



GEELONG GRAMMAR SCHOOL | OVERSEAS STUDENT PROGRAMME

Complaints and Appeals Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide Overseas Students with the opportunity to access procedures to facilitate the resolution of a complaint or appeal, pursuant to Standard 10 of the National Code.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This Policy applies to prospective and current Overseas Students in relation to a decision made by the School, the School's Education Agents or any related party the School has an arrangement with to deliver the Overseas Student's course or related services.
- 2.2 Grievances brought by a current Overseas Student against another School student or School Employee will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Student Complaints Policy, which is available on the School's learning management system, the Hive.
- 2.3 Overseas Students should also refer to the *Overseas Students Complaints and Appeals Flowchart* available on the School's website and the Hive for further information.

3. Guiding principles

- 3.1 The School will ensure that:
 - 3.1.1 This Policy and associated procedures are accessible to all Overseas Students;
 - 3.1.2 the School maintains Overseas Student's enrolment during the complaint or internal appeal process;
 - 3.1.3 the School maintains the Overseas Student's accommodation and welfare arrangements during the complaint or internal appeal process. This may include the Overseas Students being required to stay with a Nominated Homestay Provider;
 - 3.1.4 all complaints and appeals are assessed and dealt with by the School confidentially, fairly, professionally, promptly and in a transparent manner;
 - 3.1.5 the complaints and appeals process promotes a conciliatory approach to resolving an issue, providing open communication with the Overseas Student (and their parents as required) wherever possible;
 - 3.1.6 the rights of the Overseas Students and anyone else involved in the process are protected;
 - 3.1.7 all parties have a right to having a support person present throughout the process;
 - 3.1.8 victimisation of anyone involved in the complaint or appeal process will not be tolerated;
 - 3.1.9 if an appeal is against the School's decision to report an Overseas Student for unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory course attendance, an Overseas Student's enrolment will be maintained until the external complaint process is complete; and
 - 3.1.10 while a Overseas Student may choose to access more than one external appeals process, the School will allow one external appeal only before exercising its right to report a Overseas Student for unsatisfactory attendance or progress. It is recommended that students discuss further appeals with the Department of Home Affairs.

4. Informal Complaints and Appeals Resolution

- 4.1 The School will respond to any complaint or appeal the Overseas Student makes regarding his or her dealings with the School, the School's Education Agents or any related party the School has an arrangement with to deliver the Overseas Student's course or related services.
- 4.2 In the first instance the School requests that there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue through mediation/information resolution of the complaint.
- 4.3 Overseas Students should contact their Head of House or Unit, Head of Middle School or Senior School (Corio), Head of Campus (Bostock House, Toorakor Timbertop) or the School's Overseas Student Manager in the first instance for mediation or informal resolution of the complaint.
- 4.4 Prospective Overseas Students should contact the Admissions Team in the first instance for mediation or informal resolution of a complaint.

If further consultation is required to resolve the issue, the matter can be referred to the Vice Principal | Residential Education, Care and Community or when necessary, the Principal.

5. Formal Complaints and Appeals Handling

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 The Overseas Student must notify the Vice Principal | Residential Education, Care and Community in writing of the nature and details of the complaint or appeal.
- 5.3 Written complaints or appeals will then be provided to the Principal.



- 5.4 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 Overseas Student has twenty (20) working days from the date of notification in which to lodge a written appeal.
- 5.5 The process is at no cost to the Overseas Student, unless the Overseas Student engages representation, in which case, the associated cost is the responsibility of the Overseas Student.
- 5.6 The formal grievance process will commence within ten (10) working days of the lodgement of the complaint with the Vice Principal | Residential Education, Care and Community and the School will finalise the outcome as soon as practical.
- 5.7 The Overseas Student will have an opportunity to meet with the Principal as part of the formal grievance process, to formally present their case to the Principal prior to the Principal making a decision. Overseas Students have the right to be accompanied and assisted by a support person at all relevant meetings.
- 5.8 Once the Principal has come to a decision regarding the complaint or appeal, the Overseas Student will be informed in writing of the outcome and with detailed reasons for the outcome.
- 5.9 If the grievance procedure finds in favour of the Overseas Student, the School will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required.
- 5.10 The School will keep written records of the complaint or appeal including a statement of the outcome and reason for the outcome.
- 5.11 The School undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within fifteen (15) working days.
- 5.12 For the duration of the appeals process, the Overseas Student is required to maintain enrolment and attendance at all classes and other School commitments as normal.
- 5.13 In the event that resolution is not possible using the resources available within the School, the Principal (or their delegate) will forward the complaint to an independent or external appeal avenue. If this occurs, the Overseas Student has access to legal assistance for arbitration of the issues.
- 5.14 If the internal grievance handling or appeal process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the Overseas Student, the School will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventive or corrective action required by the decision, and advise the Overseas Student in writing of that action.

6. Notification to PRISMS

If an appeal is against the School's decision to defer, suspend or cancel an Overseas Student's enrolment due to unsatisfactory behaviour, the School will, on completion of the internal process supporting the decision to defer, suspend or cancel, notify the Department of Education through the PRISMS of the change to the Overseas Student's enrolment status. Once the Department of Education has been notified of the deferment, suspension or cancellation, the Overseas Student will have 28 days from this date in which to:

- 6.1.1 leave Australia; or
- 6.1.2 show the Department of Home Affairs a new Confirmation of Enrolment; or
- 6.1.3 provide the Department of Home Affairs with evidence that he/she has accessed an external appeals process.

7. External complaints and Appeals Forces and Further Resources

- 7.1 If an Overseas Student is not successful in the internal complaints and appeals process, the Overseas Student will be advised of their right to access external complaints handling and appeals process at minimal or not cost. This advice will be provided to the Overseas Student within ten (10) working days of the completion of the internal complaints handling and appeals process, including the contact details of the appropriate complaints handling and external appeals body.
- 7.2 Further assistance may be sought from:
 - 7.2.1 the Overseas Student Ombudsman (www.oso.gov.au);
 - 7.2.2 Dispute Resolution Centre of Victoria, (<https://www.disputes.vic.gov.au/>); or
 - 7.2.3 Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) (www.vrqa.vic.gov.au).
- 7.3 If the external grievance handling or appeal process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the Overseas Student, the School will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventive or corrective action required by the decision, and advise the Overseas Student in writing of that action.

8. Associated documents

- 8.1 Student Complaints Policy (available on Hive); and
- 8.2 Student Complaints and Appeals Flowchart.

9. Definitions

CAAW letter	means Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare letter
ESOS Act	means the <i>Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</i> (Cth)
National Code	means the <i>National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018</i> (Cth)
Nominated Homestay Provider	means a person or family that provides accommodation, support and welfare to overseas students on behalf of the School as part of the School's overseas student program



Overseas Student	means a student on a subclass 500 student visa and issued with a CAAW letter by the School
PRISMS	means Provider Registration and international Students Management System

10. Review and circulation

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