School Complaints and Appeals Policy

**POLICY RELEASE DETAILS**

*Date of Policy*
March 2015

*Approved by Board*
Date March 2015 (via Principal)

*Review Date*
When necessary to take account of new laws and technology, changes to College’s operations and practices and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing environment.

**POLICY**

1. **Purpose**
   a) The purpose of Christian Outreach College Toowoomba’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. The internal complaints and appeals processes are conciliatory and non-legal.
   b) If parents need to contact the school in regards to a complaint or appeal the following contact details are supplied:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Academic/Subject Problems</th>
<th>For Personal Problems</th>
<th>For Homestay Problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of School (as relevant)</td>
<td>College Counsellor/Chaplain</td>
<td>Enrolments Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone No: 4617 6555</td>
<td>Phone No: 4617 6555</td>
<td>Phone No: 4617 6555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available: 8:15 am to 4:15 pm</td>
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<td>Available: 8:15 am to 4:15 pm</td>
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2. **Complaints against other students**
   a) Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under the school’s Honour Code and Behavioral Policy.

3. **Informal Complaints Resolution**
   a) In the first instance, Christian Outreach College Toowoomba requests there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue through mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
   b) Students should contact the Head of School 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 to the Principal/other and Christian Outreach College Toowoomba’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 student must notify the school in writing of the nature and details of the complaint or appeal.
   c) Written complaints or appeals are to be lodged with the Principal/Head of School.
d) Where the internal complaints and appeals process is being accessed because the student has received notice by the school that the school intends to report him/her for unsatisfactory course attendance, unsatisfactory course progress or suspension or cancellation of enrolment, 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.

f) Each complainant has the opportunity to present his/her case to the Principal/Head of School.

g) Students and / or the School may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at all relevant meetings.

h) The formal grievance process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint or appeal with the Principal/Head of School.

i) 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 reasons for the outcome, and a copy will be retained on the student’s file.

j) If the grievance procedure finds in favour of the student, Christian Outreach College Toowoomba will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required, and advise the student of the outcome.

k) Christian Outreach College Toowoomba undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within 10 working days.

l) 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. In the case of Standards 10 and 11, students are able to access the external appeals process within 10 days.

b) If the student wishes to complain or to lodge an external appeal about a decision made or action taken by Christian Outreach College Toowoomba, 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 or phone 1300 362 072 for more information.

c) Christian Outreach College Toowoomba recommends further complains and appeals can also be directed to:

Dispute Resolution Branch
Department of Justice and Attorney-General
GPO BOX 149
Brisbane QLD 4001

Level 1
Brisbane Magistrates Court
363 George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Tel: (07) 3239 6269 / 1800 017 288
Fax: (07) 3239 6284

If a student is concerned about the actions of the school they may approach the chief executive of the Department of Education, Training and Employment, who, under part 2, division 2 of the Education (Overseas Students) Act 1996, may suspend or cancel the registration of a provider or a course if a
breach of the requirements of registration provision is proved. Concerns or complaints about the conduct of a registered provider should be addressed in writing to:

The Manager
International Quality (Schools) Unit
DETE
LMB 527
BRISBANE QLD 4001
6. Other legal redress
   a) Nothing in the School'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 Christian Outreach College Toowoomba or the parent(s)/legal guardian of a student where that student is under 18 years of age

Support person – for example, a friend/teacher/relative not involved in the grievance.