



## Complaints and Appeals Procedures for International Students

*These procedures are designed to put in place a set of steps for International Students when they feel they have a grievance about their treatment by the School, including by a member of the staff of the School. It is important to look carefully at the procedures to ensure that they are being implemented as described. The School recognises the need to complete the process as promptly as practically possible. It would be the School's hope that most issues could be resolved at Step 1, although there may be situations where the aggrieved party may seek permission from the Principal's Office to bypass one or more steps in this grievance procedure. Mediation is available at any step in the grievance process, conducted by a mutually agreed person.*

### Definitions

“Grievance” refers to any action or event associated with school operations which results in an International Student feeling:

- inequitably or unfairly treated
- harassed
- victimised
- humiliated; or
- discriminated against.

### International Students

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These procedures are for International Students or their parents when they feel they have a grievance. It would be the School's hope that most complaints could be resolved at Step 1. Mediation can also be sought at any step in the grievance procedures.

**STEP 1 Talk to a staff member such as the International Student Support Teacher, a Tutor or a Head of School and seek an informal resolution or if not resolved, access to the grievance process. This staff member will provide and discuss with the student Complaints and Appeals Policy**

#### **STEP 2 Communicate a Grievance**

In the first instance an International Student or parent should communicate a grievance to their usual first point of contact; Tutor (Years 7-12), Director of Residence (Walker House), Enrolment Office, or to the School Counsellor.

On receiving a grievance the staff member will investigate the circumstances, and communicate with all those involved. The goal is to resolve the complaint using a problem-solving approach in order to arrive at a mutually satisfactory outcome. The staff member may consult with a senior colleague if deemed appropriate, and should inform the Head of School (K-12) and the Deputy Principal about the complaint and its outcome at the end of Step 2. A written record should be kept of the outcome by the senior staff member involved.

#### **STEP 3 Conciliation**

If a resolution is not achieved at Step 2 the matter will be referred to the Head of School (if grievance is about School) or Deputy Principal (if the grievance is about Walker House).

The Head of School or Deputy Principal will investigate the grievance, review the process to date and determine a way forward which may involve some or all of the options below:

- interviews with those involved
- seeking information from witnesses or others who have information pertinent to the complaint
- mediation or restorative conference between the complainant and the respondent(s)
- counselling of one or more parties
- disciplinary action.

The Head of School or Deputy Principal will communicate with the complainant as appropriate during the process and at its conclusion, either in writing or by interview. The Principal will be informed of the grievance and the outcome of the process at Step 3.

If satisfactory resolution is not achieved at Step 3, the matter will be referred to the Principal for formal review (Step 4)

#### **STEP 4 Formal Review by the Principal**

The Principal will gather all relevant information and review the actions taken to date. The Principal may choose to re-interview those involved. He or she will make a determination and advise the student and their parent/guardian in writing.

If still unresolved for the student or parent, the student is referred to an independent grievance counsellor (Step 5)

#### **STEP 5 Mediation or Restorative Procedure by an Independent Grievance Counsellor**

International Student is referred to an independent grievance counsellor (through the Principal's Office). An independent counsellor will be provided from a TAFE college, university or other independent school. This procedure will have regard to the duration of the overseas student's visa to stay in Australia. The outcome of the grievance process, including any decisions, will be provided to the student and their parent/guardian in writing.

If mediation procedures do not resolve the matter, students and parents can lodge an external appeal or complaint (Step 6)

#### **STEP 6 Overseas Students Ombudsman**

If a student or parent wishes to lodge an external appeal or complaint about a decision, they can contact the Overseas Student Ombudsman. The Overseas Student Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for international students who have a complaint or wish to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by their private education provider.

To contact the Overseas Student Ombudsman Email:

[ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au) or Call: 1300 362 072\*

within Australia. Outside Australia call +61 2 6276 0111.

\*If a translation service is required call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 in Australia, outside Australia call +61 3 9203 4027.

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