

# COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' COMPLAINT POLICY

### PURPOSE

1. An approach may be made to the school by or on behalf of a student that expresses dissatisfaction or unhappiness with some element of the student's enrolment at the school. Complaints may relate to pastoral care, accommodation, the education programme, or any other element of the student's enrolment. Complaints can be made formally or informally and are dealt with through the school's internal complaint procedures.
2. The policy makes clear factors that will be considered to ensure a proper and fair process is in place to resolve complaints by students or their families.
3. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 (the Code).

### POLICY

Pakuranga College aims to maintain positive relationships with our students and their families, provide excellent pastoral care and work towards resolving minor issues before they become too big.

Pakuranga College:

- Has clearly defined and communicated internal processes for international students, their parents, or other parties to raise a complaint and have it resolved.
- Undertakes to deal with all complaints in a fair and reasonable manner with the intent of resolving concerns effectively and within a reasonable timeframe.
- Agrees that the school will comply with all aspects of the Code and Disputes Resolution Scheme rules.

### REVIEW

The school will review procedures relating to this policy as part of the annual self-review. The school will collect and record appropriate evidence of the review.

### REPORTING

The staff member in charge of the international student programme will report directly to the Principal on the operation of the Complaint Policy.

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

### INTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

The school has developed procedures for students to express complaints and have them dealt with fairly and effectively.

These procedures are:

- Easily understood and followed by students.

# COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES



- Clearly communicated to students and their parents.
- Cover a range of complaints.
- Provide recourse for students and their parents if they are not satisfied with how their concern was dealt with.

In following these procedures, the school will:

- Apply the principles of fairness, consistency, objectivity, and promptness when responding to complaints.
- Make the procedures easy to understand by using a visual flow chart, and step-by-step instructions, in plain English, as well as in other languages if necessary.
- Develop the procedures in consultation with international staff and other relevant staff.
- Include clear direction on who to go to for support, and where they can be found.
- Identify different types of complaints and the appropriate person to deal with each type of complaint.
- Advise international students first to approach the staff member closest to the problem.
- Include photographs and locations of appropriate staff for ease of identification for students.
- Inform students about the procedures both verbally and in writing.
- Make the information available to students via orientation materials and homestay booklet, and to parents via the application documents and the school website.
- Remind students about the procedures throughout the year in during term interviews.
- Display the complaints procedure information in areas frequented by international students.
- Inform key staff in the school of the international student complaints procedures.
- Inform residential caregivers of the procedures in the written information provided to them, and verbally during the initial vetting interview, so they can support their student.
- Let students know that they have a right to an advocate, and make sure advocates have institutional knowledge (policies, procedures, people) and can listen without prejudice to the student's point of view.
- Let students know that they may bring another support person with them (such as a friend or family member or homestay parent) during any stage of the process.
- Survey students, parents, staff to check comprehension of the complaints procedures and record results as evidence for self-review and update these procedures in response to feedback.

## EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

The school provides information to students and parents on how to submit a formal complaint to NZQA in the event they are not satisfied with how their complaints were dealt with by the school.

The school:

- Displays the complaints process information in the International Department.
- Provides information about complaints processes on the school website.
- Includes information about the complaints process on the tuition contract and orientation materials.
- Informs students of the process both verbally and in writing.
- Ensures information about the NZQA complaints process and the DRS is updated as required.

# COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES



## STAFF PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING COMPLAINTS

The school has staff procedures for dealing with complaints by international students or their parents/legal guardians or other stakeholders.

These staff procedures:

- Identify the key staff involved and clearly define their roles and responsibilities at each stage of the process.
- determine how the complaints procedures are communicated to students, parents and other parties
- Identify how and where an international student complaint, the steps taken to resolve it, and the outcome are recorded.
- Align with the procedures for students to raise complaints.
- Be regularly reviewed.

The school will:

- Apply the principles of fairness, consistency, objectivity and promptness when responding to complaints.
- Use staff experienced in working with international students and the requirements of the Code to develop and review the procedures.
- Ensure that all staff who may be approached by students with concerns, understand the school's responsibilities and have training in how to respond appropriately to concerns or complaints, including active listening, and applying the principles of fairness, consistency, objectivity and promptness.
- Identify individuals within or outside of the school who may be appropriate advocates for students who wish to talk to the school about a complaint.
- Inform students that the school has access to first language support people, should they need advocacy or support.
- Check that the information given to students matches with actual practice.
- Hold specific meetings where staff discuss student issues and concerns and identify and address these early: weekly Deans meetings, International Staff meetings
- Keep records of all complaints received, the steps taken to resolve them and outcomes in each case in e-School and hard copies in the student's file.
- Communicate with parents about concerns expressed by their child and how the school is addressing these concerns.
- Identify the points at which parties will be updated on progress, and how they will be informed of these updates.
- Provide all parties with a written summary of the outcome of the complaints.
- Check in with the student and, if necessary, their parents after the matter has been resolved to ensure they have been able to resume student life and do not need additional support.
- Refer any ongoing complaints to a different (more senior) person within the school than the staff member(s) who dealt with the initial complaint.
- Gather feedback on the effectiveness of the procedures and make changes as necessary as part of the school's self-review process.

# COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES



## PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW IF A STUDENT HAS A PROBLEM OR COMPLAINT

This is included in the orientation information as a flow chart and displayed in the International Office.

If you do have a problem, please ask for help while it is still a little problem. Do not wait for it to become a big problem. If you are not confident that your English is good enough, you can always bring a friend.

Problems at school with teachers or subjects:

- In the first instance you should see the International Director.
- Careers can give you advice on your course, choice of subjects and tertiary study.
- Your House Dean is also available to give you advice.

Problems with school friends:

- You can talk with your Tutor Teacher or House Dean.
- Our Guidance Counsellors may also be able to give you advice.

Problems with homestay:

- One of our Homestay Co-ordinators will assist you with any homestay matters.
- If it is an emergency the emergency phone number is 027 294 4925.

Language problems:

- We have teachers who can speak Chinese, Japanese, Spanish and German.

If you are still not satisfied you or your parents can write to the Acting Principal, Mr Billy Merchant.

If you feel your problem is not being solved by the school, you can contact the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) [www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz). Phone 0800 697296 or [qadrisk@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:qadrisk@nzqa.govt.nz).

If it is a financial or contractual dispute, you can contact Study Complaints/Nga Amuamu Taura by phone on 0800 006 675. More information is available on the Study Complaints website: [www.studycomplaints.org.nz](http://www.studycomplaints.org.nz)

You must be able to show them that you have tried to get the school to act before you contact them. They will consult the school to see if anything can be done to help you.

Pakuranga College has agreed to observe and be bound by **The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 (the Code)** published by the Ministry of Education and administered by NZQA. Please see link for copies of <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/tertiary-and-international-learners-code/>.

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/AGENTS

This is included in the Application Form/Enrolment Contract, read and signed by all parents (and agent, as applicable).

If there are concerns about a student's treatment then, under the terms of the Code, the Director of International Students should be contacted in the first instance so that the school's internal grievance

# COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES



procedures can be implemented. If you feel your problem is not being solved by the school, you can contact the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) [www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz). Phone 0800 697296 or [qadrisk@nzqa.govt.nz](mailto:qadrisk@nzqa.govt.nz).

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