

## Freedom of Speech Annual Report (2025)

As indicated in the December 14, 2018 and September 12, 2018 memos from the then Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, each of Ontario's publicly-assisted colleges and universities is 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.

*There have been no changes made to Policy 8 – Freedom of Speech or the University's free speech policy framework during the reporting period.*

*In 2024, the President's Advisory Committee on Freedom of Expression and Inclusive Engagement was established as a standing advisory body to the President and senior administration on free expression matters. The Committee is comprised of faculty, staff, and students with relevant expertise to be available to advise the University on free expression matters, including policy revision and development, and the various tasks and responsibilities that have been identified as part of the **implementation plan** resulting from the **report** of the Task Force on Freedom of Expression and Inclusive Engagement.*

*In line with the report of the **Task Force on Freedom of Expression and Inclusive Engagement**, the University released a Statement on institutional neutrality, institutional restraint, and communications ("Statement"). The Statement was made publicly*

*available on the University's Freedom of Expression website. The Statement outlines the importance of institutional neutrality and restraint, conditions for institutional statements, and the relationship of these principles to inclusive engagement and freedom of expression.*

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.

*On the University's Freedom of Expression site, there is a contact form where anyone can submit feedback anonymously. The form can be found here.*

*The responsible University officer for Policy 8 – Freedom of Speech is the President and Vice-Chancellor. In addition, the Waterloo community is aware of and frequently engages with the University Secretariat on policy interpretation.*

*The President may be reached at president@uwaterloo.ca or through contact information at this page: Welcome to the Office of the President | Office of the President (uwaterloo.ca)*

*The Secretariat may be reached at: secretariat@uwaterloo.ca or through contact information at this page: Welcome to the Secretariat | Secretariat (uwaterloo.ca)*

*Inquiries regarding specific events are typically directed to the event organizer. If further information or support is required, they may be referred to relevant offices such as the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism or University Communications. Additional departments and individuals will be involved as necessary.*

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?

*When the University hosts events or speakers which require security, it assumes such costs. When an external party uses University space for an event that requires security, that party is responsible for those costs.*

*Where safety concerns are identified with a specific event, we engage with our Special Constable Services and our Communications and Issues Management Team to support safety planning and work with event organizers to ensure that events are able to proceed safely. Special Constable Services maintain close liaison with law enforcement authorities.*

*There were no instances of non-curricular events that did not proceed due to safety concerns or their related costs.*

## 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.

*There were no official complaints about free speech between August 1, 2024 and July 31, 2025.*

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.).

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?

## 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.	0
Number of official complaints reviewed that did not proceed.	0
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?	N/A

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.

*The University has events calendars maintained by several departments that allow events to be publicly posted for purposes of bringing events to the attention of community members. Between August 1, 2024 and July 31, 2025, there were an estimated 1191 non-curricular events held at the institution, either online or in person. Faculties, departments, staff, students, student associations and the public do not list all their events in these calendars. Therefore, it is likely that the number of events was higher than estimated.*

Institutional Comments (if any).