



VANCOUVER ISLAND
UNIVERSITY

Taking Action Against Harassment



A Student Guide

“All students have a right to be treated with fairness and respect. If that’s not happening my job is to assist you to take action and stop the harassment.”

– Human Rights Advisor

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prohibited grounds under VIU’s human rights policy

- Race or Colour
- Ancestry or Place of Origin
- Political or Religious Beliefs
- Marital or Family Status
- Physical or Mental Disability
- Sex or Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Unrelated Criminal Conviction

And sometimes there are no grounds – it is just happening, and we still need to make it stop.

For More Information Contact

Human Rights Advisor
Nanaimo Campus
Building 200, Room 224
250-740-6430
humanrights@viu.ca

Visit Our Website

www.viu.ca/humanrights



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why take action?

You will feel better about yourself once you take action

Harassment is difficult to confront but in the long run taking action will alleviate unwanted stress and anxiety.

Perpetrators offend others as well

Chances are that the one who is offending you with their behaviour offends others as well. By confronting the individual and having them put an end to their abusive pattern of behaviour, you help others.

Taking action inspires others

Once you overcome your own situation, your strength and insight stands to support others. Giving and receiving support is the only way in which our community will overcome problems of harassment.

All of us are responsible for bringing an end to Harassment

Ensuring human rights and showing leadership when exposed to harassment is everyone’s responsibility. Achieving a safe, fair, and equitable learning environment requires a community effort.

Outcomes

- + alleviate unwanted stress and anxiety
- + put an end to an abusive pattern of behaviour and help others
- + give and receive support
- + ensure human rights and show leadership
- + achieve a safe learning environment



if you are being harassed take positive action

what is harassment?

Abusive, demeaning, or intimidating behaviour that interferes with a person's ability to feel at ease or comfortable at school.

Examples/Scenarios

- A classmate pressures you for a date and won't leave you alone even though you expressed non-interest and refused their advances repeatedly.
- A Professor yells at you in front of your classmates because you did not participate in a class field trip.
- Checking out a VIU event on Facebook, you see a racist cartoon posted by your classmate.
- Another student spreads nasty rumours about you and sends out emails to others using your name.

what to do if you are being harassed

Take Action

Don't pretend it isn't happening or blame yourself. The situation is very unlikely to go away if not confronted. If you feel capable of doing so, address the harasser firmly, directly and immediately. If not, don't wait until things get worse before seeking help.

Contact Human Rights

At a confidential meeting you can explore the alternatives for taking further action. The Human Rights Advisor can assist in getting the situation dealt with quickly and appropriately.

Keep Records

It is very important that you document the date, times, locations, witness, and details of the incidents as they will come in handy for later reference.

Get Support

Harassment can be very upsetting. Losing sleep and worry can hurt your studies. Counselors in Student Services are available to assist.

Drop in to the Human Rights Office, located on the second floor of Building 200 or call 250-740-6430.



what to do if you are confronted about your behaviour

Take it Seriously

Realize that your behaviour is having a negative effect on someone, even though your intentions may have been good natured.

Resolve the Issue Informally

Acknowledge the complaint and apologize to the individual, if you can. Try to understand the other person's point of view and why they consider your actions offensive.

Don't Retaliate

Don't try to get back at the person who is complaining – it will only make things worse.

Seek Support and Advice

If a formal process is required, ensure that you understand your rights and that you know the proper procedures. Students can contact the Students' Union, a counselor or the Human Rights Advisor.

don't allow it to go on any longer!