GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Purpose

Eastwest College of Intercultural Studies has developed structures and procedures to address concerns and complaints from students as to the teaching or operation of Eastwest. As a small community, we seek to address any concern or complaint quickly and act in a way that brings resolution ensuring the well-being and safety of all students and staff. Complaints will be handled fairly and respectfully, and all parties involved will have an appropriate opportunity to be heard and to respond to relevant information.

Any student may use the college grievance procedure to make a complaint. A group of learners may also raise a concern or complaint together. At any stage of the process, students may have a support person of their choice, where appropriate. This may include another student, student council member, staff member, family member, or other support person.

Procedure

Where minor concerns arise, whether academic or general concerns, students are encouraged to take a common-sense approach and raise them **directly with the relevant person**, with the aim of resolution at the lowest possible level.

If the concern remains unresolved in a satisfactory manner for the student, they should talk next with their **care group leader or another staff member**.

If the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they should put their complaint in writing and bring it to **the college principal**, who may also consult with staff. Complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days. Students will be informed of the expected timeframe for resolving the complaint and will receive updates if the process takes longer than initially expected.

WEC directors are the next level of appeal, should the situation remain unresolved. They may be approached directly via director@wecnz.org. If the Directors are unable to resolve the complaint, they may appoint an independent person acceptable to both parties to assist in resolving the matter. Where both parties agree to a binding determination process, the terms of that process will be explained to them before it begins.

Once a complaint is resolved, summary notes and decisions made are to be recorded. Copies of all correspondence from and to the student will be kept in the student file. Records will be stored securely in accordance with college policy and relevant privacy requirements.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Eastwest's complaints process, they may raise their concerns externally. The New Zealand Qualifications Authority's website provides useful information about the avenues available.

Any event regarded as a critical incident will be referred to the Pastoral Care Dean and/or the WEC Crisis Management Team and follow their procedure.

In summary:

Stage 1 – Informal concern → Relevant person

Stage 2 – Further internal support → Care Group Leader / staff member

Stage 3 – Formal complaint → Principal

Stage 4 – Internal appeal/review → WEC Directors

Stage 5 – Independent/external resolution → Appropriate external body/process

When a formal complaint is received, the college will acknowledge the complaint, clarify the issues being raised, gather relevant information, and provide the student with an opportunity to respond where appropriate. The student will be informed of the outcome and any actions to be taken.

Definitions

Concern	A matter that a learner would like to raise or discuss with the person involved, with the aim of resolving it informally.
Complaint	A formal concern raised when the matter has not been resolved satisfactorily, or the learner believes the matter requires a formal response.
Critical Incident	An event out of the range of normal experience, which is sudden and unexpected. It involves the perception of a threat to life and can include elements of physical and emotional loss. A critical incident may require an immediate response and does not need to follow the normal grievance pathway.