

What is Employment Equity?

Employment Equity is the term developed by Judge Rosalie Silberman Abella, Commissioner of the Royal Commission on Equality in Employment (1984), to describe a distinct Canadian process for achieving equality in all aspects of employment. The Employment Equity Act was passed in 1986.

Recognizing that "systemic discrimination" was responsible for most of the inequality found in employment, the Commission outlined a systemic response and chose the term "Employment Equity" to describe the process.

Employment Equity is an on-going planning process used by an employer to:

- identify and eliminate barriers in an organization's employment procedures and policies;
- put into place positive policies and practices to ensure the effects of systemic barriers are eliminated; and
- ensure appropriate representation of "designated group" members throughout their workforce.

The goal of Employment Equity is to:

- eliminate employment barriers for the four designated groups identified in the Employment Equity Act : women, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people, members of visible minorities;
- remedy past discrimination in employment opportunities and prevent future barriers;
- improve access and distribution throughout all occupations and at all levels for members of the four designated groups;
- foster a climate of equity in the organization.

In Canada, there are two Federal Employment Equity Programs, the Legislated Employment Equity Program (LEEP), and the Federal Contractors Program (FCP).

Humber College complies voluntarily with the Employment Equity Act under the Federal Contractors Program.

The information in this Fact Sheet was developed by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and can be found at the following website
<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/lp/lo/lsw/we/information/what.shtml>