



POLICY NAME:	COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION POLICY
POLICY AREA:	Risk Management
DATE APPROVED:	May 2022
AUTHOR:	Director of Finance
NEXT REVIEW:	May 2024

The College community may access this policy via the Wesley College website or by contacting the Head of College's Executive Assistant on 9368 8000.

1. Objective

The objective of this policy is to provide all current and past students of Wesley College, parents and guardians of past, current or future Wesley students, and other persons with a clear process for addressing and the resolution of complaints regarding the College.

2. Rationale

Wesley College recognises that matters of complaint and grievance will arise from time to time. We would hope that most issues can be easily and quickly resolved by simply discussing them with the relevant people. If the matter is not resolved then members of the College Community are encouraged to contact the next appropriate member(s) of staff with whom to raise their issue.

3. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

Complainant is the person who lodges a grievance.

Grievance is a concern or complaint regarding the College raised by a relevant member of the College Community relating to perceived unfair or inequitable treatment.

Head of College means the Head of College or the Head of College's nominee

Mediation is facilitation to enable parties to reach an outcome that is suitable and agreeable to all parties.

Mediator is a person who acts as intermediary from a position of neutrality who assists the parties to achieve an agreed outcome.

Respondent is the person against whom the grievance is lodged.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all current and past students of Wesley College, parents and guardians of past, current and future Wesley students, and other persons. Separate policies apply to staff.

5. Role of the Director General

The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school observes the registration standards, including the standard about its complaints handling system. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the [Department of Education website](#). While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, she does not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the school's decision.

6. Policy Statements

6.1 Culturally Safe Complaints Management

The College will ensure that its complaints management process is culturally safe, ie that it will be one which overcomes cultural barriers and taboos to disclosure, provides culturally appropriate means of making complaints, is managed by people who are aware of and sensitive to potential complainant's culture and cultural attitudes, including those arising from historical trauma and mistrust of authorities, and which facilitates access to culturally-appropriate therapeutic and other services as required.

6.2 Child Safe Principles

The College's 'Student Complaints and Grievances Policy' will reflect the requirements of the '[National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)', particularly [Principles 9 & 10](#).

6.2 Key Requirements

- The organisation has an accessible, child focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and report.
- Effective complaint handling processes are understood by children and young people, staff, families and volunteers, and are culturally safe.
- Complaints are taken seriously, and responded to promptly and thoroughly.
- The organisation has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.
- Reporting, record keeping, privacy and employment law obligations are met.
- The organisation regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.
- Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.
- The organisation reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families and children and young people.

6.4 Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will be accepted, recorded, evaluated and actioned to the extent possible. Anonymous complaints are best addressed as per the College's Whistleblower Policy.

6.5 Complaint handling

As per DEWA Registration Guidelines, schools should maintain a detailed complaints register with capacity to record:

- date of complaint;
- name of complainant and relationship to the school;
- subject matter of the complaint, including the name of any person complained about and his or her relationship to the school;
- complaint investigator and position or role at the school;
- date investigation completed;
- whether complaint upheld;
- resolution agreed with or offered to complainant;
- date of referral for review (for example by the governing body);
- complaint reviewer and relationship to the school;
- date review finalised; and
- review resolution agreed with or offered to complainant.

Information regarding the identity of those involved in any matter may be restricted for reasons of confidentiality to, for example, to the Chair of Council, Head of College, Deputy Heads and the Director of Finance only.

6.6 Procedural Fairness

In addressing complaints and grievances, the College will ensure:

- a hearing appropriate to the circumstances
- lack of bias
- evidence to support a decision; and
- inquiry into matters in dispute.

6.7 Guide to Making a Formal Complaint

The following is a step by step guide as to how to make a formal complaint regarding the College.

Step 1: Making a Complaint to the Relevant Person

Concerns should be raised in the first instance with the relevant staff member as follows:

- Concerns related to student welfare, academic or pastoral matters, should be raised with the class teacher, tutor, or mentor. Any academic complaints should be referred to the appropriate Head of Learning Area, or Assistant to a Head of School.
- Concerns related to the Boarding Community, should be raised with the relevant Year Group Co-ordinator or the Head of Boarding.
- Concerns related to co-curricular programs should be raised with the relevant person in charge of the activity e.g. the Head of Sport or Head of Arts.

Should any concern referred to above not be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the issue should then be raised with the relevant Head of School.

If the issue is about school fees or a business arrangement then it should be referred directly to the Manager, Accounting or to the Director of Finance.

If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved through discussions with the above staff, then the individual can raise a formal grievance.

If the complaint involves the Head of College and the complainant is not comfortable raising the concern with the Head of College, the concern should be forwarded in writing to the Chair of Council

Step 2: Process for Making a Formal Grievance

The formal grievance outlines in writing a description of the grievance, a brief description of the attempts to resolve the grievance (if applicable) and suggestions of a possible resolution. This formal written grievance should be addressed to the Head of College. The Head of College will contact the complainant regarding the matter to ensure a complete understanding.

As each grievance is unique the Head of College will decide whether to deal with the grievance personally or to involve other relevant parties who may have knowledge of the grievance or expertise relevant to the resolution of the grievance.

If the grievance relates to a member or members of the Wesley staff they will be told about the grievance. They will also be told that there should be no victimisation or retaliation against the complainant as a result of the grievance being lodged.

The Head of College or the Head of College's nominee, following consultation with the complainant and the respondent(s), determines the most suitable method of resolving the grievance. This may include, but is not limited to, mediation or an independent investigation. The complainant and respondent will be advised in writing of the resolution process and the rationale behind it.

The Head of College has the right to interview students without parents or guardians being present if it is deemed necessary.

Step 3: Referral to the College Council

If the complainant is still not satisfied after the matter has been dealt with via the Head of College they may write to the Chair of College Council who, together with the Executive Committee of Council and Council itself, is the final authority. All correspondence should be labelled *Private & Confidential, Chair of Wesley College Council* via the Head of College's Executive Assistant.

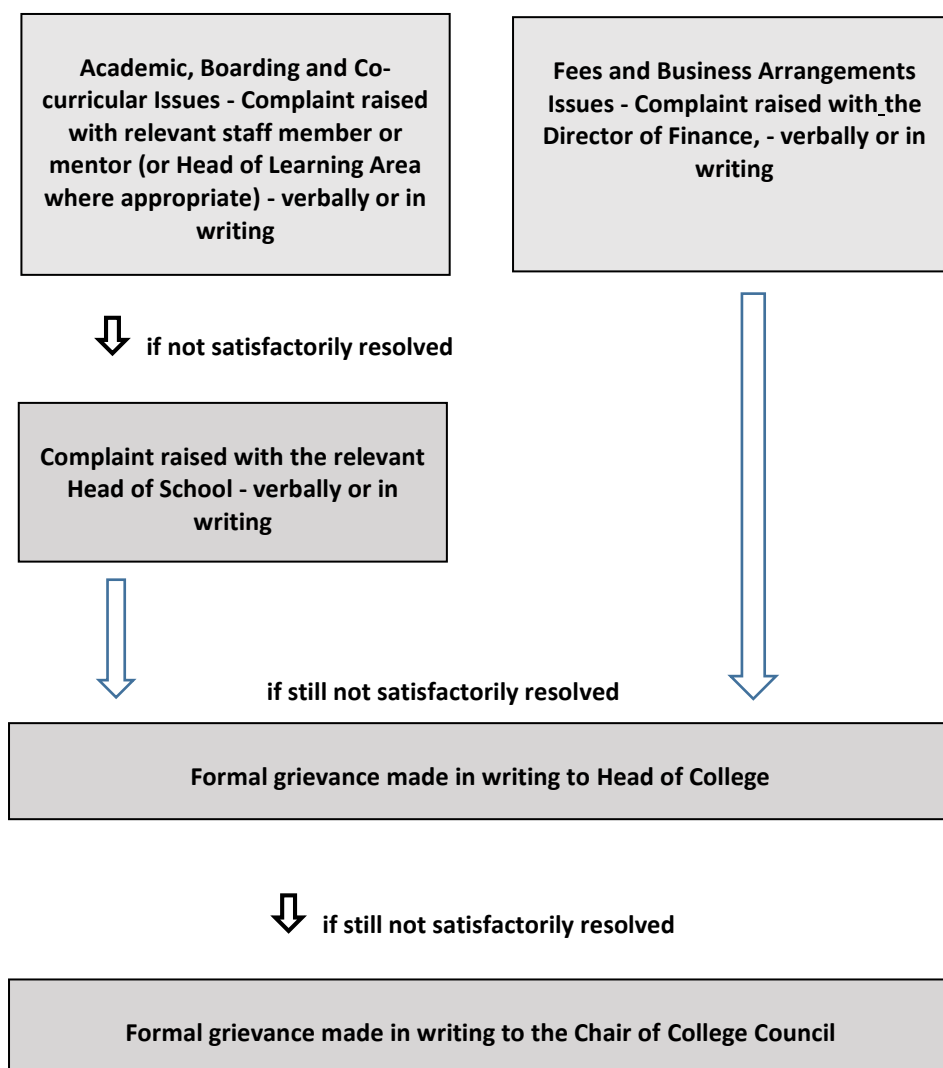
Unless requested by the Chair, Executive Committee of Council or Council, the Head of College will not be involved in deliberations regarding the resolution of the grievance. The Council or Executive Committee of Council may appoint an independent mediator in an attempt to resolve the grievance.

Any matter referred to an individual member of College Council will be passed on to the Chair of Council.

Any complaint or grievance forwarded or made to the Chair of Council and any appeal against a school policy or decision of the Head of College will be dealt with as follows:

- The Chair of Council will ensure the Head of College is aware of the nature and details of the matter.
- The Chair of Council will convene a meeting of the Executive Committee of Council to resolve the matter.
- The Executive Committee of Council may request any person to attend before it or provide information to it.
- The Executive Committee of Council will recommend to College Council a course of action.

Complaint & Grievance Flow Chart



The College has in place a Whistleblower Policy, which is accessible on the College portal and website. A potential complainant may, having regard to the nature of the issues involved or the complainant's preferences regarding confidentiality, or both, consider that it is more appropriate to utilise the processes under the Whistleblower Policy rather than this Complaint and Grievance Resolution Policy.

Approval / Endorsement Body:	Council
Policy Portal Access Level:	Public
Communication Process:	Portal Website
Author / Contact Person:	Director of Finance
Relevant Legislation / References	Department of Education (WA) 2022 Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools School Education Act 1999 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations Student Complaints and Grievances Policy Whistleblower Policy