

## A4.14 – Dispute Resolution



<b>Approval Body:</b>	Academic Council
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<b>Supporting Documents:</b>	<a href="#">Private Training Institutions Regulatory Unit</a>
<b>Related Policy:</b>	A4.5 Student Code of Conduct A4.31 Student Appeals HR5.11 Professional Conduct

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and fair framework for addressing student conflicts, concerns, and disputes related to education delivery, administrative processes, or financial matters. The policy promotes early, informal conflict resolution where appropriate and outlines a structured formal process when issues cannot be resolved informally. The goal is to achieve timely, equitable, and mutually respectful outcomes.

### Definitions

#### Conflict

A disagreement or tension between a student (or group of students) and a faculty or staff member, often stemming from miscommunication, differing expectations, or interpersonal challenges. Conflicts may be resolved informally without the need for formal intervention.

#### Dispute

A disagreement, conflict, or concern arising between a student (or group of students) and a member of Stenberg College staff or faculty. Disputes may relate to the delivery of education, administrative processes, or financial matters.

#### Formal Dispute Resolution

A structured process triggered when informal efforts have not led to resolution or when the concern is serious in nature. This process involves written submissions, investigation, adjudication, and written decisions.

#### Informal Resolution

An early, non-adversarial process of addressing concerns or conflicts through open dialogue, clarification, and support, without initiating a formal complaint. This may include mediation, facilitated conversations, or self-directed resolution.

#### Resolution

The attainment of a satisfactory and workable outcome for all involved parties, adhering to the integrity policies and principles of Stenberg College, to effectively address and conclude student disputes or concerns related to education delivery, administrative issues, or financial matters.

## Description

The policy encourages students to utilize informal channels for dispute resolution and emphasizes principles such as timely filing of written complaints, protection against retaliation, and a commitment to fostering constructive dialogue. It outlines a structured process, allowing for formal presentations, rendering decisions within specified timelines, and providing written responses to students.

## Principles

- Stenberg College is committed to fostering an environment that encourages respectful communication, early conflict resolution, and collaborative problem-solving.
- Students are encouraged to resolve concerns through informal channels whenever it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- Students will not be subject to retaliation due to filing a complaint.
- Students are expected to use the dispute resolution process responsibly, ethically, and in good faith. Vexatious, malicious, repetitive, or bad-faith use of the dispute resolution process, including filing disputes or complaints with the intent to harass, intimidate, challenge academic decisions without grounds, or disrupt institutional processes, is prohibited and may constitute a breach of the *A4.5 Code of Student Conduct* policy.
- Disputes will be approached by the College with a commitment to fostering constructive dialogue and fair consideration of issues and evidence, with the overarching goal of achieving resolutions that are mutually beneficial and equitable for all parties involved.
- All complaints must be made in writing and filed with Stenberg College within five (5) business days of the disputed incident. Disputes filed after this will not be considered.
- Students are afforded various informal channels to express themselves and have their comments acknowledged throughout the program. These avenues encompass end-of-course evaluations, anonymous check-in interviews, small group check-ins, and engagement with members of the Student Advisory Council.
- Students are encouraged to address conflicts, disputes, or concerns through immediate informal discussion with the relevant Stenberg College Official. Stenberg College faculty and staff maintain regular availability for student meetings, and students are expected to initiate contact directly to schedule a meeting. In cases where contact information for the appropriate individual is needed, students can reach out to Student Services for assistance.
- If concerns persist after informal avenues have been exhausted, students are required to formally present their concerns in writing to the College. In the event the appropriate person is absent or named in the complaint, concerns should be directed to the appropriate Program Chair/Manager.
- Students who remain dissatisfied with the proposed resolution and seek to escalate their dispute must document their concerns in writing and submit them to the Program Dean/Director. In cases where the Program Dean/Director is implicated in the complaint, students will further elevate the dispute to the Vice President, Academic. This will constitute an official dispute and will be kept on file with the College.
- If students wish to seek representation by an agent or lawyer, they must complete a signed consent form. A hearing may be called at this stage.

- Students will be provided with a written Dispute Resolution Response with determination as soon as possible and no later than thirty (30) days from the date of complaint submission or escalation.
- Upon receipt of the Dispute Resolution Response, the matter will be officially considered closed. All relevant communications, documentation, and evidence pertaining to the dispute will be systematically filed in the Stenberg College Disputes file, with additional copies placed in the student's file.
- If a student is dissatisfied with the resolution and believes they have been misled by the institution regarding any significant aspect of their program, they have the option to file a complaint with the Private Training Institutions Regulatory Unit. This must occur within one (1) year of completing, being dismissed or withdrawing from the program.

If a student has concerns related to academic outcomes (e.g. grades, academic misconduct, program dismissal, and/or other academic outcomes based on academic, attendance, or behavioural grounds), please refer to the *A4.31 Student Appeals* policy.

If a student's concern relates to faculty or staff professional conduct, it may also be addressed under the *HR5.11 Professional Conduct* policy. Students may contact Student Services for guidance on the appropriate process.