



STUDENT GRIEVANCE APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Purpose:

The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 requires the college to have and implement a documented internal complaints handling and appeals process and policy, and provide the overseas student with comprehensive, free and easily accessible information about that process and policy.

Relevant to:

Principal | International Student Services Personnel | Parents/Guardians | International Students

Date of effect:

06/2021

Review date:

06/2024

Related Legislation:

- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

College Policy:

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic College is committed to handling grievances effectively and efficiently. Assessment of the grievance or appeal will be conducted in a professional, fair and transparent manner. To manage grievances effectively, we have established a grievance procedure.

The college will respond to a grievance or appeal from an International Student regarding their dealings with OLSH Catholic College or any related party the college has an arrangement with to deliver the overseas student's course or related services, within 10 working days from the date on which the grievance was lodged. An outcome will be finalised as soon as practicable.

Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under the College's *Code of Conduct*.

Informal Grievance Resolution:

Most issues causing concern can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. In most cases, these issues can be resolved through informal discussions with appropriate staff members.

The student will be given a written statement of the outcome of the internal appeal, including detailed reasons for the outcome.

A written record will be kept of the grievance or appeal, including a statement of the outcome and reasons for the outcome so we can identify any systemic issues arising and take appropriate rectification action.

Our Informal Grievance Procedure:

- 1) In the first instance, every effort should be made to resolve any difficulty informally at the Campus level through mediation/informal resolution of the grievance.
- 2) The student should discuss the problem first with their teacher, the International Student Officer or other person concerned directly to attempt mediation/informal resolution of the grievance.
- 3) The student may meet with the Campus Year Level Coordinator/Lead Learner/Head of Campus if further action is required and the student's parents/guardians will be contacted using an interpreter if necessary.
- 4) If the matter has not been resolved at the Campus level and all campus-based avenues are exhausted, the student may wish to take up the matter with the Pastoral Care Coordinator.
- 5) A decision will be reached by the Officers, in consultation with the campus-based officers involved and the parent or guardian of the student.
- 6) Where matters cannot be resolved through this process, the matter will be referred to the Principal.
- 7) A student will be encouraged to have a friend or relative to assist at any time during the grievance procedure.
- 8) Guardian issues should be referred to the Pastoral Care Coordinator in the first instance.

How to Make a Formal Grievance:

The process of this grievance procedure is confidential and any grievances or appeals are a matter between the parties concerned and those directly involved in the grievance handling process.

If you have been unable to resolve a matter informally, or simply wish to make a formal grievance, the following steps outline the procedure to be followed:

- 1) The student or their parent/guardian must refer their formal grievance to the Principal. The *Grievance or Appeals Form for International Students* must be completed and mailed/mailed to the International Student Officer (details on the form) who will then forward to the Principal.
- 2) Where the internal grievance and appeals process is being accessed because the student has received notice by the College that the College intends to report them for unsatisfactory course attendance, unsatisfactory course progress or suspension or cancellation of enrolment, the student has 20 working days from the date of notification in which to lodge a written appeal.
- 3) Internal grievances and appeals processes are available to students at no cost.
- 4) Each complainant has the opportunity to present their case to the Principal in a meeting.
- 5) Students may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at all relevant meetings.
- 6) The formal grievance process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the grievance or appeal with the Principal.

- 7) Once the Principal has come to a decision regarding the grievance or appeal, the student will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the outcome.
- 8) If the grievance procedure finds in favour of the student, OLSH Catholic College will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required.
- 9) OLSH Catholic College undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within 10 working days.
- 10) For the duration of the appeals process, the student is required to maintain enrolment and attendance at all classes as normal.

External Appeals Process:

If an international student is not satisfied with the outcome of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic College's internal grievance handling process they may lodge an external appeal through the Overseas Student Ombudsman (OSO), who investigates grievances about problems that international students or intending international students may have with private education and training in Australia. The college will advise the student within 10 working days of concluding the internal review of their right to access an external grievance handling and appeals process. The services of the OSO are free. The contact details for OSO are as follows:

- Phone: 1300 362 072 within Australia. Outside Australia call +61 2 6276 0111.
Enquiries: 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday, Australian Eastern Standard Time.
- Website: <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students>

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic College agrees to be bound to the OSO's recommendations and will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventive or corrective action required by the decision, and advise the overseas student of that action.

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality applies with respect to both information relating to the person making the grievance and, if relevant, to a person against whom a grievance is made. Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic College is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of information throughout the grievance process.

Personally identifiable information about a complainant will only be made available for the purpose of addressing the grievance and (unless the complainant consents) will be actively protected from disclosure.

Definitions:

- 1) Working Day – *any day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday during term time*
- 2) Student – *a student enrolled at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic College or the parent(s)/legal guardian of a student where that student is under 18 years of age*
- 3) Support person – *a friend/teacher/relative not involved in the grievance*