



Full Fee Paying Overseas Students: Complaints and Appeals Policy

This Policy provides overseas students and their parents with information about procedures to facilitate the resolution of a dispute or complaint. These internal procedures are a conciliatory and non-legal process.

In the first instance, an attempt should be made to informally resolve the issue. Staff will make every effort to resolve all enquiries, concerns, complaints and disputes promptly and in accordance with procedural fairness. Students and/or parents should contact the student's Housemaster (Senior School) or Class Teacher (Junior School) in the first instance to attempt informal resolution.

If this is unsatisfactory or does not result in a resolution, the procedures as set out in the [Complaints and Dispute Resolution Guide](#) should be followed. This also sets out the appeals process if the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome.

Note that grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under the School's behaviour management policies.

For conditions that apply to handling of a complaint arising from the School's suspension or cancellation of a student's studies, please read the [Full Fee Paying Overseas Students: Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy](#).

Principles Regarding Complaints and Disputes

The following principles apply to complaints and disputes:

- Student wellbeing is the first priority.
- The process is accessible to all parties and there is a commitment to cooperation by School staff.
- Procedural fairness is offered to all parties.
- The complainant can present their case at no cost.
- Complainants are entitled to a support person in any discussions such as a friend/teacher/relative not involved in the grievance. A lawyer acting for the student/parents is not regarded as an acceptable support person.
- The subject of the complaint is informed of its substance.
- Confidentiality is maintained as appropriate.
- Complaints are monitored and their management evaluated to pre-empt systemic/recurring issues.
- All persons in the School community are entitled to respect and courtesy.
- Complainants are entitled to be dealt with fairly and promptly.
- The student's enrolment will be maintained whilst a complaint and/or appeal is being considered, except as outlined in the [Full Fee Paying Overseas Students: Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy](#).
- The complaints process, or appeals process, will begin within ten working days of receipt of the complaint, and be completed in a reasonable timeframe.
- The complainant is entitled to a written statement of the outcome of the complaint, including the details and reasons.
- The School maintains written records of a complaint, including records of any corrective and/or preventative action, on the student's file.
- Procedures for lodging a complaint are communicated to the School community.

- The School will appoint an independent investigator if required when dealing with a complaint.

Procedures

Procedures are outlined in the [Complaints and Dispute Resolution Guide](#), which is available on the School's website.

External Appeals Process

Should an overseas student not be satisfied with the outcome of the internal complaints and dispute resolution process, they may lodge an external appeal through the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman investigates complaints about problems that overseas students or intending overseas students may have with private education and training in Australia. The services of the Commonwealth Ombudsman are free.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman will determine whether the School followed the rules and its policies and procedures correctly, and treated the overseas student fairly. The Commonwealth Ombudsman cannot make decisions regarding academic merit. The Commonwealth Ombudsman will also not investigate if the complaint has not been first raised with the School.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman may require that the School issues an apology, changes or reviews a decision, changes policies or procedures, issues a refund, or takes some other action.

Cranbrook School agrees to be bound by the recommendations of the Commonwealth Ombudsman and will implement the decision or recommendations made by the Commonwealth Ombudsman immediately and take any preventative or corrective actions required by the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

You can make a complaint to the Commonwealth Ombudsman by:

- Telephone on 1300 362 072 if within Australia or +61 2 6276 0111 if outside Australia
- On the online complaint form found at www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students

You can make a complaint in your own language. To do so, call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) in Australia on 131 450 if within Australia or +61 3 9203 4027 if outside Australia. The Commonwealth Ombudsman will pay for the interpreter.

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