



Student Academic Grievance Policy

Effective: April 16, 2020

Policy Number: SP001

Revision: April 16, 2020

Associated Policy: SP001.1: Student Academic Grievance Policy Procedures

1. Overview

- 1.1 This policy has been developed to ensure all current of Fraser International College (FIC) are given access to equitable, effective and fair complaints resolution and appeals processes for all academic issues.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the valid grounds and procedures for academic matters which relate to;
 - Program progression (probation and exclusion)
 - Curriculum content and delivery
 - Conferral of awards
 - Academic credit
 - Academic misconduct
- 1.3 The process outlined in this policy is applicable when there is an academic complaint or appeal relating to any activity; review of marks, including assignments, mid-terms, final assessments. For complaints or appeals relating to non-academic issues, refer to policy **SP002: Student Non- Academic Grievance Policy** .
- 1.4 This policy and related documentation are to be accessible through the FIC policy library
- 1.5 This policy and related procedures will be communicated to staff via email and ongoing staff information sessions.

2 Organizational Scope

- 2.1 Any current student of FIC who believes they have experienced incorrect, inappropriate or unfair treatment in the course of their academic relationship with FIC during their time as an active student is entitled to access the process detailed in this policy

3 Definitions

- 3.1 Complainant: a person lodging a complaint or appeal
- 3.2 Respondent: a person responding to a complaint or appeal; this may also be the person who made the original decision under dispute

4 Policy Principles

- 4.1 All complaints and appeals will be dealt with in accordance to the principles of procedural fairness which respect the right of a complainant to be heard by an impartial party
- 4.2 All attempts will be made to resolve complaints and appeals as close to the source as possible
- 4.3 Complainants and respondents will not be subject to discrimination or harassment resulting from their participation in any academic grievance resolution process
- 4.4 Staff shall make all attempts to respond to complaints within the time limits specified in this policy



- 4.5 All procedures relating to this policy will be available to the public.
- 4.6 All communications arising from the complaints process, together with the proceedings of the appeals and grievance committee, will remain confidential except to the extent necessary to give effect to this policy
- 4.7 Where the appeal relates to suspension of enrolment, students may maintain their enrolled status whilst awaiting the outcome of the appeal
- 4.8 If at any time during the internal or external grievance process a decision is made which supports the complainant, FIC will immediately implement the decision and advise the complainant of the outcome

5 Administrative Procedures

- 5.1 Records of all complaints and appeals will be kept for a period of five (5) years
- 5.2 All records relating to an academic grievance will be kept in strict confidence and filed separate from student files
- 5.3 All academic grievance records will be under the responsibility of the Senior Academic Success Manager and VP Corporate Services

6 Academic Grievance Process

- 6.1 The academic grievance policy is a staged process;
 - Stage 1 - Informal Advisory Committee
 - Stage 2 - Formal Grievance and Appeals Process
 - Stage 3 - Appeals and Grievance Committee
 - Stage 4 - SFU/FIC Academic Advisory Committee
- 6.2 Refer to **SP001.1: Student Academic Grievance Policy Procedures** for how the process shall be carried out
- 6.3 Students who require assistance understanding this policy, its scope, effective instruments and procedures may contact an FIC Student Success Advisor for support.



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Parent policy: SP001: Student Academic Grievance Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of these procedures is to describe the process that will be followed to resolve academic grievances and appeals

2. Procedures

- 2.1. The academic grievance process is a four (4) stage process, and shall be followed sequentially

- stage 1 - Informal
- Stage 2 - Formal grievance and appeals process
- Stage 3 - Appeals and Grievance Committee
- Stage 4 - SFU/FIC Academic Advisory Committee

3. Stage 1 – Informal

- 3.1. This shall be the first stage in the process
- 3.2. Direct communication between the complainant and respondent shall occur to discuss their points of view and attempt to find an amicable resolution
- 3.3. Grievances are to be brought to the attention of the respondent within 10 business days of the inciting incident
- 3.4. The complainant is entitled to request and receive a written response outlining a full explanation for any decisions and actions taken
 - 3.4.1. All written responses are to be relayed to the complainant within 10 business days barring extenuating circumstances

4. Stage 2 – Formal Grievance & Appeals Process

- 4.1. This shall be the second stage in the process
- 4.2. Only to be initiated if Stage 1 is unsuitable or unavailable, and must be initiated within 20 business days of the inciting incident via the submission of written notice of appeal
- 4.3. Stage 2 is to be executed in 3 escalating steps;

Stage 2, Step 1 – if the complainant has engaged in the Stage 1 informal process and is not satisfied with the outcome, the complainant can, within the aforementioned 20 business day window, meet with a Student Success Advisor, who will attempt to bring the matter to an amicable resolution. Any staff member involved in Stage 1 shall not be involved in Stage 2.



Stage 2, Step 2 – Should step 1 fail to yield an amicable resolution, the matter is to be escalated to the Student Success Manager. The Student Success Manager will review the written notice of appeal and make an appointment with the complainant for a first hearing, and attempt to find an amicable resolution within 5 business days of receiving the case.

Stage 2, Step 3 – Should step 2 fail to yield an amicable resolution, the situation is escalated to the Senior Academic Success Manager who, upon review of the written appeal, will issue a written response within 10 business days of receiving the written appeal.

5. Stage 3 – Appeals and Grievance Committee

- 5.1. This shall be the third stage in the process
- 5.2. The committee shall consist of;
 - 5.2.1. The College Director and Principal
 - 5.2.2. The Director of Admissions
 - 5.2.3. The Associate Director, Students
 - 5.2.4. A Student Success Advisor
- 5.3. Any staff member involved in any preceding attempts at resolution shall be replaced on the Committee by the most appropriate senior staff alternate
- 5.4. This stage is only to be initiated if grievance was not adequately addressed in Stage 2 based on the following criteria;
 - 5.4.1. The complainant believes that there was insufficient opportunity to present their case to the decision maker in Stage 2, step 3;
 - 5.4.2. The process was not carried out in accordance with FIC policy and procedures
 - 5.4.3. The decision was reached contrary to evidence provided or failed to consider all evidence relevant to the case
- 5.5. A written statement of appeal can be lodged with the Appeals and Grievance Committee
 - 5.5.1. The written statement is to be presented to the front desk, date stamped and submitted to the Associate Director, Students or most appropriate proxy
 - 5.5.2. The written statement can only be submitted within 5 Business days of the complainant receiving the written decision from stage 2, Step 3

6. Stage 4 – SFU/FIC Academic Advisory Committee

- 6.1. This shall be the fourth stage in the process
- 6.2. The committee's purpose is to review any decision relating to an academic grievance and issue an opinion establishing whether a similar conclusion would have been reached at Simon Fraser University (SFU)
- 6.3. The committee will not enter any mediation or discussion regarding an appeal; all appeals are to be written for the committee's consideration
- 6.4. This stage is only to be initiated if grievance was not adequately addressed in Stage 3 based on the following criteria
 - 6.4.1. The complainant believes that there was insufficient opportunity to present their case to the decision maker;
 - 6.4.2. The process was not carried out in accordance with FIC policy and procedures



6.4.3. The decision was reached based on all available information, barring new evidence presented after the conclusion of stage 3.

- 6.5. All requests for an opinion must be submitted in writing
- 6.6. All appeals will be heard by the committee at the earliest available session
- 6.7. The complainant will be notified of the committee's opinion within one month of the committee meeting during which the grievance was discussed
- 6.8. If the opinion of the committee differs from the decision reached in Stage 3, the grievance is to be referred to Stage 3 for re-assessment