

INTERNATIONAL FULL FEE-PAYING STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

Last reviewed: November 2023

Next review date: February 2024 by Director Marketing and Enrolments

The purpose of St Mary's Anglican Girls' School Complaints and Appeals Policy is to provide a student or their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) with the opportunity to access procedures to facilitate the resolution of a dispute or complaint.

INFORMAL COMPLAINTS

Students or parents who have a grievance (problem) of any sort are advised to follow the following procedures:

1. Discuss the issue with the International Students Co-ordinator or a member of staff that they feel comfortable in discussing the issue with in the first instance.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, it should be brought to the attention of the Associate Dean and/or the Head of Boarding or Head of Junior School.
3. They will refer the matter to the Principal if the issue cannot be resolved and St Mary's internal formal complaints and appeals handling procedure will be followed.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

1. 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.
2. At this point the student or their parents/legal guardians should contact the school in writing outlining the nature and details of their complaint.
3. Written complaints or appeals are to be lodged with the School Principal.
4. Where the internal complaint and appeals process is being accessed because the student has received notice by the school that the school intends to report her for unsatisfactory course attendance, unsatisfactory course progress, or suspension or cancellation of enrolment, the student has 20 days from the date of notification to lodge such an appeal.
5. Internal complaints and appeals are available at no cost to the student and or parents/legal guardians and are conducted in a professional, fair and transparent manner.
6. Each complainant has the opportunity to present their complaint to the Principal. Students and parents may be accompanied by a support person at these meetings.
7. The formal complaints process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint to the Principal.

8. Once the Principal has come to a decision regarding the complaint, the student and/or their parents/legal guardians will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the outcome of the complaint. A copy of the outcome will be retained on the student's file.
9. If the grievance procedure finds in favour of the student, St Mary's will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required from this decision and advise the student and or parents/legal guardians of the outcome of the complaint in writing.
10. If the complaints procedure does not find in favour of the student and or parents/legal guardians, or they are dissatisfied with the result of the complaints procedure through the Principal, they may appeal the decision to the Chair of the Board of Governors.
11. The Chair of the Board of Governors will review the case and may choose to meet with the student and/or parents or legal guardian to discuss the nature of the complaint. A support person may be present at this meeting.
12. The Chair of the Board of Governors will inform the student and or parents/legal guardians of their decision within 10 days of the complainant reaching them.
13. If the Chair of the Board of Governors finds in favour of the student, St Mary's will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required from this and advise the student and/or parents or legal guardians in writing of the outcome of their decision. A copy of this will be kept on the student's file.
14. If the Chair of the Board of Governors does not find in favour of the student and/or parents/legal guardians or they are dissatisfied with the result of the complaints procedure, then St Mary's will advise them of the external complaints and appeals process available to them at minimal cost within 14 days of the decision being made. The final decision will be given in writing and kept on the student's file.
15. St Mary's undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within 20 working days of the complaint being made.
16. For the duration of the appeals process, the student is required to maintain attendance at all classes as normal.

INDEPENDENT ADVICE

Advice or Complaints can also be directed to the Overseas Students Ombudsman

- Web site: <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au>
- Making a complaint: <http://www.oso.gov.au/complaints/international-student-complaints>

OTHER LEGAL REDRESS

This agreement and the availability of complaints and appeals processes do not remove the right of the student and their parents or legal guardians to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

For information relating to your rights and responsibilities under the ESOS Act, visit www.aei.gov.au.