

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Overseas Students Complaints and Appeals Policy



Date **November 2024**

Review **November 2026**

Source of Obligation

Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000; National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students, Standard 10, Complaints and Appeals.

Lauriston Girls' School Policy

The school will ensure that all complaints and appeals are handled confidentially and with respect. The student has the right to raise complaints and appeal decisions through established processes, without affecting their right to act under the Australian Consumer Law (ACL), if applicable.

The School will address any complaint or appeal raised by an overseas student regarding their interactions with Lauriston, an Education Agent, or any other associated parties with whom the School collaborates to deliver the CRICOS course or other related services, including the student deferral process.

It is our policy that:

- students are provided with consistent, comprehensive, free and easily accessible information in relation to the school's complaints and appeals processes.
- all students will be given the opportunity to formally present their case at minimal or no cost.
- the overseas student is given an opportunity to formally present her case; and be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings.
- All complaints and appeals will be treated professionally, in a fair, respectful and transparent manner.
- for the duration of the complaints and appeals process, the student's enrolment will be maintained. Attendance at all classes is required unless otherwise stated.
- appropriate corrective and/or preventative actions will be implemented where required.

Informal Complaints Resolution Process

Initially, the school encourages an attempt to resolve the issue informally through mediation, in line with the informal complaints resolution process.

Students should first contact the Overseas Student Coordinator to discuss the matter and attempt an informal resolution.

If the issue cannot be resolved through mediation, it will be referred to the relevant Head of School, who will keep the Principal informed of the complaint's progress.

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Formal Complaint and Appeal Process

If a student decides to lodge a formal complaint (after completing the informal complaints process) or an appeal, they must submit it in writing. The written complaint or appeal should be directed to the Principal and must clearly outline the nature of the complaint or the grounds for the appeal.

If the student wishes to appeal the school's intention to report a breach of student visa conditions, or to suspend or cancel the student's enrolment, the student has 20 working days from the date of notification in which to lodge an appeal. The written appeal is to be submitted to the Principal, detailing the request for an appeal.

The school will begin assessing the complaint or appeal and initiate the formal grievance resolution process within 10 working days.

Formal Grievance Resolution Procedure

The school will begin the formal grievance resolution process within 10 working days of receiving the complaint or appeal notification.

A meeting will be arranged by the Principal, the relevant Head of School, and the Overseas Student Coordinator to discuss the issue. The Principal will coordinate with all relevant parties to ensure that the assessment of the complaint or appeal is conducted professionally, fairly, and transparently.

The student will have the opportunity to present their case at minimal or no cost and has the right to be accompanied by a support person (not involved in the matter), such as a friend, teacher, or relative, at any relevant meetings. (This does not include legal practitioners or education agents).

Throughout the complaints and appeals process, the student is required to remain enrolled at the school and continue attending all classes, unless otherwise specified.

Notification of Complaint and Appeal Decision

The school will make every effort to conclude the formal grievance resolution process as quickly as possible, or within 10 working days.

The Principal has the authority to make the final decision and provide any appropriate recommendations regarding the complaint or appeal.

The student will be notified in writing of the decision within 10 working days, including the reasons for the decision and any related recommendations. A copy of all documentation regarding the complaint or appeal will be kept in the student's file.

If the decision is in favour of the student, the school will promptly implement the recommended corrective and/or preventative action(s). The student will also be provided with contact information for an external body to access an external complaints handling and/or appeals process.

If the decision is in favour of the school, the student must agree to comply with the recommended corrective and/or preventative actions.

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Throughout the complaints and appeals process, the student is required to remain enrolled at the school and attend all classes as normal, unless otherwise stated.

In cases involving the cancellation of course enrolment, the school will not finalise the cancellation until the complaints and appeals process has been completed, unless the appeal is in favour of the school, the student chooses not to engage in the process, or the student withdraws from the process.

External Complaints and Appeals Process

If the complaint or appeal decision is not found in favour of the student, or if the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, they have the right to lodge a formal complaint or appeal through an independent external agency, at minimal or no cost to the student.

If the student chooses to pursue this option, they should contact the Overseas Students Ombudsman, Phone: 1300 362 072. ([Website](#)).

During the external complaints and appeals process, the student's enrolment will be maintained, and attendance at all classes will be required unless otherwise stated.

The student will be notified in writing of the Ombudsman's decision and recommendations. A copy of all documentation related to the complaint or appeal will be kept in the student's file.

If the external complaints and appeals process results in a decision in favour of the student, the school will promptly implement the recommended corrective and/or preventative actions.

If the external complaints and appeals process finds in favour of the school, the student must agree to comply with the recommended corrective and/or preventative actions.

In cases involving the cancellation of course enrolment, the school will not finalise the cancellation until the complaints and appeals process has been completed, unless the appeal is in favour of the school, the student chooses not to engage in the process, or the student withdraws from the process.

Implementation

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- Staff training
- Effective complaints and appeals procedures
- Effective record keeping practices
- Implementation of corrective actions when necessary.

Breach of Policy

The school will assess each breach of this policy based on the context in which it occurred and determine its severity. A serious breach may lead to disciplinary action, including the termination of enrolment or employment.