

## PROCEDURE

### PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

#### Note on the use of these procedures:

- Procedures support a policy by providing specific directions on how the policy must be carried out.
- This document is intended as a starting point to ensure that we do everything we can to meet our Code obligations under Outcome 15 Offers, enrolment, contracts and insurance 62 (1h); Outcome 17 Orientation 70(1e), Outcome 21 Dealing with Complaints and Outcome 22 Compliance with the international learner contract Disputes Resolution Scheme..
- For the purposes of these procedures, we define complaints as follows:
  - **Complaint means:** an approach to Mount Aspiring College by, or on behalf of, an international 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 initially through the school's internal complaints procedures.
  - Where a student is unable to access Mount Aspiring College's internal complaints process or is dissatisfied with the outcome of that process, they may make a formal complaint via Study Complaints, or to the Code Administrator. This type of complaint is referred to in these procedures as an 'external complaint'.

#### 1. Internal Complaints Procedures

Mount Aspiring College has developed procedures for students to express complaints and have them dealt with fairly and effectively.

These procedures

- Are easy for students to understand and follow.
- Are 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 implementing these procedures, Mount Aspiring College 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.
- engage in ongoing consultation and review with international and other relevant staff.
- include clear direction on who to go to for support, and where the staff members 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 and parents/legal guardians via the international handbook, orientation and via the complaints flow chart being displayed in the international office.
- remind students about the procedures throughout the year in international assemblies and during interviews.
- display the complaints procedure information in the international office, ESOL classrooms and other areas frequented by international students.
- inform key staff in the school, eg guidance counsellor, deans, ESOL teachers, SLT, 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.

## 2. External Complaints Process

Mount Aspiring College will provide information to students or parents/legal guardians 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 will

- display the complaints process information in key student areas around the school, such as the international office and ESOL rooms.
- provide information about complaints processes on the school website.
- include information about the complaints process in the International Student Handbook and orientation materials.
- inform students of the process both verbally and in writing.
- survey international students and parents/legal guardians to check they understand the information provided about the complaints process and update procedures and communication in response to feedback received.
- inform agents of the complaints process in materials provided to them
- include updates about the NZQA complaints process and the DRS in international staff meetings or PD sessions, keeping minutes or presentation notes as evidence for self-review.

## 3. Staff Procedures for Addressing Complaints

Mount Aspiring College has developed 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.
- are regularly reviewed.

In implementing these procedures, Mount Aspiring College 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 review the procedures.
- ensure that all staff who may be approached by students with concerns, understand the school's Code 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. These will include a list of first language speakers and their contact details, for all language groups within the international student cohort.
- 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: international department team meetings, and meetings with teachers/middle or senior leaders when needed.
- keep records of all complaints received, the steps taken to resolve them and outcomes in each case.
- communicate with parents/legal guardians 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.

## COMPLAINT PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

*These procedures will be provided to students and parents during orientation as a flow chart and displayed in the international office and ESOL rooms.*

If you 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, ask a friend to help you explain.

Problems at school with teachers or subjects:

- Talk to ..... and ask them to help.

Problems with friends or other students:

- Talk to ..... or .....

Problems with money, your visa enrolment or insurance:

- Talk to .....

If you are still not satisfied you or your parents can talk to the Principal. If you are not happy with the help you have received, write a letter to the Board of Trustees.

If you are not satisfied by the outcome of our complaints process, you may notify the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). Please refer to the [NZQA website](#) for more information on their role and process.

You may also be able to take your complaint to [Study Complaints](#) – a dispute resolution provider specialising in supporting international students in resolving disputes with their schools.

Mount Aspiring 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 [here](#) for more information.

## SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

- The 'Complaint Procedures' will be provided to all international students and parents/legal guardians at orientation and via the website.
- Students may (and are encouraged to) request advocacy and interpretation at any time within the complaints process.

- When a staff member receives a complaint from an international student or parent/legal guardian, they will gather all relevant information, and try to resolve the concerns in the first instance.
- Where the staff member cannot resolve the student or parent's concerns, they should escalate the problem to the international director to ensure that these concerns are addressed and resolved.
- Families will be advised of outcomes of the complaints process by the international director. Outcomes will be delivered in person or by phone, email, or in writing as appropriate to the student's parents or agent.
- All discussions and outcomes will be dated, recorded and placed on file. A copy will be given to the student and the agent or parents/legal guardians on request.
- Complaints will be dealt with as fast as possible. If there is no resolution or outcome that is satisfactory to the student or their parent/legal guardian, they may refer the complaint to NZQA or the Disputes Resolution Scheme, seeking their assistance in resolving the dispute.
- Students/parents will be given information about how to access NZQA or Study Complaints (the DRS) if breaches to the Code or issues with the school cannot be resolved through the school's internal processes. This information will be available to the student and their family as part of orientation materials. It will also be included in the International Handbook and be available on the website.
- Mount Aspiring College will provide all relevant material to NZQA/Study Complaints on request, and will abide by the decisions of NZQA or the DRS and will instigate recommendations to remedy the problem within the timeframe specified by NZQA/the DRS.