

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES

<b>POLICY NAME:</b> Complaints about Service, Instruction and Employees	<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b> 1.4.2	<b>CATEGORY:</b> Administration and Operations
<b>RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE:</b> President	<b>APPROVAL AUTHORITY:</b> Senior Leadership Team	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> October 4, 2023
<b>NEXT FULL REVIEW DATE:</b> October 3, 2028	<b>REVISED:</b> November 9, 2023	<b>REPLACES:</b>

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to support a positive and safe learning and working environment for all members of the Coquitlam College community. The policy establishes a process for addressing complaints regarding College services, instruction and employees.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all members of the College community.

This policy does not cover matters relating to grading, human rights or issues of misconduct. These matters will be dealt with under other appropriate College policies and/or processes.

### **Policy Statements**

1. Coquitlam College (the College) is committed to providing excellent education, service and support to students and employees. The College acknowledges that situations may arise where an individual may seek to address concerns regarding their experiences.
2. The College will not accept, address or investigate complaints that are:
  - a. made anonymously;
  - b. received from a third party, unless there is written consent to make the complaint on the student's behalf; and/or
  - c. false or not made in good faith.
3. Legitimate complaints may be issued without fear of reprisal or retaliation.
4. The College will address every complaint appropriately and equitably.
5. The College reserves the right to determine the appropriate corrective action for a complaint, including but not limited to suspension or dismissal.

### **Procedures**

6. Complaints should be brought forward as soon as possible after the incident so the matter may be dealt with effectively and quickly.
7. A support person and/or advocate for the student/employee may attend any meeting associated with a complaint.

8. Students may withdraw a complaint at any time by forwarding a written statement to the Head Advisor.

### **Stage One: Informal Resolution**

9. The College encourages informal resolution of complaints where both parties feel safe and comfortable doing so.
10. To resolve a complaint informally, the student/employee should discuss the matter with the individual(s) involved and/or an Advisor/Supervisor within five (5) days of the event taking place. The student/employee should indicate the nature of the complaint and a requested solution.
11. Students/Employees may seek the support of an Advisor or Supervisor in resolving a complaint. The Advisor/Supervisor may recommend:
  - a. an attempt at informal resolution;
  - b. the matter proceed to Stage Two; or
  - c. that the complaint should be addressed using a process outlined in another College policy.
12. The complaint is closed if an informal resolution is successful.
13. If the matter cannot be resolved in Stage One, the student/employee may proceed to Stage Two.
14. If either party is uncomfortable discussing or resolving the matter informally, or if the response is unsatisfactory, the issue may be brought directly to Stage Two.
15. The Advisor/Supervisor will issue a complaint report with details of the complaint and any attempted or agreed upon resolution. A copy of the report will be sent to all relevant parties.

### **Stage Two: Formal Complaint**

16. If a complaint is not resolved in Stage One, a formal complaint may be issued in writing to the Head Advisor within ten business days of the incident or the date written on the Complaint Report.
17. The complaint must include the name and contact information of the Complainant, the program of study/department, the nature of the complaint, any efforts taken to resolve the complaint and results, a requested solution.
18. A copy of the complaint will be sent to the Respondent.
19. The Head Advisor will review the information provided and may request additional information and/or request a meeting with the Complainant, Respondent or other individuals identified in the formal Complaint.
20. Within ten business days of receiving a complaint the Head Advisor will provide a written response to the Complainant outlining, within the limits of privacy, the decision, with rationale, and any appropriate corrective action taken regarding the complaint. A copy of the response will be sent to the Respondent.
21. A copy of the written response will be stored in the office of the Head Advisor.

### **Stage Three: Formal Review**

22. If the Complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the Head Advisor, a formal review request may be sent to the President.
23. The formal review request must be submitted within five (5) business days on the date of the written response.

24. The President may request additional information and/or request a meeting with the Complainant, Respondent or other individuals identified in the formal Complaint.
25. The President will issue a final decision within ten (10) business days of receiving a request for formal review. The decision, with rationale, and any new corrective action will be sent to the Complainant, and a copy sent to the Respondent. The decision of the President is final, and the matter will be closed.

### **Stage Four: External Review for Senior Secondary Only**

26. In the case of a complaint to the College requiring further investigation involving the Senior Secondary program, the complainant may contact the Ombudsperson from the Federation of Independent Schools of BC (FISA).

### **Confidentiality**

27. All parties involved in a complaint will adhere to the principles and requirements of confidentiality.
28. When a complaint is brought forward, information will not be disclosed by any person involved unless the information is required to further due process.

### **Definitions**

Complainant: An individual who is issuing a complaint with the College.

Respondent: The individual against whom a complaint has been made.

Supervisor: The individual directly responsible for an employee.

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

### **Related Documents**

Appendix A: Complaints Form

[1.3.3 Sexual Misconduct](#)

[2.2.1 Student Academic Responsibility](#)

[2.2.2 Student Non-Academic Conduct](#)

[2.2.3 Appeal of Final Grade](#)

[3.1.2 Conflict of Interest for Employees](#)

[3.1.3 Procedural Fairness and Appeals](#)

[3.1.4 Prevention of Bullying and Harassment](#)

[Human Rights Code](#)

[Personal Information Protection Act](#)

Appendix B: Internal and External Contact Numbers