



# Strategic Grievance Handling

Developing Techniques and Processes to Strategically Prevent and Manage Grievances

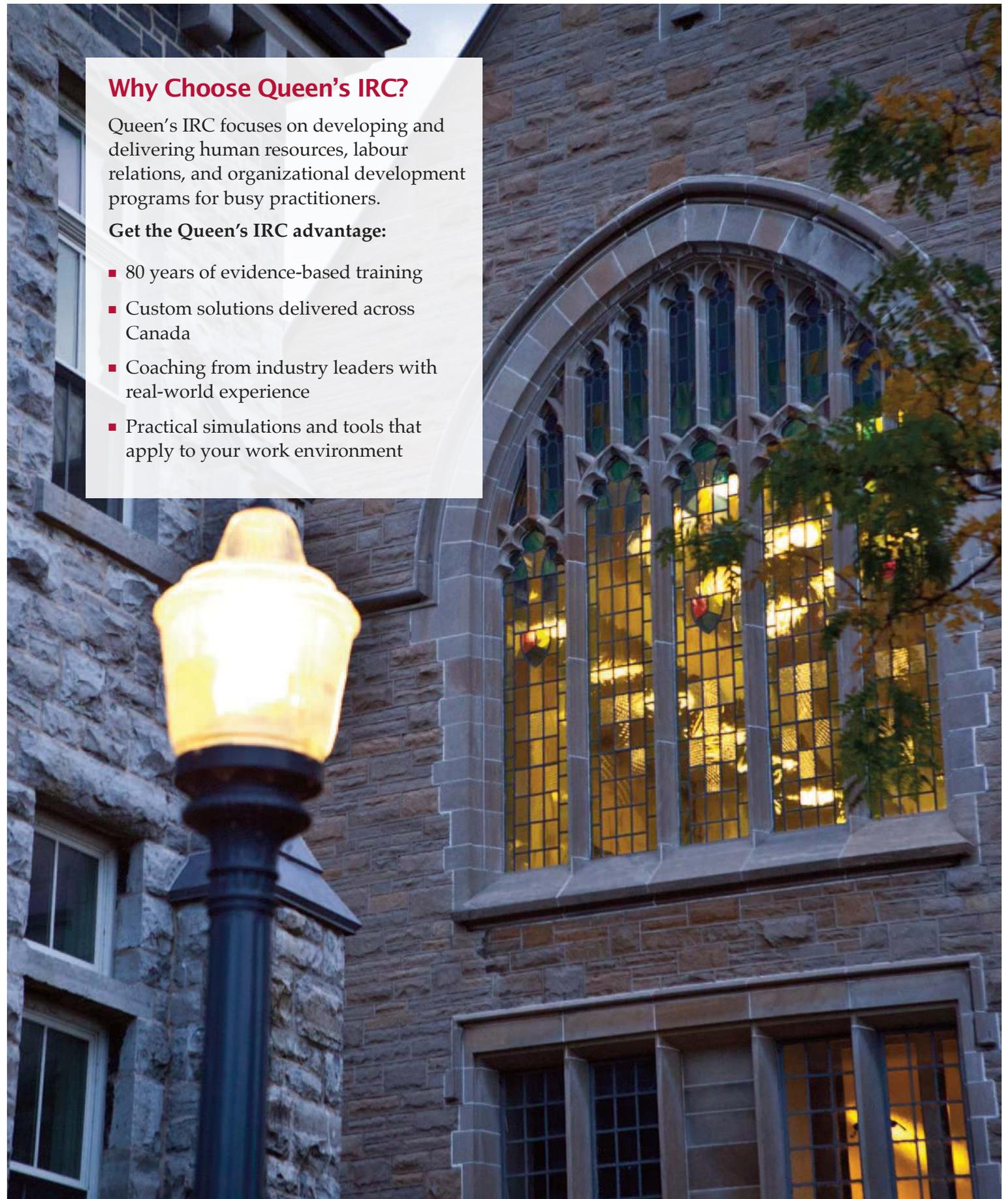


## Why Choose Queen's IRC?

Queen's IRC focuses on developing and delivering human resources, labour relations, and organizational development programs for busy practitioners.

### Get the Queen's IRC advantage:

- 80 years of evidence-based training
- Custom solutions delivered across Canada
- Coaching from industry leaders with real-world experience
- Practical simulations and tools that apply to your work environment



The number of outstanding grievances is one of the most telling indicators of the state of labour relations in a unionized environment. Considering legal costs, damage to labour-management relationships and reduced productivity, grievances can also be very expensive for both employers and unions. Like taxes, grievances are a part of the unionized workplace but many can be avoided and strategic practitioners can play a role in reducing their frequency. There are measures that can be taken before grievances are launched. There are steps that you can take during the grievance procedure, during mediation and in advance of the arbitration process to lessen the impact on employees, the union, and the organization. That's where this program comes in.

Strategic grievance handling is a thoughtful approach to labour relations. It involves identifying workplace-wide issues or problems, then analyzing the way in which proactive individual grievance management can address those issues. A long-term goal can then be developed for solving the systemic issues. You will come away from this program with the big-picture perspective, as well as some skills that you can use back at work to confidently handle all steps in the grievance process.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of this four-day program, you will be better positioned to:

- Diagnose when and how conflict escalates
- Understand the context and purpose of a grievance
- Consider your options both before and when a grievance is filed
- Prepare for and take control of the grievance meeting
- Deploy your skills more effectively during the grievance process
- Strategically choose mediation or arbitration as an option for resolution
- Conduct a grievance analysis before a round of collective bargaining
- Understand how strategy can feed a positive relationship cycle

## Organizational Benefits

- Enhanced in-house capacity to handle grievances
- Reduced time and legal costs spent on arbitration
- Poised and well-grounded responses to changing labour laws and legal issues
- Well-grounded positions going into collective bargaining

### Essentials

#### 4 Days / 4 Credits

#### Date & Location

Dec. 3-6, 2019: **Toronto**  
Apr. 6-9, 2020: **Toronto**  
Nov. 3-6, 2020: **Toronto**

**Fee:** \$4,695

#### Who Should Attend

Supervisors and managers who oversee unionized staff as well as union officials, shop stewards, and others who represent workers.

#### Takeaway Tools

- Five-Stage Conflict Escalation Model
- Grievance Preparation Checklist
- Insights into planning personal or workplace strategies for prevention of grievances

Please refer to our website, [irc.queensu.ca](http://irc.queensu.ca) for the latest information on venues.

# Learn. Design.

## a) The Rules of the Road

Much of the grievance process is grounded in law, so that's where we start. In no time, you'll gain an understanding of the basic legal foundation as well as these topics:

- What is a grievance?
- How is it linked to collective bargaining?
- What are the typical boundaries and scope of a grievance?
- Which sorts of outcomes are predictable?
- When can a grievance be reviewed?

## b) Conflict Escalation and Containment

There's both art and science involved in recognizing, assessing, and preventing conflict from escalating into a formal grievance. Learn to identify the stages in conflict escalation and acquire the techniques for controlling conflict. Come away with a practical five-stage conflict escalation model with immediate practical benefits for reducing workplace "temperature." Best of all, test your understanding of this tool in a scripted scenario and, in a safe workshop setting, discuss methods of intervention.

## c) Case Studies: Learning From Decisions

Working in small groups you'll compare your judgment using real-life cases against actual decisions made by arbitrators, and utilize these decisions to start developing your own strategic insights. You'll hear from participants about their workplace issues and work in table groups to re-think approaches to current or pending grievance scenarios

Hear the story about how an "ordinary" grievance process contributed to a workplace tragedy.

- What creative solutions were developed to work through these situations?
- What was learned?
- How has legislation and workplace policies changed?
- How can each of us translate these lessons into practical applications in our own workplaces?

## d) How to be a Strong Advocate

The basis of effective grievance handling consists of thorough preparation and solid advocacy, communication, and negotiating skills.

In this session, you'll learn:

- How to prepare for grievance meetings
- The benefits of information sharing
- How to apply strategic analysis of grievances for early resolution
- How to negotiate at grievance meetings

Join the session leader in discussions on key issues and questions that inevitably arise:

- What information should or should not be revealed at early stages?
- What should the grieving party or supervisor say and do in grievance meetings?
- Which types of negotiating strategies can be employed during grievance meetings?
- What is the best way to communicate for maximum impact?

# Implement.

## e) Following the Mediation and Arbitration Routes

Grievance mediation and arbitration each demand a specific skill-set and understanding. Learn — and practice — the difference between the two in role plays. You are asked to take on a role and, guided by confidential information, play out a scenario that will be resolved through the mediation process. Then, the exact same scenario is played out through an arbitration process. Get on-the-spot coaching along the way.

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of grievance mediation and arbitration?
- When would you choose either process?
- When would you make a process shift, and move from one process to the other?
- How should you make that shift?

## f) Feeding the Collective Agreement

Strategic grievance handling inevitably translates into strategic labour relations. In this closing session, we make the connection to not only the workplace dynamics but to the all-important bargaining relationship and review the processes that nurture these relationships.

- What are the best practices in tracking grievances, and how does your handling of them impact the bargaining process?
- Why do we choose to go to arbitration and how can we improve the process when negotiating collective agreements?
- What are the economic realities of grievance mediation or arbitration?

## Interactive Learning

Participate in grievance role plays as well as mediation and arbitration simulations that allow you to practice negotiating techniques. Test assumptions in a safe environment and receive on-the-spot coaching. Learn how professionals approach the same scenarios.

## Learning Beyond the Classroom

**Our learning programs are focused on your growth:**

- Opportunities to network with high-level colleagues from across the country
- Coaching from internationally-renowned facilitators with real-world experience
- Skills and strategies that directly apply to work environments
- Experience-based programming to test theories and ideas
- Mentoring beyond classroom sessions

# Facilitators and Guest Speakers

## **Mercedes Watson (Lead Facilitator)**

Mercedes is a co-founder and senior partner with a boutique-cis a senior partner with a boutique-consulting firm and a portion of her consulting practice focuses on labour relations issues. She is a regular facilitator at Queen's IRC where she provides her expertise to core courses (**Negotiation Skills, Strategic Grievance Handling and Managing Unionized Environments**) and travels throughout Canada and to Trinidad (Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business) on behalf of Queen's IRC to deliver customized training to organizations and their union and/or management groups. <https://irc.queensu.ca/facilitators/mercedes-watson>

## **Guest Speakers**

### **Deborah Cooper**

Deborah is currently the General Counsel of a large federal union representing almost 15,000 federal government employees in multiple departments and agencies across Canada.

Prior to this role, she was the General Secretary of the National Joint Council (NJC) of the Public Service of Canada. She was a union-side appointee to the position, having held the post from May 2013 – June 2018. The position is alternately held by employer side and bargaining agent side appointees for a five-year period each. The NJC is a union-management organization that is the forum of choice for co-development and consultation between the parties within the federal public service.

<https://irc.queensu.ca/facilitators/deborah-cooper>

### **Carol De Rosie**

Carol is a Registered Nurse who spent most of her adult life in Toronto working at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre where she worked in Oncology. As an active staff member, Carol sat on numerous hospital committees through the years including the Diversity, Ethics, Fiscal Advisory, and Nursing Advisory.

Carol held positions with the Ontario Nurses Association, Local 80 as: Grievance Officer, First Vice President, and for 10 years, full time President.

<https://irc.queensu.ca/facilitators/carol-de-rosie>

### **John McConchie**

John is a labour arbitrator, mediator, and harassment complaints investigator who also advises clients in labour arbitration and human rights matters. John brings over 25 years of experience and a special interest in preventative law to the task of helping clients both solve legal problems and prevent them from arising or recurring. To this end, he works with his partner, Ricki Lambeck McConchie, in providing client-targeted seminars, workshops and online programs on popular workplace subjects.

<https://irc.queensu.ca/facilitators/john-mcconchie>

### **Dawn McDermott**

Dawn, Senior Advisor of Dispute Resolution and Support for Wilfrid Laurier University, has a 25-year history of working with people and organizations in crisis, implementing community programs and developing institutional supports for people experiencing marginalization, victimization, harassment and discrimination.

During her tenure as the Executive Director of Windsor and Essex County, Dawn was a member of the Sexual Assault Advisory Committee, and a team member appointed to conduct the Domestic Violence Safety audit of the Windsor police service. She co-created and implemented a group treatment program for female political torture survivors.

<https://irc.queensu.ca/facilitators/dawn-mcdermott>

*The roster of guest speakers may change. We will do our best to keep you informed of program changes.*

# Registration Kiosk

## Strategic Grievance Handling

### Developing Techniques and Processes to Strategically Prevent and Manage Grievances

We offer four easy ways to register:

**Web:** Complete the online form at: [irc.queensu.ca](http://irc.queensu.ca)

**Telephone:** Reserve by calling toll-free: 1-888-858-7838

**Fax:** (613) 533-6812

**E-mail:** [irc@queensu.ca](mailto:irc@queensu.ca)

Confirmation and information on program location, check-in time, and agenda will follow.

#### Registration and Fees

Program fees include tuition, workbook materials, lunches, and some dinners. For all programs, payment in full is required one month before the program begins.

Register 60 days prior to a program and save \$300 on the tuition of four- and five-day programs, and \$150 on two- and three-day programs.

Register three people **from the same organization in the same program at the same time**, and receive a **10% discount** on program fees. Register five or more people **in the same program at the same time**, and receive a **20% discount**.

If you know you will be pursuing a Queen's Certificate and would like to remit tuition in one payment before your first program, we offer a special fee with a considerable saving. Contact our Program Administration office for details.

**Note:** Only *one* discount may be applied.

#### Cancellation Policy

Substitutions are permitted with no penalty **8 days or more from the program start date**.

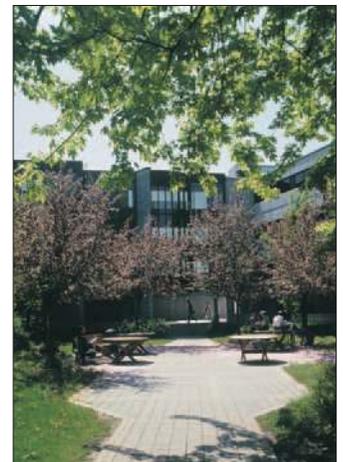
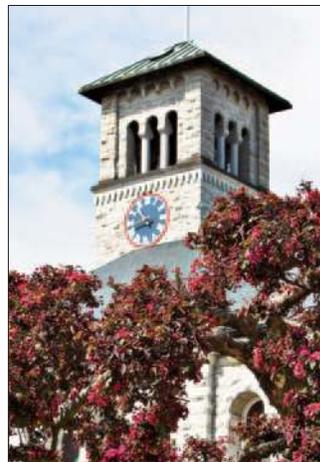
Substitutions **7 days or less before the program start date will be subject to a \$500 charge**.

Transfers and cancellations are permitted with no penalty **up to 15 days prior to the program start date**.

**Transfers and cancellations 14 days or less from the program start date will be subject to a 100% charge of the program fee.**

#### Location and Accommodation

Please refer to our website, [irc.queensu.ca](http://irc.queensu.ca), for the latest information on venues.





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