



**Governance &
Advocacy Office**



SAIT STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

CONSUMER & MEMBER COMPLAINT POLICY

CREATED: JANUARY 20, 2023

Saitsa*
SAIT Students'
Association

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1. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 1.1 In accordance with Board of Directors policy EL-1, Saita shall not allow members to be uninformed of the process for registering a complaint or concern.
- 1.2 Saita believes it is in the best interest of all parties that complaints are dealt with promptly and resolved as quickly as possible.
- 1.3 Saita shall strive to review and respond to all complaints in a manner that is fair, impartial, and respectful of all parties.
- 1.4 Saita shall provide complainants with clear and understandable reasons for decisions relating to complaints.
- 1.5 Saita values all of its customer and member feedback, and shall use complaints as opportunities to improve its products, services, and procedures.
- 1.6 Saita shall conduct any complaint investigations in a manner that is fair and impartial.
- 1.7 Saita will not tolerate any complaints that are frivolous, vexatious, or made in bad faith.
- 1.8 Saita shall not tolerate repetitive complaints intended to irritate or harass Saita employees.
- 1.9 This policy does not apply to customer or member suggestions for or about programs and services.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Balance of Probabilities** refers to the standard by which the validity of a complaint shall be assessed; a complaint shall be found valid if the evidence suggests that an infraction was more likely to have occurred than not.
- 2.2 **Complaint** refers to either a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction after a perceived wrongdoing regarding a Saita service, a specific employee, or the privileges and responsibilities of Saita membership, in accordance with these procedures.
- 2.3 **Complainant** refers to one or more consumers, or members of the SAIT community that have made a formal complaint and brought it to the attention of Saita.
- 2.4 **Concern** shall refer to statements made by customers or members about potential issues that may arise from Saita's practices.

- 2.5 Conflict of Interest** shall refer to any situation where an investigator may benefit from, or may be perceived to benefit from
- 2.6 Employee** shall refer to any Saitsa staff member, whether full-time or part time, or any volunteer for Saitsa.
- 2.7 Investigator** shall refer to any individual who has been charged with investigating a complaint; this may be the Executive Director, Director of Student Services, department managers, or an third-party investigator.
- 2.8 Suggestion** shall refer to any consumer or member feedback on a product or services that Saitsa offers, regarding how the program or service may be improved.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1** All Saitsa staff shall be responsible for complying with the following guidelines when hearing or responding to complaints:
 - 3.1.1** If receiving a complaint, directing it to the relevant individuals who will respond to the complaint within 2 business days, or in accordance with the department's manual. If a complaint is received during a time where Saitsa is closed, it shall be acknowledged within 2 business days of Saitsa reopening.
 - 3.1.2** If a complaint received is regarding a SAIT program or service, Saitsa staff may attempt to direct the complaint to the appropriate departments.
 - 3.1.3** If investigation is required after a complaint is acknowledged, the investigation shall be initiated within 5 business days of the complaint's acknowledgement.
 - 3.1.3.1** If an investigation is required for the complaint, the complainant shall be notified that an investigation has been opened, and that they may be contacted for more information.
 - 3.1.3.2** Any complaint investigation shall be completed within 20 business days of the complaint being acknowledged.
 - 3.1.4** If an investigation is not deemed necessary for a complaint, Saitsa staff may take reasonable steps to resolve the complaint within 5 business days.
- 3.2** Department managers are responsible for:

- 3.2.1** Establishing a system that manages complaints, concerns, and suggestions effectively and efficiently for their department programs and services;
 - 3.2.2** Ensuring the complaints process is effectively administered;
 - 3.2.3** Ensuring staff are appropriately prepared for complaint management
 - 3.2.4** Maintaining accurate complaint records;
 - 3.2.5** Determining the proper response to complaints, where needed;
 - 3.2.6** Referring complaints to an external organization or agency, where appropriate.
- 3.3** Department staff are responsible for:
- 3.3.1** Handling complaints in accordance with Saitsa's and the department's procedures;
 - 3.3.2** Directing complaints to their department managers, when necessary.

4. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCERNS

- 4.1** Saitsa values all consumer and member feedback, but acknowledges that not all feedback it receives constitutes a complaint.
- 4.2** Any concerns or suggestions received by staff shall be noted and directed to the department manager. Consumer suggestions and concerns may be tracked for future reference when planning or developing Saitsa programs or services.
- 4.3** While Saitsa values the input of its consumers and members, not all suggestions or concerns may be acted upon when modifying Saitsa programming or services.

5. INITIATING A COMPLAINT

- 5.1** Individuals may make a complaint either verbally or in writing.
 - 5.1.1** When hearing complaints verbally, employees should listen and seek to understand the complaint, and may attempt to resolve it within reason.
 - 5.1.2** Complaints that cannot be immediately resolved shall be directed to the Saitsa website to submit the complaint to the department manager.
 - 5.1.3** Complaint records shall include the following:
 - 5.1.3.1** The name of the complainant(s);
 - 5.1.3.2** The complainant's contact information, if the complaint cannot be resolved immediately;

- 6.6** Investigators shall comply with the following procedures when investigating complaints from consumers or members:
 - 6.6.1** The investigator shall meet separately with the complainant and respondent to gather additional information regarding the nature of the complaint;
 - 6.6.2** The investigator shall gather additional information through interviews with witnesses, and shall consider any evidence brought to them by witnesses to the complaint;
 - 6.6.3** Investigators shall assess evidence to determine:
 - 6.6.3.1** If the evidence has reliability to demonstrate substance to the complaint;
 - 6.6.3.2** The circumstances and context of the complaint;
 - 6.6.3.3** Credibility of parties involved
 - 6.6.3.4** Consistency in evidence;
 - 6.6.3.5** Absence of evidence, where it should logically exist.
 - 6.6.4** Investigators shall determine if a complaint is substantive on a balance of probabilities.
- 6.7** Upon concluding their investigation, investigators shall notify all parties separately to the complaint of the outcome of their investigation, and how the complaint shall be resolved.
- 6.8** If an investigation finds that a complaint was unfounded, frivolous, vexatious, or made in bad faith, it shall be dismissed. The complainant shall be notified of the reasons for dismissal, and Saitisa shall retain a record of the decision.
- 6.9** If an investigation requires the involvement of a third-party (e.g., Campus Security), Saitisa shall notify the relevant parties and may provide them with information about the nature of the complaint, if requested.

7. RESOLVING A COMPLAINT

- 7.1** Saitisa shall make reasonable efforts to resolve complaints in a timely fashion.
- 7.2** Any employee or volunteer who receives a complaint may make reasonable efforts to resolve the complaint immediately. This can include, but is not limited to:
 - 7.2.1** Offering an apology to the customer(s);
 - 7.2.2** Offering to replace the faulty product(s);



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