

George Brown Polytechnic

**Annual Report:
Human Rights,
Discrimination,
Harassment & Hate
(Bill 166) - January 2026**

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Land Acknowledgment

George Brown Polytechnic is located on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and other Indigenous peoples who have lived here over time. We are grateful to share this land as treaty people who learn, work, and live in the community with each other.



Background

The *Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act, 2024* ("the Act") received Royal Assent on May 16, 2024. This legislation amended the *Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act* with new requirements for Ontario's publicly-assisted colleges and universities to have policies and rules that describe how each institution will address and combat racism and hate, including but not limited to anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism, antisemitism and Islamophobia.

Effective September 9, 2024, a Directive issued by the Minister ("the Ministry Directive") outlined requirements for institutional compliance, including annual reporting requirements pursuant to subsection 20 (4) of the Act.

George Brown was in full compliance with the Act and Directive as of January 31, 2025, and a set of requirements for annual reporting were embedded into the institution's revised Human Rights Discrimination and Harassment Policy ("HRDH Policy").

The HRDH Policy requires George Brown to collect data and prepare an annual report on the following:

- The number of complaints reported by the George Brown community;
- The type of complaints (including whether verbal, physical, property related);
- The number of complaints that do not proceed to a review (i.e. investigation);
- The number of complaints resolved via informal resolution;
- The associated Human Rights Code ground;
- The associated subcategories of Code grounds and applicable intersectionality; and,
- The incident outcomes, including response and resolution times, the findings of investigations, and the involvement of law enforcement.

The HRDH Policy also requires George Brown to provide its Board of Governors and the Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security ("The Ministry") with an annual report detailing the information identified above and publish it on the institution's website without identifying personal information, information that would compromise personal privacy, or otherwise confidential information.

George Brown Taking Action on Racism, Discrimination and Hate

George Brown Polytechnic believes and acknowledges that every member of the George Brown community should experience and contribute to an understanding and respectful learning, working and living environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and hate. George Brown has been committed to a climate of understanding and mutual respect, so each member of its community feels able to contribute to George Brown's activities and objectives.

George Brown has been committed to creating, fostering, and maintaining a welcoming and affirming learning and working and living environment, where all our community members feel a sense of inclusion and belonging. We have continued to take action to address harassment, discrimination, and hate

in all forms, including the hate experienced by members of racialized and minoritized communities including Asian, Black, Indigenous, Jewish, Muslim, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and persons with disabilities and all communities protected under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*. We have recognized and been committed to addressing harassment and discrimination in any of its forms through initiatives that engage the George Brown community in authentic learning opportunities, challenge us to deeply reflect on our systems, practices, policies, and procedures, and inspire us to create an equitable and inclusive learning, working, living, and organizational culture and climate that is free of racism and hate in all its forms. Examples of notable initiatives, including institutional strategies and frameworks will be summarized later in this report.



Office of Anti-Racism, Equity and Human Rights Services (OAREHRS)

The Office of Anti-Racism, Equity and Human Rights Services (OAREHRS) leads George Brown Polytechnic's work on equity, human rights, and sexual violence prevention and response. As the office responsible for administering the HRDH Policy,

OAREHRS provides confidential support to the entire community; manages reports, and complaints; develops prevention and education programs; and advises the George Brown community on anti-racism, equity, diversity, inclusion and indigenization.

OAREHRS's work is guided by several important principles:

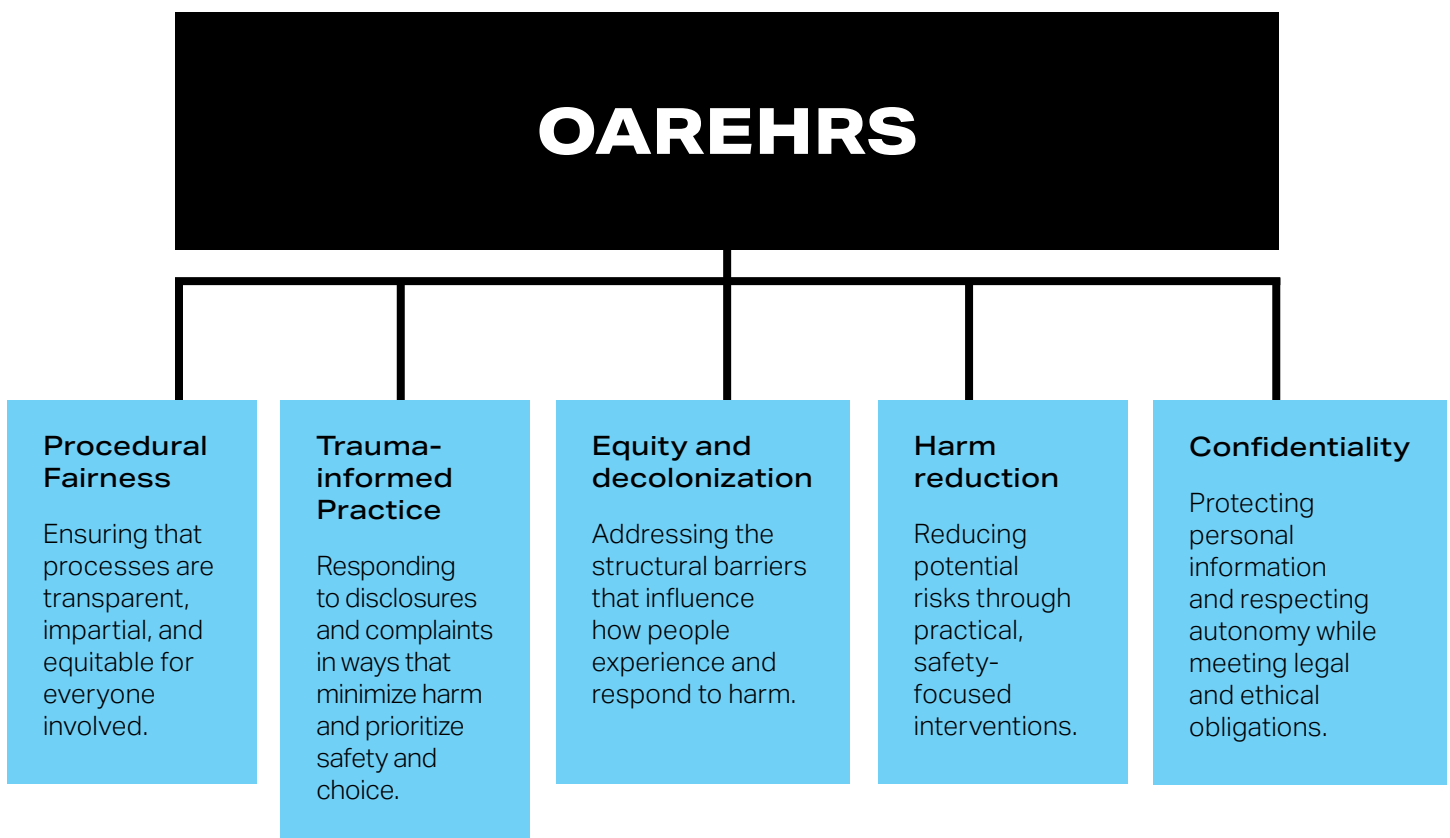


Figure 1: A diagram representing OAREHRS' guiding principles.

Through its programs and partnerships, OAREHRS helps George Brown put its commitments into practice. In 2025, OAREHRS focused on providing timely, informed support, response and resolution and clear and transparent communication. The office's work combined individual assistance with

broader education and collaboration, helping students and staff navigate complex situations and understand their options. These efforts reinforce trust in the institution's processes and strengthen shared accountability for maintaining a safe and inclusive campus.

About the Report

This annual report is structured in alignment with the requirements of s. 20(8) of The Act and the Ministry Directive. S. 20(8) requires all universities and college provide their boards of governors with an annual report on the implementation and effectiveness of its policies and rules on anti-racism and hate in the preceding year. The Ministry Directive specifies the information that must be available in the publicly available report to be submitted to the Ministry, and states that each institution's policies shall specify the content of the annual report.

The report is organized into two main parts:

A

Reported Human Rights, Discrimination and Harassment Incidents/Concerns and Complaints

This section presents information about intakes (incident/concerns) and complaints received by OAREHRS between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025 and relevant outcomes based on the HRDH Policy and Ministry reporting requirements. It includes definitions to clarify the distinctions between these terms.

B

Implementation and Effectiveness of George Brown's Policies and Procedures Addressing Discrimination, Harassment and Hate

This section reflects on how the HRDH Policy has been put into practice during the year, including procedural and process improvements education/training and awareness-raising initiatives. It also situates this work within George Brown's broader institutional strategies and commitments related to anti-racism, reconciliation, community safety and inclusivity. The section further considers how George Brown continues to embed equity, trauma-informed practice and procedural fairness into its prevention and response framework.

A. Reported Human Rights, Discrimination and Harassment Incidents/Concerns and Complaints

This section of the report provides information on the data collected from reported incidents/concerns and complaints of discrimination, harassment and/or hate that were brought forward to OAREHRS by George Brown community members between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025. It is important to confirm that no personal or identifying information is included in this report. Where data may unintentionally identify individuals, the data has been aggregated accordingly.

Definitions

In order to help contextualize the data outlined below, we have summarized some applicable definitions, noting that not every one of these definitions are necessarily found in the HRDH Policy at this time, but are summarized in OAREHRS' standard operating procedures and protocols to guide complaint resolution processes.

- Discrimination:** The unequal or differential treatment based on a Prohibited Ground – whether intentional or not - that results in a disadvantage. Discrimination can be direct, indirect or systemic in nature. It includes the failure to accommodate persons based on a Prohibited Ground.
- Harassment:** Refers to discriminatory harassment, namely a course of vexatious comment or conduct based on a Prohibited Ground, that exceeds the bounds of free expression or academic freedom as these are protected under the polytechnic's policies, which is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Harassment normally requires a 'course' of conduct or comment, but a single incident can be sufficiently egregious to constitute harassment. Harassment can take place in a variety of forms including physical, verbal, written, and/or online.
- Intake:** An intake is a process by which an OAREHRS Advisor obtains relevant information from a community member regarding an incident/concern or complaint they have brought to OAREHRS' attention through an initial point of contact. This initial contact could have taken place through any of the following means: email, telephone, in-person at the OAREHRS office, via the OAREHRS website contact form, and/or online anonymous complaint form). Information obtained through the intake process forms the basis for the preliminary assessment of the concern to determine whether it is within the scope of the HRDH Policy.
- Preliminary Assessment:** The process by which OAREHRS makes a determination as to whether the concern or complaint raised with the office by a community member amounts to a *prima facie* case of discrimination and/or harassment under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* and therefore falls within the scope of the HRDH Policy.
- Complaint:** A reported incident or concern that is determined by OAREHRS to be within the scope of the HRDH Policy may proceed through a complaint resolution process as a formal complaint brought forward by an individual community member or by George Brown (initiated by the institution). If a formal written complaint is delivered to OAREHRS by a community member and determined to be out of scope of the HRDH Policy, it is referred to the relevant George Brown unit or office under the applicable policy(ies). Anonymous complaints brought to the attention of OAREHRS are addressed keeping in mind the core principles of procedural fairness, equity, community safety, and trauma-informed approaches.

- **Complaint Resolution Process:** The delivery or determination of a complaint that is in scope of the HRDH Policy initiates the complaint resolution process. The complaint resolution process may involve alternative resolution (currently “informal resolution” in the HRDH Policy) or a formal investigation.
- **Alternative Resolution:** The HRDH Policy states that the OAREHRS may proceed with a complaint through informal resolution (e.g. mediation). Alternative resolution may also involve a variety of different resolution methods including but not limited to: a facilitated restorative dialogue between the parties in a complaint, impact statements, education/training opportunities, and/or recommendations by OAREHRS to address individual complaints while also offering proactive interventions and/or supports to prevent similar incidents in the future.
- **Investigation:** A formal process by which an internal or external investigator engages in fact-finding and HRDH Policy analysis to assess the merit of the allegations in a formal complaint filed with OAREHRS. The investigation culminates in a confidential written report summarizing the evidence, drawing conclusions about credibility, making findings of fact and, if requested, providing an analysis on whether the facts support a finding of discrimination or harassment under the HRDH Policy.

Intakes of Reported Incidents/Concerns and Complaints

Between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025, OAREHRS received and processed 86 intakes from George Brown community members. This total does not involve the many requests for information, guidance, consultation, and advice sought out by students, staff, and other community members; the total includes only the reported incidents/concerns and complaints brought to OAREHRS attention.

Out of the 86 intakes assessed by OAREHRS, 51 of those incidents/concerns were found to be out of scope of the HRDH Policy. These incidents/concerns were referred to the appropriate George Brown units and offices for assessment under the applicable policy(ies). 28 of the 86 concerns brought to OAREHRS attention were determined to be in scope of the HRDH Policy and proceeded through a complaint resolution process either through alternative resolution or investigation. The other concerns captured in the final column below include those that were found to be in scope of the HRDH Policy but chose another forum or are still undergoing preliminary assessment.

Category	Count
Determined Out of Scope of HRDH Policy	51
Complaints	28
Other: Pursued An Alternative Forum (In Scope) or Still Under Preliminary Assessment	7
Total Intakes	86

Table 1: Number of intakes of reported incidents/concerns and complaints

Reported concerns, incidents, and complaints fell into a variety of categories based on the nature of the allegations raised. Categorizing human rights-related incidents/concerns requires a nuanced approach. It is important to note that the categories below are not mutually exclusive. A single incident or concern may involve multiple forms of harm, for example, an individual may report both direct discrimination and verbal harassment as part of the same matter. In addition, where concerns, incidents, or complaints involve intersecting Code grounds, they may be counted in more than one category. Of note is that the two anonymous complaints raised through George Brown’s online form, did not provide enough information or particulars for the institution to appropriately assess, respond and/or address. Property damage and/or law enforcement involvement (i.e. police) was not identified in any of the reported incidents and complaints.

Category	Intakes
Verbal/Written/Online Harassment	21
Indirect/Direct Discrimination	12
Systemic Discrimination	11
Physical Harassment	0
Property Damage	0
Policy Not Triggered	51
Undergoing Preliminary Assessment/Pursuing Alternative Form	7
Anonymous Complaints	2
Law Enforcement Involvement	0

Table 2: Number of intakes categories

The most commonly cited *Human Rights Code* grounds in the incidents/concerns reported to OAREHRS in 2025 are race (34), disability (23), creed (14), ethnic origin (13), sex (6), gender identity/gender expression (5), and family status (3). OAREHRS received 1 reported incident citing sexual orientation as the primary ground. In 10 of the incidents/concerns there was no identifiable *Code* ground.

Subcategories of the *Code* ground of race for which data was collected for the purposes of this annual report include Islamophobia (8), Anti-Black Racism (7), Antisemitism (6) and Anti-Indigenous Racism (0). OAREHRS received reports of 20 incidents alleging racism based on additional racial identities (e.g. anti-Asian, anti-South Asian etc.). Noting that individuals do not carry single identity markers and that discrimination and/or harassment is often intersectional in nature, this report is also able to share available data regarding intersectional *Code* grounds.

Primary Human Rights Code Ground	Intersectional Human Rights Code Grounds
Race/Colour/Ancestry	Creed, Ethnic Origin, Citizenship, Place of Origin and Gender
Disability	Family Status, Gender Expression
Creed	Family Status, Ancestry, Ethnic Origin, Race
Sex	Gender, Gender Identity
Gender Identity/Gender Expression	Disability, Sex
Family Status	Disability, Creed

Table 3: Primary and intersectional Human Rights Code Grounds

Complaint Intake Data Based on Human Rights Code Grounds

<i>Human Rights Code Ground</i>	<i>Sub-Category (as applicable)</i>	<i>Total Intakes</i>	<i>Proceeded to Review (i.e. complaint resolution process)</i>	<i>Not Reviewed (i.e. determined out of scope of HRDH Policy after preliminary assessment)</i>	<i>Another Mechanism in Process OR Still in Preliminary Assessment</i>
Age	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ancestry, colour, race	n/a	34	7	24	3
Race	Anti-Black	7	5	2	
Race	Anti-Indigenous	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Race/Creed	Islamophobia	8	5	3	1
Race/Creed	Anti-Semitism	6	2	4	
Race	Other	20	3	14	3
Citizenship	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a
Ethnic Origin	n/a	13	6	7	
Place of Origin	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a
Creed	n/a	14	6	7	1
Disability	n/a	23	10	11	2
Family Status	n/a	3	3	n/a	n/a
Marital Status	n/a	0		n/a	n/a
Gender Identity and Gender Expression	n/a	5	3	2	n/a
Receipt of public assistance (in housing only)	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Record of offences (in employment only)	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding)	n/a	6	3	3	n/a
Sexual Orientation	n/a	1	n/a	1	n/a
No Code Ground Identifiable	n/a	10	n/a	n/a	n/a

Table 4: Complaint intake data based on Human Rights Code Grounds

As described above, in 2025, 28 complaints proceeded through a complaint resolution process under the HRDH Policy. The data in this report only captures those complaints that were initiated in 2025. Of the 28 complaints, nine were addressed and resolved through an alternative resolution process and three were formally investigated. Eight of those complaints were abandoned or withdrawn by the complainants. Complaints were considered abandoned where the complainant chose not to follow up with or respond to OAREHRS' communications after a complaint resolution process was initiated. Complaints were considered withdrawn when a complainant explicitly advised OAREHRS that they did not wish to proceed further with their complaint after a complaint resolution process had been initiated. Eight of the complaints initiated in 2025 are ongoing in 2026, and a final resolution has not yet been reached.

Complaint Outcomes (28)

Outcome Type	Complaints
Alternative Resolution Process Completed	9
Investigation Completed	3
HRDH Policy breach unsubstantiated (1)	
HRDH Policy breach substantiated (2)	
Disciplinary Action Post-Investigation (2)	
Abandoned/Withdrawn	8
Complaint Resolution Process Ongoing	8

Table 5: Complaint outcomes

Response and Resolution Timelines

George Brown is committed to timely, trauma-informed, and responsive services when addressing reported incidents, concerns and complaints related to human rights, discrimination, harassment, and hate. After the point of initial contact through any of the mechanisms specified earlier in this report, OAREHRS endeavours to respond within 48-72 hours. The HRDH Policy confirms that George Brown will confirm receipt of a complaint and how it will be dealt with within 30 days, and that complaints will be resolved within 12 months of the date the complaint was received. OAREHRS is committed to continuing to meet these response and resolution requirements for complaints in alignment with core principles of procedural fairness and trauma-informed practice.

Resolution Type	Average Number of Months from Intake to Final Resolution
Final Assessment & Determination – Out of Scope of HRDH Policy	2
Early or Alternative Resolution	2
Investigation Completed	5

Table 6: Response and resolution timelines

B. Implementation and Effectiveness of George Brown's Policies and Procedures Addressing Discrimination, Harassment and Hate

In January 2025, George Brown strengthened its HRDH Policy to ensure that all the requirements specified in the Act and the Minister's Directive were fully incorporated. In the Fall of 2025, George Brown conducted extensive community consultations with students, staff, and external partners to provide input and feedback on the HRDH Policy for a comprehensive policy review to be completed at the end of March 2026.

Much of this past year's work centered on strengthening internal procedures and protocols to address discrimination, harassment and hate-based concerns and complaints to ensure ongoing alignment with the Act and Ministry Directive as well as the HRDH Policy. It also provided an important opportunity to reflect on next steps. The experiences and data from this reporting period have helped identify areas where George Brown can deepen its approach, moving beyond compliance toward a model defined by ongoing consultation, collaboration, and community capacity. A key development this year was the hiring of a new Director of Human Rights, Sexual Violence Response and Complaints Resolution. This role enhances institutional leadership and oversight, ensuring that policy implementation is more cohesive, data-informed, and responsive to the evolving needs of the George Brown community.

Policy Practice and Process Improvements

In 2025, OAREHRS refined procedures and developed additional templates to support consistent, timely, and effective responses to complaints. This included developing clear guidelines on the materials included in decision-maker packages to ensure all relevant information is presented in a structured manner, as well as creating standardized letters for referring completed investigations to decision-makers that clearly outline their responsibilities and related timelines. To further support consistency in decision-making, OAREHRS developed standardized letter templates for decision-makers to communicate outcomes to complainants and respondents.

In addition, the office updated its letter template for communicating with complainants whose concerns fall outside the scope of the HRDH Policy, using more accessible and plain language to enhance understanding. This ensures that individuals are informed when their concern does not meet the policy threshold or OAREHRS jurisdiction in a transparent and supportive way. Together, these tools promote clarity, accountability, and consistent application of complaint processes across the institution.

Enhancements to case management tools and standard operating procedures also enabled more detailed and accurate record-keeping, resulting in richer data and more comprehensive reporting. Together, these process improvements not only enhanced operational efficiency but also strengthened institutional learning and continuity. They will inform the continued development of a robust data and evaluation framework – one that moves beyond tracking volume to assess the quality, reach and impact of OAREHRS's services across the polytechnic community.

Training and Education

OAREHRS continued to keep policy education and awareness a priority by delivering both foundational and targeted sessions across campuses, helping students and employees understand their rights and responsibilities under the HRDH Policy. Training focused on educating key partners and collaborators on OAREHRS' complaint resolution processes and procedures for greater clarity and transparency. At times, education/training was the outcome of an alternative resolution to address a concern/incident or complaint. These sessions also provided valuable opportunities to gather ongoing feedback from our community, strengthen relationships, and reinforce OAREHRS's role as a trusted, accessible resource for support and information.

Approximately 58 events, education and/or training sessions were held in 2025 that had as their primary focus human rights, anti-racism, and/or anti-hate. Examples of these sessions include workshops delivering information about the HRDH Policy and OAREHRS complaint resolution processes, Anti-Black Racism and Equity Mindedness sessions for the George Brown senior leadership team, sessions on Fundamentals to Action on Anti-Racism, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, and a variety of workshops organized by George Brown Indigenous Initiatives and Black Futures Initiatives.

Among current employees to date, we have 2891 completions of the Doing the Work: An Introduction to Anti-Racism e-module on George Brown's Cornerstone platform (95% of current employees). 500 of these completions took place in 2025.

OAREHRS engaged in awareness-raising activities throughout the year, including social media posts and institution-wide communications to mark days and months of significance in 2025. In 2025, OAREHRS developed and distributed its annual Diversity Calendar which serves as a resource for students and employees to recognize significant cultural, religious and historical observances, while promoting reflection, learning, and supporting creed-based accommodations across George Brown.

Awareness-raising activities and calendar-supported observances included, but were not limited to:

- Holocaust Remembrance Day
- Lunar New Year
- Black Futures Month
- Jewish Heritage Month
- Asian Heritage Month
- Emancipation Day

Further to the initiatives highlighted above, it is significant to note that OAREHRS' anti-racism/anti-hate website platform, *Taking Action on Racism, Discrimination and Hate*, had approximately 4,146 views in 2025, which is very promising engagement for a website that was fully launched at the end of January 2025.

Following the comprehensive review of the HRDH Policy in Spring 2026, OAREHRS will move towards human rights, discrimination, harassment and anti-racism education that is more interactive and grounded in the experiences and needs of the George Brown community. The updated model will emphasize collaboration, real-life application, and opportunities for ongoing learning. OAREHRS will also explore "just in time" educational resources as a way of building both awareness and practical, responsive skills across all areas of the institution.

Strategic Alignment to Prevent and Address Racism and Hate

George Brown Polytechnic's institutional response to incidents of racism and hate under Bill 166 is grounded in a well-established foundation of strategic frameworks, policies, and action plans that have shaped the Polytechnic's anti-racism, equity, Indigenization, and human rights work over many years. This existing architecture positions the Polytechnic to meet legislative requirements while sustaining an inclusive and respectful learning and working environment for racialized and Indigenous students and employees.

This work is anchored in Strategy 2026, which identifies equity as a core institutional priority rather than a discrete area of activity. Through the Foundation of Equity priority, the Polytechnic affirms equity, anti-racism, Indigenization, reconciliation, and meaningful inclusion as essential to how governance, policy, academic delivery, and operations are designed and carried out. This priority establishes the conditions through which institutional responses to racism and hate are integrated into day-to-day decision-making and long-term planning.

Within this context, Bill 166 is operationalized through existing strategies that emphasize prevention and institutional responsibility. The Foundation of Equity priority provides the lens through which legislated requirements are interpreted and implemented in ways that support consistency, sustainability, and alignment with broader institutional goals.

The Anti-Racism Action Plan provides a focused framework for identifying and addressing systemic racism across the institution. It directs attention to governance, policy coherence, leadership roles, capacity building, curriculum, and monitoring, and supports Bill 166 by strengthening the Polytechnic's ability to respond to incidents within a broader system of institutional learning and improvement, consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code and our values.

The Indigenous Education Strategy advances reconciliation and Indigenization by embedding Indigenous-informed approaches and culturally safe practices across the Polytechnic. Aligned with the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and informed by George Brown's Indigenous Education Council, the strategy addresses structural barriers and supports Indigenous-led programming, partnerships, and decision-making. In doing so, it reinforces shared responsibility for fostering respectful and safe environments for Indigenous students and employees.

George Brown Polytechnic's commitment as a signatory to the Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion further situates Bill 166 within an explicit focus on addressing anti-Black racism. The Charter informs institutional planning, curriculum development, and accountability mechanisms, supporting sustained action to address conditions that contribute to hate and exclusion.

Together, these strategies form a coordinated institutional approach that emphasizes prevention and sustained alignment with legislative and human rights obligations. Their continued implementation reflects George Brown Polytechnic's commitment to due diligence and to maintaining a campus environment grounded in safety, dignity, and respect.



Building Capacity and Connection

Collaboration remained a cornerstone of policy implementation. OAREHRS worked closely with administrative, academic and student support areas, including Human Resources, (People and Culture), the Teaching and Learning Exchange (TLX), the Office of the Registrars, the Student Association; Indigenous Initiatives; the Black Futures Initiatives; Counselling and Student Well-Being; the George Residence; Office of Student Conduct and Support; Accessible Learning Services; and Public Safety and Emergency Management to ensure that programming and response efforts remained accessible, intersectional and relevant. These partnerships strengthened George Brown's collective capacity to respond effectively to harm while reinforcing the values of equity, inclusion and community care that underpin George Brown's mission.

OAREHRS continued to be visible and approachable to students and employees seeking information or support. These efforts helped position OAREHRS as a trusted resource within the George Brown community.

A Sector in Transition

The post-secondary sector is navigating a period of transition that will continue in the coming years. Within this landscape, George Brown must continue to examine how this important work can be sustained and strengthened in new ways. This means approaching the work in ways that are integrated, agile, and responsive to emerging needs while maintaining the integrity and depth that this work demands.

This moment invites innovation and presents an opportunity to find new ways to strengthen collaboration, engage the community, and embed prevention and response practices more deeply across the polytechnic. George Brown remains committed to continuous improvement and to ensuring that its approach evolves thoughtfully and creatively within a changing sector.

Contact Us

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