



Grievance Policy

POLICY APPROVED BY BOARD:

24 April 2014

DATE OF LAST REVIEW:

May 2020

SCHEDULED FOR REVIEW:

June 2023

Background

King's College acknowledges that from time to time grievances may occur within the College community and that these need to be addressed with procedural fairness and in a Christ like manner.

Scope

Applies to all students, staff, parents and members of the wider College community.

Relevant Policies

Vision, Mission and Values

Child Protection Policy

Safe School Policy

Policy

Grievances are addressed in accordance to the Christian perspective articulated by Jesus in his instructions on dealing with offence in Matthew Chapter 18. The essence of those instructions is a 3 step process:

- The offended person should first go to the person against whom the grievance relates in an attempt to resolve the issue
- If that approach is unsuccessful, another person (supervisory person) should assist with an approach and seek resolution
- Finally, if both approaches are unsuccessful, the matter should be brought before an authoritative body (put complaint in writing) for judgment.

The College expects that to achieve an effective resolution for all parties, when making a complaint or grievance the complainant should:

- provide complete and factual information in a timely manner
- deliver the complaint in a calm and reasoned manner
- avoid making frivolous or vexatious complaints or using false or misleading information.

Guidelines

Step One

In many situations, the most appropriate action is to tell the person who is the cause of the complaint/grievance how you feel. If the complaint is about their behaviour, tell them what you found offensive/ hurtful/ not acceptable.

Speaking with them will give them a chance to stop or change what they are doing or to explain what they had decided and why.

The desirable outcome of this Stage is that the two parties will resolve the issue and seek mutual forgiveness and reconciliation. If this meeting is successful, the issue should remain private.

Step Two

If the grievance continues unresolved and the aggrieved person is not satisfied that the matter has been appropriately rectified, the grievance procedure will move to Step Two. This will include the following steps:

1. The aggrieved person should speak to a person in a supervisory role within the College:
 - Staff member aggrieved by another staff member – to a Head of School
 - Staff member aggrieved by their Head of School – to the Principal
 - Student aggrieved by another student – to a teacher or Head of school
 - Student aggrieved by a teacher – to a Head of School
 - Staff member aggrieved by a parent – to a Head of School
 - Parent aggrieved by a staff member – to a Head of School
 - Parent, student or staff member personally aggrieved by the Principal – the Board Chair
 - Any person aggrieved by a member of the Board – the Principal or Board Chair

The aggrieved person may choose to speak verbally with the supervisory person to seek advice or clarification prior to a complaint being put in writing. Should this choice be made it is understood that the complaint will not be investigated until put in writing.

To formalise a complaint it should be in writing and also presented verbally at a meeting with the supervisory person. The supervising person will read the letter, ask questions to seek clarification of the particulars and dimensions of the grievance and make appropriate notes.

Note: If the complaint is about another person they have the right to know the allegations and have a chance to respond.

2. The supervisory person receiving the complaint will inform the Principal of the grievance/complaint and receive instructions regarding further action/ investigation to be undertaken.
3. The supervisory person (or appointed investigating officer) will meet with the person against whom the complaint has been made, to explain the nature of the complaint and to either

present them with a copy of the written complaint and/or a letter advising of the allegations/complaint and the action the College will undertake to investigate the complaint.

At any formal or informal meeting with the supervisory person or investigating officer the person against whom the complaint has been made will have the opportunity to discuss their responses to the formal complaint and seek further clarification.

Where the meeting between the supervisory person and person against whom the complaint has been made is informal the possible outcomes include:

- arrangements are agreed for a meeting between the aggrieved person and the person against whom they have made the complaint
- agreement by both parties for a formal mediation process
- no agreement is reached and the grievance is referred to the Principal to initiate a formal investigation

This stage of the resolution process should be completed within 7 days of the supervisory person receiving the complaint. Any delay in the process is to be communicated to the parties in writing.

4. Where an investigation has been initiated, the Principal will determine the investigating officer/s who will generally be part of the Executive Leadership Team.

Should an investigation be undertaken, any person being interviewed as part of the investigation process has the opportunity to have a support person attend the meeting with them (this support person is not able to participate in the conversation).

An investigation is a confidential process that should not be discussed outside the process by either the investigating officer/s (except with the Principal) or by the complainant or person whom the grievance is with (except with a support person or professional/spiritual adviser including pastor/minister).

The Investigation process will include:

- an individual interview with each of the two parties
- a discussion of the issues with both parties present (as appropriate determined by investigating officer)
- an interview with one or more third parties if appropriate
- written report to the Principal including all documentation and interview notes relating to the complaint/grievance including recommended outcomes/findings

The investigator/s should, where possible, complete their report within 14 days of being directed to undertake the investigation. Any delay in the process is to be communicated to the parties in writing.

The Principal will consider the report, where possible, within 7 days of receiving it and advise both parties of his decision. Where the 7 day time frame can not be adhered to the Principal will advise both parties in writing of the delay.

Stage Three

Should the parties not be satisfied with the outcome of the investigation and the decision of the Principal they may request a review of the decision by the College Board.

Should either party decide to follow this avenue, they should put the matter in writing providing full details of why they are requesting the decision/s of the investigation process be reviewed.

Correspondence should be sent to:

Board Chair
c/ Principal
King's College
PO Box 681
Warrnambool Vic 3280

The Board Chair will endeavour to respond to the review request within 30 days of receiving the letter. Where the 30 day time frame can not be adhered to the Principal or Board Chair will advise both parties in writing of the delay.

Possible outcomes of the grievance/ complaint process

1. If the complaint is fully or partially upheld one or more of the following actions may be offered:
 - action to fix or improve the situation
 - an apology
 - an explanation
 - an admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
 - an assurance that the College will seek to avoid the event complained of reoccurring
 - an explanation of the steps that have been/ will be taken to ensure that the event will not happen again
 - an undertaking to review the College's policies in light of the complaint
2. Your complaint is not upheld:
 - The reasons for this should be clearly given to you.

Notes

- If the Principal is subject to a personal grievance by another person, all references in this document to the Principal will be replaced by the Board Chair.
- Where a student is party to the grievance procedures, any procedures beyond Stage 1 will involve the parents/carer of the student
- All parties to the grievance/complaint and all supervisory personnel and investigating officers are bound to non-disclosure of the parties, procedures and outcomes except for discussions that may occur with professional or spiritual advisers.
- A failure to maintain the confidentiality provisions by a staff member may result in separate disciplinary processes being initiated.
- All documents created and collected by this process will be retained in a secure file accessible only by the Principal or their Personal Assistant.

Review Record

Original Approval Date: 24 April 2014

Review Date	Notes on Review
July 2016	Reviewed in full
May 2020	Reviewed - update to name of roles