

Creating a Learning / Work Environment Free from Harassment and Discrimination

If you think you might be experiencing Harassment or Discrimination...

1. Don't ignore the situation or hope it will go away.
2. If you can, tell the person clearly (verbally or in writing) what behaviour(s) you object to and ask them to stop.
3. Document what is happening (date, time, offending behaviour, any witnesses, impact on you).
4. Talk to someone you trust (TA, supervisor, professor, Equity and Human Rights Office, friend or family member, etc.).
5. Your options under the policy include informal resolution, alternative dispute resolution and formal investigation.
6. There may also be other options like filing a grievance, calling Security/Police, or going to the BC Human Rights Tribunal.

If you want to avoid being accused of Harassment...

1. Reflect critically on your behaviour. Think about your comments/behaviour towards others and your humour. Could anyone find it offensive? How would you feel if someone said something similar to someone you are close to?
2. Ask others for feedback.
3. Pay attention to body language, silences, etcetera. Sometimes people are unable to say that they are offended in words.
4. Refrain from humour or comment that centers out men or women, people of a particular race or ethnic background, gays/lesbians/bisexuals or transgender people, Aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities and any marginalized group. Look for humour that doesn't hurt anyone.
5. Practice respect for everyone you encounter.

If someone accuses you of Harassment or Discrimination...

1. You might feel defensive and even angry to start. Do your best to remain open to what the person has to say. Listen carefully and try to understand the situation from the other person's point of view.
2. Understand that even though you may not have intended to offend anyone, your actions may have had that impact.
3. If you are genuinely sorry, look for a way to apologize (respecting any existing limitations on contact with the complainant).
4. Listening is key. Listen. Listen some more.
5. Respect what the complainant is saying. Work to change any behaviour that someone else finds offensive.
6. Talk to someone you trust (a friend or family member, a union representative, a counsellor/advisor or someone from the Equity and Human Rights Office).

If you want to create a fair and respectful learning/work environment...

1. Treat everyone as you wish to be treated.
2. Do not engage in or laugh at sexist, racist, heterosexist or otherwise demeaning humour.
3. Challenge harassment and discrimination.
4. Strive to be inclusive. Hold events in accessible locations. Plan 'holiday' celebrations. Use plain language.
5. Educate yourself about privilege and oppression.

