STUDENT COMPLAINT AND APPEAL POLICY

Status	Draft – approval pending receipt of Ministerial consent
Approving Body	Academic Council
Date Adopted	TBD
Effective Date	TBD
Date of Last Review	N/A
Supersedes	N/A

1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes procedures for students to raise concerns about instruction, services, employees, academic decisions, disputes with other students, or institutional policies and procedures. These procedures ensure prompt, fair, impartial, and where possible, informal resolution to student complaints and appeals.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all currently enrolled students and their duly designated representatives who wish to initiate a complaint or appeal regarding:

- Academic decisions (grades, probation, suspension, dismissal)
- Quality of instruction or program delivery
- Student services
- College employees
- CCTCM policies, practices, or procedures
- Marketing or advertising of programs
- Disputes with other students

A duly designated representative is a person given express written authority by a student or group of students, typically through a signed authorization letter naming the individual to act on their behalf.

3. PRINCIPLES

At every stage of a complaint or appeal in which the student participates, including informal resolution, formal meetings, investigation and review, the student has the right to have a person present with them. A duly designated representative may submit the complaint, evidence, explanations and other submissions on the student's behalf at every stage, with the student's written authorisation.

- Students must bring complaints forward as soon as possible after the concern arises.
- CCTCM will endeavor to resolve complaints promptly and informally whenever possible.
- All complaints will be investigated by individuals who are impartial and not directly involved in the matter under review.
- Students, faculty, and administrators named in complaints have the right to be notified of allegations and to respond in writing.
- All parties will receive written decisions that include clear reasons for the outcome.
- Students will not be subjected to discipline, retaliation, or adverse action for filing legitimate complaints.

- Privacy considerations prohibit disclosure of actions taken regarding employees or other students.
- Students may withdraw complaints at any time by notifying the person handling the complaint.
- Time limits may be extended if doing so aids resolution or there are justifiable reasons for delay.

4. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Step 1: Informal Resolution

The student contacts a College employee to discuss the complaint or concern within thirty (30) business days of the incident giving rise to the complaint, except in extenuating circumstances that, in the opinion of CCTCM, justify an extension.

For complaints involving disputes between students, students are encouraged to first attempt to resolve the matter directly with the other student(s) involved, if it is safe and appropriate to do so. If direct resolution is not possible or successful, students may proceed with the formal complaint process.

Students should state their complaint clearly, preferably in writing, and retain a copy. The employee will review the concerns, seek clarification if needed, and explore resolution options with the student. If unresolved, the student may proceed to Step 2.

Step 2: Formal Written Complaint

If concerns are not resolved in Step 1, the student may submit a signed written complaint to the Academic Dean using the form provided below that includes:

- Description of the complaint, including time and date
- Employee or student involved (if relevant)
- Names of witnesses (if any)
- Action taken to date, including Step 1 details
- Resolution sought

Within seven (7) business days of receiving the complaint, the Academic Dean will determine whether they are impartial and not directly involved in the matter. If the Academic Dean is directly involved in the complaint or cannot investigate impartially, the complaint will be referred to another impartial administrator for investigation. Where the complaint concerns the President or another senior administrator, the investigation is referred to the external investigator retained under Section 6.

The investigating administrator will conduct an investigation, which may include discussions with relevant individuals. If an employee, faculty member, administrator, or student is named in the complaint, they will be notified of the specific allegations and will have five (5) business days to respond in writing to the concerns.

The investigating administrator will:

- **If the complaint has merit:** Identify a resolution and advise all parties in writing with clear reasons for the decision; if necessary, bring parties together to discuss and develop resolution strategies.
- **If the complaint lacks merit:** Inform all parties in writing with detailed reasons explaining why no further action will be taken.
- **If the complaint is deemed false, frivolous, vexatious, or made in bad faith:** Meet with the complainant to discuss the motivation and provide written reasons for this determination.

Late submission of a complaint may make resolution more difficult but does not invalidate the complaint.

5. APPEAL OF ACADEMIC DECISIONS

Students who wish to appeal academic decisions (including grades, probation, suspension, or dismissal) must first follow the complaint procedure in Section 4. If the matter remains unresolved after Step 2, or if the student wishes to appeal the decision resulting from the complaint process, they may request a review by submitting a written appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee, through the Secretary of the Academic Council, within ten (10) business days of receiving the Step 2 decision. The written appeal must include:

- The specific decision being appealed
- Grounds for the appeal (e.g., procedural error, new evidence, disproportionate outcome, perceived bias)
- Supporting documentation
- Remedy or outcome sought

The Academic Appeals Committee (AAC) is a committee of the Academic Council, constituted under §7.2 of the Academic Council Charter. It comprises three members drawn from the Council and the faculty, none of whom are directly involved in the situation under review, and is convened by the Secretary of the Academic Council.

Where the internal pool is insufficient to constitute an impartial panel, or where a senior administrator is a party to the matter, the panel shall include an external member under the standing arrangement described in Section 6. The AAC will review the appeal within ten (10) business days and issue a written decision with detailed reasons for the outcome. The AAC may uphold, modify, or overturn the decision under appeal. The AAC's decision is final within the institution; the President does not hold appellate authority under this policy.

Where the President is personally a party to the matter under appeal, the panel is chaired by the external adjudicator retained under Section 6, and no decision of the panel issues without the chair's concurrence. In such matters the appeal accordingly terminates with an external adjudicator.

Note: For detailed information about the grounds and procedures for academic probation, suspension, and dismissal, refer to the Academic Probation and Dismissal Policy.

6. IMPARTIALITY REQUIREMENTS

All complaints and appeals must be investigated and decided by individuals who are impartial and not directly involved in the matter under review. An individual is considered directly involved if they:

- Are named as a party in the complaint
- Have a personal interest in the outcome of the complaint
- Have witnessed the events giving rise to the complaint
- Have a close personal or professional relationship with any party that could affect their impartiality

When an administrator or faculty member assigned to investigate a complaint determines they cannot act impartially, they must recuse themselves and refer the complaint to another appropriate impartial administrator for reassignment; where no impartial internal administrator is available, or where the President is a party, the matter is assigned to the external investigator retained under this section.

Students may raise concerns about the impartiality of an investigator by submitting a written request to the Academic Dean outlining the basis for the concern; where the concern relates to the Academic Dean or the President, the request is directed to the external adjudicator retained under this section. The reviewer will assess the request and, if warranted, reassign the investigation to ensure impartiality.

CCTCM maintains a standing arrangement with an external investigator/adjudicator, engaged under a framework agreement, to serve where the internal pool of impartial individuals is insufficient, where the President or another senior administrator is a party or directly involved, or where an external panel member is required under Section 5. Costs are incurred only upon activation and appear in the institutional budget.

7. RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

CCTCM will maintain records of all formal complaints (Step 2) and appeals in accordance with applicable privacy legislation. Records will include: the complaint or appeal submission, investigation notes, responses from involved parties, and the final decision with reasons.

All complaint and appeal proceedings are confidential. Information will be shared only with those who need to know for investigation and resolution purposes. Privacy considerations prohibit disclosure to complainants of specific actions taken regarding employees or other students.

8. POLICY REVIEW

This policy is reviewed every three (3) years or when circumstances warrant. The Academic Council reviews this policy on the recommendation of the Academic Dean; pending its constitution, the Academic Dean coordinates reviews and recommends amendments.

9. CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions about this policy or to initiate a complaint:

Past, current and prospective international students may obtain the complete complaint and appeal procedure from the Administration Office without a student login. The scope for initiating a complaint remains as set out in section 2. Public PDF download page: https://cctcm.ca/policy/.

Office of the Academic Dean

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COMPLAINT FORM

Instruction: Please complete this form in full. Formal complaints must be submitted within **10 business days** of the failure of an informal resolution attempt. Submit the completed form via email to the appropriate authority.

Name:	
Email:	
Complaint Incident: Please describe the nature of the complaint. Use additional paper if required. Include the following: • Date(s) and time(s) of incident(s) • Location(s) of incidents(s) • Individual(s) involved	
DESIRED OUTCOME Please briefly describe the remedy sought from this complaint or desired outcome.	

OFFICE USE ONLY			
Received by:		Date	
Decision Maker:			
Investigation:			

Decision: Date:		
To be processed under Policy:		
• Student Complaints	• Faculty and Staff Complaint	• Other: