

August 29, 2025

VIA Email: submissions@heqco.ca

Attn: Submissions Office
Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario
2500 – 88 Queens Quay West
Toronto, ON M5J 0B8

Dear Sir/Madam:

Re: Western University's 2025 Annual Report on Freedom of Expression

We thank you for this opportunity to report on Western University's Freedom of Expression Policy for the period of August 1, 2024 to July 31, 2025.

Section A: Institutional Policy

Question: 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.

Answer: The University's Board of Governors approved Western's current Policy on November 29, 2018. There have been no amendments to the Policy or its Procedures since their original enactment by the Board of Governors.

Question: 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.

Answer: When members of the community (or guests) have questions related to freedom of expression or a complaint about an event on campus, they are referred to the University's Ombudsperson; this is expressly provided for in the Procedures to the Policy. The University Ombudsperson can be reached at ombuds@uwo.ca. If an individual wishes to file a complaint, the Procedures identify the appropriate Office within Western's Administration team to receive and process the complaint, which is dependent on whether the respondent is a student, student group, student union, staff member, faculty member, guest, or the University itself.

Question: 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?

Answer: Under Western's Use of University Facilities Policy, use of University Facilities for an event may be subject to security costs as set by the University from time to time. Members of the University Community participating in a demonstration that complies with the Policy will not be charged security costs unless they request additional security beyond the security the University has agreed to provide.

Pursuant to this Policy, Western will review an event to determine whether any security concerns arise. If security concerns arise, security is arranged by Western and the related security costs are charged to the event organizer or assumed by Western in accordance with the Policy.

To our knowledge, there were no instances where a non-curricular event did not proceed during the reporting period due to security concerns or their related costs.

Section B: Complaints

Question: 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.

Answer: The University received no complaints under the Policy during the period of August 1, 2024, to July 31, 2025.

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?	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.

The recorded in-person non-curriculum events that were held on campus between August 1, 2024 and July 31, 2025 is approximately 17,041. This number does not include events held in space controlled directly by the faculties (which are not booked through the central reservation system). We estimate that the inclusion of non-curriculum based events held in space controlled directly by faculties would increase the total number of non-curriculum based events by an additional 30% to 40%.

We are unable to confirm the number of online events held at the University, as this number is not tracked by the University.

Should you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. Strzelczyk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of the last name being a large, stylized capital 'S'.

Florentine Strzelczyk, PhD
Provost & Vice-President (Academic)

