

Victoria Conservatory of Music

Dispute Resolution Policy

Rationale

It is the desire of the Victoria Conservatory of Music to provide an effective and consistent process for responding to complaints of disrespectful behaviour at the workplace including bullying, harassment, and human rights violations, regardless of whether the complaint is initiated internally or externally. This protocol also enables the Conservatory to form an accurate picture of emerging issues for the purpose of developing preventative measures.

This purpose of this policy is to ensure that individuals work in a respectful workplace, free of bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

Respectful Workplace

A respectful workplace is characterized by:

- a) Polite behaviour – courteous and considerate behaviour toward others.
- b) Inclusion of other people with different backgrounds, cultures, strengths, and opinions
 - i. Inclusion for the purposes of this policy means welcoming people into the workplace with diverse backgrounds, cultures, how they choose to identify, strengths, and opinions.
 - ii. Behaviours include but are not limited to: working to understand cultural differences, working constructively with employees accommodated as a result of the employer's duty to accommodate, and valuing other's differing styles and contributions.
- c) Freedom from disrespectful, discriminating, bullying, and harassing behaviour.
- d) Constructive management of differences
 - i. Differences are understood to be a fact of life and are managed through mutually respectful dialogue and as needed, conflict management and dispute resolution processes.
- e) Support
 - i. Individuals are supported to learn and practice dispute resolution and respectful workplace skills.
 - ii. "Support" for the purpose of this policy means coaching, in-service training, and/or internal or external intervention designed to bring dispute resolution skills and respectful workplace knowledge to the workplace.

Student Complaints

The Victoria Conservatory of Music's faculty and administrative staff are deeply committed to excellence in teaching and student success. The Conservatory has established a number of processes for bringing forward and addressing any concerns about the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and throughout the conservatory experience. This includes the ongoing Faculty Teaching Assessment Program as administered through the Office of the Dean in collaboration with the Artistic Directorate Committee.

Please note: This section of the Student Complaint Process is for student complaints about teaching and learning. For the non-academic/artistic complaint and resolution process, please consult the [Respectful Learning Environment](#) section of our website.

Teaching and Learning

Every year the Conservatory surveys students about their learning experience and welcomes honest, constructive feedback. More detailed information including guidance and support is available through the Dean's Office.

1. Informal complaint process (academic/artistic)

Step 1 - Speak to Instructor

You are encouraged to talk to the instructor first in order to resolve the issue.

Step 2 - Speak to Instructor's Department Head or Director

If you are not satisfied after Step 1 or if the circumstances of the complaint make it difficult or impossible to meet with the instructor, you should take your complaint to the Department Head or Director. This person will meet with the instructor or, if appropriate, both the instructor and the student, to discuss the complaint. If you are unsure as to who the applicable Dept Head or Director is for your instructor, please inquire at the Conservatory Front Desk / Registration.

If the instructor is the Department Head or Director, you should take your complaint to the Conservatory Dean and Chief Artistic Officer [dean@vcm.bc.ca]

Although not required at Step 2, you're encouraged to summarize briefly your complaint in writing for discussion with the Dept Head/Director or Dean.

Step 3 - Register complaint with Office of the Dean

You may meet with the Dean without preparing your complaint in writing. However, the complaint will not proceed through the formal process if you do not provide the complaint in writing giving relevant details. You should include a suggested remedy.

2. Formal complaint process

Step 4 - Complaint in writing to Office of the Dean

If not resolved at the informal level, you should prepare your complaint in writing, submit it to the Office of the Dean and arrange an appointment through that office (dean@vcm.bc.ca). A copy of the formal complaint will be provided to the faculty member.

Step 5 - Meet with the Dean

After meeting with the Dean you will receive in writing from the Dean the outcome of that meeting, including any decisions made and/or summary of next steps. The Dean will meet with you to explain the decision as requested. A copy of the written outcome and next steps will be forwarded to the faculty member and respective Department Head or Director.

3. Decision review process

Step 6 - Review by the Chief Executive Officer

If you're not satisfied with the outcome of your meeting with the Dean, you may write to the Conservatory's Chief Executive Officer (ceo@vcm.bc.ca) requesting a review, with the complaint in writing attached. The CEO's decision will be final.