
Student Issues and Complaints

Policy Number:	1313
Key Process Area:	Student Services
Owner:	VP AISA
Current Approved Date:	June 2024

POLICY STATEMENT

The New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) is committed to ensuring all teaching and learning experiences are of the highest quality while maintaining a focus on students' best interests. Students shall have the right to voice issues and concerns regarding their experience at NBCC and work in conjunction with the College to arrive at a respectful resolution.

PURPOSE

This policy serves to voice issues and complaints that arise in conjunction with College policies, staff members, fellow students, or the overall student experience at NBCC without fear of reprisal, in a timely, constructive, and confidential manner.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This policy applies to applicants, full-time and part-time students who are currently enrolled in a course or program at NBCC, and former students who were enrolled in a course or program when the alleged incident(s) resulting in the complaint occurred.

All employees of the College who deal with a complaint shall respect the student's right to confidentiality. Similarly, the rights of a person who is the subject of a complaint, including their right to confidentiality, will be respected. Note that confidentiality is not synonymous with anonymity. A complaint must be made within fifteen (15) working days of the incident(s) giving rise to the complaint except in extenuating circumstances which, in the opinion of the College, would justify an extension.

1.0 DEFINITIONS

Anonymity: Allows the name of the complainant to be withheld. However, a student reporting a complaint to a college employee should understand that while every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality, the College cannot investigate or follow up on anonymous disclosures.

Complainant: The person who brings forward information that a potential violation of NBCC's policies may have occurred OR who brings forward information expressing dissatisfaction with their learning/teaching experience, College services, its employees, or other students.

Complaint: The expression either in writing or oral of the student's dissatisfaction with the learning/teaching experience, the College services, its employees, or other students.

Confidentiality: The process of strict privacy guiding the College's response to a complaint. A student's name and disclosure are known, but only to those who need to know to help resolve the complaint/or provide support as per the student's request.

Formal Complaint: Written submission of issue(s) by complainant(s) for resolution/response by respective manager.

Former student: Any student who is no longer actively enrolled at NBCC.

Informal Complaint: Complainant addresses issue directly with the other person(s) involved.

Student: For the purposes of this Policy, a person is considered a 'student' from the moment they are enrolled in a program or course until they have graduated or completed it.

Working Days: Monday to Friday excluding public/stat holidays.

2.0 STUDENT RIGHTS

- 2.1 Students may expect to learn in a healthy and safe environment.
- 2.2 Students may gather in a peaceful and harmonious fashion.
- 2.3 Students may expect the NBCC environment to be free from harassment, indignity, injury, or violence.
- 2.4 Students have the right to expect quality services and resources that support instruction and student life.
- 2.5 Students will be informed of the location of all NBCC policies, guidelines and any course or program specific materials regarding study and general conditions at NBCC.
- 2.6 Students are provided with a forum to provide feedback on NBCC's programs and services.
- 2.7 The confidentiality of all information regarding students will be respected. Within the generally accepted rules of ethics employees and staff members may access student records in performing their professional duties. Confidential student information (meaning private and sensitive information related to issues such as a student's health, finances, or academic performance) will be maintained in confidence. The student must consent in writing to their disclosure.
- 2.8 Students have a right to freedom of opinion and expression in the classroom within the context of the course content.

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The College has several policies dealing with specific types of complaints, including the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy (1308), Maintaining a Respectful Community Policy (4202), and Student Code of Conduct Policy (1112). If students are unsure under which policy they should launch a complaint or if they require help to initiate the process, they may consult with any member of the Student Services team.

Complaints may be addressed using either the informal and/or formal procedure. Whenever possible, an informal resolution should be attempted before initiating a formal complaint. If the complainant believes that the issue has not been (or cannot be) adequately addressed informally, they may approach any member of the Student Services team to be directed to the **Formal Complaint Form** or download it directly from NBCC.ca.

Students are encouraged to seek resolution of complaints by addressing the issue directly with the person involved as soon as possible. A student may choose to have a member of the NBCC College Community assist them with the informal process/resolution. If this is not sufficient to resolve the complaint, the complainant has the option to file a formal complaint.

Where a complaint is against an individual, it is the right of the student to seek an informal resolution through the various levels of supervision in the Department or Academic School involved.

Where several students in the same class or program have the same concern, the matter should be raised with the Coordinating Instructor before proceeding with a formal complaint.

A group of students may delegate one or more of its members to voice a complaint on their behalf. However, no one shall initiate a complaint on behalf of another person or persons without the written permission of the person(s).

Timelines for the College's responses to complaints, as outlined in the related procedural document, are those to which the College normally expects to have the ability to adhere to. It is anticipated, however, that there may be occasions when it is not feasible for a full and thorough investigation to be carried out within the expected timelines, therefore necessitating a longer period of time. These may include, but are not restricted to:

- Periods when NBCC is closed (e.g. Statutory Holidays and the Christmas/New Year period).
- Periods when key staff are absent from the College due to work commitments, scheduled or unscheduled leave, sickness, or other good reason.
- Particularly complex issues of complaint.
- Issues of complaint which are related to other on-going procedures which may need to be completed before the complaint can be fully addressed (e.g. disciplinary matters, legal proceedings).

Where it is apparent that the stated deadlines cannot be met, the student will be informed at the earliest opportunity at which an indication of the revised deadline for response and the reasons for the delay can be given.

4.0 OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS

Addressing Student Issues & Complaints Process
Academic Integrity (1111)
Course Delivery and Evaluation of Learning (1109)
Formal Complaint Form (1313.4625)
Maintaining a Respectful Community (4202)
Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (1308)
Student Appeal (1000.4809)
Student Code of Conduct (1112)
Student Standing (1113)