

Office of Human Rights and Equity Services Annual Report

July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Human Rights and Equity Officer would like to acknowledge the support, guidance and leadership provided by the Associate Vice President, Human Resources to the Office of Human Rights and Equity Services (OHRES) during the 2013-2014 year; a year which has been marked by change and transition.

INTRODUCTION

The OHRES is a confidential and impartial resource for all members of the Brock community. The mandate of the OHRES is to promote a respectful, diverse and inclusive work, living and learning environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. This mandate applies to all students and employees and furthers the University's commitment to integrity, respect, freedom of expression and equity.

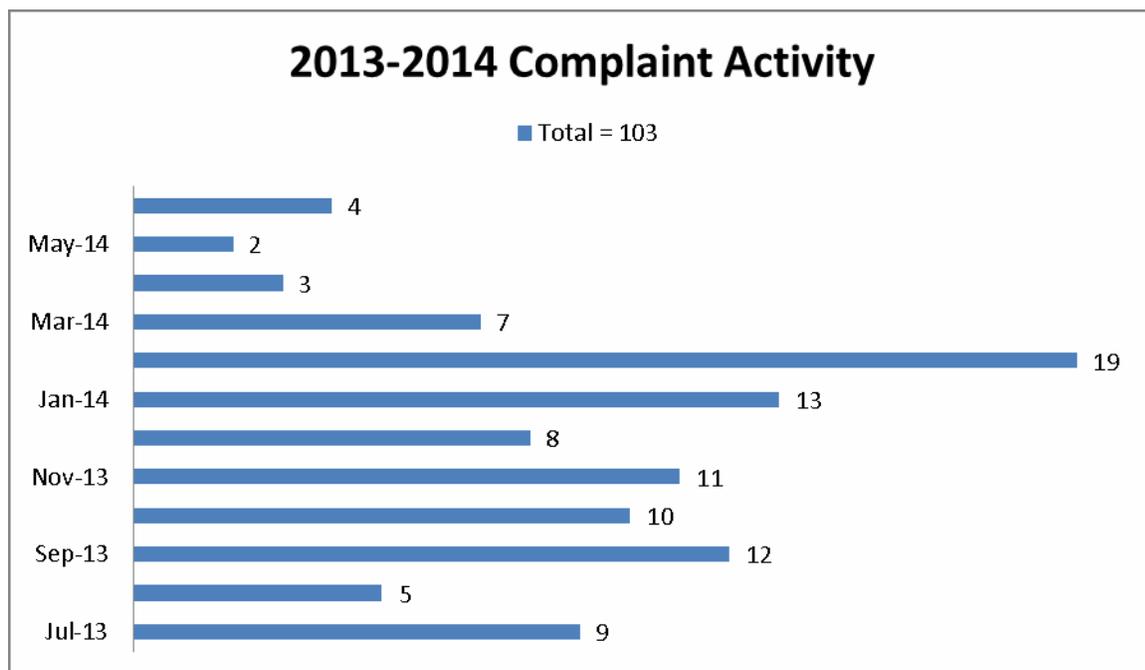
The primary responsibility of the OHRES is to administer Brock's Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy. Through this, the OHRES facilitates the resolution of complaints of discrimination and harassment; mediates and conciliates complaints; consults with supervisors and faculty on complaint resolution strategies and maintains case files and statistics.

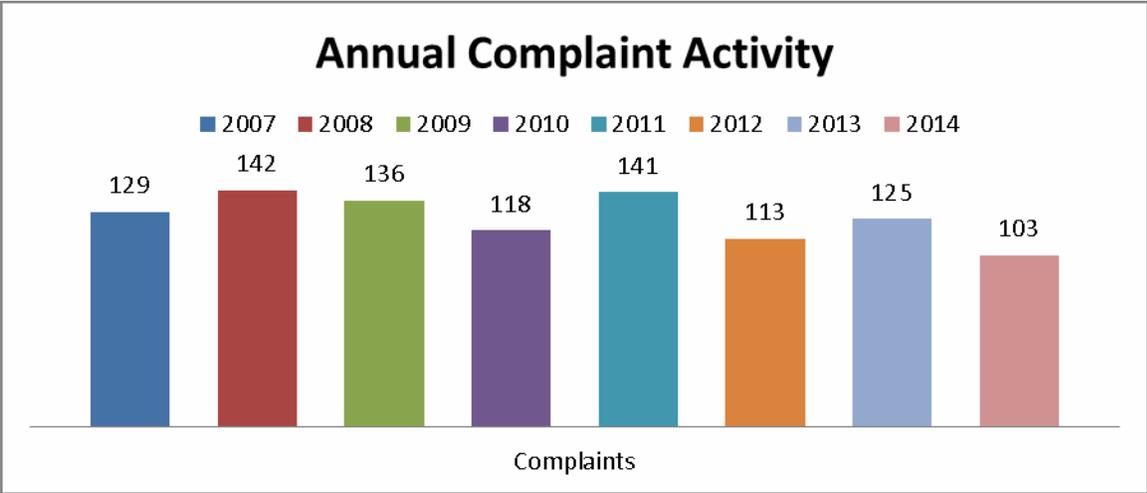
The OHRES is engaged in proactive activities to promote a respectful and inclusive community through educational and training sessions on equity, diversity, and human rights. Other services include consultations with various sectors of the University on policies and procedures with equity and human rights implications, collaboration with community members on various projects to promote inclusiveness, diversity and respect and referral to resources within and external to Brock University.

This report provides an overview of the activities of the OHRES from June 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014.

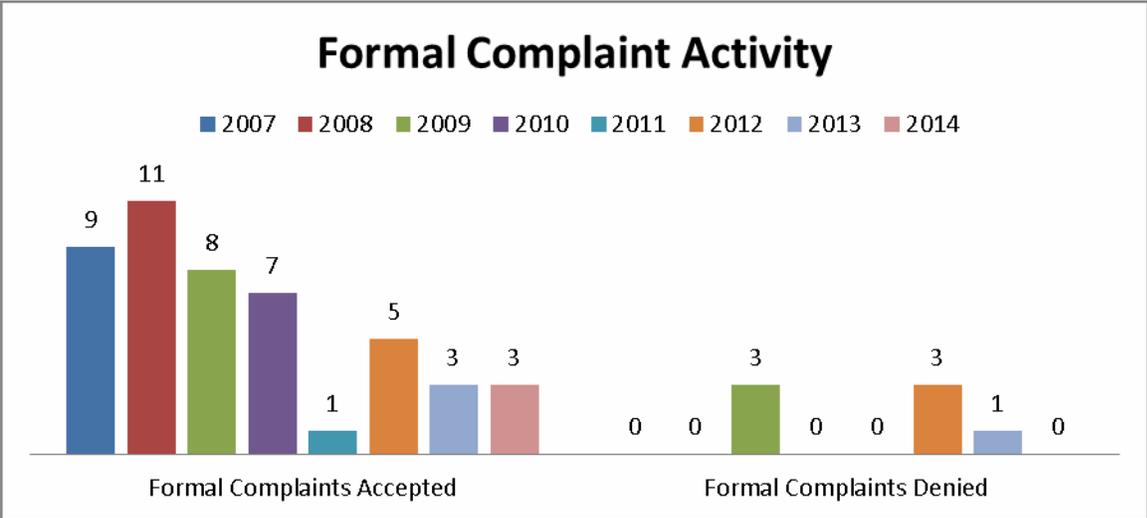
Complaint Activity

During the period of July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014 the OHRES handled 103 complaints, which represents an 18% reduction in complaints recorded over the 2012-2013 year (125).





Of the one hundred and three complaints received, seventy-two were resolved through personal resolution processes, twenty-eight through informal resolution and three were resolved through formal resolution processes, including one handled through the Student Code of Conduct and two through investigative procedures. No requests for formal complaints were denied during this period.



In order to ensure accurate and detailed data collection, recording of complaint activity handled by the OHRES, and the identification and analysis of emerging complaint trends, the purchase and use of case management software is currently being explored.

Training and Education Initiatives

OHRES facilitated or partnered with campus stakeholders to provide a diverse range of educational and training initiatives that span the University’s human rights, equity and accessibility portfolios in order to proactively promote a respectful and inclusive community. Initiatives included:

- Training:
 - Positive Space
 - Diversity awareness
 - Understanding and addressing harassment
 - Accessible procurement
 - Accessibility and service learning

- Diversity awareness in the classroom
- Conferences and Events
 - Co-chairing the 2nd Annual Equity, Engagement, Teaching & Learning Conference
 - People of African Descent: Recognition, Empowerment & Equity Conference
 - Peace Forum
- Education Activities
 - African Heritage Month activities
 - Graduate Students Orientation
 - Faculty of Education Orientation
 - Student Justice Centre Resource Fair
- Customized Training Initiatives
 - Brock University Students' Union
 - Student Justice Centre

Additionally, the OHRES was a stakeholder in the delivery of Global Awareness & Appreciation of Diversity & Inclusion domain curriculum for the Experience BU program.

In 2013-2014 OHRES delivered a number of in-class sessions, customized to course content. It is encouraging that a growing number of our academic community members are including Human Rights and Equity in their curriculum.

Our academic partners for 2013-2014 were:

1. Department of Geography
2. Department of Communication and Popular Film
3. Department of Organizational Behaviour, Human Resources, Entrepreneurship & Ethics
4. Department of Kinesiology

Committee Involvement

Staff from the OHRES participated in a wide variety of committees (ten in total) as subject matter resources during 2013-2014, including: Students-at-Risk Case Team; Brock University Accessibility Advisory Committee; Mental Health Management Advisory Committee; Student Justice Centre Advisory Board; Equity Engagement, Teaching and Learning Steering Committee; Accessible Teaching and Learning Committee; Chaplaincy Endorsement Committee; as well as committees relating to policy/procedure development and committees relating to conference and other event planning.

Change and Transition

During the latter part of 2013-2014 the OHRES underwent organizational change and transition. The Manager, Human Rights and Equity Services position was eliminated and the OHRES transitioned from the Office of the President to Human Resources, reporting to the Associate Vice-President. The change in reporting structure has resulted in more direct institutional support for the office. Additionally, the OHRES has been relocated to Schmon Tower 1101A allowing for the OHRES to develop closer working relationship with Human Resources.

CHARTING A NEW COURSE

Following the change and transition experienced within the OHRES at the end of 2013-2014, the OHRES is charting a new course and reimagining the vision of the office. In order to begin this process, the OHRES has established the following priorities in 2014-15:

- Complete a substantial revision of the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy
- Develop a workplace harassment program
- Evaluate and make recommendations regarding the Employment Equity Policy

- Develop training content and delivery framework for training regarding human rights code as it relates to persons with disabilities
- Enhance department communications and reputation

All of the priorities for 2014-2015, with the exception of enhancing departmental communication and reputation, focus on ensuring legislative compliance with Ontario Human Rights Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Employment Equity Act or Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

CONCLUSION

Although the 2013-2014 year saw organizational change and transition for the OHRES, it was still a productive year. The OHRES fulfilled its mandate to promote a respectful, diverse and inclusive work, living and learning environment that is free from harassment and discrimination by providing complaint resolution services, acting as institutional resource regarding issues related to human rights, equity and inclusion, and providing training opportunities to the Brock University community.