

CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

BACKGROUND

Northern College is committed to sustaining a positive work environment in which employees and students work constructively together. The Conflict Resolution Policy and Process has been established as a foundation for ensuring that the work and learning environment remains positive. For the purpose of this Policy educational conflict does not refer to matters covered by the Academic Appeals Policy (A-5).

POLICY

Northern College will foster a climate in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity and mechanisms are in place to help individuals resolve conflict. The Conflict Resolution Policy is intended to provide the opportunity to resolve conflict and complaints quickly, fairly and without reprisal, and to help improve communication and understanding between employees, between employees and their manager, and between students and employees.

PROCEDURE

Employees or students who are experiencing an educational or work related conflict or have a complaint are encouraged to resolve it through discussions with the other person where possible.

Employees or students may seek assistance or be accompanied by another person during the process. Students are often assisted by a Student Advisor. Employees are often assisted by a Union Representative.

Penalty or retaliation against an employee or student who initiates conflict resolution or makes a complaint, or participates in a conflict resolution investigation will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.

A complaint in which a complainant makes allegations knowing them to be false or submits a complaint for a purely malicious or vindictive purpose will not be tolerated and could be subject to discipline.

This Policy provides employees and students with an opportunity to resolve conflict and/or complaints. Employees and students are encouraged to follow the policy and procedures. Nothing in the Policy is intended to prevent a complainant from using an

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alternate procedure such as a collective agreement or another internal policy or procedure. If another procedure is initiated the College has the right to consider suspending or terminating this procedure.

A complainant has the right to withdraw a complaint at any stage in this process. The College may continue to act on the issue identified in the complaint in order to comply with its obligations.

Stage 1) Informal Conflict Resolution and Complaint Process

- 1.1. It is expected that employees or students who experience an educational or work related conflict or who have a complaint will first attempt to discuss the matter with the other person(s).
- 1.2. In some situations this may be difficult or inappropriate. In these cases, the employee may request a meeting with their Manager, or if the conflict is with their Manager, request a meeting with a Human Resources Representative to discuss the complaint or conflict. Students may request a meeting with a Student Advisor to discuss the complaint or conflict. If further action is required the Student Advisor will advise the Dean/Associate Dean, or Campus Manager as appropriate.
- 1.3. An informal resolution meeting may be offered to help facilitate a resolution. In order for a resolution meeting to be successful both parties must be in agreement.
- 1.4. If the employee or student is not satisfied with the informal resolution of the conflict, he or she may proceed with the Formal Conflict and Complaint Resolution Process.

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Stage 2: Formal Conflict and Complaint Resolution Process

- 2.1. Employees who have a complaint or require management intervention in relation to an educational or work related conflict and wish to initiate the formal resolution process must prepare written documentation, with supporting details of the conflict situation or complaint and submit it to their Manager or the Human Resources Representative. Students can submit written documentation with supporting details to the Dean/Associate Dean or Campus Manager as appropriate.
- 2.2. The Manager, or the Dean/Associate Dean or Campus Manager, will investigate the merits of the conflict resolution request or complaint by meeting with each party individually then assessing the merits of the complaint. The Manager, or the Dean/Associate Dean or Campus Manager, will consult with a Human Resources Representative and others as necessary.
- 2.3. Within ten (10) working days of receiving the conflict resolution request or complaint, the Manager, or the Dean/Associate Dean or Campus Manager, will complete an investigation and prepare a written response. The written response will be sent to the employee or student and they will be required to acknowledge receipt and indicate if they agree or disagree.
- 2.4. If the conflict or complaint has not been resolved to the employee's or student's satisfaction, the Manager, or the Dean/Associate Dean or Campus Manager, will forward the complete file, including all documentation and the recommended resolution, to the next level of management.
- 2.5. The next level of management will review the file and further investigate as deemed appropriate in the circumstances. A written response will be provided to the employee or student either concurring with the previous resolution or proposing an alternative resolution.
- 2.6. The decision and recommendations made by the Vice President or designate will be the final step under this Policy and Procedure.
- 2.7. This process is not intended to deny any rights under the appropriate Collective Agreement, including timelines.

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Review of the Policy

The College will review this policy every five years.

APPROVAL BY PRESIDENT



Fred Gibbons

January 8, 2018

Date

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