

## **Freedom of Speech Annual Report (2025)**

As indicated in the December 14, 2018 and September 12, 2018 memos from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, each of Ontario's publicly-assisted colleges and universities are to prepare an annual report on the implementation of a free speech policy. Please use this template; you may append additional documents or institution-specific information as you see fit.

The institutional Freedom of Speech Annual Report will be a public document and should respect privacy obligations. Please report on events or incidents that took place between **August 1, 2024** and **July 31, 2025**.

The reports are to be posted on the institution's website and submitted to the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) by **September 2, 2025**.

Please submit your institution's annual report and the link to its location on your website to [submissions@heqco.ca](mailto:submissions@heqco.ca). Please reach out to HEQCO at the same address with any questions.

### **Section A: Institutional Policy**

You may append additional documentation or institution-specific information as you see fit.

**Has your institution amended its free speech policy (or policy framework) since the time of your 2024 report? If so, please explain the reason for the change and provide the link to its location on your institutional website.**

Toronto Metropolitan University's (TMU) institutional free speech policy framework has not changed since the 2024 report.

The Respectful Workplace Policy (formerly the Workplace Civility and Respect Policy) is reviewed annually as per the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and was renamed in the past year. The TMU Discrimination and Harassment Policy (formerly the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy) was also reviewed, revised and renamed in 2024/25.

TMU has long been committed to upholding freedom of expression, including the

right to free speech. TMU welcomes the opportunity to engage in open and candid discussions. It is essential that at a university, controversial subjects are discussed, attitudes are challenged, and alternatives are suggested and considered. All members of the university, as well as guests and visitors, have a role to play in this shared enterprise.

TMU's 2010 statement on freedom of speech, as well as related Senate and administrative policies, are linked below. Collectively, these documents constitute the University's free speech policies:

- [TMU Senate Statement on Freedom of Speech](#)
- [TMU Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#)
- [Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct](#)
- [Bookable Space Policy](#)
- [Respectful Workplace Policy](#)
- [Sexual Violence Policy](#)

Additional [university administrative policies](#) and [Senate policies](#) are available.

**Where are members of the institutional community (or guests) directed when there is a free-speech-related question or complaint about an institutional event? Please provide contact information.**

There are multiple designated offices at TMU where members of the community are directed when there is a free speech-related question or complaint. Complaints related to free speech at TMU are addressed depending on the nature of the incident. Some of the offices where members of the community can raise complaints include the following:

**Ombudsperson's Office:** Students who wish to pursue a complaint through an independent avenue may elect to contact the Ombudsperson's Office, which will assess and discuss issues with students, investigate them if appropriate, or make a referral to the appropriate services and areas of the university.

**Contact:** <https://www.torontomu.ca/ombudsperson/>

**Campus Safety and Security:** In instances where specific actions by community members pose an immediate risk to the safety of community members, 24/7 access to security services is available at TMU. Where events are anticipated to create a significant amount of controversy on campus, campus security must be involved in the risk assessment process. For spontaneous incidents, such as protests or demonstrations, security will ensure that safety and peace are maintained, but typically will not shut down events without consulting other decision-makers. Temporary space users are expected to pay for any extra costs to the university caused by events.

**Contact:** <https://www.torontomu.ca/community-safety-security/>

**Student Life Office:** Student Life supports students who wish to plan or host an event. This office assists students with planning and delivering events and meeting the requirements of TMU's policies. While other offices more formally conduct investigations and enforce TMU's free-speech-related policies, this office can help coordinate, liaise and ensure that students with complaints access the appropriate avenues.

**Contact:** <https://www.torontomu.ca/student-life-and-learning/>

**Human Rights Services:** Complaints related to the Discrimination and Harassment Policy (DHP) and Sexual Violence Policy (SVP) are handled through the Human Rights Services office. The DHP identifies freedom of expression and academic freedom as values and guiding principles informing the policy and states: "This Policy is not intended to inhibit freedom of expression or academic freedom. However, in exercising such freedom there is a responsibility on all University community members to respect the rights of others to learning, working and living environments at the university that are free from Discrimination and Harassment, as outlined in this Policy." If a TMU community member believes they have been the subject of discrimination or harassment based on a protected ground under the DHP (which is aligned with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*), such a complaint can be reported to the Human Rights Services office and addressed through the complaint resolution process under the policy and its procedures. Full details of this process are available in the Discrimination and Harassment Procedures.

**Contact:** <https://www.torontomu.ca/humanrights/>

**Student Conduct Office:** Complaints about the conduct of students related to free speech events are handled by the Student Conduct Office, which is responsible for administering the Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct. This policy prohibits any conduct which is abusive, demeaning, threatening, or endangers health and safety. It prohibits the disruption of the learning, teaching and work environment, and distribution of malicious and untrue material. A breach of the policy may result in a range of penalties. Details of this process can be found online at <https://www.torontomu.ca/student-care/students/student-code-of-conduct/file-complaint/>

**Contact:** <https://www.torontomu.ca/student-care/students/student-code-of-conduct/file-complaint/>

**Senate Statement of Free Speech:** In May 2010 TMU's (then Ryerson) Senate approved and posted its statement on Freedom of Speech, which can be found at: <https://www.torontomu.ca/content/dam/senate/documents/Statement on Freedom of Speech May 04 2010.pdf>

**What is your institution's policy on holding events where there are security concerns? To your knowledge, were there any instances where a non-curricular event did not proceed due to security concerns or their related costs?**

TMU's Student Event Management Process, also known as '[Explore TMU](#)' helps to demystify event planning and ensures success and safety for campus events. The process involves reviewing requests for events using a detailed event risk management framework and working with event organizers to gather event details and understand and assess ways to mitigate and/or eliminate potential safety risks. Factors considered in the event risk management process include, among others, the nature of the event, type of activities to be undertaken during the event (e.g., physical or non-physical activities, topics of discussion etc.), type of speakers and participants (e.g., government officials or other VIPs) and whether alcohol will be consumed.

For faculty, staff, members of the public, and alumni, an online space reservation request form must be completed and submitted to Events and Space Reservation

Services. The Department reviews all requests for potential risks and to ascertain space availability. Events that pose potential risks are flagged for review, and event organizers are held to similar standards as students. The approval process takes up to 45 days and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.torontomu.ca/student-life-and-learning/programs/exploretmu/event-risk-management/>

Between August 1, 2024 and July 31, 2025, there was one (1) non-curricular event that did not proceed due to a concern for safety.

## **Section B: Complaints**

You may append additional documentation or institution-specific information as you see fit.

**Between August 1, 2024 and July 31, 2025, did any member of the institutional community (or guests) make an official complaint about free speech? If yes, please provide a general description that protects the privacy of complainants.**

In the reporting year, one (1) complaint about free speech was reported to the university. The complaint was from a student group and it related to concerns about the denial of a campus event request.

**If there has been an official complaint (or more than one):**

**What were the issues under consideration? Please identify any points of contention (e.g., security costs, safety, student unions and/or groups, operational requirements, etc.).**

The student group that filed the complaint expressed frustration with the event approval process at the university, citing allegations of unclear timelines and a lack of rationale for the denial of their campus event request. They also raised questions about equitable treatment compared to other student groups.

**How did the institution manage the free speech complaint(s)? Was the complaint addressed using the procedures set out in the policy? How were issues resolved?**

The student group's complaint was referred to the Office of the Ombudsperson at TMU. The Office reviewed the concerns raised in line with its independent mandate to promote fairness and procedural clarity. The Office does not make or overturn University decisions, but provides impartial review and recommendations.

Although the student group's event ultimately proceeded off-campus, they were referred to University leadership, including Risk Management and Student Life.

**Section C: Summary Data**

**Please provide the following summary data for free-speech-related official complaints received by the institution:**

Number of official complaints received under the free speech policy relating to curricular and non-curricular events.	1
Number of official complaints reviewed that did not proceed.	1
Number of official complaints where the institution determined that the free speech policy was not followed appropriately.	0
Number of official complaints under the free speech policy that resulted in the institution applying disciplinary or other institutional measures.	0
To your knowledge, were any free speech complaints forwarded to the Ontario Ombudsman?	No

**To the best of your ability, please provide an estimate of the number of non-curricular events held at the institution either online or in person between August 1, 2024 and July 31, 2025. Non-curricular events include, for example, invited speakers, sporting events, rallies, student life/student affairs events, conferences, etc., as opposed to regular events held as part of an academic program or course.**

Between August 1, 2024 and July 31, 2025, there were 2,166 event space bookings and 3,042 non-curricular events for students at TMU. This includes events taking place off-campus, online, and in some department-owned spaces.

**Institutional Comments (if any).**

None.