

# STUDENT COMPLAINT POLICY & PROCEDURE

## Policy Statement

The Student Complaint Policy is used to inform and assert individual student rights and responsibilities. Hanson College of Business, Health and Technology (hereinafter 'Hanson') will use this policy as a guide in responding to student complaints. This is to ensure fairness and consistency in all matters relating to student complaints while respecting the law, preserving academic freedom, and respecting individual human rights. Hanson will exercise care to protect and respect the rights of both the Complainant and the Respondent.

It is important to note that complaints may be made regarding an alleged violation that has taken place on the premises of Hanson, either rented or owned, or on other premises during any Hanson-sponsored activity or event, where the complainant is directly affected by the conduct in question.

This policy is available to past, current, and future international students at all times.

## Consultation Process for Complaints

Any student who believes that they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment, and/or bullying should contact the Campus Administrator or designate for assistance in resolving the matter confidentially and respectfully:

**Contact:** respective Campus President

Toronto - [susan.hera@hansoncollege.com](mailto:susan.hera@hansoncollege.com) Brampton - [gregory.byrne@hansoncollege.com](mailto:gregory.byrne@hansoncollege.com)

## Student Rights

Each complainant has the right to make oral submissions of the complaint.

The complainant may elect another person (proxy) to make an oral submission on their behalf. Oral complaints (including those made by a proxy) are considered under the informal resolution method. Formal resolution will require the lodging of a formal written complaint.

Complainants have the right to have a person present with them at all stages of the complaint procedure and to have a representative of their choosing.

A complainant has the right to withdraw a complaint at any stage in the process.

A complainant has the right to be provided with a copy of the complaint, any submissions filed, and any decisions made regarding the complaint.

## Resolution Methods

As detailed below are three independent methods to seek a complaint resolution: Personal Resolution, Informal Resolution, and Formal Resolution.

### **Personal Resolution – Not mandatory, only encouraged if safe and possible**

If safe and possible, it is encouraged that any student who believes that they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment, and/or bullying should attempt Personal Resolution by making it clear directly to the person causing the offense that such behaviour is inappropriate, unacceptable, and should not be repeated.

Any student who believes that they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment, and/or bullying should keep a personal record of the details of any alleged incidents of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying, including:

- Date and time
- Place
- Name and status of other person(s) involved
- A specific account of what happened -to be as detailed as possible
- The effect of the incident
- Names of any witnesses and their contact information
- Actions taken including any person to whom the incident has been reported
- Any attempts at personal resolution.

It is important that such a record be kept for each incident and that it is made as soon as possible after the event. Such records can be brought to the Student Services Office when seeking advice and assistance in resolving the matter.

### **Where:**

- An attempt at personal resolution does not succeed
- The behavior continues
- The behavior is more of a serious nature than can be dealt with by personal resolution
- Personal resolution is not appropriate to the specific case

Then the student should make a complaint to the Student Services Office. This complaint recorded by staff at student services will be kept on file and prompt attempts at Informal Resolution or Formal Resolution procedures, depending on the circumstances of the case.

The Student Services Office will document and retain all contact information as confidential documents.

**Informal Resolution – Oral complaint and resolution, complainant and respondent mutually agree**

Informal resolution will attempt to be conciliatory rather than adversarial. It is important for all parties to retain their dignity, and for practical resolutions to be found to enable the parties to continue to work and study together.

Following receipt of a student complaint, the Student Services Office will explore the use of Informal Resolution with the parties to resolve the matter.

Where parties agree, the Student Services Office will work with the parties to resolve the matter.

Any information obtained during Informal Resolution procedures arising from the process is without prejudice and will not be introduced as evidence in the Formal Resolution Stage unless both the complainant and respondent consent.

If an Informal Resolution that is acceptable to both parties is reached, then the Student Services Office will send a written communication to both parties, outlining the details of the Informal Resolution and mutual agreement. Receipt of this written communication and confirmation in writing regarding the agreement must be acknowledged by both parties.

The Student Services Office will assist, if needed, in bringing about whatever administrative or other action is needed to implement the resolution.

Where a complaint is resolved informally, the Student Services Office will retain the complaint as a confidential document, and no reference to its existence will be contained in either the complainant's or the respondent's official student file.

**Where:**

- Alternative dispute resolution measures do not succeed.
- Both parties are not willing to attempt an informal resolution.
- The behavior continues.
- The behavior is more serious than can be dealt with by Informal Resolution.
- Informal Resolution is not appropriate to the specific case, Formal Resolution will be applicable.

**Formal Resolution**

Complainants may submit a formal complaint in writing, requesting a formal resolution, to the Student Services Office.

On receiving a formal complaint, the Student Services Office will determine if:

- The allegations fall within this policy.
- There are any safety risks and health concerns that require immediate attention.



The decision on whether to proceed with a formal resolution shall be made by the Student Services Administrator after communication with the complainant, respondent, and witness (if applicable).

If the decision is not to proceed, the complainant shall be notified in writing and provided with information on their rights to appeal this decision as outlined in this policy.

If the decision is to proceed, the respondent shall be notified within five (5) business days of receipt of the formal

complaint. The respondent shall be provided with details of the complaint and advised of the procedure to be followed in the resolution of the complaint. An investigator will then be appointed by Hanson to investigate the complaint. The investigator shall respect the confidentiality of all parties and shall be impartial in the exercise of their functions.

## **Complaint Review and Resolution Process**

Within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the investigator's report, Hanson is to render a decision. The review will take into consideration the investigator's report, the record of the complaint, and all circumstances and contexts regarding the complainant and respondent. Copies of the complaint and decision with an explanation will be provided to all parties. The Campus designate is responsible for making decisions about the review. The decision must be expressed in writing to both the complainant and the respondent. If disciplinary action is taken and subsequently overturned by a higher authority or by grievance and arbitration procedures, the complainant, the respondent, and the Student Services Office shall be notified.

## **Formal Complaint Record Management**

A record of every complaint will be maintained by the college at the Student Services Office for at least three (3) years following the date of the decision of the complaint review. The record shall include a copy of the complaint, decision, and support documents filed with the complaint.

A copy of the Investigator's report shall also be provided to the Student Services Administrator, who will ensure that the Investigator's report is maintained in the record of the complaint.

Hanson may impose one or more of the following sanctions:

- A written reprimand
- Imposed conditions
- Payment as compensation for damage or loss of property
- Correction of a situation that the individual created or helped to create
- Continued suspension or expulsion

Failure to comply with imposed sanctions may result in further action.

## Appeals

Once a formal complaint decision is rendered in writing, the complainant or respondent if not satisfied with the resolution, has three (3) business days from the date of the decision letter to complete and submit the '**Student Appeal Request Form**' to the Student Services Administrator or designate who will endeavor to respond to appeal requests within five (5) business days.

In the **Student Appeal Request Form**, the student must demonstrate grounds for evidence of one of the following items: bias, procedural fairness, or new information (criteria listed on the form).

A Final Appeal Resolution Render will be completed within five (5) business days.

If the complaint is not resolved at the college level, students may submit a complaint to the Superintendent of Ontario Career Colleges, Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security. Under the Ontario Career Colleges Act, 2005, and its regulations, the Superintendent of Ontario Career Colleges can consider a student's complaint only after:

- Students have followed the college's student complaint procedure.
- Students have complained directly to the college.
- Students are not satisfied with the outcome.

Should students remain unsatisfied with the resolution of their complaint; they are entitled to submit their complaint to the Superintendent of Ontario Career Colleges via PARIS (Program Approval & Registration Information System). Students should proceed by following these steps:

- Visit the website and create a student user account at Register | PARIS: Program Approval & Registration Information System.
- Initiate the complaint process once their account is established.
- Enter the details of their complaint and upload any pertinent documents.
- Review, amend, and finalize their submission.
- Await a response from the Ministry.

If the complaint is not dismissed, students will receive a decision letter from the Ministry within three (3) to four (4) Weeks.

## Management Rights

Even in the absence of a formal complaint under this policy, nothing in the policy prevents Hanson from investigating, of its own accord, an alleged violation of Hanson's Code of Conduct policy and Student Complaints Policy, where Hanson's senior administration has grounds to believe that such violation has occurred.

## **Complaints Relating to Operations of the Policy**

If a member of the Hanson community considers that the Student Services Office has failed to follow the procedures outlined in this policy, concerning any matter to which the member has been a party, he or she may submit a written complaint to the Senior College Management detailing the alleged procedural failure.

The Senior College Administrator or designate shall investigate the complaint and inform the members of the results of the investigation.

If the alleged procedural failure refers to actions of the College Administrator or designate or you filed a complaint with the college and you are not satisfied with the response, you may then complete a Student Complaint Form and submit it to the Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security (MCURES). The Ministry will determine whether the college has violated the law. The college and the complainant will be provided with a written response to the complaint from the Ministry, usually within three to four weeks from when it was received.