



Minaret College

Grievance and Complaints Resolution Policy and Procedures

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1 Rationale

Minaret College aims to create a harmonious and productive environment where a three-way partnership between parents, staff and students is cultivated and nurtured. The core business of the College is conducted through relationships; therefore, a high value is placed on maintaining and protecting relationships within the College community. The College affirms the dignity and value of all peoples and seeks to conduct all matters in a way that respects and cares for people.

The intention of the College is to provide a professional, safe and nurturing atmosphere, however, just as any environment, there also exists a potential for grievances and tension to arise. The resolution of any school related grievance held by a member of a school community is vital to the well-being and success of the school and its students.

Minaret College is open to receiving concerns and complaints with the view to improving the services provided and protecting the well-being of our students.

- General complaints will be handled under the Guidelines section of this policy.
- Bullying complaints or concerns will be handled as outlined in the Bullying and Harassment and Behaviour Management policies.
- Matters to do with child abuse be it physical, sexual or emotional in nature will be handled as outlined in the Commitment to Child Safety, Crimes Act and Mandatory Reporting policies.

It is Minaret College's intent to resolve to the satisfaction of all concerned any complaint or grievance in as timely a manner as possible. The guiding principles are to be humble and gentle, be patient, ensure discussions are open and constructive, bearing with one another in love and generous intention. Make every effort to keep the unity with one another through the bond of peace.

2 Definition and Scope

This policy applies to the management of all grievances and complaints received by Minaret College.

A *grievance* is when the impacted individual/party perceives an action of decision has been taken (or not taken) which they believe to be of concern, unfair and/or causing conflict.

A *complaint* may be raised when the individual/party perceives the issue is high risk (e.g. highly confidential) or the consequence of the issue puts them or others in significant danger. Additionally, if a grievance is unsuccessfully resolved, the impacted individual/party may escalate the concern as a complaint.

The processes for addressing a grievance or complaint are both outlined as part of this policy. However, this policy does not address grievances or complaints relating to employment matters under industrial award.

3 Confidentiality and Victimisation

The parties involved at any stage of the grievance or complaint process are required to maintain confidentiality at all times. The parties must not disclose, by any form of communication, either the fact or the substance of the matter to anyone other than those directly involved in the grievance or complaint investigation or resolution.

A person must not victimise or otherwise subject another person to detrimental action as a consequence of that person raising concern, providing information about or otherwise being involved in the resolution of a grievance under these procedures.

Any breach of either the confidentiality or non-victimisation requirements will be treated seriously by the College, and may result in disciplinary action.

4 Resolution Timeframes and Potential Outcomes

Issues of grievance or complaint can be a stressful period for all involved and so the investigating staff member must proceed efficiently while still taking the necessary time to gain a full picture of the situation. Depending on the nature of the issue, the timeframes to resolve will vary.

It is therefore expected that at each point of the process a timeframe is given to those involved in the grievance/complaint and expected timeframes. If those impacted are unsatisfied with the timeframes, feedback should be provided. If unable to be resolved the party may choose to escalate to the next stage of the process.

Outcomes of either grievances or complaints will depend on the findings of the investigation. Course of action may include:

- Education/training
- Ongoing monitoring of situation/behaviour
- Counselling
- Change in College policy or procedure
- Mediation
- Written apology

If, during the investigation, a breach of policy is identified by any party, this will be managed according to the relevant policy.

5 Islamic Perspective

O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do. (5:8)

The College affirms the dignity and value of all people as Allah's creation; and seeks to conduct all matters in a way that pleases Allah (SWT) and cares for people. In the event of a dispute or conflict within the School, the process shall follow the principles set forth in Islam. Making peace and resolving a complaint or dispute is an Islamic duty; hence we should be careful not to harm others, as there is great reward for those who strive for peace and preserve brotherhood.

The believers are but a single brotherhood, so make peace and reconciliation between your two contending brothers; and fear Allah that you may receive mercy (49:10)

6 External Bodies

At any time, a student, parent/carer, staff or community member may choose to refer their concerns to an external body such as the Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority (VRQA), the Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, or the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

Grievance Procedures

6.1 Introduction

The following section outlines the procedures expected to be followed for each student, parent, staff and community member. Where the impacted individual/party has dual roles (e.g. staff member *and* parent of a student), the process followed should be based on the nature of the concern. For example, a staff member who has concern regarding their child who is a student, the 'parent' procedure should be followed.

Prior to initiating the relevant procedure, it is expected that (where possible) an attempt has been made to bring resolution informally. Where that is not possible or has been unsuccessful the below relevant procedure should be followed.

In all grievance procedures a decision must be made as to if the concern requires formal investigation. Investigations may be commenced informally and later be formalised due to the nature of information which comes to light in the initial stages of investigation.

Formal investigation must be followed when either:

- The impacted individual/party requests a formal investigation
- At any stage during the investigation it appears there has been a breach of school policy and/or law.
- Details of the allegation, if proven accurate may lead to further action (eg. Disciplinary action).

Note: Formalising an investigation does not predict an outcome of the investigation – it reflects the requirement to thoroughly investigate and document the investigation and outcome, regardless of outcome.

6.2 Students

Of priority is that students can raise a grievance with a staff member with whom they feel comfortable. The expectation is that students will raise concerns with their teacher or coach however if they do not feel comfortable to do so, the Student Wellbeing Specialist or Head of School would also be appropriate.

In summary:

- The student should approach either the teacher or coach
- The teacher may try to resolve the concern informally
- The coach may investigate informally or formally
- Formal investigation will result in notification of the Head of School, Head of Campus and Executive Principal
- Formal investigation recommendations must be endorsed by the HOS (or HOC/EP if requested)
- Formal investigation outcomes will be communicated in writing to the student
- Record of formal investigation and outcomes will be held by the Head of School
- If the student is unsatisfied with the outcome, the issue may be escalated via the formal Complaint process (see relevant section in this document)

Please refer to Appendix One for full detail.

6.3 Parent/Carer

A parent/carers may raise personal concerns or concern on behalf of their child. To ensure that grievances can be dealt with in a timely and confidential way we ask parents/carers to email or phone call. Alternatively, a meeting time can be arranged. Meetings can be booked via reception.

In summary:

- The parent should approach the Head of School
- Based on the nature of the concern, the Head of School may investigate the issue or delegate to a suitable staff member (including Student Wellbeing Specialist, Curriculum Specialist, Coach, Deputy Head of School).
- The staff member will investigate informally or formally
- The Head of School will notify Head of Campus and Executive Principal if commencing formal investigation
- Formal investigation recommendations must be endorsed by the HOS (or HOC/EP if requested)
- Written outcome of a formal investigation will be provided
- Record of formal investigation and outcomes will be held by the Head of School
- If the parent is unsatisfied with the outcome the issue may be escalated via the formal Complaint process (see relevant section in this document)

Please refer to Appendix Two for full detail.

6.4 Staff

If a staff member has a grievance, their Head of School or Manager is the avenue for resolution. If the staff member feels uncomfortable to raise the concern with their Head of School/Manager, the Head of Campus or Executive Manager of Operations is the alternate avenue for academic and operations staff respectively. The receiver of the complaint will complete a formal or informal investigation based on the nature of the concern.

In summary:

- The staff member should approach the Head of School/Manager
- The grievance will be investigated informally or formally
- The Head of School will notify Head of Campus and Executive Principal if commencing formal investigation
- Formal investigation recommendations must be endorsed by the HOS (or HOC/EP if requested)
- Written outcome of a formal investigation will be provided
- Record of formal investigation and outcomes will be held by HR
- If the staff member is unsatisfied with the outcome the issue may be escalated via the formal Complaint process (see relevant section in this document)

Note: If a staff member would like advice or support the Staff Wellbeing Specialist is available however this role is not responsible for decision making or resolution. Resolution of issues can only be achieved by the above-mentioned grievance or complaint process.

Please refer to Appendix Three for full detail.

6.5 Community member

Minaret college aspires to make a positive contribution to the local, national and international community. There may be times where we fall short of the stand we set ourselves and therefore community feedback is important to us.

Community feedback should be directed to the Executive Principal via the Formal Complaint Procedures outlined below.

7 Formal Complaint Procedures

A *complaint* may be raised when the individual/party perceives the issue is high risk (e.g. highly confidential) or the consequence of the issue puts them or others in significant danger. Additionally, if a grievance is dealt with without successful resolution, the impacted individual/party may escalate as a complaint.

A written complaint can be submitted in person to the Executive Principal (or reception). Alternatively, an appointment can be requested via reception.

Based on the nature of the complaint the Executive Principal will investigate or assign investigation to an appropriate member of staff – this may include being formally investigated via the grievance process. This may (or may not) also include contacting the concerned party for further information regarding their complaint.

The Executive Principal will review investigation findings and approve the intended course of action. Depending on the nature of the issue, outcomes may be communicated by the Executive Principal or a member of staff.

8 Informal Investigation Procedure

An informal investigation requires the investigator understand and validate the concerns and provide an acceptable outcome to all parties. As the severity of the allegations are not as high, formal centralized documentation is not required.

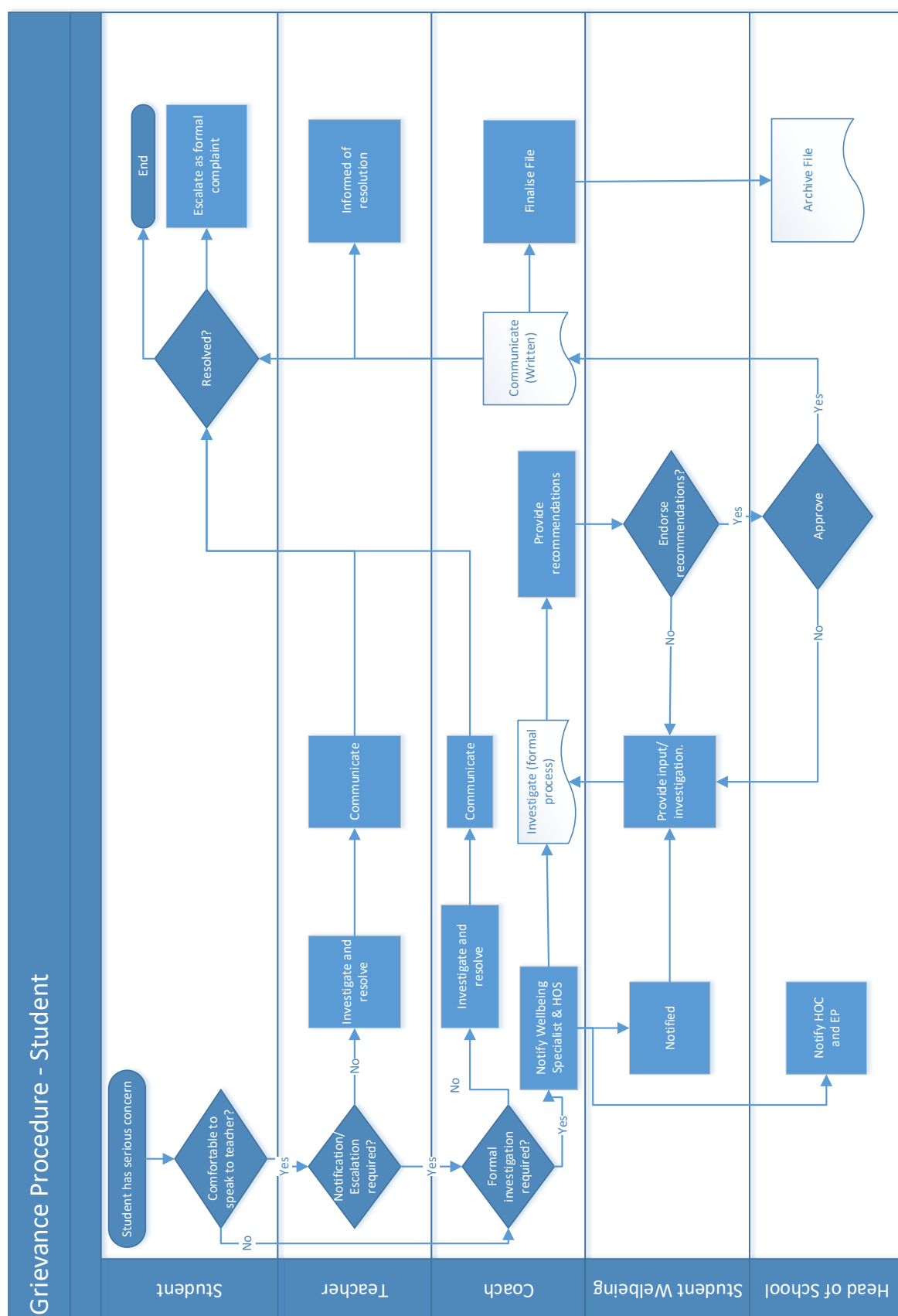
The investigator however is still expected to take notes throughout the process and archive them appropriately. If the issue escalates or repeats, notes from previous informal investigations may be called upon to complete a formal investigation.

9 Formal Investigation Procedure (for both grievances and complaints)

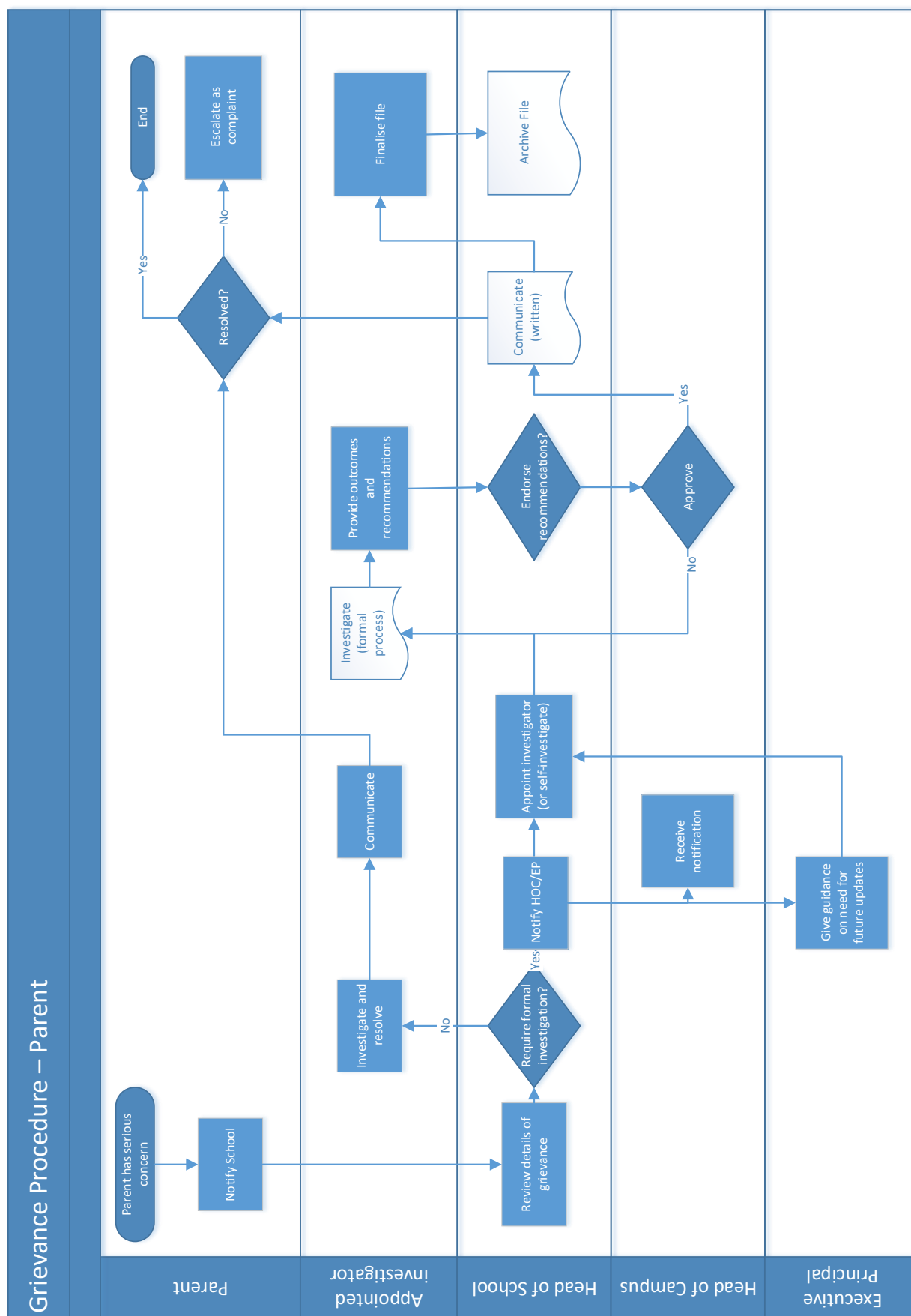
For either a grievance or complaint, where a formal investigation procedure is to be followed, the below outlines the expectations of the appointed investigator:

- Review details of the initial grievance/complaint
- Plan an investigation outline – including who else should be interviewed as part of the investigation and what additional information may be required – review and amend the plan regularly as the investigation continues
- If required, appoint an appropriate support person to take notes during interviews/discussions. The appointed support person should not contribute within interviews however may be consulted by the appointed investigator for their views outside the investigation meetings
- Where possible, meet with the individual who has raised the initial grievance/complaint to clarify and understand their perspective fully
- Request any evidence from the complainant to substantiate their concerns (e.g. emails, notes)
- Continue to conduct investigations through interviews and ask for evidence where possible
- When arranging interviews, the invited party should be informed that the interview is part of a formal investigation process and therefore they may also bring a support person to the interview if they wish.
- When all perspectives have been gained, prepare a summary of the investigation findings and recommendations.
- Present recommendations to the relevant approver to review and approve
- Once outcome is approved, prepare a written letter to summarise the outcome of the complaint. Where possible, meet with the complainant to discuss the outcomes and provide the letter in person.
- Details of any consequences to individual staff members should not be provided to the complainant.
- Finalise the full investigation file (including records of interviews, evidence and outcome letter) and provide to the relevant area for archiving

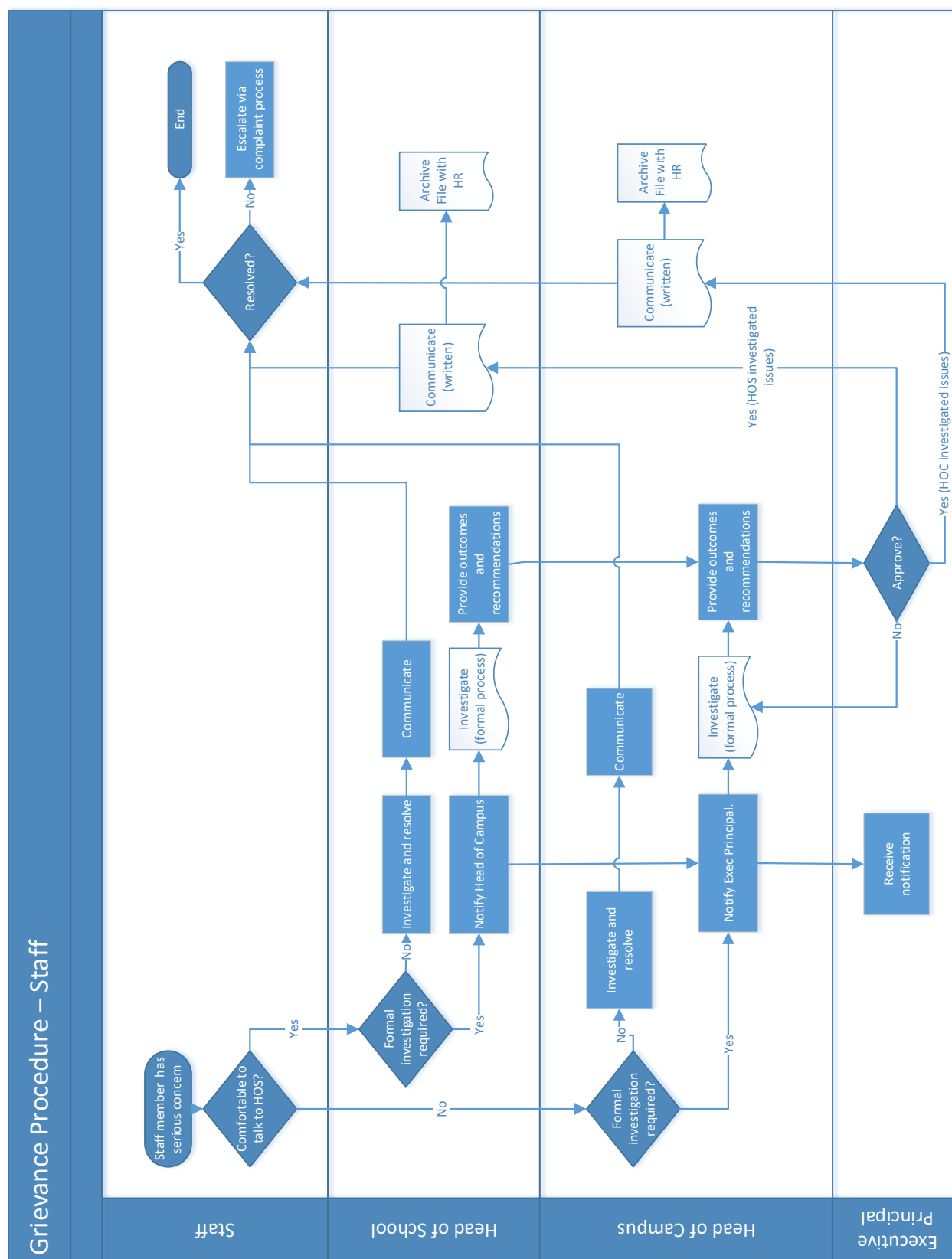
10 Appendix One – Grievance process (student)



11 Appendix Two - Grievance process (parent)



12 Appendix Three - Grievance process (staff)



13 Related Policies

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Child Safe Standards and Code of Conduct
- Betrayal of Trust Policy & Procedure - Crimes Act 1958(Vic)

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Executive Responsible	Sead Omerovic
Approved by	
Minaret College Board	Date 20 June 2018
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