WENTWORTH COLLEGE

Complaints Procedure Policy

Approved by: Manuel Guimaraes, Principal

Last Review: September 2026

Next Review: September 2027

Complaints Procedure Policy

INFORMAL APPROACH

Parents and students are encouraged to raise their concerns about an academic issue, in the first instance with the student's personal tutors. If the matter is financial, they should speak to KAREN NEDAS, the college bursar. Other complaints should, initially, be taken to Heads of Year.
It is suggested that at each stage, the person investigating the complaint makes sure that they:

- establish what has happened so far, and who has been involved;
- clarify the nature of the complaint and what remains unresolved
- meet with the complainant or contact them (if unsure or further information is necessary); o clarify what the complainant feels would put things right;
- interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish;
- conduct the interview with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning; o keep notes of the interview.

If parents/guardians believe that the college or a member of staff has not dealt with the matter in a satisfactory manner, they may pursue the complaint, informally, with Manuel Guimaraes, the Principal. This would normally take the form of a discussion with Mani and would occur after parents have pursued their concerns, as far as they are able, with other members of staff. The meeting should be arranged within a few days of the request.

An effective Complaints Procedure will:

- encourage resolution of problems by **informal** means wherever possible;
- be easily **accessible** and **publicised;**
- be **simple** to understand;
- be **impartial;**
- be **non-adversarial;**
- allow **swift** handling with established **time-limits** for action and keeping people informed of the progress;
- ensure a full and **fair** investigation by an independent person where
- necessary;
- respect people's desire for **confidentiality;**
- address all the points at issue and provide an **effective** response and **appropriate** redress, where necessary.

Formal procedures will need to be invoked when initial attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further.

REVIEW PANEL

The panel will be appointed by or on behalf of the Proprietor. It will consist of three members of the college staff (who have no detailed knowledge of the complaint, ensuring fairness) and an individual who is completely independent of the management and running of the college. Prior to the establishment of the review panel, the complainants(s) will be asked to give, in detail, their concerns in writing. Within 10 days of receipt of such, a review panel will be appointed. Depending on the complexity of the issue, the panel will meet within 5 - 15 days. Each member of the panel will be supplied with a copy of all relevant documents. The complainants will be supplied with copies of all documents, which the college is obliged to disclose under the Data Protection Act 1998. These papers will be issued not less than 5 working days before the review panel meets.

REVIEW MEETING

The meeting will take place at college. Those present, at the meeting, will be:-

- Members of the review panel
- The Principal
- Any other relevant member of staff
- The complainants and the student (if parents/guardian wish)

A friend may accompany Parents/guardians, if they wish; however, legal representation is inappropriate. The proceedings will be conducted in an informal manner but minutes will be taken. All parties present are entitled to take and return their own notes. The college will produce a formal record of the meeting, which will be retained, in a confidential file, in the Administrator's office. An elected member of the review panel will chair the meeting in order to allow all persons present the opportunity to speak. Everyone at the meeting is expected to show courtesy, restraint and good manners. The chair, at his/her discretion, terminates the meeting. Each of the issues raised, in the letter, will be discussed.

Following the meeting, the review panel will further discuss all issues raised and make a decision. In the absence of a clear vote, the chair will cast theirs. The decision of the Panel will remain FINAL. It will be notified to all parties, by letter, within five working days.

- If a complainant delivers their complaint during the week preceding a college holiday, then the time limits set out in this policy take effect from the commencing date of term or half term.
- This policy has been set out in accordance with Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 (Part 7 (f), (g)).
- ALL COMPLAINTS WILL BE DEALT WITHIN THE STRICTEST OF CONFIDENCE.
- A record will be kept of whether the complaint was resolved at a preliminary stage, or by a panel hearing.

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the School Administrator who will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name: **Pupil's name:** **Your relationship to the pupil:** **Address:** **Postcode:** **Day time telephone number:** **Evening telephone number:**
Please give details of your complaint.

What action, if any, have you already taken to try and resolve your complaint. (Who did you speak to and what was the response)?

What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By who:

Complaint referred to:

Date: