



MATER DEI MANAGING GRIEVANCE AND DISPUTES POLICY

Mater Dei aims to provide an environment that is safe, fair and productive and where all employees, volunteers, contractors, subcontractors, consultants, related personnel and service users (students, parents/guardians and advocates) may come forward with a grievance in the knowledge that reasonable attempts will be made to address the grievance and resolve it. Members of the Mater Dei community and management are encouraged to resolve grievances and disputes, which may arise from time to time before they have an opportunity to escalate. Mater Dei's Grievance Procedure Policy has been developed to provide a mechanism for resolving disputes and/or grievances about matters that involve Mater Dei.

Mater Dei will provide a Grievance, Disputes and Appeals Management Procedure that:

- is simple and easy to use;
- is effectively communicated and promoted to all staff and stakeholders of the Mater Dei Community;
- ensures grievance and disputes or appeals are fairly assessed and responded to promptly;
- is procedurally fair and follows principles of natural justice, and
- complies with legislative requirements.

Who does this Managing Grievance and Disputes Policy apply to?

This Policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, subcontractors, consultants, related personnel and service users across the Organisation and applies to general grievances.

If you have a grievance about unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying please see the Mater Dei Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement for Employees, Contractors and Volunteers.

What is a grievance?

For the purpose of this Policy a grievance is defined as a concern that you have been treated unfairly, or an unfair situation, decision or event that affects and upsets you. It includes any type of problem, concern, complaint or dispute related to the organisation and its service delivery and implementation.

PRINCIPLES

Mater Dei will:

- consider all grievances or disputes it receives
- treat all complainants with respect, recognising that the issue of grievance or dispute is important to the complainant

- maintain confidentiality of parties involved, keeping any information private to those directly involved in the grievance or dispute and its resolution
- ensure advocacy is available to staff who raise a grievance or dispute and require support
- resolve grievances and disputes, where possible, to the satisfaction of the complainant
- deal with all grievances and disputes in a timely manner
- keep parties to the grievance or dispute informed of progress of their grievance
- ensure that Board Members, staff, volunteers and others are given information about the Grievance and Disputes Policy and Procedure as part of their induction and are aware of the mechanisms in dealing with grievances and disputes
- ensure all staff, management, stakeholders and Board Members are aware of the Grievance and Disputes Policy and Procedures
- ensure that where possible, the complainant or accused are not penalised in any way during the progress of investigating the grievance or dispute, and
- ensure that feedback data (both positive and negative) is considered in Organisational reviews and in planning service improvements.

PROCEDURES

Information for Staff and Stakeholders

All staff, management and stakeholders will be informed of their rights and responsibilities with regards to grievances, disputes and appeals at the earliest possible stage of their involvement with the Organisation.

Making a grievance and dispute

If you have a grievance, you should, if it is appropriate, try in the first instance to address the grievance directly with the person involved.

If you have a grievance that cannot be resolved directly with the person involved you should raise your grievance or dispute in writing or verbally to the Executive Assistant to the CEO/Principal.

Service users may raise their grievance by completing the back page of the Grievance Handling Process Brochure available from the School Reception or on the School Website and forward it on to the Executive Assistant to the CEO/Principal.

If the grievance or dispute is about:

- a staff member or volunteer the grievance or dispute will normally be dealt with by the Program Manager
- a Program Manager or Senior Staff Member, the grievance or dispute will normally be dealt with by the CEO/Principal, or

- the CEO/Principal the grievance or dispute will normally be dealt with by the Chair of the Mater Dei Board of Directors.

Written grievances or disputes may be sent to:

Karen Taylor
 Mater Dei
 229 Macquarie Grove Road
 CAMDEN NSW 2570
 PO Box 3090 NARELLAN NSW 2567

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Procedure for grievance and disputes and appeals management

- in the first instance to the Program Manager
- the Executive Assistant to the CEO/Principal, or
- to the CEO/Principal.

1. Processing the grievance, dispute or appeal

The Executive Assistant to the CEO/Principal will be responsible for;

- registering the grievance, dispute or appeal in the Grievance and Disputes Register;
- informing the complainant that their grievance or dispute has been received and providing them with information about the process and time frame; and
- passing the grievance on to either the relevant Program Manager, the CEO/Principal or the Chair of the Board who will in turn investigate the grievance.

2. Investigating the grievance, dispute or appeal

The relevant Program Manager, the CEO/Principal or the Chair of the Board is responsible for:

- examining the grievance or dispute;
- investigating the grievance and dispute and deciding how to respond; and
- informing the complainant by letter of the grievance and dispute being received of what is being done to investigate and resolve it, and the expected time frame for resolution.

As far as possible, grievance and disputes or appeals will be investigated and resolved within 28 days of being received. If this time frame cannot be met, the complainant will be informed of the reasons why and of the alternative time frame for resolution.

3. Resolving the grievance and dispute

The relevant Program Manager, the CEO/Principal or the Chair of the Board is responsible for:

- making a decision or referring to the appropriate people for a decision

- informing the complainant of the outcome
- upheld (and if so what will be done to resolve it)
- resolved (and how this has been achieved), or
- if no further action can be taken, the reasons for this

- informing the complainant of any options for further action if required.

4. Reviewing the grievance and dispute:

If the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation and proposed resolution of their grievance and dispute or appeal they can seek a further review of the matter by talking to the CEO/Principal.

5. Referral to external procedure:

- a formal external Grievance and Disputes Procedure may follow Step 4 if the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome

The complainant will be referred to:

The NSW Ombudsman
 Telephone: 02 9286 1000
 Toll free 1800 451 524
 (TTY) 02 9264 8050
nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au

Grievance and disputes Resolution and Referral Service CRRS
www.crrs.org.au

NSW Anti-Discrimination Board
 Telephone: 02 9268 5544
 Toll Free 1800 670 812
www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb

WorkCover NSW
 Telephone: 131 050
www.workcover.nsw.gov.au

EAP (Employee Assistance Program)
 Catholic Care Intake
 Telephone: 02 4254 9316

Record keeping

A register of grievance, disputes and appeals will be kept in the Grievance and Disputes Register which is located in the Executive Assistant to the CEO/Principal's Office. The register will be maintained by the Executive Assistant to the CEO/Principal and will record the following for each grievance and dispute or appeal:

- details of the complainant and the nature of the grievance or dispute
- date lodged
- action taken
- date of resolution and reason for decision
- indication of complainant being notified of outcome, and
- complainant response and any further action.

Copies of all correspondence will be kept in the HR filing cabinet and maintained by the Executive Assistant to the CEO/Principal.

The Grievance and Disputes Register and files will be confidential and access is restricted to:

- CEO/Principal
- Executive Assistant to the CEO/Principal, and
- Investigating Officer.

Grievance and disputes involving specific staff members or volunteers

The Program Manager has delegated responsibility for resolving grievance and disputes or disputes involving staff members and volunteers.

Internal grievance and disputes, where a staff member or volunteer makes a grievance and dispute concerning another staff member or volunteer will be dealt with in accordance with the Mater Dei Grievance and Disputes Policy.

External grievance and disputes by clients or stakeholders made against a staff member or volunteer will be managed by the Program Manager who will:

- notify the staff member or volunteer of the complaint and its nature
- investigate the grievance and dispute and provide the staff member or volunteer with an opportunity to respond to any issues raised
- attempt to mediate the dispute (if appropriate) and/or attempt to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the outside party
- take any other action necessary to resolve the issue, and
- inform the CEO/Principal.

Grievance and disputes involving the CEO/Principal will be managed by the Mater Dei Board of Directors.

Grievance and disputes involving members of the Mater Dei Board of Directors

Grievance and disputes made against a member of the Mater Dei Board of Directors will be referred to the Chairperson. The Chairperson, or their delegate, will:

- notify the person about whom a grievance and dispute is being made of the grievance and dispute and its nature
- investigate the grievance and dispute and provide the member with an opportunity to respond to any issues raised, and
- attempt to mediate the dispute (if appropriate) and/or attempt to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the outside party.

Where the Chairperson of the Mater Dei Board of Directors is the subject of a grievance and dispute, the grievance and dispute should be referred to other office bearer/s.

If the matter remains unresolved, the Chairperson of the Mater Dei Board of Directors or notified office bearer will raise the matter at the next Board meeting. Depending on the seriousness of the grievance and dispute, the Board may:

- deal with the matter at its meeting, or
- refer the matter to the NSW Ombudsman

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- Informing staff, management and stakeholders of their rights and responsibilities with regards to grievances, disputes and appeals at the earliest possible stage of their involvement with the Organisation.;
- Effective communication and notification procedures;
- Effective record keeping procedures; and
- Initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

RELATED POLICIES/STATEMENTS

Mater Dei Grievance and Disputes Register

Mater Dei Staff Code of Conduct

Mater Dei Grievance Handling Process Brochure

Mater Dei Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement for Employees, Contractors and Volunteers

Approved at Leadership Team YES / NO / NA	Signed	Date
Approved at Board YES / NO / NA	Signed	Date
Staff Briefed YES / NO	Signed	Date
Review Date February 2016		