



Formal Complaint Guidelines

These guidelines pertain to written formal complaints relating to discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence. Every situation is different and therefore every complaint will differ in its content, length and format. However, some guidelines apply to all formal complaints. Please use the following guidelines and structure to construct your complaint before you submit it to the Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management (OHRCM).

1. A formal complaint is a written document (preferably typed, but handwritten complaints will also be accepted). It can be emailed to the OHRCM or provided in person.
2. If your complaint is naming more than one respondent (the subject of your complaint), you must prepare a separate complaint document for each respondent.
3. Title your document “Formal Complaint.”
4. In the body of your complaint, provide the following details:
 - Identify yourself as the complainant.
 - Provide your identifying and contact information:
 - full name
 - mailing address
 - email address
 - phone number(s) where you can be reached
 - faculty, unit or department
 - position and current status in relation to the UM (e.g. current or former student or employee, on leave, etc.)
 - length of time at the University
 - Identify respondent(s) and provide their contact information (if known):
 - full name
 - email address
 - phone number(s)
 - faculty, unit or department
 - position and current status in relation to the UM

Remember: If you are identifying more than one respondent, you must prepare a separate complaint document for each respondent.

- Confirm that you are filing a formal complaint under the *Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy* or the *Sexual Violence Policy*.

- Indicate how you know the respondent and what your current relationship is to them. (e.g. supervisor, student, professor, etc.).
- Indicate the specific type of prohibited behaviour(s) that you believe the respondent subjected you to: discrimination, human rights-based harassment, sexual harassment, personal harassment, or sexual assault.
- For allegations of discrimination and human rights-based harassment, identify what characteristic(s) you believe apply to your complaint (e.g. ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, etc.).

Please refer to the prohibited conduct section of the Disclosures and Complaints Procedure (starting at section 2.4) for the definitions of discrimination, personal harassment, human rights-based harassment, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and sexual assault.

- State the first time the behaviour(s) occurred. Provide a date, if possible, or your best recollection of when you believe the incident first happened.
- Describe the incident/prohibited behaviour(s). If there is a series of incidents or behaviours, list all of them chronologically and state for each incident:
 - what happened
 - where it happened
 - when it happened
 - who else was involved or witnessed the incident
- Indicate what steps have been taken to address the behaviour(s) with the respondent, whether by you or someone else (e.g. talked to the respondent or the manager). If no steps were taken, indicate that that as well.
- List anyone else you have communicated with about the behaviour(s), and the result of that communication.
- Write down what has led you to the decision to file a formal complaint.

5. Provide any documents and/or items in your possession that you believe support the allegations stated in your complaint. For example:
- e-mails, text messages and other forms of communication
 - audio recordings
 - photos/letters/cards
 - clothing
 - other items or documents
- Indicate whether there is any additional information that supports your complaint but is currently not in your possession, where it is held, and how it can be obtained.

6. **In a separate document**, please list any witnesses and other persons who may have relevant information concerning your complaint and provide their email addresses and

phone numbers if you have them.

7. When submitting your complaint, please indicate where and how you prefer to be contacted by the OHRCM (e.g. at home or at work, by phone or email, etc.).

IMPORTANT: Be aware that your formal complaint (absent your witness information) must be shared with the respondent(s) pursuant to the *Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy*, the *Sexual Violence Policy*, and the *Disclosures and Complaints Procedure*.