

## Student Complaints and Dispute Resolution

Number:	1.4.2
Responsible Executive:	President
Approval Authority:	Senior Leadership Team
Effective Date:	May 9, 2025
Next Review Date:	May 5, 2030
Revised Date:	
Category:	Administration
Replaces:	Complaints about Service, Instruction and Employees

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### PURPOSE

The policy establishes a process for submitting and resolving complaints regarding services, instructors and/or employees of Coquitlam College (the College).

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all students of the College.

This policy does not address matters relating to grading, student conduct or human rights. For these matters, students should refer to the appropriate policy for information on how to proceed:

- [Appeal of Final Grade Policy 2.2.3](#)
- [Diversity and Inclusiveness Policy 1.4.1](#)
- [Employee Professional Standards and Conflict of Interest Policy 3.1.2](#)
- [Prevention of Bullying and Harassment Policy 3.1.4](#)
- [Sexual Misconduct Policy 1.3.3](#)
- [Student Academic Responsibility Policy 2.2.1](#)
- [Student Non-Academic Conduct Policy 2.2.2](#)
- Other policies that may be appropriate to address specific matters.

### POLICY STATEMENTS

1. The College is committed to providing excellent education, service and support to its students and acknowledges that situations may arise where a student may seek to address concerns regarding their education or service experience.
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 individual's behalf; and/or
  - c. where there is sufficient evidence to indicate the complaint was not made in good faith.
3. Complaints made in good faith may be made without fear of reprisal or retaliation.
4. Due to privacy considerations, the College will only disclose any details or actions in relation to a complaint to those on a need-to-know basis.

**PROCEDURES**

5. Complaints should be brought forward as soon as possible after the incident so the matter may be dealt with effectively and quickly.
6. Students may bring a support person and/or advocate to meetings or other processes associated with a complaint.
7. Complaints may be withdrawn at any time by submitting a written statement to the recipient of the original complaint.

Informal Resolution

8. To resolve a complaint informally, the student is encouraged to discuss the matter with the employee or instructor. The student is encouraged to specify the nature of the complaint and a requested solution.
9. In response, the employee or instructor should provide a written response to the student within five (5) business days of receiving the complaint.
10. If the student is not comfortable using the informal complaint process, or the complaint is not resolved informally, the student may proceed with a formal complaint.

Formal Complaint

11. If the complaint is not resolved informally to the satisfaction of the student, or the student or employee did not wish to proceed with an informal resolution, the student can make a formal complaint.
12. Within ten (10) business days of the date of the incident or the date of a written response in the informal resolution process, whichever is later, the student should submit a written complaint to the Chief Academic Officer. The written complaint should specify:
  - a. student name and contact information;
  - b. the nature of the complaint;
  - c. efforts taken to resolve the complaint and results, and
  - d. a requested solution.
13. Within ten (10) business days of receiving the written complaint, the Chief Academic Officer or designate will:
  - a. respond to the student in writing, acknowledging receipt of the complaint;
  - b. conduct an investigation into the complaint (this may include meeting with the student and/or consulting with relevant parties);
  - c. A copy of the complaint will be provided to the subject of the complaint. The subject of the complaint will be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint; and
  - d. provide a written response to the student and the subject of the complaint outlining, within the limits of privacy, the decision regarding the complaint.

14. Once the decision is communicated it is considered final and the matter is closed.

External Review for Senior Secondary Only

15. 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).

**DEFINITIONS**

Good Faith: Being honest and sincere when sharing your concerns. It means you believe your complaint is true and based on real experiences or facts. Complaints made in good faith are meant to solve a real problem, not to harm, mislead, or retaliate against someone.

**RELATED RESOURCES**

- [Appeal of Final Grade Policy 2.2.3](#)
- [Diversity and Inclusiveness Policy 1.4.1](#)
- [Employee Professional Standards and Conflict of Interest Policy 3.1.2](#)
- [Prevention of Bullying and Harassment Policy 3.1.4](#)
- [Procedural Fairness and Appeals Policy 3.1.3](#)
- [Sexual Misconduct Policy 1.3.3](#)
- [Student Academic Responsibility Policy 2.2.1](#)
- [Student Non-Academic Conduct Policy 2.2.2](#)