



COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

A copy of this policy will be provided to the student (or parent(s)/legal guardian if the student is under 18 years) 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 the Hillcrest Christian College Complaints and Appeals Policy for International students is to provide students 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

Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with in accordance with the College's Behaviour Management Policy.

3) Informal Complaints Resolution

- a) In the first instance, Hillcrest Christian College requests there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue through mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- b) Students should contact their class teacher in Early Years or their pastoral care teacher in Middle Years/Senior Years 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 Head of Senior Years/Head of Middle Years/Head of Early Years and Hillcrest Christian College's internal formal complaints and appeals handling procedure will be followed.
 - i) For academic, subject or procedural concerns in Primary contact the, Director-International Student Department, Head of Early Years; in Secondary contact the Director-International Student Department, Director of Studies
 - ii) For personal or social concerns in Primary, contact the Director-International Student Department, Director of Early Years or Head of Early Years; in Secondary contact the Director-International Student Department, Head of Senior Years, Head of Middle Years
 - iii) For Homestay concerns, contact the Director-International Student Department

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 College in writing of the nature and details of the complaint or appeal.
- c) Written complaints or appeals are to be lodged with the Principal or his delegate

- 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 has 20 working days from the date of notification in which to lodge a written appeal.
- e) Internal 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 or his delegate.
- g) A student may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at all relevant meetings.
- h) The formal grievance process will commence within ten (10) working days of the lodgement of the complaint or appeal with the Principal/other.
- i) Once the Principal or his delegate 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, Hillcrest Christian College will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required, and advise the student of the outcome.
- k) Hillcrest Christian College undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within twenty (20) working days.
- l) For the duration of the appeals process, the student's enrolment and attendance must be maintained.

5) External Appeals Process

- 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. This process must begin within 10 working days.
- b) If the student wishes to complain or to lodge an external appeal about a decision made or action taken by Hillcrest Christian 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 refer to www.oso.gov.au or phone 1300 362 072 for more information.
- c) If a student is concerned about the actions of the College they may approach the chief executive of the Department of Education, Training and Employment, who, under Part 2 Division 2 of the Education (Overseas Student) 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

Nothing in the College's Grievance Policy negates the right of an International student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws in the case of financial disputes.

Definitions

a) Working Day – any day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday during term time

b) Student – a student enrolled at Hillcrest Christian College or the parent(s)/legal guardian of a student where that student is under 18 years of age

c) Support person – a friend/teacher/relative not involved in the grievance. This excludes legal representatives and education agents acting on behalf of the student at this stage of the complaints handling process.