



## COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

*A copy of this policy will be provided to the parent at a reasonable time prior to a written agreement being signed and again within 7 days of the commencement of student attendance of the enrolled course.*

### 1. Purpose

- a) The purpose of Heights College's Complaints and Appeals Policy is to provide a student or parent(s)/legal guardian with the opportunity to access procedures to facilitate the resolution of a dispute or complaint.
- b) The internal complaints and appeals processes are conciliatory and non-legal.

### 2. Complaints against other students

- a) Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under the College's Behaviour Management Policy.

### 3. Informal Complaints Resolution

- a) In the first instance, Heights College requests there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue through mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- b) Students and/or parents should contact the student's class teacher in the first instance to attempt mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- c) If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, the matter will be referred firstly to the Sub-College Co-ordinator, and Heights College's internal formal complaints and appeals handling procedure will be followed.

### 4. Formal Complaints Handling Procedure

- a) **The process of 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.**
- b) The parent, on behalf of the student, must notify the College in writing of the nature and details of the complaint or appeal.
- c) Written complaints or appeals are to be lodged with the Headmaster's Office in the first instance, who may delegate the process to the Head of the Sub-College, Head of Teaching & Learning, or Head, Student Administration.
- d) Where the internal complaints and appeals process is being accessed because the student has received notice by the College that the College intends to report him/her for unsatisfactory course attendance, unsatisfactory course progress or suspension or cancellation of enrolment, the student (or the parent on behalf of the student) has 20 working days from the date of receipt of notification in which to lodge a written appeal.
- e) Complaints and appeals processes are available to students at no cost. Each complainant has the opportunity to present his/her case to the Headmaster or delegated responsible Officer.

- f) Students and / or the College may be accompanied and assisted by support person at all relevant meetings.
- g) The formal grievance process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint or appeal with the Headmaster's Office.
- h) Once the Headmaster or delegated responsible Officer has come to a decision regarding the complaint or appeal, the student will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the outcome, and a copy will be retained on the student's file.
- i) If the grievance procedure finds in favour of the student, Heights College will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required, and advise the student of the outcome.
- j) Heights College undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures as soon as practicable.
- k) For the duration of the appeals process, the student's enrolment and attendance must be maintained.

## 5. External Appeals Processes

- a) If the student is dissatisfied with the conduct or result of the complaints procedure, he/she may seek redress through an external body at minimal or no cost, within 10 working days of receiving the outcome of the complaints procedure.
- b) If the student (or parent on behalf of the student) wishes to complain or to lodge an external appeal about a decision made or action taken by Heights College, he/she may contact the Overseas Students Ombudsman at no cost. The Overseas Students Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for overseas students. Please see: [www.oso.gov.au](http://www.oso.gov.au) or phone 1300 362 072 for more information.

## 6. Other legal redress

- a) Nothing in the College's Complaints and Appeals Policy negates the right of an overseas student to pursue other legal remedies.

## 7. Definitions

- a) Working Day – *any day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday during term time*
- b) Student – *a student enrolled at Heights College or the parent(s)/legal guardian of a student where that student is under 18 years of age*
- c) Support person – *for example, a friend/teacher/relative not involved in the grievance.*

(Policy last updated on 10 February 2016)