

School Complaints and Appeals Policy

Blackheath and Thornburgh College 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) 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 Blackheath and Thornburgh College Complaints and Appeals Policy is to provide a student 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

- a) Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy.

3. Informal Complaints Resolution

- a) In the first instance, Blackheath and Thornburgh College requests there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue through mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- b) Students should contact the Dean of Students 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 Principal/other and Blackheath and Thornburgh College internal formal complaints and appeals handling procedure will be followed. Particular complaints may be referred to or through particular area supervisors e.g. boarding issues to the Head of Boarding, academic issues to the Dean of Studies or Principal.

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 school in writing of the nature and details of the complaint or appeal.
- c) Written complaints or appeals are to be lodged with the Principal.
- d) Where the internal complaints and appeals process is being accessed because the student has received notice by the school that the school 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 receipt of notification in which to lodge a written appeal.

- e) 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.
- g) Students and / or the School may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at all relevant meetings.
- a) The formal grievance process will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint or appeal with the Principal.
- b) Once the Principal 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.
- c) If the grievance procedure finds in favour of the student, Blackheath and Thornburgh College will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required, and advise the student of the outcome.
- d) Blackheath and Thornburgh College undertakes to finalise all grievance procedures within 10 working days.
- e) For the duration of the appeals process, the student's enrolment and attendance must be maintained.

5. External Appeals Processes

- a) If the student is dissatisfied with the conduct or result of the complaints procedure, he/she may seek redress within 2 weeks through an external body at minimal or no cost.
- b) If the student wishes to complain or to lodge an external appeal about a decision made or action taken by Blackheath and Thornburgh 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 see: www.oso.gov.au or phone 1300 362 072 for more information.
- c) If a student is concerned about the actions of the school they may approach the chief executive of the Department of Education, Training and Employment, who, under part 2, division 2 of the Education (Overseas Students) 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

- a) Nothing in the School's Complaints and Appeals Policy negates the right of an overseas student to pursue other legal remedies.

7. Definitions

- a) Working Day – any day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday during term time
- b) Student – a student enrolled at Blackheath and Thornburgh College or the parent(s)/legal guardian of a student where that student is under 18 years of age Support person – for example, a friend/teacher/relative not involved in the grievance.

THE COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY WAS LAST UPDATED BY Nigel Fairbairn ON 10/09/15