

Office of Human Rights and Equity Services - Annual Report

For the period May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016

INTRODUCTION

The Office of Human Rights & Equity Services (OHRES) provides a confidential and impartial service that is available for all Brock community members. The mandate of the OHRES is to:

- Promote a respectful and inclusive campus environment;
- Prevent harassment and discrimination on campus through training and awareness initiatives;
- Respond appropriately to complaints of harassment and discrimination; and
- Ensure Brock University is compliant with human rights law and best practices.

The primary responsibility of the OHRES is to administer Brock's Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy (RWLEP). The OHRES facilitates resolutions of complaints of discrimination and harassment, consults with applicable Brock University personnel on complaint resolution strategies, and maintains case files and statistics. Resolutions vary depending on the circumstances and the needs of the individuals involved. Some resolutions may include accommodations, mediation, apologies, sensitivity training, investigation, or discipline.

The OHRES is engaged in proactive initiatives to promote a respectful and inclusive community through educational and training sessions on equity, inclusivity, and human rights. Other services the OHRES offers includes providing expertise on policies and procedures with equity and human rights implications, collaboration with Brock community members on various projects to promote inclusivity and respect, and referral to resources within and external to Brock University.

This report provides an overview of the activities of the OHRES during the 15/16 Fiscal Year (from May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016). The previous annual reports were based on the time period from July 1 to June 30. The time period for the annual report has been changed to better align with existing Brock University reporting periods. As such, there will be overlap in reporting from the previous year. Due to this change there will be no comparison from the previous annual report.

The following table summarizes complaint activity against the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy for the period May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUITY SERVICES - COMPLAINT DASHBOARD					May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016		
Total Number of Complaints							
Carried over from previous period (May 1, 2015)					5		
Received during the period (May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016)					53		
Closed during the period (May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016)					45		
Open at end of the period (May 1, 2016)					13		
Complaint Type <i>Note: complaints may allege more than one type of harassment and/or discrimination.</i>				Complainant Type			
				Student	32	Faculty	13
1. General Harassment (Personal and/or Workplace)		38		Staff	8		
2. Harassment and/or Discrimination based on:							
Sex	9	Disability	5				
Race	6	Age	1	Respondent Type			
Ancestry	5	Reprisal	1	Faculty	23	Institution	8
Colour	4	Creed	1	Student	11	Visitor	1
Ethnic Origin	1	Gender Identity	1	Staff	9	N/A	1
Resolution Type							
Informal The use of alternative dispute resolution with the parties to resolve the matter. Examples may include mediation, accommodation, or an apology.					27		
Personal Confidential contact with the OHRES for advice and assistance in resolving a complaint under the RWLEP. Examples may include advice on having a difficult conversation or help drafting an email.					18		
Formal Where alternative dispute resolution measures do not succeed, both parties are not willing to attempt informal resolution, the behaviour continues, the behaviour is of a more serious nature than can be dealt with by informal resolution, or informal resolution is not appropriate to the specific case, then the matter may move to formal resolution. Examples may include investigation, grievance, or application to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTO).					8		

TRAINING AND EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Human Rights Training

The OHRES provided general human rights training to the following units:

- Custodial Services
- Parking Services
- Student Internship Program
- International Services

Professional Development

The Human Rights & Equity Advisor attended the following training workshops and conferences:

- It's Never Okay: The 2015 Summit on Sexual Violence and Harassment
- Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence
- Crucial Conversations

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The OHRES provided expertise and input into drafting and updating the following University policies:

- Sexual Assault and Harassment Policy
- Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy
- Alcohol Policy
- Workplace Violence Policy
- Employment Equity Policy

COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT

The OHRES was actively involved on the following committees:

- Sexual Violence Prevention Committee
 - Chair of the Policy Sub-Committee
 - Interim Chair of the Research and Funding Sub-Committee
- Racial Climate Task Force
- Human Rights Task Force

CHANGE AND TRANSITION

The OHRES has experienced significant change this year. At the start of the year, the Manager of Labour Relations was responsible for administering the main tasks of the OHRES. In November 2015, a Human Rights & Equity Advisor was hired and took over the responsibilities of the OHRES.

In March 2016, responsibility for the OHRES moved from Human Resources to Internal Audit Services and is now being overseen by the Director, Internal Audit. This transition allows for the OHRES to benefit from Internal Audit's independence and unbiased reporting line to the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees.

CONCLUSION

Although there was a lot of change in the OHRES this year, there has been positive momentum towards improving how Brock University addresses human rights issues on campus. The OHRES continues to fulfill its mandate to promote a respectful and inclusive campus environment; prevent harassment and discrimination on campus through training and awareness initiatives; respond appropriately to complaints of harassment and discrimination; and, ensure Brock University is compliant with human rights law and best practices.