
BCIT STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCESS

PURPOSE

BCIT is committed to providing high quality education and services for students. We recognise that students will, from time to time, have concerns about their educational and service experience and require guidance in addressing these concerns.

To ensure the prompt and effective response to student complaints, students must endeavour to bring their complaints forward as soon as possible after the concern has arisen. Institutional representatives, who receive a student complaint, must endeavour to resolve the complaint as soon as possible after it is received.

The following procedures are designed to ensure a prompt and where possible, informal resolution to student complaints. These procedures are intended to address issues and/or concerns for Full Time, Part Time and Distance Education Students.

SCOPE

This procedure is to be used by students and/or their duly designated representatives who wish to initiate a complaint regarding instruction, services, institute employees, BCIT policy, practices or procedures.

NOTE: If a student has a complaint about his or her individual mark or academic outcome, please review the Academic Appeal Process and with attention to the time limits for appeals at: www.bcit.ca/judicial/students/appeals

DULY DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE

A duly designated representative is a person who has been given express authority to act by either a student or a group of students and usually requires a letter from the student(s) authorizing a named individual to act. A duly designated representative for the purpose of this procedure is a Set Rep, the BCITSA Vice President Student Affairs or the BCITSA Advocate.

RESPONSIBILITIES

An individual receiving a complaint must make reasonable efforts to resolve the complaint as promptly as possible and notify the student of the response to the complaint. If an individual receiving a complaint is unable to address the matter, it should be referred to the appropriate Institutional body for resolution.

To guide students in bringing their complaint to the appropriate Institutional body, a list of BCIT Departments is provided at the end of this document.

INFORMAL COMPLAINTS

Step 1

- Within five (5) business days of the incident or event, the student should speak to the instructor or the service area employee indicating:
 - The nature of the complaint
 - Requested remedy
- Within five (5) business days of receiving the complaint, the instructor or service area employee should provide their written response to the student.

Step 2:

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of step 1, or if the student is not comfortable in proceeding with Step 1, within five (5) business days the student should:

- Speak to the Program Head, Chief Instructor or Service Area Supervisor indicating:
 - The nature of the complaint
 - Efforts taken to address the complaint
 - Results of the resolution attempt
 - Requested remedy
- Within five (5) business days of receiving the complaint, the Program Head, Chief Instructor or Service Area Supervisor should provide their written response to the student.

Step 3:

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Step 2, or if the student is not comfortable in proceeding with Step 1 or 2, within five (5) business days, the student should:

- Speak to the Associate Dean or the Service Area Manager indicating:
 - The nature of the complaint
 - Efforts taken to address the complaint
 - Results of the resolution attempt
 - Requested remedy
- Within five (5) business days of receiving the complaint, the Associate Dean Service Area Manager should provide their written response to the student.

Tip: If you don't know the name of the individual to whom you should speak, simply ask the employee. E.g.: "What is the name of the supervisor/manager for this area? I would like to speak with him/her. Please tell me how I can find him/her."

FORMAL COMPLAINTS

Step 4

If the complaint has not been resolved informally, or if the student is not comfortable using the informal complaint process:

1. Within ten (10) business days of the original incident **OR** the last attempt at informal resolution, the student should forward a written complaint using the attached Complaint Form to the Dean or the Service Area Director outlining:
 - a. Student name, program of study and contact information
 - b. The nature of the complaint
 - c. Efforts taken to address the complaint
 - d. Results of the resolution attempt
 - e. Requested remedy
2. Within five (5) business days of receiving the written complaint, the Dean or the Service Area Director will:
 - a. Write to the student acknowledging receipt of the complaint
 - b. Undertake an examination into the complaint
 - c. Determine the appropriate resolution to the complaint
3. Within ten (10) business days of receipt of the complaint the Dean or the Service Area Director will:
 - a. Provide the student with a written response outlining, within the limits of personal privacy, the decision in regard to the complaint.

Step 5

If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean or Service Area Director:

1. Within ten (10) business days of receipt of a response from the Dean or the Service Area Director, the student should forward a written statement to the appropriate Vice President requesting a review of the decision including an explanation of the continued dissatisfaction.
2. The request for a review must include:
 - a. The original written complaint
 - b. The written response from the Dean or the Service Area Director
 - c. All previous written responses from Steps 1 to 4, if applicable
3. The Vice President will review the decision and provide the student with a written response within twenty (20) business days of receipt of the request for review.

The decision of the Vice President is final.

OTHER INFORMATION

Appeals:

Academic appeals and complaints of harassment and discrimination are addressed through other processes.

For information on **Academic Appeals** see: www.bcit.ca/judicial/students/appeals

For **Harassment or Discrimination** complaints see: www.bcit.ca/harassment/policy/complaints

Anonymous or Third Party Complaints:

Anonymous or complaints from third parties which do not have express authority from the student(s) to act will not be accepted.

Time Limits:

Time limits may be extended by the department or service area if an extension of time will aid in the resolution of a student complaint or if there are justifiable reasons for a student's delay in bringing forward a complaint. Late submission of a complaint may make resolution more difficult, but it does not invalidate the complaint.

Privacy:

Privacy considerations prohibit disclosure of actions taken in relation to a complaint involving employees of the Institute or other students.

Protection:

A student will not be subjected to discipline, retaliation or any adverse action for filing a legitimate complaint.

Withdrawing a Complaint:

A student may withdraw a complaint at any time by simply advising the person to whom they have brought the complaint that they no longer wish to proceed.

Where a student has initiated a formal complaint, they may withdraw the complaint by writing the Dean or Service Area Director requesting that the complaint be withdrawn.

WHERE TO BRING YOUR COMPLAINT

Facilities Department	For complaints about building, furnishings, heating and cooling, cleanliness, food services
Information Technology Services	For complaints about BCIT accounts or computers
Library Services	For complaints about access, service, library holdings
Registrar's Office	For complaints about registration, admissions, time tabling
Safety and Security Department	For complaints about hazards, theft, vandalism, threats, violence, emergency preparations
Schools and Programs	For complaints about courses, programs, instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School of Business• School of Computing & Academic Studies• School of Constructions & the Environment• School of Energy• School of Health Sciences• School of Transportation
Student Judicial Affairs	For complaints about student non-academic behaviour
Student Services	For complaints about recreation services, counselling, disability services, student housing, financial aid, student health services, Aboriginal Services

WHERE TO GET HELP

Students may call upon their Set Reps, the BCIT Student Association Advocate, BCIT's Campus Mediation Services or members of a student's school or program for assistance in resolving complaints.



STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURES
Formal Written Complaint

Name: _____ Student number: _____
Email: _____ Phone number: _____
Date: _____ Student Program: _____

This complaint is being submitted in accordance with BCIT's Student Complaint Procedures.

Nature of the complaint:

Date of incident(s):

Individual(s) involved:

Location of incident(s)

Witness(es) to the incident (if any):

Consequences of the incident(s):



In an effort to address this complaint, I have spoken to (check all that apply):

Instructor or the service area employee [provide name, position, and date]

Date _____

Program Head, Chief Instructor or Service Area Supervisor [provide name, position and date]

Date _____

Associate Dean or the Service Area Manager [provide name, position and date]

Date _____

Requested remedy:

Results of discussions to this point:

I understand that by submitting this written complaint, an investigation may be conducted into the merits of my complaint and that I may be required to provide additional information as to the facts of my complaint.

I understand that no adverse action will be taken against me for filling a legitimate complaint.



I understand that my complaint may be withdrawn through written notice to the Associate Dean, Dean or Service Area Director. I also acknowledge that I have been encouraged to attempt an informal resolution of my complaint prior to initiating a written complaint.

I hereby agree to allow those BCIT individuals involved in Steps 1 to 5 to discuss the nature and details of my complaint and associated information as part of the resolution process.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Directions:

You may print your complaint form and deliver it to the person or office listed under the **WHERE TO BRING YOUR COMPLAINT** section, or you may scan and send it by email to the recipient.