



## UNDERSTANDING BROCK UNIVERSITY'S RESPECTFUL WORK AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: A STUDENT'S GUIDE

---

Brock is committed to building and maintaining a **respectful work and learning environment** – where each community member is valued for their **diversity and contribution**, where everyone is treated with **dignity and respect** and feels like they belong, and where **services and opportunities are accessible to everyone**.

Discrimination, harassment and bullying, of any kind, have no place in such an environment. It is **everyone's responsibility** to create and maintain a respectful work and learning environment – we all play a part! In order to ensure a respectful work and learning environment, Brock University has several policies to guide community members, including: Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy, Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures in Non-Academic Matters, and the Residence Community Guiding Principles.

### WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

We each have rights and responsibilities in creating this environment. Each of us has the **right** to participate, live, learn, and work in an environment that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits all forms of harassment and discrimination. Everyone is expected to take **responsibility** for their own behaviour – ensuring that their comments and conduct do not cause discomfort, distress or harm to others in our community. This includes direct contact (face to face, telephone) and indirect contact (online – email, chats, website postings; voice mail; gossip; passing messages through another party). In addition, we expect our community members will recognize that a respectful work and learning environment is one that supports the right of all individuals to dignity and respect and that members will make active efforts towards creating an inclusive environment that celebrates the diversity of our community.



### DID YOU KNOW THAT???



- ~ Information you post online is often “public” – meaning other members of our community and beyond are able to view what you post and can often easily identify who posted it.
- ~ Information you post or send online (websites, email, chats, photos, videos) creates a permanent and traceable record that may be accessible for years to come?
- ~ Today's employers often investigate the online behaviour of job applicants and employees looking for inappropriate conduct.
- ~ Posting material to Facebook, myspace, and other on line forums that compromises the dignity of another person or is found to be offensive could result in sanctions under university policies?
- ~ Telling jokes about or making fun of someone else could affect their ability to work, study, and be happy?
  - ~ Picking on someone, gossiping about someone or ignoring someone could be forms of bullying?

### WHAT SHOULDN'T I DO?

Brock University's policies prohibit any form of discrimination, harassment and bullying by members of our community (students, staff, faculty and visitors to our campus). This means you should monitor your conduct to ensure you are not engaging in any of the following inappropriate conduct.

**“Discrimination”** means differential treatment of an individual or group which is based on a personal characteristic (such as gender, race, creed, disability, and/or sexual or gender orientation) of that individual or group, and which has an adverse impact on them. *This can include, but is not limited to things like: deliberately not picking someone for a group project because of a personal characteristic; assuming someone can or cannot participate in an activity based on their ability; planning events that someone will be unable to attend due to their religious rituals.*

**“Bullying”** means persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating or insulting behaviour, abuse of power and/or unfair punitive sanctions which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated and/or vulnerable, which undermines the recipient’s self-confidence and/or reduces the recipient’s feelings of self-esteem and self-worth, and which may cause the recipient to suffer stress. *This can include, but is not limited to things like: making someone the target of pranks; spreading malicious rumours; posting degrading information about someone on the Internet.*

**“Harassment”** means a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Single acts of sufficient severity may also constitute harassment. *This can include, but is not limited to things like: sending someone offensive or threatening email or messages on line; repeatedly contacting someone without their interest; publicly embarrassing or making offensive comments about another person.*

#### WHAT HAPPENS IF I OR SOMEONE ELSE BEHAVES THAT WAY?

Should this type of behaviour occur, there are many options on campus for support and help:

~ **Office of Human Rights and Equity Services:** We provide independent advice for all community members (students, staff and faculty), in a confidential environment, on options for resolving issues of conflict, bullying, harassment and discrimination. We also administer the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy, which includes several options for resolution of complaints, including coaching, education, mediation, and formal investigations. Our goal is to work with all parties to achieve a workable solution that restores a respectful work and learning environment for everyone. [www.brocku.ca/humanrights](http://www.brocku.ca/humanrights) ext. 5657

~ **Residence Life Staff:** If you live in residence, the Residence Life Staff are available to listen and refer you to other campus supports. Inappropriate behaviour in residence is covered by the Residence Community Guiding Principles. [www.brocku.ca/residence](http://www.brocku.ca/residence) ext. 3799, 4520 or 5280 (Residence Life Coordinators)

~ **Campus Security Services:** Inappropriate conduct occurring anywhere on campus can be reported to Campus Security Services. **Campus Security should be called immediately if you feel threatened or fear for your safety in any way.** Potential breaches of the Student Code of Conduct should be reported to Campus Security Services for investigation. [www.brocku.ca/campussecurity](http://www.brocku.ca/campussecurity) ext. 4300 (day) ext. 3200 (evening) or use any emergency phone

~ **Manager, Student Conduct:** This office administers the Student Code of Conduct, which includes provisions prohibiting harassment. [www.brocku.ca/sdc/discipline](http://www.brocku.ca/sdc/discipline) ext. 4041

~ **Personal Counselling Services:** Counseling services are available to all students, free of charge, if you just need someone to listen; counselors may refer you to other services for resolution of situations. [www.brocku.ca/sdc/counselling](http://www.brocku.ca/sdc/counselling) ext. 3240 or 4225

#### HOW CAN I HELP TO CREATE A RESPECTFUL WORK AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?

- Actively celebrate diversity on our campus – create or attend diversity events
- Respect others, include others, learn about and understand others – think about how your comments and actions might affect others – avoid making assumptions or judging people based on stereotypes
- Use care, good judgment, and respect in all your online activities – don’t target others or put yourself at risk
- Watch for social cues that suggest someone is uncomfortable with your conduct (breaking eye contact, moving away from you, ending the conversation, fidgeting, withdrawing) – address conflict or issues right way and apologize for any negative impact on the other person
- Know your responsibilities and educate yourself on the issue – know Brock’s policies and codes of conduct
- Choose not to use or share words, jokes, emails, cartoons, and comments of a discriminatory or harassing nature that may adversely affect others – let others know your preference for a respectful, inclusive environment
- Manage your stress and frustration levels effectively to prevent problems – sleep, exercise and good nutrition always help – talk things out with a friend, colleague or counselor
- Speak out when you see discrimination, harassment and/or bullying behaviour – stopping it is everyone’s responsibility – try addressing the behaviour directly or get assistance
- Support others who are facing discrimination, harassment and/or bullying – it can be very isolating – speak out on their behalf or assist them to get support