



UPPER YARRA
SECONDARY COLLEGE

www.uysc.vic.edu.au

Complaints

Rationale

A timely and professional response to parent complaints is an effective means of encouraging communication, building trust, and resolving issues for the betterment of all concerned.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide an outline of the complaints process at Upper Yarra Secondary College so that parents and members of the community are informed of how they can raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at our school.
- ensure that all complaints regarding Upper Yarra Secondary College are managed in a timely, effective, fair, and respectful manner.

Scope

This policy relates to complaints brought by parents, carers, students, or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to our school.

In some limited instances, the College may need to refer the complainant to another Department of Education and Training process where there are different mechanisms in place to review certain decisions, for example, expulsion appeals.

Implementation

Upper Yarra Secondary College welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, and is committed to continuous improvement.

We value open communication with our families and are committed to understanding complaints and addressing them appropriately.

We recognise that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection and learning.

We value and encourage open and positive relationships with our school community. We understand it is in the best interests of students for there to be a trusting relationship between families and the College.

When addressing a complaint, it is expected that all parties will:

- be considerate of each other's views and respect each other's role.
- be focused on resolution of the complaint, with the interests of the student involved, at the centre.
- act in good faith and cooperation.
- behave with respect and courtesy.
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate.
- operate within and seek reasonable resolutions that comply with any applicable legislation and Department of Education policy.

- recognise that schools and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

Preparation for raising a concern or complaint

Upper Yarra Secondary College encourages parents, carers or members of the community who may wish to submit a complaint to:

- carefully consider the issues you would like to discuss.
- remember you may not have all the facts relating to the issues that you want to raise.
- think about how the matter could be resolved.
- be informed by checking the policies and guidelines set by the Department and Upper Yarra Secondary College. (Further Information and Resources section below.)

Support person

You are welcome to have a support person to assist you in raising a complaint with the College.

Please advise us if you wish to have a support person to assist you, and provide their name, contact details, and their relationship to you.

Complaints process

Upper Yarra Secondary College is always happy to discuss with parents, guardians, carers and community members, any concerns they may have.

- Concerns in the first instance should be directed to your child's teacher, Team Leader, Assistant Principal or Principal. Where possible, school staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed.
- Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents or community members may wish to make a formal complaint to the Principal or Assistant Principal, noting that formal complaints should be directed to a member of the school's leadership team.
- If you would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our school will first seek to understand the issues and will then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together. The following process will apply:

Complaint received

Please email, telephone, or arrange a meeting through the UYSC Front Office with the Assistant Principal or Principal, to outline your complaint so we can fully understand what the issues are. We can discuss your complaint in a way that is convenient for you, whether in writing, in person or over the phone.

Information gathering

Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Principal, Assistant Principal, or nominee may need to gather further information to properly understand the situation. This process may involve speaking to others to obtain details about the situation or the concerns raised.

Response

- Where possible, a resolution meeting will be arranged with the Assistant Principal/Principal to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties.
- If after the resolution meeting we are unable to resolve the complaint together, we will work with you to produce a written summary of the complaint in the event you would like to take further action.

- In some circumstances, the Principal may determine that a resolution meeting would not be appropriate. In this situation, a response to the complaint will be provided in writing.

Timeline

- Upper Yarra Secondary College will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (usually within two school days) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner.
- Depending on the complexity of the complaint, Upper Yarra Secondary College may need time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of your complaint.
- We will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold a resolution meeting where appropriate within 10 working days of the complaint being raised.
- In situations where further time is required, Upper Yarra Secondary College will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.
- Upper Yarra secondary College will keep written records of complaints and document all steps taken to resolve the issue.

Please note that unreasonable conduct (e.g. vexatious complaints) may need to be managed differently to the procedures in this policy.

Resolution

Where appropriate, Upper Yarra Secondary College may seek to resolve a complaint by:

- An apology or expression of regret.
- A change of decision.
- A change of policy, procedure, or practice.
- Offering the opportunity for student counselling or other support.
- Other actions consistent with school values that are intended to support the student, parent and school relationship, engagement, and participation in the school community.

In some circumstances, Upper Yarra Secondary College may ask you to attend a meeting with an independent third party or participate in mediation with an accredited mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute.

Escalation

If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved by the College, or if your complaint is about the Principal and you do not wish to raise it directly with them, then the complaint should be referred to the North East Victoria Region by contacting the Community Liaison Officer.

Upper Yarra Secondary College may also refer a complaint to North Eastern Victoria Region if we believe that we have done all we can to address the complaint.

For more information about the Department's parent complaints process, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: [Raise a complaint or concern about your school.](#)

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on the College website.
- Included in UYSC staff induction processes.
- Included in transition and enrolment packs.

- Annual reference in school newsletter.
- Hard copy available from the College administration upon request.

Further information and resources

The Department of Education and Training's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- Complaints - Parents

The Department of Education and Training's parents' website:

- [Raise a complaint or concern about your school](#)

Links to UYSC Policies:

- UYSC Statement of Values and Communication
- UYSC Code of Conduct

Review and approval

Ratified By: UYSC School Council	
Review Date: March 2022	Responsible for Review: Principal Scott Tully School Council President Robert Hay
Next review date: March 2026	

