


<b>AIHS Policy and Procedure</b>		
<b>Doc #:</b> PP - 2.1	<b>Title: Complaints and Appeals</b>	
<b>Guidelines:</b> 3.13		
<b>Rev #:</b> 3	<b>Approved By: School Principal</b>	<b>Date: 14/01/2025</b>

## 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1** To describe a formal policy and procedure for dealing fairly and consistently with feedback, complaints and appeals received. This policy and procedure also describes how the feedback is monitored and resolved.
- 1.2** To inform students, visitors and interested parties the route by which they can express a complaint and appeal or provide feedback.
- 1.3** To inform staff of this policy and procedure so that staff know what to do if a customer complaint, appeal or feedback is given.

## 2.0 Scope

- 2.1** This policy and procedure applies to all staff, employees, contractors and students of the School.

## 3.0 Definitions

**3.1 Complaint** – An expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service or actions provided by the School, which may be raised formally or informally.


- Informal complaint – A concern or dissatisfaction expressed without following the official complaint process.
- Formal complaint – A concern or dissatisfaction submitted through the School's official complaint resolution process.

**3.2 Appeal** – A request to review and overturn a decision made by the School. Appeals may relate to, but are not limited to, the following matters:

- Outcome of assessment marks;
- Refusal of leave of absence/release letter/refund request;
- Intention to Report (ITR) for unsatisfactory course progress/non-payment/misbehaviour; or
- Decisions related to late enrolment.

**3.3 Resolution** – Plans or actions developed and mutually agreed-upon by the School and the complainant to address and resolve the complaint.

**3.4 Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO)** – Investigates complaints about problems that overseas students or intending overseas students may have with private education and training in Australia. The legal basis for the Ombudsman role is the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Legislation Amendment Act 2011*, passed by the Australian Parliament on 21 March 2011. (Source: OSO website)

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## 4.0 Responsibilities


**4.1 All Staff at ACA** – Responsible for understanding this policy and procedure and knowing what to do when a customer feedback, complaint or appeal is received.

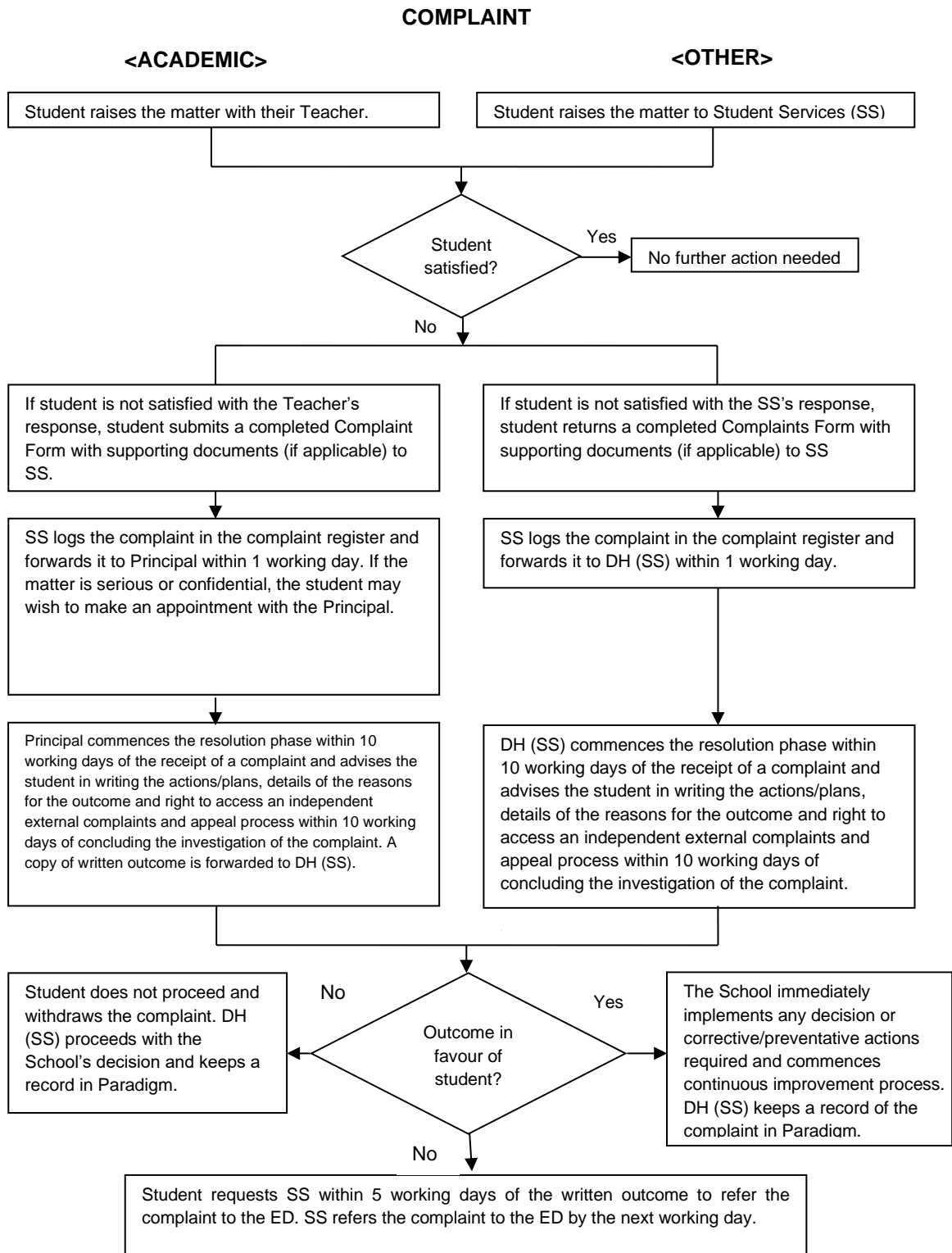
**4.2 Designated Head (DH) – Student Services (SS), Marketing, and Principal /Executive Director (ED)** – Responsible for ensuring that all feedback, complaints and appeals are dealt with fairly and timely.


**4.3 Student Services (SS) Department** – Responsible for communicating progress and outcome to students and logging and maintaining all records in student file and also in complaint/appeals login the feedback file.

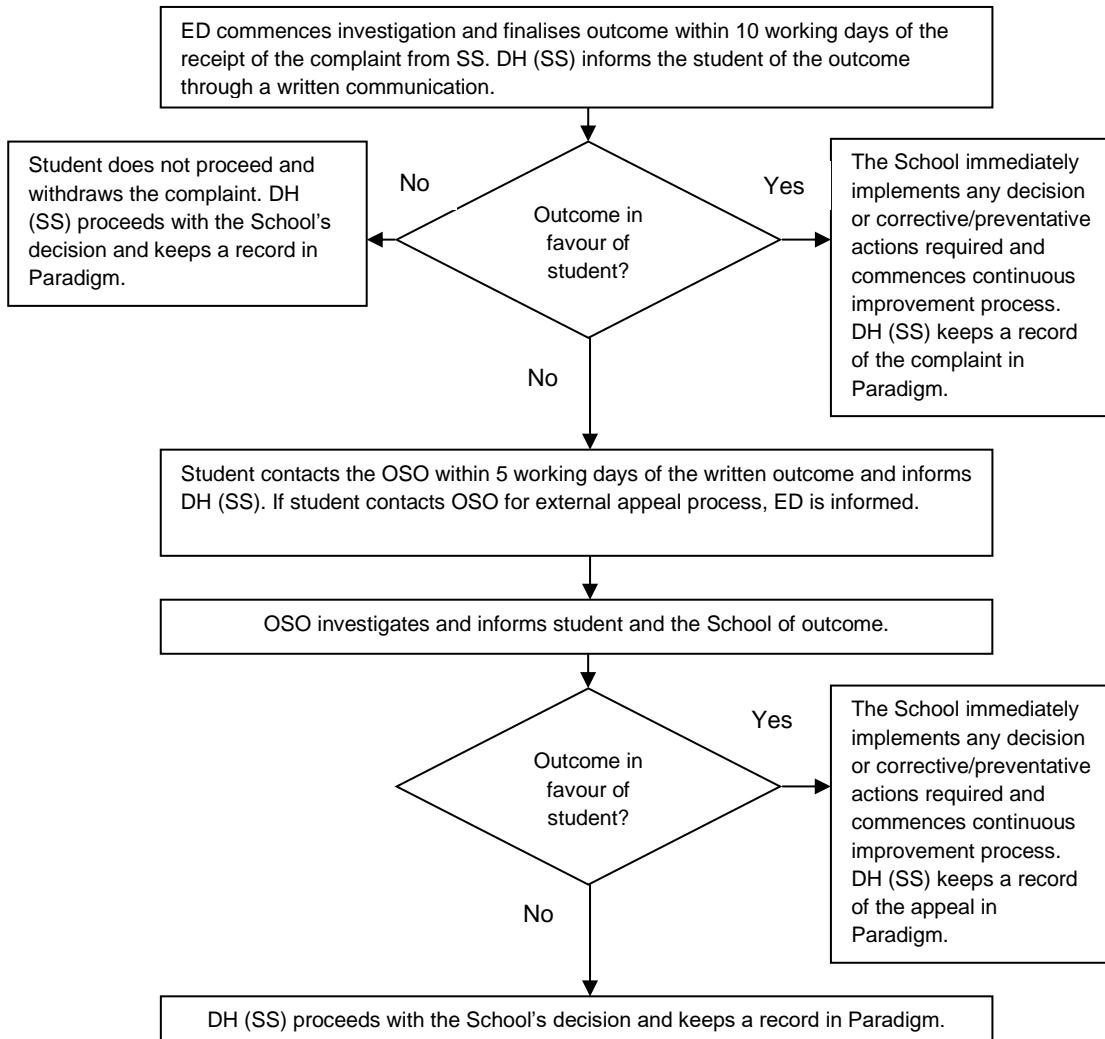
## 5.0 Procedure


### 5.1 Process Flowchart

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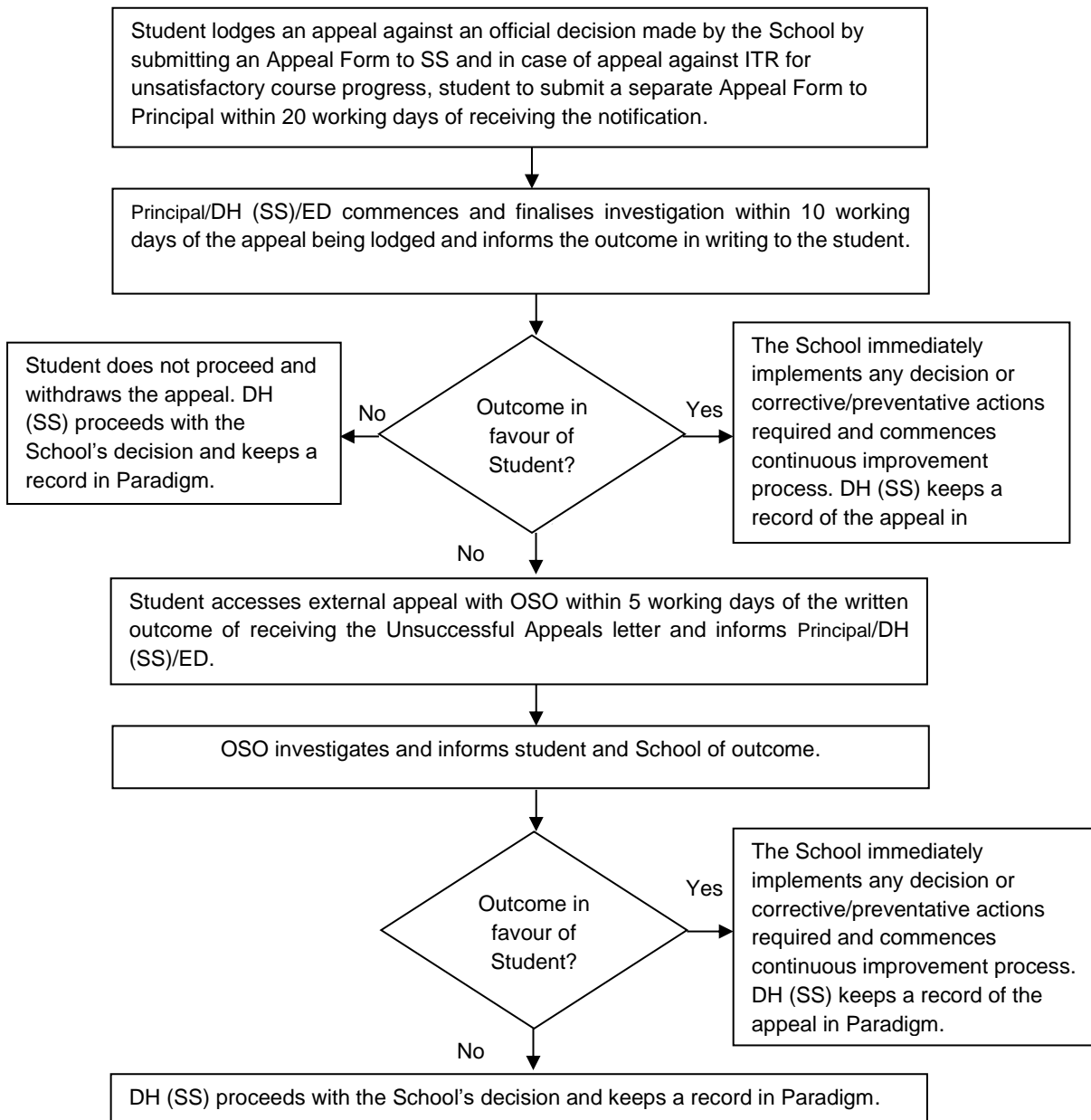



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### APPEAL



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## 5.2 Flowchart Details

Sometimes students may have a complaint or be unhappy about a particular decision or action of the School or of a Teacher or other School staff members. For Academic complaints students should approach the Teacher or Principal. For any other issues, students should contact SS.

### 5.2.1 Complaint (A-Academic related and B-Other)

**5.2.1.1.A** In the first instance, students should raise the matter with their Teacher. There may have inadvertently been a mistake or misunderstanding which they can quickly rectify. Many problems can be resolved by the Teacher on the spot and the Teacher can give the student information which clears up the problem.

**5.2.1.1.B** For other complaints, student must raise the matter to SS.


**5.2.1.2.A** If the student is not satisfied with the Teacher's response or the matter is more serious, the student completes and returns the Complaint Form (available on the School website and at reception) to SS. The student should attach copies of any supporting documents (if applicable).

**5.2.1.2.B** If the student is not satisfied with the SS's response or the matter is more serious, the student completes and submits the Complaint Form (available on the School website and at SS) to SS. The student should attach copies of any supporting documents (if applicable).

**5.2.1.3.A** Upon receiving the Complaints Form with supporting evidence, SS immediately logs the complaint in the complaint register and forwards it to the Principal within 1 working day. If the matter is very serious or confidential, the student may wish to make an appointment with the Principal to give notice of the complaint.

**5.2.1.3.B** Upon receiving the Complaints Form with supporting evidence, SS immediately logs the complaint in the complaint register and forwards it to DH (SS) within 1 working day.

**5.2.1.4.A** Within 10 working days of the receipt of a formal complaint, the Principal will consider the information provided and may contact the student and/or Teacher/staff members if further information is required. The Principal shall, if they see fit, make a decision on the matter and advise the student and Teacher in writing the actions/plans, details of the reasons for the outcome and right to access an independent external complaints and appeal process within 10 working days of

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concluding the investigation of the complaint. A copy of written outcome is forwarded to DH (SS).

**5.2.1.4.B** Within 10 working days of the receipt of a formal complaint DH (SS) will consider the information provided and may contact the student and/or staff members if further information is required. DH (SS) shall, if he sees fit, make a decision on the matter and advise the student in writing the actions/plans, details of the reasons for the outcome and right to access an independent external complaints and appeal process within 10 working days of concluding the investigation of the complaint.


**5.2.1.5 If the outcome is in favour of the student,** the School immediately implements any decision or corrective/preventative actions required and commences continuous improvement process. DH (SS) keeps a record of the complaint in Paradigm as evidence of the communication to the student.

**If the outcome is not in favour of the student,** the student will choose either to withdraw the complaint or proceed further. If student proceeds, he/she must request SS within 5 working days of the written outcome to refer the complaint to the ED. SS refers the complaint to the ED by the next working day. If student does not proceed and withdraws the complaint, DH (SS) proceeds with the School's decision and keeps a record in Paradigm.

**5.2.1.6** The ED commences investigation and finalises outcome within 10 working days of the receipt of the complaint from SS. Once the outcome has been finalised by the ED, DH (SS) informs the student of the outcome through a written communication including details of the reasons for the outcome.

**5.2.1.7 If the outcome is in favour of the student,** the School immediately implements any decision or corrective/preventative actions required and commences continuous improvement process. DH (SS) keeps a record of the complaint in Paradigm as evidence of the communication to the student.

**If the outcome is not in favour of the student,** the student will choose either to withdraw the complaint or access an independent external appeal process conducted by the OSO. If student proceeds, he/she must contact the OSO within 5 working days of the written outcome and inform DH (SS). If student contacts OSO for external appeal process, ED is informed. If student does not proceed and withdraws the

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complaint, DH (SS) proceeds with the School's decision and keeps a record in Paradigm.

**5.2.1.8** OSO investigates and informs student and the School of outcome. The appeal procedure will be determined by the independent mediator. If required, all documentation from the student and the School related to the appeal will be forwarded to the independent body.

**5.2.1.9** If the outcome of the external appeal is in favour of the student, the School immediately implements any decision or corrective/preventative actions required and commences continuous improvement process. DH (SS) keeps a record of the appeal in Paradigm as evidence of the communication to the student.

If the outcome is not in favour of the student, DH (SS) proceeds with the School's decision and keeps a record in Paradigm.

### 5.2.2 Appeal Against an Official Decision Made by the School


**5.2.2.1** Student lodges an appeal against an official decision made by the School by submitting an Appeal Form to SS within 20 working days of receiving the notification.

In case of appeal against the School's intention to report for unsatisfactory course progress, student submit the appeal form to Principal within 20 working days of receiving the notification.

**5.2.2.2** Staff responsible as per the type of appeal (Principal/DH (SS)/ED) commences and finalises investigation within 10 working days of the appeal being lodged. Staff will consider the information provided (if applicable) and information about the student in the Student Management System (Paradigm), and may contact the student if further information is required. Once the outcome has been finalised the student is informed in writing.

Types of Appeal	Person responsible
Assessment Marks	Principal
ITR for Course Progress	Principal
ITR for unsatisfactory attendance	Principal
ITR for Non-payment	Executive Director
ITR for Misbehaviour	Executive Director



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Refusal of Leave of Absence	Executive Director
Refusal of Release	Executive Director
Refusal of Refund	Executive Director
Late Enrolment	Principal

**5.2.2.3 If the outcome is in favour of the student,** the School immediately implements any decision or corrective/preventative actions required and commences continuous improvement process. DH (SS) keeps a record of the appeal in Paradigm as evidence of the communication to the student.

**If the outcome is not in favour of the student,** the student will choose either to withdraw the appeal or access external appeal process with the OSO. If student proceeds, he/she must contact the OSO within 5 working days of the written outcome and inform Principal/DH (SS)/ED. If student does not proceed and withdraws the appeal, DH (SS) proceeds with the School's decision and keeps a record in Paradigm.


**5.2.2.4 OSO** investigates and informs student and the School of outcome. The appeal procedure will be determined by the independent mediator. If required, all documentation from the student and the School related to the appeal will be forwarded to the independent body.

**5.2.2.5** If the outcome of the external appeal is in favour of the student, the School immediately implements any decision or corrective/preventative actions required and commences continuous improvement process. DH (SS) keeps a record of the appeal in Paradigm as evidence of the communication to the student.

If the outcome is not in favour of the student, DH (SS) proceeds with the School's decision and keeps a record in Paradigm.

### 5.3 General Guidelines

- All correspondence to under 18 students will also be sent to their parents or guardians.
- If the School considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise student complaint or appeal, the School will inform student in writing the reasons as why more than 60 calendar days are required and will regularly update student on the progress of the matter.

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- Nothing in this policy and procedure inhibits student's rights to pursue other legal remedies under Federal or State law. Students are entitled to resolve any dispute by exercising their rights to other legal remedies.
- The School will maintain the student's enrolment while the complaints and appeals process are ongoing.
- Students must also continue attending his/her classes during the complaint and/or appeal process.
- There is no cost to the complainant and/or appellant for utilising this complaint and/or appeal process.
- At all meetings, the student may have a support person present (at the student's cost). If the student is under the age of 18, the parent or guardian must also be present.
- Student has the right to appeal a decision made by the School to report his/her unsatisfactory course progress based on the following grounds.
  - I. The School's failure to record or calculate a student's marks accurately,
  - II. Compassionate or compelling circumstances, or
  - III. The School has not implemented its intervention strategy and other policies according to its documented policies and procedures that have been made available to the student.


#### **5.4 Complaints and Appeals Process Identified by Parents or Guardian**

**5.4.1** Complaints and grievances identified by parents or guardians are referred to the student's Teacher and/or Principal. This can be organised either by making an appointment over the phone or directly seeing Student Services.

**5.4.2** If the parents or guardians are unsatisfied with the end results or find that it is inappropriate to discuss, an arranged appointment can be made to have a meeting. During the meeting with the Principal, the parents or guardians may bring a friend, relative or interpreter.

**5.4.3** Should the complaint be in regards to the Principal, the student and the student's parents', legal guardian(s) or carer(s) will need to contact the ED. Contact details can be provided by the SS.

**5.4.4** The confidentiality of a complaint is subject to case by case. If the complaint is concerning another person, the person will be given a chance to appeal against the allegations. AIHS can accept anonymous complaints however, it may be difficult to resolve if further information is not given.

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## 5.5 External Appeal

**5.5.1** The student will have access and receive the outcome of only **one external appeal process** before the School may report the student to the relevant authorities. Hence the School does not have to await the outcome of multiple external appeal processes which the student may wish to access. However, the School will inform students that they could refer to the OSO. OSO offers a free and independent service for overseas students who have a complaint or want to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by their private education or training provider. You can initiate the external appeals process to OSO by telephone, in writing, by fax, or using OSO's online complaint form available at <https://forms.ombudsman.gov.au/prod?entitytype=Approach&layoutcode=ApproachWebForm>

Overseas Students Ombudsman  
GPO Box 442 Canberra ACT 2601  
Tel: 1300 362 072  
Fax: 02 6276 0123  
Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)  
Website: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

## 5.6 Withdrawal of Complaint/Appeal


**5.6.1** The student may withdraw a complaint or appeal at any time during the resolution process. The student must make the withdrawal in writing and submit it to the Student Services. This will then be forwarded to the DH (SS). Alternatively, the student may send an email to the DH (SS) using his/her email address that is registered with the School.

**5.6.2** DH (SS) will send a written acknowledgement of the withdrawal to the student. The matter will be concluded and deemed to be resolved.

## 5.7 Documenting Complaints/Appeals

**5.7.1** The DH (SS) must keep records of the following, where applicable:

- Actions taken to address the root cause of complaint/appeal;

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- Minutes of meetings at which actions arising from complaint/appeal were agreed on;
- Changes to systems and/or processes to address the inadequacy that led to the complaint/appeal or to improve operations.

**5.7.2** DH (SS) will record the complaint and its resolution in the School's Complaints Register that will allow identification and detail of the following:

- Submission date of complaint;
- Nature and description of complaint;
- Date/s when cause of complaint occurred;
- Attachments (if applicable);
- Determined resolution including reasons for any decision;
- Date of resolution; and/or
- Date written statement of outcomes was sent to student.

**5.7.3** The outcome of the complaint/appeal and the reasons for the outcome will be placed in the student file and on Paradigm.

**5.7.4** DH (SS) will monitor and annually review the complaints and appeals as part of their continuous improvement process.

## **5.8 Forms of Feedback**

**5.8.1** Feedback or complaints can be provided to the School by various means.

These include:

- Complaint Form;
- E-mails; or
- Verbal feedback to staff of AIHS.

## **6.0 References**

**6.1** Management Review (Continuous Improvement) Policy and Procedure

## **7.0 Appendices**

- 7.1** ACA Complaint Form
- 7.2** AIHS Appeal Form
- 7.3** ACA Complaints Register
- 7.4** ACA Unsuccessful Appeals Letter