

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

Full Fee Paying Overseas Students (FFPOS)

The purpose of Kambala's Complaints and Appeals Policy is to provide a student or parents/legal guardian with the opportunity to access procedures to facilitate the resolution of a dispute or complaint. These internal procedures are a conciliatory and non-legal process.

In the first instance, Kambala requests there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue. Staff will make every effort to resolve all enquires, concerns, complaints and disputes promptly and in accordance with procedural fairness.

If this is unsatisfactory or does not result in a resolution of the matter, the School's internal formal complaints handling procedure will be followed.

The process of this grievance procedure is confidential and any complaints are a matter between the parties concerned and those directly involved in the complaints handling process.

If the student or parents/legal guardian remain dissatisfied with the outcome, the School will advise of access to an independent external appeals process.

Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under Kambala's Code of Conduct.

For conditions that apply to handling of a complaint or appeal arising from the School's suspension or cancellation of a student's studies, please read the School's Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.

Principles

The following principles apply:

- Student wellbeing is the first priority.
- The process is accessible to all parties and there is a commitment to cooperation by school staff.
- Procedural fairness is offered to all parties.
- The subject of the complaint is informed of its substance.
- Confidentiality is always maintained as appropriate.
- Complaints are monitored and their management evaluated to pre-empt systemic/recurring issues.
- All persons in the school community are entitled to respect and courtesy.
- Complainants are entitled to be dealt with fairly and promptly.
- Procedures for lodging a complaint are communicated to the school community.
- The Principal will appoint an independent investigator as required when dealing with a complaint.

Procedures

Students, parents, members of the community and staff employed by the School may lodge a complaint with the Principal. This may be about the provision of education/conduct of a school employee.

Complaints will be handled promptly, confidentially and according to procedural fairness.

Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained between parties involved and support persons (unions or professional associations).

Teachers must:

- Maintain confidentiality.
- Resolve complaints where possible.
- Communicate outcomes of all complaints to the Principal.
- Refer complaints to the Principal where appropriate.

The Principal must:

- Maintain confidentiality.
- Ensure complaints are resolved.
- Ensure that procedures for resolving complaints are communicated to staff and parents.
- Ensure complainants and respondents are aware that they can have a support person present during discussion.

An investigator will be appointed by the Principal, follow direction from the Principal and according to the principles of procedural fairness. The investigator will inform the Principal of the findings of the investigation. The Principal will inform the claimant and the respondent of the findings. In the case of overseas students/parents a suitable interpreter will be provided for the duration of the procedures.

Complaints against other students

Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under the School's Behaviour Management Policy.

Information complaints resolution

- First, Kambala requires that there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue through mediation or informal resolution of the complaint.
- The student should contact the year coordinator in the first instance to attempt mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation/informal resolution, it will then be referred to the Principal/Director of Boarding and Kambala's internal formal complaints and appeals handling procedure will be followed:
 - Boarding (Director of Boarding)
 - Academic (Director of Curriculum)
 - All other matters (Head of Senior or Junior Schools)

Formal complaints handling procedure

Students

- Students should contact the Overseas Students Coordinator in the first instance to attempt mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, the matter will be referred to the Principal. For specific issues for example, academic issues to the Director of Curriculum/Head of Senior or Junior Schools.
- At this point, the student should notify the School in writing of the nature and details of the complaint (see Kambala's Grievance Appeal Form).
- Each complainant has the opportunity to present her case to the Principal/other. Students may be accompanied by a support person.
- The formal complaints process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint with the Principal/other.
- Once the Principal has come to a decision regarding the complaint, the student will be informed in writing.
- If the complaints procedure finds in favour of the student, Kambala will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required.
- If the complaints procedure does not find in favour of the student or the student is dissatisfied with the result of the complaints procedure, she will be informed of the external complaints and appeals process available to her at minimal or no cost.
- Kambala undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures in a timely process.
- For the duration of the appeals process, the student is required to maintain enrolment and attendance at all classes as normal.

Parents/legal guardians

- Parent/legal guardians should contact the Overseas Students Coordinator in the first instance to attempt mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, it will be referred to the Principal/other. For specific issues for example, academic issues to the Director of Curriculum/Head of Senior or Junior Schools.
- At this point, parent/legal guardians must notify the School in writing of the nature and details of the complaint.
- Each complainant has the opportunity to present their case to the Principal/other. Parents/legal guardians may be accompanied by a support person.
- Kambala's internal formal complaints process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint with the Principal/other.
- Once the Principal has come to a decision regarding the complaint, the parent(s)/legal guardian will be informed in writing.
- If the complaints procedure finds in favour of the parent/legal guardian the School will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required.
- If the complaints procedure does not find in favour of the parent/legal guardian or the parents/legal guardian is dissatisfied with the result of the complaints procedure, the School will advise of the external complaints and appeals process available to them at minimal or no cost.
- Kambala undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within a timely process.

External appeals process

If the complaints procedure does not find in favour of the student, or the student is dissatisfied with the result of the complaints procedure, the student will be informed of the external complaints and appeals process available at minimal or no cost.

The external body used for Kambala's external complaints and appeals processes is the Association of Independent Schools (AIS).

Overseas students may also contact the Overseas Student Ombudsman www.ombudsman.gov.au

Definitions

- Working Day is any day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday during term time.
- Student is a student enrolled at Kambala, or the parent/approved guardian of a student where that student is under 18 years of age.
- Support person is a friend/teacher/relative not involved in the grievance. It should be noted that the student's lawyer and/or education agents are not regarded as acceptable support persons at this stage of the complaints handling process.