PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS & WRITING GOOD DECISIONS

Procedural fairness is an aspect of administrative law and is a legal requirement, but since most staff and faculty are not lawyers, how are they supposed to know what the expectations are? The Office of the University Ombudsperson has created an asynchronous training course for members of the Queen's community that can be completed at their own pace when it is convenient for them.

What is included in the training?

1. First, the training goes through the components of procedural fairness which relate to the steps taken by the decision maker before and after making a decision or responding to a complaint – in essence it's the process that is followed.

2. The second portion of the course is writing good decisions, which stems from a component of procedural fairness, the requirement for reasons. Any decision letter (e.g. funding, appeal, academic integrity etc.) with a lack of stated reasons can be grounds for subsequent appeals, so the training provides guidance to decision makers on how to convey decisions with procedural fairness in mind.

Who should take the training?

At minimum, all decision makers within the Queen's community should complete the training; specifically, those who make academic decisions that involve students or those who advise students on academic and appeal options. This should include Deans, Associate Deans, Appeal Boards or Committees, Faculty or School Office Staff, Academic Advisors & Student Government or Committee Leaders.

Why is the training important?

- Procedural fairness is a legal requirement
- It empowers decision makers to feel more confident in decision-making and communicating the rationale for their decision
- It helps decision makers to craft decision letters with a rationale
- It provides basic procedural training for boards or committees responsible for hearing appeals

Questions?
Contact Aimee Buratch, Ombuds Manager of Communications & Outreach at a.buratch@queensu.ca

How to sign up?

1. E-mail ombuds@queensu.ca to request the training for you or your team/department
2. A link will be sent to be shared with the team
3. Individuals work through the modules on their own time at their own pace (it is expected to take no more than 1 hour to complete)
4. A follow-up Microsoft Teams meeting is typically scheduled with the Office to answer any questions that came up through the training; this is tailored to your team's needs (e.g. answer questions, review template letters, chat through an application of a specific policy)