

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES POLICY

Rationale

Concerns and complaints may emanate from a number of sources: parents/guardians, students, staff and members of the public. They may be directed towards the organization as a whole, specific Alta-1 campuses or particular individuals or groups of individuals. Processes, therefore, need to be in place to facilitate the resolution of such.

Principles

1. The right to lodge a complaint is acknowledged.
2. Complaints should be lodged in accordance with established procedures.
3. Complaints should be investigated and addressed promptly.
4. All actions and documentation should be recorded in the complaints register.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy a *concern* is an issue which is typically resolved through informal discussion between the parties directly concerned whereas a *complaint* is a formal grievance requiring resolution through specified channels.

Procedures

Concerns. Usually concerns are resolved directly and informally between the people involved and no further action is required.

Depending on the nature of the concern, Regional Principals or other relevant line managers are expected to maintain a register of concerns raised, for accountability purposes.

Complaints. Unresolved concerns or serious grievances may lead to a complaint being lodged. Complaints need to be presented in writing either through the complainant sending a letter or email, or by the staff member receiving the complaint orally in a face to face meeting and completing a Complaint Form which is signed by the complainant. If the complaint relates to a member of staff the complainant is to be directed to the relevant line manager to make the complaint; if about a Regional Principal then the complaint should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer; if about the Chief Executive Officer then to the Board Chairman; and if about the Board then to the Executive Officer of Alta-1 Australia who will determine the next course of action. The letter/form is filed, and the complaint entered into the Complaints Register which is maintained by the Chief Executive Officer. A written acknowledgement and initial response outlining the process to be used, and by when, will be forwarded by the College within 5 working days of receipt.

Formal complaints will be investigated by a senior member of staff, the board or an independent arbiter, depending on the circumstances, above. The substance of the complaint will be provided to the subject of the complaint. Following investigation, a written response will be sent to the complainant by

the date indicated in the initial acknowledgement. Successful resolution will be recorded and entered into the Complaints Register as such.

In issues not involving a Regional Principal, the Chief Executive Officer or a Board member, if a satisfactory resolution is not achieved at this stage the Chief Executive Officer will offer to refer the matter to the Alta-1 College Board Chairman and record it in the Complaints Register. The Chairman will call for a report from the Chief Executive Officer and may convene a meeting with the complainant. Successful resolution will be acknowledged in writing, recorded and entered into the complaints register as such.

If still unresolved the matter will be referred to the full Alta-1 College Board and recorded in the Complaints Register. The Board shall make the final decision in the matter.

If unhappy with the decision of the College Board, a request through the Chief Executive Officer can be made for a meeting with an independent mediator. The Chief Executive Officer will consult with CSA/AISWA in identifying a suitable mediator.

Throughout the process, confidentiality will be maintained by limiting knowledge of the issue only to those directly involved. Depending on the issue, and in accordance with other Alta-1 College policies (Student Protection, Managing Reportable Criminal Offences, Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse), third parties outside the school may need to be contacted. Information on file will remain confidential.

Further information is available in the Parent/Student Handbook or by contacting the College Compliance Manager for advice on the process.