

GRIEVANCE SETTLEMENT POLICY

Rationale

From time to time, grievances within the college community may happen in which a process of conciliation needs to occur. Thus, a process of conciliation must be in place to address such issues in a Christian manner - efficient, confidential and caring.

Aims

- To provide a set process of addressing and resolving grievances.
- To provide a process whereby conciliation between parties can occur in a confidential manner.
- To settle problems within the college community in a concise, caring, Christian manner.

Policy Details

Any student or the parent/guardian of a student enrolled at the College may seek to resolve a grievance with the College through a process of consultation as outlined below.

The Grievance Settlement Policy involves the following:

A. Internal Grievance Procedures

1. In any grievance the student and/or parent/guardian should first seek a resolution by bringing the matter of concern to the attention of the people/bodies mentioned in the following paragraph, seeking to resolve the matter at the lowest possible level. The student may nominate a support person to accompany him/her at any stage of the dispute resolution process.
2. If the college has sent a notice of intention to report for breaches of attendance or course progress or of student misbehaviour then the student has 20 working days in which to lodge an internal appeal.
3. Those parties who are available internally to resolve grievances are:
 - 3.1. The student's teacher.
 - 3.2. The College Principal.
 - 3.3. The School Management Council.
 - 3.4. The Executive Committee of the Northern Australia Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
4. Failure to resolve a grievance at one level entitles the person to seek resolution at the next appropriate level.
5. Grievances referred by a student or a parent/guardian to the School Management Council or Executive Committee must be in writing and directed to the Chair of the respective body.

6. At all levels of this consultative process it is an expectation that the parties involved will act in a Christian manner. Individual rights are to be respected, information is to be exchanged honestly and openly, confidentiality is to be maintained and judgements are to be made with integrity. All efforts are to be made by those involved in communications to achieve understanding by all parties of the issues concerned.
7. When grievances are resolved at levels 3.3 or 3.4 decisions will be conveyed in writing to the person or person lodging the grievance within four weeks from the grievance being lodged.

B. External Grievance Procedure

8. If it is not possible to resolve the dispute internally, via the process above, the College will make arrangements for independent mediation to resolve the dispute. Independent mediation is available through the Dispute Resolution Branch. Students outside Brisbane may use the Toll Free No: 1800 017 288. At present there is no fee for use of this service, but this may change. The number for the Dispute Resolution Centre in Cairns is 07 4039 8742 located at the Cairns Courthouse, 5 Sheridan St. Cairns.
9. If you wish to lodge an external appeal or complain about this decision, you can contact the Overseas Students Ombudsman. 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. See the Overseas Ombudsman website www.oso.gov.au or phone 1300 362 072 for more information.
10. If a student is concerned about the actions of the College they may approach the State Authority for CRICOS Registration. In Queensland this is the Department of Education. The Director-General of the Department of Education has the power to suspend or cancel the college's registration or a course if a breach of the requirements of registration provision is proved. Concerns about the conduct of the College should be addressed to :
The Senior Education Officer
Office of Non-State Education
Queensland Department of Education
P.O. Box 15033
City East Qld 4002

The policy must be given to overseas students before a written agreement with the student is entered into or before an amount has been paid, whichever happens first. The policy must be given to overseas students again within 7 days of them attending a course conducted by the registered provider. ESOS) Reg 1998 Section 8 (4)(a)(b)
11. The procedure at this level is not intended to be adversarial nor to adhere to an evidentiary code. It is intended to be non-threatening and facilitative. However, parties in such a process will be reminded that the process does not prevent a student from exercising the student's rights to other legal remedies.

C. Termination of enrolment

All staff and students of the college have the right to work and learn in a safe, non-threatening environment. On occasion, members of the community, including parents/guardians feel that they need to discuss an issue with a member of staff. In such cases, such people must do so in a non-threatening manner and if possible, make a prior appointment. If the teacher deems it appropriate, they may request that all future contact be through the Principal. If the parent breaches this procedure, then enrolment may be terminated. If after further contact through the Principal, the Principal may terminate enrolment if it is considered in the best interests of the college. Similarly, parents must not behave in a threatening manner toward any student or staff member of the college. If this occurs, their child's enrolment may be terminated, at the discretion of the School Management Council.