

Complaints and Appeals Policy

Alphington Grammar School is governed by the regulations and guidelines of The Education Services for Overseas Students Act (2000) (The 'ESOS Act') and the National Code 2018. Standard 10 of this code requires the School to have and implement a documented internal complaints and handling process and appeals policy.

1. Process and Practices:

- 1.1. Alphington Grammar School takes all complaints received by Overseas Students at the School very seriously and we endeavour to provide comprehensive, free and easily accessible information about this process through this policy.
- 1.2. If an Overseas Student wishes to make a complaint pertaining to any area of their course, they must visit the front office and ask for a complaints form, which must be filled out and returned to the front office.
- 1.3. The School maintains a full complaints register including the details, outcome and reason for the outcome, including any appeals, requests or decisions, of each complaint received by the School.
- 1.4. If the School does not resolve the Complaint to the satisfaction of the student, or the School makes a decision regarding a student's enrolment with the School that the Overseas Student disagrees with, students have the right to launch an appeal.

2. Internal Appeal:

- 2.1. Students have twenty (20) working days to lodge a written appeal to the School. The issue will then be escalated to an internal appeals panel.
- 2.2. An appeal can be made by informing the School via email or phone of the intention to appeal and which decision it is regarding. The School will commence assessment of the appeal within ten (10) working days of it being made in accordance with the complaints and appeals policy.
- 2.3. An appeals panel will be assembled as needed, and will be comprised of three (3) members of staff who have the requisite independence from the issue at hand and are able to address the appeal on its merits in a fair, professional and transparent matter.
- 2.4. Staff who hold the following positions are eligible to sit on the appeals panel:
 - Principal;
 - Assistant Principal/s;
 - Heads of House; and
 - Business Manager.
- 2.5. The make-up of the appeals panel will be determined by the Principal on a case-by-case basis on availability, and the nature and complexity of the complaint will be considered.
- 2.6. Students are entitled to invite a support person at any stage of the complaints and appeals process to ensure the process is fair and transparent.
- 2.7. Where the matter is escalated to an appeals panel, the panel aims to resolve the complaint within twenty-eight (28) days from the date of referral and, in any event, no later than forty-two (42) days after the original complaint was received.

3. External Appeal:

- 3.1. In the case that Overseas Students are not successful in the School's internal appeals process, the School must advise the Overseas Student within ten (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.
- 3.2. The School directs students to the Overseas Student Ombudsman (OSO).

- 3.3. The OSO investigates complaints about problems that Overseas Students or intending Overseas Students may have with the private education and training sector in Australia.
- 3.4. The Overseas Students Ombudsman can be contacted as follows:
 - Commonwealth Ombudsman
GPO Box 442
Canberra
ACT 2601
 - Website <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/overseas-students>
 - Phone 1300 362 072 (within Australia) or +61 2 6276 0111 (outside Australia).
- 3.5. The School must inform an Overseas Student who wishes to access the services of the OSO that, in most cases, the purpose of the OSO is to investigate whether the School has followed our own internal policies and procedures. Generally, the OSO does not make a decision on behalf of the School.
- 3.6. A written record of the complaint or appeal, including a statement of the outcome and reasons for the outcome, will be supplied to the student for their records.