



# DARAMALAN COLLEGE

## GRIEVANCE/COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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### Related Policies

Staff Grievance Policy and Procedures

### Rationale

The Daramalan College Grievance/Complaints Policy and Procedures is a set of formal and agreed procedures that will be followed to deal with and resolve grievances that arise involving members of the wider College community. The staff and leadership of Daramalan College recognise that grievances may arise from time to time and acknowledge that a positive complaints culture provides an opportunity for growth and change and resolution. Daramalan College is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in which all members of the College community have the right to voice grievances or complaints.

The Daramalan College Grievance/Complaints Policy and Procedures endeavour to promote:

- a just and dignified method of conflict resolution
- expedient and effective results
- improved communication, understanding and relationships
- fairness and objectivity.

### Definition

A grievance or complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction about a situation, decision, action or failure to act by a member of the Daramalan College community. It is usually made by an individual but sometimes by a group.

### Policy

Grievances raised will be dealt with in accordance with the following principles:

- a) Only the people directly involved in investigating or adjudicating a grievance will have access to information about the grievance;
- b) All parties will have a chance to put their point of view;
- c) All grievances will be dealt with as quickly as possible;
- d) Accurate documentation is maintained throughout the process;

In working through the resolution process, it is understood that:

- a) Confidentiality will be respected and maintained, as far as is possible, by all parties concerned. While all parties have a right to seek advice in confidence, no party will canvass - within the College community or beyond - to support or defend an allegation;
- b) The College, through its teachers, its Executive and the Board will be open to the concerns of parents and students;

- c) Complaints will be received in a positive manner;
- d) Information that will assist in the resolution of a complaint will be clear and readily available;
- e) Concerns will be dealt with speedily and those who have raised them will be kept informed about progress;
- f) Students will not receive adverse treatment because they or their parents have raised a complaint;
- g) Clear confidential files and logs will be kept;
- h) Resolution of the matter will be sought;

**Anonymous Complaints:**

- The College values feedback through complaints and grievances and is committed to seeking appropriate resolutions and, where applicable, improving its policies and processes. The College treats all complaints impartially, discreetly and with sensitivity.
- Anonymous complaints present serious limitations in relation to investigation and resolution of concerns; however, the College will investigate all complaints to the best of its ability within the presented circumstances.
- The College encourages all members of its community to feel confident to openly make complaints to facilitate communication and resolution.

**Procedures for claims, issues and disputes**

Policies, guidelines and procedures are in place and these are part of the resolution process.

Step One – Initial direct informal discussion about grievance

- a) A Complainant should try to resolve the grievance directly with the person involved first. This may be done by requesting a telephone call or meeting with the relevant employee of the College, and then discussing the concern.
- b) Following the meeting the relevant College employee will send an email to
- c) acknowledge the discussion, and if a resolution was reached the agreed outcome.
- d) If the Complainant is not comfortable raising the issue directly with the relevant person involved in the issue, then they can commence the process at Step 2.

Step Two - Escalation of informal discussion

If resolution of an issue is not achieved at Step 1, the issue can be raised with the appropriate senior staff member to discuss the concern.

For example:

<b>Nature of concern</b>	<b>Staff member</b>
Student matter Years 7-8 Years 9-12	Assistant Principal Pastoral Care Years 7-8 Assistant Principal Pastoral Care Years 9-12
Curriculum and Assessment matter Years 7-10 Year 11-12	Assistant Principal Curriculum and Assessment Year 7-10 Assistant Principal Curriculum and Assessment Year 11-12

Co-Curricular Activities	Deputy Principal
Teaching Staff matter	Deputy Principal
Administration, Support Staff and financial matters	Business Manager
College Management	Principal
The Principal	Director of MSC Education

- a) The Complainant should contact the relevant senior staff member to make an appointment to have a telephone or in person meeting to discuss the complaint further.
- b) The concerns raised will be dealt with by the senior staff member as appropriate. If required, the complaint will be investigated and handled with the relevant due diligence and addressed in an equitable and unbiased manner.

#### Step Three – Lodgement of a formal grievance

This step is used when the Complainant:

- a) is not satisfied with the outcome in step 2; and
  - b) wishes to lodge a detailed, written and formal complaint.
- To commence this process, the Complainant can lodge a grievance to the College in writing, by letter or email.
  - For the College to appropriately respond, the written grievance should include details of the concern including relevant times and dates and the people involved. The complaint should also be signed by the Complainant.
  - All formal grievances are to be submitted to the Principal who may delegate the process to the Deputy Principal on their behalf.
  - All formal complaints will be treated seriously.
  - The College will determine the most appropriate method of dealing with the grievance, to ensure confidentiality of the process and that the appropriate people within the College are involved.
  - If the grievance involves the Principal, the grievance can be submitted to the Director of MSC Education who will liaise with the Board Chair in relation to any processes.
  - Once a grievance has been received an acknowledgement of receipt will be issued.

#### Step Four – Investigation

- The Complaint will be investigated confidentially and in an equitable and unbiased manner, as deemed appropriate by the College.
- The College will inform the Complainant in writing about the outcome of the investigation, to the extent appropriate noting procedural fairness and confidentiality obligations.

#### Step Five – Appeal

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision made following the investigation, they can appeal in writing.
- The College does not offer unlimited opportunities for appeal if a complainant is unhappy with the resolution of a complaint.

- Any appeal against the resolution of a complaint should be made in writing to the Principal. An appeal is only likely to be considered if there is evidence there was a procedural problem with the investigation.
- The Principal, at their discretion, will consider the application for an appeal and will either direct the complaint be re-examined or direct the matter be closed.

#### Step Six – External resolution

If the complainant is not satisfied by the outcome of the review or the complaint remains unresolved, they may pursue external resolution alternatives.

#### **Invalid or Malicious Complaints:**

If the complaint is proved to be invalid or if there is evidence that the complaint was made with the main purpose or intent of causing distress, depending on the nature and source of the complaint, appropriate outcomes could include the following:

- A written apology from the person who made the complaint
- Counselling for either or both parties
- An official warning
- Disciplinary action

All processes following a complaint found to be invalid or malicious are to be managed by the Principal.

#### **Record Keeping:**

Records of formal complaints, investigations and other associated documentation are maintained by the Principal and stored in a restricted access file.

<b>Approved by:</b>	College Executive
<b>Contact Staff Member:</b>	Principal
<b>Audience:</b>	College Community
<b>Implementation Date:</b>	August 2024
<b>Supersedes Policy Dated:</b>	January 2021
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