

OVERSEAS STUDENTS COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

1. POLICY

Fintona Girls' School, the 'School', values good relationships and open communication. The School understands that parents, students and staff have a right to raise concerns and have them addressed. To maintain good relationships the School will work to ensure grievances and conflicts are addressed.

The purpose of the Overseas Students' Complaints and Appeals policy is to provide students the opportunity to access procedures to facilitate resolution of a dispute or complaint.

Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under the School's other wellbeing and behaviour management policies and procedures.

At this time Fintona does not arrange, manage or support Home Stay arrangements.

2. INFORMAL COMPLAINTS HANDLING

- In the first instance Fintona Girls' School requests that there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue through mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- Students should contact their Head of School or the Registrar in the first instance for mediation or informal resolution of the complaint.
- If further consultation is required to resolve the issue, the matter can be referred to the Deputy Principal or when necessary, the Principal. In these circumstances the School's formal Overseas Students Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedure will be followed.

3. FORMAL COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

- This grievance procedure is confidential and any complaints or appeals are a matter between the parties concerned and those directly involved in the complaints handling process.
- The student must notify the Head of School or Registrar in writing of the nature and details of the complaint or appeal.
- Written complaints or appeals are to be lodged with the Principal.
- Where the internal complaints and appeals process is being accessed because of unsatisfactory course attendance, unsatisfactory course progress or suspension or cancellation of enrolment, the student has 20 days from the date of notification in which to lodge a written appeal.
- Students may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at all relevant meetings.
- The formal grievance process will commence within 5 working days of the lodgement of the complaint with the Principal and the School will finalise the outcome as soon as practical.
- Once the Principal has come to a decision regarding the complaint or appeal, the student will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reason for the outcome.
- If the grievance procedure finds in favour of the student, the School will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required.
- The School will keep written records of the complaint or appeal including the outcome and reason for the outcome.
- The School undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within 15 working days.
- For the duration of the appeals process, the student is required to maintain enrolment and attendance at all classes as normal.

In the event that a resolution is not possible using the resources within the school, the Principal will forward the complaint to an independent appeal avenue. If this situation arises, a student has access to legal assistance for arbitration of the issues.

4. FURTHER ASSISTANCE MAY BE SOUGHT FROM:

Dispute Resolution Centre of Victoria
235 Queen Street, MELBOURNE, VIC 3000
PH: 03 9603 8370

Or

The Overseas Student Ombudsman
PH: 1300 362 072
www.oso.gov.au

Or

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)
www.vrqa.vic.gov.au