

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES

POLICY NAME: Complaints about Services, Employees or College	POLICY NUMBER: 1.4.2	CATEGORY: Administration and Operations
RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE: Vice-President	APPROVAL AUTHORITY: Executive Council	EFFECTIVE DATE: July 3, 2023
NEXT FULL REVIEW DATE: July 2, 2028	REVISED:	REPLACES:

### Purpose

To deal with complaints about College Services, Employees or College policies themselves.

### Scope

This policy applies to all employees and students of the College.

### Policy Statement

1. Coquitlam College is committed to providing excellent service to students, but situations may arise where an individual or group within the College community may wish to make a complaint about services, employees or the College's policies.
2. The procedures in this policy are designed to protect all parties involved.
3. Complaints covered under this policy cannot be anonymous. Anonymous complaints will not lead to an investigation.
4. The College reserves the right to determine corrective action, which may range from a reprimand to suspension or dismissal.
5. College employees must report any information that impacts the security and safety of the College's students or employees.
6. The Vice-President, may at his/her discretion, move the complaint to Stage 4 of the procedures within this Policy. The Vice-President may also decide not to initiate an investigation, or may suspend an investigation, if a complainant has chosen to initiate another course of action for the complaint.
7. The College will make every effort to proceed in a fair and equitable manner with an assurance of due process.
8. All individuals will be treated in accordance with due process. This includes the complainant's right to make a complaint, the respondent's right to know the allegations and to be given an opportunity to respond, and the rights of both parties to a fair and timely process of resolution.
9. Students and College employees have the right to make a complaint and may do so without fear of reprisal or retribution. However, a complaint made against a person will not automatically result in action taken against the respondent.
10. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the course of the complaint and investigation; however, confidentiality and anonymity must be separated from each other. Confidentiality will be maintained subject to the College being subject by law to disclose information about the

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES

investigation, and subject to disclosure which is necessary to continue or resolve a complaint. The College will endeavour to keep confidential any information involving a complaint.

11. The College affirms that it will not disclose information and documents that are obtained and gathered during an investigation if the College considers disclosure an unreasonable invasion of a person's privacy under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act.
12. All individuals involved in the investigation are expected to respect confidentiality and privacy when made aware of any information during an investigation.

### Procedures

#### Stage One

13. The first attempt to resolve a complaint is with the instructor, administrator, employee or student directly involved.
14. The individual who receives the complaint should encourage the complainant to attempt an informal resolution with the person against whom the complaint has been made.
15. Informal resolution should be attempted although not every informal resolution will achieve a solution.

#### Stage Two

16. If the situation is not concluded in Stage 1, the complaint may proceed to an Advisor or Administrator in the Student Services office.
17. The Advisor or Administrator may attempt an informal resolution.

#### Stage Three

18. If Stage 2 does not resolve the situation, and the complainant proceeds to Stage 3, the complaint must be written to the Advisor or Administrator and signed by the complainant.
19. The Advisor or Administrator will inform the complainant of the complaint process, will assure the complainant that the information provided will be sent to only those who need to know, and that the complainant will not need to fear reprisal or retribution.
20. A copy of the complaint will be provided to the respondent.

#### Stage Four

21. If the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation and the decision rendered, he/she may appeal in writing to the Vice-President.
22. The Vice-President may request more information from the complainant and the respondent and/or hold a hearing or meeting or seek an external investigator.
23. The External Investigator will not be required to provide any documentary material or information gathered in the investigation or testify in any litigation, arbitration, inquiry or other legal proceedings and will not be subpoenaed for any purpose relation to the investigation in litigation, arbitration, inquiry or other legal proceeding.

#### Stage Five

24. If an individual involved in the complaint is not satisfied with the Vice-President's decision, he/she may refer the matter in writing to the College Chief Executive Officers within five (5) working days of the Vice-President's decision for resolution.

### Definitions

**Corrective Action:** Action taken to eliminate the causes of non-conformities or other undesirable situations, so as to prevent recurrence.

**Related Documents**

[2.2.2 Student Non-Academic Conduct](#)

[Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

[Human Rights Code](#)