



SV500-19 COMPLAINTS AND INTERNAL APPEALS POLICY

1. RATIONALE

Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School ('the School') *SV500-19 Complaints and Internal Appeals Policy* addresses the obligation of the School to provide SV500 students with the opportunity to address complaints or grievances with the School through a formal appeals process. All students at the School, including SV500 students, have access to a range of support services and staff, who can assist them to resolve grievances in a less formal manner. The School's *POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students & Parents]* covers all students. Mediation services are available prior to or during the complaints and appeals process.

2. SCOPE

This policy includes the following

- 2.1. SV500 students and parents
- 2.2. Board of Governors
- 2.3. Head of School
- 2.4. Deputy Head of School
- 2.5. Chief Financial Officer
- 2.6. Head of Secondary
- 2.7. Head of Primary
- 2.8. Deputy Head of Secondary (Wellbeing)
- 2.9. Deputy head of Primary (Wellbeing)
- 2.10. Director of Studies
- 2.11. Head of Boarding
- 2.12. School Psychologist
- 2.13. Marketing and Community Relations Manager
- 2.14. All staff as required
- 2.15. Education Agents

3. POLICY

SV500-19 Complaints and Internal Appeals Policy outlines specific requirements for SV500 students in relation to complaints. This policy is an extension of *POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students & Parents]*, which is applicable to all students and families at the School.

3.1. *Complaint resolution*

It is the School's aim and preference that any grievance be resolved through direct communication with relevant staff (Subject teachers, Heads of Learning Areas, Heads/Associate Heads of House). All staff are required to note any issues or concerns in the School's Learning Management System (SEQTA), which will allow the School to review concerns and identify if there are any systemic issues or patterns of behaviour and take appropriate remedial action where necessary.

3.2. *POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students and Parents]*

POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students & Parents] provides students and parents with the option to lodge a formal complaint and/or formal internal appeal:

- 3.2.1. about/against a decision made by the School, which directly impacts the student, including but not limited to their wellbeing, participation in School life, academic studies, attendance, accommodation, and welfare arrangements and/or continuing enrolment at the School



- 3.2.2. about/against a member of the School community
- 3.2.3. about/against any third party working on behalf of, or with the School, including but not limited to education agents, third-party course providers, homestay hosts or homestay arrangements

3.3. Notification of Complaints Policy

All SV500 students will be advised of both *POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students & Parents]* and *SV500-19 Complaints and Internal Appeals Policy* and their right to access this process as follows:

- 3.3.1. The Policy, its purpose and process will be explained to students/parents prior to enrolment, as part of the formal offer process, and as part of the *International Student Orientation*
- 3.3.2. The policy will be published in the *International Student Handbook*, which is updated annually
- 3.3.3. The policy will accompany the formal letter of offer and the Offer/Acceptance of Enrolment Contract
- 3.3.4. The policy will be available to students and parents on the School website

In addition, the School must advise SV500 students of their right to access *POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students & Parents]* and *SV500-19 Complaints and Internal Appeals Policy* and *SV500-22 External Appeals Process* concurrent with any of the following:

- 3.3.5. advising a student that the School intends to report them for unsatisfactory attendance and/or unsatisfactory course progress
- 3.3.6. advising a student that the School will be suspending the student from the School and/or boarding for disciplinary reasons, and is required to report the suspension
- 3.3.7. advising a student that the School intends to cancel the student's enrolment for any one of the following reasons (but not limited to):
 - disciplinary reasons
 - unpaid fees
 - not meeting course and/or attendance requirements

3.4. Enrolment Cancellation

The School is not required to offer students access to the Complaints and Internal Appeals Process, where the School intends to cancel the student's enrolment for any of the following reasons:

- 3.4.1. The SV500 student is refusing to maintain approved care arrangements;
- 3.4.2. The SV500 student is missing;
- 3.4.3. The School has concerns for a student's medical state, including severe depression or psychological issues which lead the School to fear for the student's wellbeing;
- 3.4.4. The SV500 student has engaged, or is threatening to engage in, behaviour that is reasonably believed to endanger the student or others;
- 3.4.5. The SV500 student has, or allegedly has, committed or is at risk of committing a criminal offence; or
- 3.4.6. Unpaid Fees, where the family has not responded to communication from the Finance Office.

The School will at all times communicate with parents/guardians.



3.5. Complaint Process

POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students & Parents] outlines the following key stages:

- 3.5.1. Lodgement of formal complaint and/or appeal
- 3.5.2. Acknowledgement of complaint and/or appeal
- 3.5.3. Investigation of the complaint, following principles of procedural fairness.
- 3.5.4. In relation to Internal Appeals, a meeting with the student/parent, and a support person/advocate of their choice to hear the student's/parent's case, may also be arranged.
- 3.5.5. The investigation/meeting must commence within 10 days of the complaint/appeal being lodged
- 3.5.6. A resolution will be formulated, student and parents will be advised of the outcome in writing, including detailed reasons for the outcome, where appropriate
- 3.5.7. In the case of a decision that does not favour the student/parent, they will be advised of *SV500-22 External Appeals Policy*, their right to lodge an external appeal, within 10 days of being notified of the outcome, and the process to do so
- 3.5.8. In the case that the outcome of the Internal Complaint/Appeal favours the student, the School must immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventative or corrective action required by the decision and advise the student in writing of that action. The School will also ensure that the student receives appropriate support from School or other professional services, to manage any concerns arising from the complaint, the complaint and appeals process and/or the corrective action

3.6. Lodging Complaint or Internal Appeal

- 3.6.1. Complaints and internal appeals must be lodged in writing and can be done by using the 'FEEDBACK' option available on the website, or in writing to complaints@bcgs.wa.edu.au, following the same process as outlined in *POL-253 Complaints Policy [Students & Parents]*
- 3.6.2. All staff are aware of this process and can provide both *POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students & Parents]* and *SV500-19 Complaints and Internal Appeals Policy*, as requested.
- 3.6.3. In the case of a student lodging a complaint or an appeal, their parent must be advised of the complaint or appeal and confirm their knowledge of the complaint in writing as above.
- 3.6.4. Records of the Lodgement of Complaints and/or Internal Appeals is maintained by the School (and the process for this detailed in *POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students & Parents]*)
- 3.6.5. The Deputy Head of School and Marketing and Community Relations Manager will be advised of the lodgement of the complaint and/or appeal, upon receipt by the School, with a view to monitoring the School's compliance and reporting via PRISMS, as required.

3.7. SV500 Time Requirements for Complaints/Internal Appeals

- 3.7.1. The School is required to notify an SV500 student of the School's intent to defer, suspend or cancel the student's enrolment and/or report the student for unsatisfactory achievement or unsatisfactory attendance in writing, and at the same time advise the student of their rights to access the School's *POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students & Parents]* and *SV500-19 Complaints and Internal*



Appeals Process within 20 days of the written notification. See *SV500-8 Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling Enrolment Policy*

- 3.7.2. In the case that the School has advised the student that a Report to PRISMS is pending, e.g. not meeting course and/or attendance requirements, the School is suspending the student's enrolment or the School is cancelling the student's enrolment, the School **must not** report the student through the PRISMS system until:
- the outcome of the Complaint/Internal Appeal is complete
 - the outcome of both the Complaint/Internal Appeal and External Appeal is completed when the complaint/appeal is about course progress/attendance breaches. Note this is the only situation requiring both appeals to be complete before the School can action the suspension or cancellation and must report this through PRISMS
 - or the student advises in writing, that they will not be accessing the Complaints and Internal Appeals Process
- 3.7.3. SV500 students have 20 working days to lodge a formal complaint or internal appeal, following advice from the School of their rights to do so
- 3.7.4. The School is required to begin assessing the complaint or appeal within 10 working days of the student lodging a complaint/internal appeal
- 3.7.5. The School is required to assess the complaint and/or finalise the outcome as soon as is practicable
- 3.7.6. In the case of a complaint or internal appeal's outcome that does not favour the student, the School is required (within 10 working days of finalising the complaint/internal appeal) to advise the student of their rights to access an External Appeal.

3.8. Confidentiality

- 3.8.1 All complaints and appeals will be treated with respect and confidentiality.

3.9. Student Support

- 3.9.1. The student and/or parent can invite a support person/advocate of their choice to accompany them to Complaints and Internal Appeals Meetings. This person may be a staff member, student or other member of the School community, or someone independent of the School community.

3.10. Interpreter and Translation

- 3.10.1. As required by the student, their parent and/or support person, the School will arrange for a professional interpreter and the translation of significant related documents to be available to support the student/parent/support person and the School in this process.

3.11. Complaints/Appeals Considerations

- 3.11.1. The School acknowledges and supports the right of students and/or parents to be given the opportunity to formally present their case, at minimal or no cost
- 3.11.2. The School is committed to conducting the assessment of any complaint or appeal in a professional, fair and transparent manner, following procedural fairness
- 3.11.3. The School is committed to hearing complaints, and making a decision, in a timely manner, subject to the complexity of the decision

3.12. Communicating Appeal Outcome



- 3.12.1. The School will advise the student and their parents of the outcome of the appeals process, in writing, within 10 working days of the decision being made. This advice will detail the reasons for the decision where appropriate
- 3.12.2. If a student is not successful in the School's internal complaints and appeals process, the School will advise the student in writing, within 10 days of concluding the internal appeal, of their right to access an external appeals process.

3.13. Records of Complaints and Appeals Process

The School will maintain a Complaints Register managed by the Head of School's Assistant. Details of how the Complaints Register is maintained is outlined in *POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students & Parents]*

3.14. Appeals related to Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment

See *SV500-8 Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling and Enrolment Policy* for study, accommodation and welfare arrangements during any related appeals process.

3.15. Welfare and Accommodation of SV500 Student

- 3.15.1. The School will at all times be mindful of the wellbeing of the student during any complaints and appeals process
- 3.15.2. In the case of an SV500 student in the care of a parent, 'nominated guardian' or homestay, the School will advise the appropriate authorities, of any concerns for the safety and wellbeing of the student and/or any risk that the student poses to the safety and wellbeing of others.
 - As required, in the case of a student in homestay, whereby the School has approved the CAAW, the School will invoke its *Emergency Welfare and Accommodation Plan* for the duration of complaints and appeals process, if required.
- 3.15.3. In the case of an SV500 student for whom the School is responsible for the CAAW, and who is resident in boarding, the School will maintain the student's welfare and accommodation, for the duration of the complaints or appeals process, including the student remaining in boarding, with the following exceptions:
 - the School is concerned and/or advised that the student is a risk to their own safety and wellbeing, including possible risk of self-harm
 - the School is concerned and/or advised that the student is at risk of harming others or the safety of others
 - The student is missing
 - The student has committed or is at risk of committing a crime

In any of these situations the School will follow the process as outlined in *POL-060 Critical and Emergency Incident Management and Response Plan*.

4. DEFINITIONS

See SV500-4 CRICOS Registration Policy

5. LEGAL AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

See SV500-4 CRICOS Registration Policy

6. ASSOCIATED POLICES, PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES AND FORMS



- ❖ POL-104 Attendance Policy
- ❖ SV500-18 Attendance Policy
- ❖ POL-060 Critical and Emergency Incident Management and Response Plan
- ❖ POL-253: Complaints Policy [Students & Parents]
- ❖ SV500-11 Homestay Policy
- ❖ SV500-10 Accommodation Policy
- ❖ International Student Handbook
- ❖ SV500-13 Support Services Policy
- ❖ SV500-14 Welfare Policy
- ❖ SV500-5 Course Delivery and Duration Policy
- ❖ SV500-20 Course Progress Policy
- ❖ SV500-22 External Appeals Policy
- ❖ SV500-7 Fee Policy
- ❖ SV500 Offer and Acceptance (contract)
- ❖ SV500-16 Refund policy
- ❖ SV500-23 Visa Requirements Policy

Version Control

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