning or transcripts have been arranged		
Live captioning has been arranged and a link has been provided to participants		
Participants are greeted individually as they enter the room		
Agenda and learning outcomes are shared at start of session		
Announcement is made to invite participants to discuss accessibility needs		
Location of washrooms, fire exits and emergency protocols are communicated		
Ground rules are introduced with input from participants to create inclusive atmosphere		
Facilitator speaks clearly and audibly		
Facilitator speaks at a moderate pace - not rushed		
Facilitator faces participants and is not in shadow		

Staff Training Guidelines: Instructional Techniques

Guideline	Yes, No, Not Sure or Not Applicable	Your Notes
Facilitator pauses frequently to allow participants to keep up with notetaking and to absorb information		
Any important announcements in the workshop are also written on board and also sent via email or on course website		
Facilitator adjusts expectations on non-verbal and para-verbal feedback received by participants as they "read the room"		
Facilitator is open to checking for comprehension in a variety of ways		
Facilitator gives examples of key concepts and provides definitions for new or complex concepts or acronyms		
Facilitator asks if anyone prefers a verbal description of visual aids such as charts, graphs, images, tables		
Facilitator uses diverse approaches to content and assignments e.g. video, audio, cartoon, graph, images etc.		
Facilitator provides participants with options for asking questions or providing comments e.g. written submissions		
If microphone is available, facilitator uses one even when it may not appear needed		
Facilitator repeats questions so that all participants can hear them		

Staff Training Guidelines: Instructional Techniques

Guideline	Yes, No, Not Sure or Not Applicable	Your Notes
Facilitator actively encourages questions and clarifications through different means e.g. verbally, online, email, note cards		
Facilitator provides sufficient breaks for participants, interpreters, support individuals and service animals		
Facilitator speaks to and looks at the participant, not the interpreter		
Facilitator refrains from side conversations with the interpreter		
Facilitator explains that the interpreter is there for everyone, not just the Deaf participants		
Facilitator provides interpreter with lesson notes or materials prior to session for review		
Facilitator provides ample space for interpreters in the room		
Facilitator avoids walking in front of interpreters/stays out of sight lines		
When more than one person using an interpreter, considers setting up room to accommodate communication for all		
If doing activities, interpreters are not counted as participants e.g. counting off into smaller groups		
Participants have opportunity for mid-point feedback before submitting final work		

Staff Training Guidelines: Instructional Techniques

Guideline	Yes, No, Not Sure or Not Applicable	Your Notes
Activities are adaptable e.g. small groups or moving throughout the classroom is a challenge for some participants		
Case studies and examples reflect a range of diversities e.g. culture, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, range of abilities		
Consideration is given to include pronouns other than He and She in examples, e.g. Them and They		
Facilitator seeks to build own additional skills in inclusivity, accessibility and disability-related knowledge		
Facilitator has completed RRC ENGAGE workshops in TRC and mental health training		
When training on sensitive topics, Facilitator has built in adequate time and support for reflection and de-brief		
Facilitator does not engage with service animals, such as guide dogs		
When a support person is present, facilitator communicates with and looks at participant, not support person		

Staff Training Guidelines: Presentation Materials

Guideline	Yes, No, Not Sure or Not Applicable	Notes
High contrast slides, ideally black and white		
Sans serif font slides, ideally Ariel or Calibri		
Font size 30 or larger on slides		
No more than 6 words per line and no more than 7 lines of text on slides - the 6:7 rule		
Unique titles for each slide		
High contrast images in slides		
No animations and transitions during slideshow		
Sans serif font handouts, ideally Ariel or Calibri		
Font size 14 or larger on handouts		
High contract text on handouts, ideally black and white		
High contrast images/graphs/charts in		
Text descriptions of images/graphs/charts in handouts		
Minimal use of bold text in handouts		
No underlining and italics in handouts		
No use of all caps in handouts		
1.5 line spacing in handouts		
Images/graphs/charts can be interpreted in greyscale - colour is not needed to understand what they are saying		
Alternate format of materials on request		
Electronic materials are accessible word or PDF with alt-text		

Staff Training Guidelines: Venue

Guideline Description	Yes, No, Not Sure or Not Applicable	Notes
Power door for training room entrance		
Power door for main hallway entrances to training room		
Door handle is lever-style or push button		
Layout spacious enough to accommodate wheelchairs, scooters, mobility devices		
Room is configurable to multiple layouts		
If podium or stage, is accessibility to facilitators with limited mobility		
Height adjustable podium		
Free from distracting noise e.g. HVAC sound, outside noise		
Lighting is adjustable		
Venue is well lit		
If windows, coverings to minimize direct sunlight		
Projector is bright for maximum readability		
Reserved seating is available and prioritized for location needs of individuals		
Reserved seating has access to electrical outlets		
Venue can accommodate live captioning		

Staff Training Guidelines: Venue

Guideline Description	Yes, No, Not Sure or Not Applicable	Notes
Directions to training room are clearly marked		
Nearby elevator		
Entrance and hallways are wide enough for wheelchair access		
Nearby gender-neutral washrooms		
Washrooms have accessible stalls, sinks, dispensers, hand dryers and doors		
Free from cables/wires for tripping or movement hazard		
Tactile signage e.g. braille at entrance of main hallway and entrance of training room, left side of door, shoulder level?		
Free from stairs and an even surface		
Option for facilitator to present in front of stage if cannot access it		
Dry erase and flip chart markers are high contrast and thick		
Dry erase board cleaners are low-scent or scent-free		
Sound system with microphone		
At least one height adjustable desk and and at least one ergonomic e.g. adjustable, padded or mesh chair		
Room has natural light		

**Staff Training Guidelines:
Venue**

Guideline Description	Yes, No, Not Sure or Not Applicable	Notes
Access to outdoors for service animals along with a volunteers to guide person to outdoors to relieve animal or walk them		
Upon request, volunteer provided near main hallway or elevator to direct participants to find the room		
Review of venue completed prior to training day in case changes are needed		

**Staff Training Guidelines:
Food and Beverage**

Guideline	Yes, No, Not Sure or Not Applicable	Notes
Bendable straws		
Lightweight cups		
Cup sleeves for hot beverages		
Food is bite-sized e.g. not spaghetti		
Offer to support individuals to help accessing food if provided buffet-style		
Sugar-free food and beverage options		
Water bowl available for service animals		