



Responsibility: Principal  
Last Updated: 6 March 2020  
Due for Review: 6 March 2022

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## 1 Grievance and Complaints Procedures:

### 1.1 Dealing with a Grievance

All members of the College community are strongly encouraged to maintain respectful and collaborative working relationships and quickly address any misunderstanding should they arise. However, a person may feel aggrieved in the course of his/her engagement with the College and believe the situation is serious enough to warrant external assistance to remedy the issue. The source of the grievance may be varied, ranging from conflict over professional or academic issues; concern over an employment condition or application of a College policy through to serious discrimination or harassment.

A minor grievance *may* be remedied by the parties themselves but, if not dealt with, minor grievances and conflicts can escalate and become issues of a more serious nature. Therefore, if it cannot be remedied quickly, the person should raise issues of grievance and conflict as soon as possible.

A grievance may be initially communicated in a written letter, email or a meeting. Issues should be raised in the first instance as follows:

- Staff with their immediate supervisor, or if a grievance is with a supervisor, the issue should be raised with the Human Resource Manager;
- Students with the class teacher or Head of Year;
- Contractors with the person who has engaged them at the College;
- Parents and volunteers with the relevant member of staff overseeing the area of concern or with the Head of Secondary School or Head of Junior School; and
- External stakeholders with the Chief Operating Officer or Principal.

Complaints made without substantiation or accusations made without any basis will be viewed by the College as a very serious matter.

### 1.2 Support

It is acknowledged that raising issues of conflict may be difficult for some people. Therefore the option exists for a support person to be included in any meetings with the person investigating the grievance. The role of a support person is to provide support to the complainant, for example by discussing the issue with him/her or taking notes in the meeting. In this situation, a support person is not an advocate for the complainant and should not become actively involved in the discussions.

A support person could be a colleague or friend and in the case of students, parents or guardians.

### 1.3 Process for Complaint

On the initial receipt of a complaint (written or verbal), the person receiving the complaint will assess the nature of the complaint and either deal with the matter themselves or, if appropriate, pass the matter to a person who is suitably independent and competent to manage the matter.

If appropriate, the person dealing with the grievance may elect to seek to resolve the issue informally by meeting with the parties singly and/or together, providing advice or strategies for action. Such an approach is not an option for dealing with formal complaints of harassment, bullying or discrimination which should always progress immediately to the formal grievance procedure.

If the matter is dealt with informally and resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, and the complaint was not trivial, then details of the issue and resolution should be noted in confidential College records. Where this informal process is not appropriate, or does not lead to resolution, the formal complaint procedure will then apply.



## 1.4 Formal Complaints

The College regards formal complaints as serious matters that have the potential to affect the reputation and career of staff or the prospect of students continuing at the College. Therefore formal complaints must be made in a formal manner according to the following guidelines:

- Formal complaints must be in writing and signed by the complainant (unless the Head of School decides this is not appropriate because of the nature of the complaint or to protect the complainant);
- The written complaint should clearly outline the nature of the complaint and specify individuals involved. It should include all relevant supporting material available to them such as emails and notes of verbal communication including, where appropriate, the names of witnesses; and
- The formal written complaint should be directed to the Head of Secondary School, the Head of Junior School, the Chief Operating Officer or the Principal.

All complaints will be treated seriously. The College will determine the most appropriate method of dealing with the grievance.

## 1.5 Escalation

Escalation should only occur if the following circumstances occur:

- If the above process has been followed and the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved, the issue may be escalated to a higher level; or
- The issue has been raised with an employee's immediate supervisor, but action has not taken within the seven to ten day period; or
- If the complaint involves the Principal then it should be raised as a grievance with the Chair of the College Board via a letter addressed to him/her via the College.

A grievance may be escalated as follows:

- Staff to the Human Resource Manager;
- Secondary School students with the Head of Department or Head of Secondary School;
- Junior School students with the Assistant Heads of Junior School, Deputy Head of Junior School or Head of Junior School;
- Parents and volunteers with the Principal; and
- External stakeholders and contractors with the Chief Operating Officer or Principal.

## 1.6 Appeals

The College does not offer unlimited opportunities for appeal if a complainant is unhappy with the resolution of a complaint. Any appeal against the resolution of a complaint should be made in writing to the Principal. An appeal is only likely to be considered if there is evidence there was a procedural problem with the investigation.

The Principal, at his/her discretion, will consider the application for an appeal and will either direct the complaint be re-examined or direct the matter be closed.

## 1.7 Academic Appeals

### 1.7.1 Junior School

Complaints about academic assessment are, in the first instance, to be referred to the appropriate classroom teacher. Where this appears to be inappropriate or satisfactory resolution is not achieved, they are to be brought to the appropriate Assistant Head of Junior School and, if necessary, to the Deputy Head of Junior School or Head of Junior School.

### 1.7.2 Years 7 to 10

Detailed guidelines for academic assessment in Years 7 to 10 are listed in the Radford College Assessment Policy (7-10). Where a student believes a piece of work has been inaccurately marked or graded, the student should first approach the class teacher for clarification.

If unable to be resolved with the class teacher, the issue may be taken to the Head of Department and thereafter to the Assistant Principal Curriculum. In the event the complaint remains unresolved, the formal complaints procedure outlined in this policy should be followed.

The College complies with the ACT Department of Education's appeals process in regards to the Year 10 Certificate.



### 1.7.3 Years 11 and 12

Detailed guidelines for academic assessment in Years 11 and 12 and the processes for appeal are detailed in the Radford College Senior School Handbook Section 7 available on Radford Online.

#### 1.7.3.1 Student Appeals - BSSS

Appeals against an Assessment Task result should occur within one week of the task being returned to the student unless the return of the work occurs on Unit Score Check day. The initial approach should be to the appropriate teacher with escalation to the Head of Department and then Dean of Senior Studies (11 & 12). In all instances involving a complaint against an Assessment Task, the complaint should be in writing.

##### 1.7.3.1.1 Student Appeal Procedures

###### **Procedures for Review for Students**

Students are entitled to appeal formally against assessment on individual items, unit grades, unit scores and course scores.

Students are urged to consult with their subject teachers and with their tutors if they have queries about any item of assessment. The first step in the appeals procedure is consultation between student and teacher. If the student still feels they have a grievance, then they should discuss the issue with the relevant Head of Department. No formal appeal can be mounted unless these first two steps have taken place.

###### **Appeals to the College**

It is Radford College policy that an appeal against the marking of an assessment task should be lodged within one week of the marked assessment being returned to the student. Appeals against a unit letter grade and/or score and/or any work returned on Unit Score Checking day for that semester must be lodged by 11am on that day.

###### *Individual Assessment Instruments*

Most disagreements over individual components of a student's unit assessment can be resolved progressively by the class teacher and the student discussing the matter. If a student is still not satisfied, then he or she should consult with the Head of the Department. Teachers should always the principles of natural justice of ensuring disputes about assessment on individual items are settled at the time of the return of the item. Where this process fails to produce satisfaction, a student can request a consultation with members of the College Mediation Committee. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the consultation with the College Mediation Committee, the student may lodge a formal appeal to the College Appeal Committee. Within the application students must outline the grounds on which they are seeking a review of the assessment.

###### *Unit Letter Grades, Unit Scores*

If a student disagrees with unit letter grades or unit raw scores he or she has received, the first resort is to discuss it with the teacher marking the assessment. If still not satisfied, the student should consult the Head of Department. A student must notify the Dean of Senior Studies writing of their intention to appeal to the Head of Department by 11am on Unit Score Check Day. If the student remains dissatisfied, consultation with the College Mediation Committee can be requested. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the consultation with the College Mediation Committee, the student may lodge a formal appeal to the College Appeal Committee.

###### *Course Scores*

Appeals regarding course scores must be made by 11am on course score checking day, Semester 2 of Year 12. Unit scores and course scores are checked through the BSSS portal. The appeal must be lodged in writing with the Dear of Senior Studies who will notify the Principal. Appeals to the Board of Senior Secondary Studies

Students who have had their letter grades or course scores reviewed by the College may appeal to the Board of Senior Secondary Studies against the College procedures by which the appeal decision was reached.



### 1.7.3.2 Appeal Process

#### Consultation with the College Mediation Committee

The College Mediation Committee members are:

- The Assistant Principal Teaching and Learning
- The Head of Secondary School
- The Assistant Principal Curriculum
- A Head of a Department not connected with the matter in dispute.

The student should approach the Dean of Senior Studies to arrange a consultation. The student may select any two of the above people to hear his or her case.

The student has the right to be accompanied by his or her Tutor so he or she can receive advice during the consultation. If a student is dissatisfied with the result of the consultation he or she can appeal to the College Appeal Committee.

#### Appeals to the College Appeal Committee

The procedures and guidelines that are to be followed are detailed in Section 7.4 of the BSSS Policy and Procedures Manual.

#### Appeals to the BSSS Appeal Committee

The procedures and guidelines that are to be followed are detailed in Section 7.5 of the BSSS Policy and Procedures Manual. Refer also to Section 7.2.2 Right of Appeal.

### 1.7.3.3 Student Appeals - IB Diploma

#### 1.7.3.3.1 Procedures for Review for Students


Students are entitled to appeal formally against IAs, course grades.

Students are urged to consult with their subject teachers before making an appeal. They should then consult with the Dean of Senior Studies who can assist in making a formal appeal. Note there is a fee charged by the IBO that must be paid to lodge the appeal. Please see the Dean of Senior Studies for more information.

## 2 Related Policies/Further Information:

- Parent Code of Conduct
- Radford College Assessment Policy
- Radford College Senior School Handbook

## 3 Version Control and Change History

Version	Date Effective	Approved by	Amendment
1.	6 March 2020		New Policy