

## **Overseas Students Complaints and Appeals Policy**

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The Geelong College acknowledges the importance of strong lines of communication between the student's home and the school. An important aspect of effective communication is a clear grievance procedure for students should issues relating to education, administrative or personal matters arise.

### **1. Purpose:**

The purpose of The Geelong College International Students' Complaints and Appeals policy is to provide an overseas student with the opportunity to access procedures to facilitate the resolution of a dispute or complaint.

### **2. Informal Complaints**

- a) In the first instance The Geelong College requests that there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue through mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- b) Students should contact their Head of House or the International Student Coordinator in the first instance for mediation or informal resolution of the complaint.
- c) If further consultation is required to resolve the issue, the matter can be referred to the Head of School, the Deputy Principal or when necessary, the Principal. In these circumstances The Geelong College's Formal Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedure will be followed.

### **3. Formal Complaints and Appeals Procedure**

- a) This procedure is confidential, and any complaints or appeals are a matter between the parties concerned and those directly involved in the complaints handling process
- b) The student must notify the Head of School or International Student Coordinator in writing of the nature and details of the complaint or appeal
- c) Written complaints or appeals are to be lodged with the Principal. If the Principal is involved, they are to be lodged with the School Council
- d) Where the internal complaints and appeals process is being accessed because of unsatisfactory course attendance, unsatisfactory course progress or suspension, cancellation of enrolment or related services, the student has 20 working days from the date of notification in which to lodge a written appeal
- e) Ensure the overseas student is given an opportunity to formally present his or her case at minimal or no cost and be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings
- f) The formal grievance process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint with the Principal and the school will finalise the outcome as soon as practical
- g) Conduct the assessment of the complaint or appeal in a professional, fair and transparent manner. 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
- h) If the grievance procedure finds in favour of the student, The Geelong College will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required
- i) The Geelong College will keep written records of the complaint or appeal including the outcome and reason for the outcome
- j) The Geelong College undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within 15 working days
- k) For the duration of the appeals process, the student is required to maintain enrolment and attendance at all classes as normal.

If the overseas student does not achieve their desired outcome in The Geelong College's internal complaints handling and appeals process, the Geelong College must advise the overseas student within 10 working days of concluding the internal review of the overseas student's right to access an external complaints handling and appeals process at minimal or no cost. The Geelong College provides the overseas student with the contact details of the appropriate complaints handling and external appeals body.

#### **4. External Appeals Processes**

The Overseas Students Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for overseas Students who have a complaint or want to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by their private education or training provider.

Overseas Students Ombudsman  
Helpline: 1300 362 072 within  
Australia.

Website: [Overseas Students Ombudsman](#)

Overseas students can also seek advice from the following agencies:

- a) [Commonwealth Department of Education and Training](#)
- b) [Education Services for Overseas Students \(ESOS\)](#)
- c) [Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority \(VRQA\)](#)

#### **5. Result of Appeal Process**

If the internal or external appeal process results in a decision or recommendations in favour of the overseas student, the Geelong College must immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take preventative or corrective action required by the decision and advise the overseas student of that action.

*This written agreement, and the right to make complaints and seek appeals of decisions and action under various processes, does not affect the rights of the student to take action under the Australian Consumer Law if the Australian Consumer Law applies".*