



Policy #:	2-05
Name of Institution:	Valemount College
Institution Number:	04328
Name of Policy:	Student Complaint/Dispute Resolution
Effective Date:	December 21, 2018
Revision Date:	
Category:	Education/Academic

STUDENT COMPLAINT/DISPUTE RESOLUTION

POLICY STATEMENT

Valemount College supports the need for students to have their complaints addressed in a timely manner with a process that is transparent and unbiased, and is in accordance with procedural fairness.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to provide a process for addressing students' complaints respecting Valemount College and any aspect of its operations. Students may also use this policy to challenge a grade, a decision or an action that is believed to be unfair. Students will not be subject to any form of retaliation as a result of filing a complaint.

PRINCIPLES

1. Students and employees are expected to resolve matters of concern through dialogue with the respondent.
2. Student complaints will be heard in accordance with the basic principles of Procedural Fairness and Conflict Resolution as outlined in the Procedures (Appendix C).
3. Student complaints and concerns will be heard in a timely manner.
4. This policy relates to all student complaints with the exception of those related to Human Rights.

GUIDELINES

1. The Student Dispute Resolutions Committee of the Valemount College Society will assist with the complaint process when and where needed as an unbiased guide to the process.
2. In all cases it is expected that every effort will be made to resolve issue through dialogue.
3. A student with a complaint about College employees, instruction, grading, program content, services or policy- related decisions will be expected to articulate the concerns to the individual involved in person and in writing prior to contacting the Student Dispute Resolutions Committee.
4. When the student is unable to directly contact the involved party (for reasons of intimidation, health, scheduling, etc.), or vice-versa, the Student Dispute Resolutions Committee may be called on to facilitate the discussions and will ensure the respondent is aware of the allegations. In some cases, the Student Dispute Resolutions Committee may have these discussions independent of the student.
5. Except in cases where the Instructor and College Director determine there may be a risk to safety or other disruptions that may occur in the teaching and learning environment, a student will be expected to continue with their courses, work experience or other related educational activities pending the outcome of the complaint process.
6. A student may have assistance available as requested or as recommended by the Student Dispute Resolutions Committee to assist with comprehending process and discussions. Assistance may include, but is not limited to interpreters, cultural advisers and translators.
7. The student may withdraw the complaint at any time. In such cases, the matter will be deemed resolved, and further complaints on the same case will not be considered, except in extenuating circumstances.
8. The complaint process will be confidential for all parties, however, anonymity cannot be guaranteed. Information will be shared and protected in compliance with the BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Act.

REFERENCES

See APPENDIX C: STUDENT COMPLAINT/DISPUTE RESOLUTIONS PROCEDURES

APPENDIX C

STUDENT COMPLAINT/DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

The Student Dispute Resolutions Committee is a committee of the Valemount College Society. The Student Dispute Resolutions Committee may become involved at any point during these processes to assist and provide advice as is necessary and/or as requested by students and employees.

A complaint can allege such things as (but will not be limited to):

- a) an error in grading an assignment or assessing a performance
- b) an error or injustice on grounds other than grading - for example:
 - i) the method of evaluation was not fair and reasonable
 - ii) the decision maker was biased on non-human rights grounds
 - iii) the instructor deviated significantly from the course outline

Stage 1 Dialogue/Informal Complaint Process

Step 1. The student attempts to resolve the issue with the concerned party (or parties) normally within ten (10) business days of the grade, decision, or action pertaining to the complaint.

Step 2. In the event that the issue is not resolved in Step 1, or if the concerned party (or parties) has/have not responded within five (5) business days of the student's initial contact, the student is normally expected to, within the next five (5) business days, notify the concerned party (or parties), in writing, that the issue will be brought forward to the College Director. If the concerned party is the College Director, the student is normally expected to, within the next five (5) business days, notify the concerned party, in writing, that the issue will be brought forward to the Student Dispute Resolutions Committee.

Step 3. A representative from the Student Dispute Resolutions Committee will meet with the student and concerned party together, if appropriate, to discuss the complaint.

**If the student is or was enrolled in an approved program, is dissatisfied with the determination, and has been misled by the institution regarding any significant aspect of that program, he or she may file a complaint with the Private Training Institutions Branch (www.privatetraininginstitutions.gov.bc.ca)*

Stage 2 – Decision/Formal Complaint Process

Step 1. If the issue is not resolved as per Stage 1, or if the concerned party has not responded, the student should, within the next five (5) business days, discuss the matter further with the College Director and present the written complaint, including details, signaling the student's intent to further escalate their complaint by filing a Formal Complaint. The student should suggest a remedy. A copy of the formal complaint will be provided to the concerned party.

Step 2. The College Director, or the Student Dispute Resolutions Committee if the complaint is against the College Director, will provide a written response to the student within 45 days after the date on which the complaint was made. This response will describe and conclude the outcome of the complaint process. A copy will be retained by the College Director and the Student Dispute Resolutions Committee, and a copy will be retained in the student's record.

Appealing the Decision

If the student feels that the issue is still not resolved and wishes to appeal the decision, the student should refer to the Appeal Policy (Student Appeal Policy #2-10). Normally the student must file an appeal within ten (10) business days after receiving the final decision as described in Stage 2 of the original complaint.