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***Backgrounder on Consultation Process for Human Rights Policy***

Lakehead University is committed to a comprehensive strategy to support human rights including providing training and education to ensure that everyone knows their rights and responsibilities; consultation, advice, and collaboration with departments and faculties regarding their polices, practices and procedures to ensure they comply with human rights requirements; regular monitoring of organizational systems for barriers based on Ontario Human Rights Codegrounds; providing an effective and fair complaint policy and associated procedures; promoting appropriate standards of conduct and organizational practices at all times; and promoting the positive value of human rights in order to shape an institutional culture that provides to all staff and students a transformative university experience.

Among the activities in our equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) plan, Achieving Excellence Together: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan 2019-2024, is the development of a comprehensive policy to address harassment and discrimination. While the university has an existing Harassment and Discrimination policy, it was established in 1994 and amended in 2008. We are looking at revising this policy to align it more closely with changes in human rights jurisprudence, best practices in the fields of human rights and discrimination, and the experience of our Lakehead University Community.

**Consultation Process**

It is the practice of Lakehead University that any changes to practices in policy undergo extensive consultation with relevant stakeholders. To this end, we plan to hold a series of focus groups with students, staff, administration, faculty in addition to individual interviews with a variety of internal stakeholders. These interviews will be anonymous and confidential. We will be asking participants to voluntarily and anonymously identify themselves as either racialized persons, persons with a disability, Indigenous persons, women, or persons who identify as members of sexual or gender minorities, their self-reported identity will not be linked to their responses and their anonymity will be maintained. This information is for statistical and demographic purposes to ensure that we are reaching as many under-represented and equity-seeking groups as possible.

We will capture this data and categorize it thematically to clarify the meaning of those experiences so that we can craft an appropriate, relevant, and meaningful policy and practice intervention relative to human rights.

We will be reaching out to student groups, departments and faculties for participants and invited various staff and students to be part of either the consultation or interviews. Should you have any questions, concerns, or require further clarification please contact our office at admin.ohre@lakeheadu.ca