

International Student Complaint Resolution Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

This policy establishes a formal process for receiving, addressing, and resolving complaints made by international students at Kootenay Columbia College (KCC). The policy ensures that all complaints are handled fairly, transparently, and efficiently, in compliance with the Education Quality Assurance (EQA) standards and the BC Human Rights Code.

KCC is committed to providing a supportive and inclusive environment for all students. This policy applies to complaints related to academic and administrative matters, student support services, misleading information provided by education agents, and harassment or discrimination based on protected grounds under the BC Human Rights Code.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All international students of KCC.
- Complaints related to:
 - Academic matters
 - Administrative matters
 - Student support services
 - Misleading information provided by education agents.
 - Harassment or discrimination based on protected grounds under the BC Human Rights Code.

3. Guiding Principles

KCC is committed to the following principles in handling complaints:

- **Fairness:** All complaints will be addressed impartially and without bias.
- **Transparency:** Students will be informed of the process, timelines, and outcomes at each stage.
- **Confidentiality:** All complaints will be handled with strict confidentiality, and information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.
- **Non-Retaliation:** Students will not face retaliation for raising complaints in good faith.
- **Accessibility:** The complaint process will be free of charge and easily accessible to all students.

4. Complaint Resolution Process

The complaint resolution process consists of the following stages:

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

- Students are encouraged to resolve complaints informally by discussing the issue with the relevant individual (e.g., fellow student, instructor, staff member, or education agent).
- If the issue is not resolved, the student may seek assistance through the formal complaint submission process.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint Submission

- If the complaint is not resolved informally, the student may submit a formal written complaint via email to Student Services Representative, Medha Sharma (studentsupport@kootenaycolumbiacollege.com)
- In the absence of the Student Services Representative, the complaint can be sent to the Regional Director, Dr. Unnati Hunjan (unnati@kootenaycolumbiacollege.com)
- The email must include:
 - Student's full name, registration number, and contact information.
 - Detailed description of the complaint (including dates, individuals involved, and supporting evidence).
 - Desired resolution.

Stage 3: Investigation and Decision

- The Student Services Representative will arrange to meet with the student(s) to discuss the concern, gather information pertaining to the complaint, and discuss the desired resolution. This meeting will be within seven (7) business days of the date from which the complaint was received in writing. All information gathered during the meeting will be reviewed and additional information and submissions from all parties involved may be requested.
- Following the meeting with the student, the Student Services Representative will conduct inquiries and/or investigations as necessary and appropriate to determine whether the student's concerns are substantiated in whole or in part. Those inquiries may involve further discussion(s) with the student, either individually or with appropriate KCC personnel, and shall be completed no later than seventeen (17) business days after the date from which the complaint was received in writing.
- The Student Services Representative will provide a determination in respect of the student complaint, within six (6) days:

- Determine that the student's concerns are not substantiated.
 - Determine that the student's concerns are substantiated in whole or in part
- The student(s) and the party(ies) involved will receive a written summary of the above determination. If it has been determined that the student's concerns are substantiated in whole or in part, the Student Services Representative shall include a proposed resolution of the substantiated concerns.

Stage 4: Appeal Process

- If the student is not satisfied with the determination of the Student Services Representative, the student must request reconsideration to the Regional Director within two (2) days of receiving the determination.
- The Regional Director will review the matter and provide reasons for the reconsideration of the determination, if any, in writing within four (4) business days. At this point, the College's International Student Complaint Resolution process will be considered exhausted.
- The Regional Director may engage the services of a third-party mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute. This would not result in any cost to the student.
- The student making the complaint may be represented by an agent or lawyer, at their own expense.

Stage 5: External Resolution

- If the complaint remains unresolved, students may escalate the matter to external bodies, such as:
 - Private Training Institutions Regulatory Unit (PTIRU) for academic or administrative complaints.
 - BC Human Rights Tribunal for complaints related to harassment or discrimination.

5. Nature of Complaints and Resolution Pathways

5.1 Academic Matters

- If a student disagrees with a grade received on an assignment or test, they must submit a written explanation of their concerns to the instructor who assigned the grade within five days of receiving it. This explanation should outline the reasons for contesting the grade and include any relevant supporting evidence the student wishes to have considered. It is important to note that grades will not be changed due to personal circumstances or unapproved absences.
- The instructor will review or reassess the assignment/test based on its grading criteria and provide the student with a written response. This response will

explain the reasoning behind the initial grade as well as any adjustments made, if applicable. Instructors are required to issue their decision within three business days of receiving the student's appeal request.

- If the student remains dissatisfied with the instructor's decision, they may escalate the appeal by submitting a formal written request via email, along with all supporting documents, to the Senior Education Administrator, Dr. Unnati Hunjan (unnati@kootenaycolumbiacollege.com) within three business days.
- Once the appeal is received, the Senior Education Administrator will arrange a meeting with the student to review the original assignment/test, along with all relevant documentation, including the instructor's written response. They may also consult with the instructor to reassess the assignment/test.
- The final decision, determined by the Senior Education Administrator, will be communicated to the student in writing within three business days of receiving the formal appeal. This decision is conclusive and cannot be further contested.

5.2 Administrative Matters

- This policy applies to complaints related to:
 - Course delivery, curriculum content, or faculty conduct.
 - Admissions, registration, and student record issues.
 - Tuition fees, refunds, and financial disputes.
- Complaints should be directed to the International Registrar, Aziz Dhillon (aziz@kootenaycolumbiacollege.com), and Finance Officer, Kaushik Ingle (accounts@kootenaycolumbiacollege.com) for initial resolution.
- If unresolved, the student may submit a formal complaint to the Regional Director Dr. Unnati Hunjan.

5.3 Student Support Services

- This policy applies to complaints related to:
 - Accessibility services and accommodations.
 - Academic advising, counseling, and career services.
 - Housing, financial aid, and scholarships.
 - Campus resources, including library, IT support, and facilities.
- Complaints should be directed to the Student Services Representative, Medha Sharma (studentsupport@kootenaycolumbiacollege.com) for initial resolution.
- If unresolved, the student may submit a formal complaint to the Regional Director Dr. Unnati Hunjan (unnati@kootenaycolumbiacollege.com).

5.4 Misleading Information by Education Agents

- This policy applies to complaints regarding:

- Misleading or inaccurate information about programs, fees, or admission requirements.
- Misrepresentation of institutional policies or post-graduation opportunities.
- Fraudulent or unethical recruitment practices.
- Complaints related to misleading information provided by education agents should be directed to the Regional Director for investigation.
- If substantiated, KCC will take corrective actions, such as terminating the agent's contract.

5.5 Harassment and Discrimination

- This policy applies to complaints related to:
 - Harassment, bullying, or discrimination based on protected grounds under the BC Human Rights Code (e.g., race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability).
 - Any conduct that creates a hostile or unsafe learning environment.
- Complaints related to harassment or discrimination should be reported to the Regional Director or Student Services Representative.
- Immediate safety concerns should be reported to Campus Administration or 911.

6. Confidentiality and Non-Retaliation

- All complaints will be handled with strict confidentiality, and information will only be shared with individuals directly involved in the resolution process.
- KCC prohibits any form of retaliation against students who file complaints in good faith.
- Students may be represented by an agent or lawyer at their own expense.

7. Record-Keeping

- All complaints and their resolutions will be documented and a copy will be added to the student's file for a period of 1 year following withdrawal or graduation.
- Records will include:
 - Date the complaint was raised.
 - Name of the complainant.
 - Nature of the complaint.
 - Steps taken to resolve the complaint.
 - Outcome of the complaint.

8. Related Policies and Documents

- Dispute Resolution Policy
- Incident & Complaint Reporting Policy
- Grade Appeal Policy
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy
- Dignity and Respect Policy
 - Procedure for Students Experiencing Discrimination, Bullying, or Harassment
- Sexual Misconduct Policy

9. Contact Information

For assistance with complaints, students may contact:

- **Student Services Representative:** Medha Sharma
Email: studentsupport@kootenaycolumbiacollege.com
- **International Registrar:** Aziz Dhillon
Email: aziz@kootenaycolumbiacollege.com
- **Regional Director:** Dr. Unnati Hunjan
Email: unnati@kootenaycolumbiacollege.com
- **Finance Officer:** Kaushik Ingle
Email: accounts@kootenaycolumbiacollege.com