



**ODYSSEY HOUSE**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

# ODYSSEY COLLEGE

ANNUAL REPORT 2022





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# Welcome

## to Odyssey College's 2022 Annual Report

**The College is a member of the Association of Independent Schools and delivers the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Curriculum to residents of Odyssey House.**

All teaching programs at Odyssey College include the NESA outcomes as per the Requirement 3.3 of the Registered and Accredited Non-Government Schools (NSW). Importantly, the Stage 6 Life Skills programs are designed to meet the diverse needs of our students.

Odyssey College continues to support vulnerable and disadvantaged adults who have been referred to Odyssey House for rehabilitation due to drug and/or alcohol dependence, sometimes coupled with extensive complex trauma and mental health needs. Whilst there are expectations for engagement and positive academic achievement, Odyssey College acknowledges that students have varying capacities, individual talents, and often significant hurdles to overcome.

In 2022, Odyssey College continued its bespoke educational offer and revised the curriculum to remain relevant to students. Each resident studied a balanced combination of subjects including Industrial Technology, Visual Art, PDHPE, Mathematics and English. Online qualifications continue to be offered to residents after completion of core studies and include Certificate and Diploma courses. With

additional learning spaces constructed and currently in construction, and a greater variety of subjects offered, Odyssey College continued its successful educational program and relevant skill development for its students. The class sizes are kept small, enabling a more personalised and engaging learning experience.

Throughout the year, vocational courses were offered to residential clients, enabling them to gain qualifications whilst in the program. This included Forklift licenses, White Card and Traffic Control Courses. In addition, a Certificate III in Hospitality enabled students to increase their employment opportunities post Odyssey House.

Many of our students have endured limited or negative school experiences during their formative years. It is within this context that our passionate teachers strive to address the unique needs and confront the challenges faced by our students. This student-centred approach lies at the very heart of our educational philosophy.

The invaluable support of the Odyssey House NSW Executive, the School Advisory Committee and the Odyssey House Board has allowed Odyssey College to make rich contributions to the healing journey of so many residents.

**Cath Macgonigal**  
Executive Director and Principal  
Odyssey House and Odyssey College

# Chair of the School Advisory Committee



**As Chair of the School Advisory Committee, I am grateful to look back on 2022 as a year of consolidated progress and achievement by staff and students at Odyssey College.**

Odyssey College provides a range of New South Wales Educational Standards Authority (NESA) approved educational and vocational programmes for residents of Odyssey House.

Operating within the therapeutic community model of Odyssey House, the College enables residents to develop their talents and skills with the goal of both future employment and a safe healthy life. We were fortunate to have the services of Lyn Mckenzie, Director, Finance and Commercial Services, in an Acting Principal role then Barbara Maxfield after we farewellled Principal Peter Reuben to seek further opportunities. We were particularly grateful to Barbara Maxfield for her management of the College's registration process, which was approved for five years.

After a thorough recruitment process, we were delighted to welcome Cath Macgonigal in the role of Principal. Cath has a depth of knowledge and passionate commitment to the education sector and to Odyssey's vision of a "world free from addiction".

We congratulated long standing School Advisory Committee member, Valerie Hoogstad, who was recipient of an AM in the 2022 Australia Day Honours. We welcomed Mr Steven Briggs onto the Committee. Steven is a proud Gamileroi man from Armidale and

has extensive experience in the TAFE sector and with Aboriginal students.

We farewellled Julie Babineau, CEO and thanked her for her wonderful support of the work within the College. I am grateful to all members of the School Advisory Committee: Lyn Mackenzie, Director, Finance and Commercial Services, Valerie Hoogstad, committee member, Julie Babineau, CEO, Steven Briggs and David Kelly, Director of Programs.

Staff coped with the continuing impact of Covid-19 on their work and made every effort to provide a stable learning environment for students. We are so fortunate to have such hard working and consistently professional staff. Our aim with education at Odyssey College is to equip students with the education they need to face the future in "A world free of addiction".

The College gives residents both practical and cognitive skills to lead fulfilling and healthy lives, free from substance misuse. Odyssey College does valuable work towards this future.

**Dr Debra Keliher**  
**Chair of the School Advisory Committee**



# Contextual Information about the School and Characteristics of the Student Body

## The College

Odyssey College, set on two sites, Eaglevale and Ingleburn in South West Sydney, is the education unit for residential clients of Odyssey House NSW. Stage 6 Life Skill subjects are taught to residents to assist in the transition to new lives at home, at work and beyond the Odyssey House therapeutic community.

During 2022, 266 people were admitted into the Odyssey House NSW Residential Program and each one attended Odyssey College.

The College is a member of the Association of Independent Schools. It delivers the Stage 6 Life Skills syllabus, which provides course options for students with special education needs who cannot access regular course outcomes.

Odyssey House NSW was founded in 1977 by Sydney businessman, Walter McGrath, following the death of

his son from a heroin overdose. As a testament to his son, Mr McGrath committed himself to developing a program to help people overcome problems related to drug dependences.

The school has a closed enrolment policy and allows admission through referral only. The College Principal is delegated authority by the Odyssey House Board and reports to the School Advisory Committee as a sub-committee of the Board.

There are several community engagement opportunities throughout the year. These include Open Days when family and loved ones are invited to the facility to meet staff and residents and enjoy lunch and speeches in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere.

## Mission, Vision and Values

All residential Odyssey House NSW clients are enrolled into the school and therefore share our Vision, Mission and Values.

**Our vision:** A world free of addiction.

**Our mission:** To build safe and healthy communities by reducing the impact of substance misuse on individuals, families, carers and communities.

**Our values:**

**Professionalism.** We are committed to excellence by maintaining our professional boundaries and fulfilling responsibilities in an accountable, inclusive and objective manner.

**Creativity.** We trust in our limitless potential.

**Respect.** We demonstrate consideration and regard for the feelings, beliefs and rights of others.

**Integrity.** We act with honesty and adhere to consistent moral and ethical values and principles through our personal and professional behaviours.

### Our Mission

To build safe and healthy communities by reducing the impact of substance misuse on individuals, families, carers and communities.

### Our Vision

*A world  
free of  
addiction*









## Our Students

In 2022, students came from varying backgrounds and ethnicities but shared the desire for a fresh start. Many were not equipped to cope with the school system and had developed learning difficulties. Odyssey College provides a window of opportunity to address clients' learning needs and gave these students another chance to effectively participate in the school system.

The College is dynamic, innovative and accommodating of all students, who must be over 18 years and enrolled in the residential rehabilitation program.

All of our teaching programs are designed to build trust, enhance self-esteem, encourage self-expression and develop self-identity. Our aim is to promote each individual's personal growth as they journey through their education so they flourish. Although they may not all finish their studies, our desire is that each student will develop a love of learning to help them

succeed after therapy at Odyssey House.

In our educational programming, implementation and evaluation we have interconnected the objectives of secondary education with the aims of the therapeutic community, and meet student needs by providing relevant programs at the therapeutically optimum stage.

Education is key to rehabilitation for residential clients. While all courses address NESA syllabus outcomes they also provide the opportunity for students to develop new skills and a greater sense of confidence.

The following diagram shows the pathway that residents take at Odyssey House. Students' educational path commences in the Foundations of Recovery program and continues through to the end of the Senior level.



# Journey of Recovery

## Odyssey House NSW's Long-term Residential Program

### MEDICAL UNIT

#### Week 1\*

All residents start in our Medical Unit, where they receive specialised withdrawal support provided 24/7 by our nursing team.

### 1. FOUNDATIONS OF RECOVERY

#### Months 1-3\*

This 12-week program can be completed standalone or as the initial stage of the longer-term program. Residents begin their recovery journey with mental health support and relapse prevention through individual and group therapies. Residents participate in vocational counselling, Odyssey College, Mingu Yabun (ATSI clients only) and engage in recreational activities.

### 2. CORE

#### Months 3-6\*

This 12-week program comprises the second stage of the longer-term program, where residents build on the skills and practices they learned during the individual and group therapies in Foundations of Recovery.

### 3. SENIOR

#### Months 6-9\*

During the third stage of the Program, residents continue to build on their skills and practices, and take on even more responsibility. At the conclusion of this stage, residents may opt to leave while still being considered as having completed treatment.

### 4. LEVEL 4

#### Months 9-12\*

This last stage is optional, although strongly encouraged. This part of the program is focused on giving back and providing leadership to new residents, developing a recovery focused lifestyle, and reintegrating with the wider community. Clients are linked in with our community programs to ensure ongoing support is always available.

\*All timings listed are approximate, residents graduate each stage of the program when they have met the criteria needed to move to the next stage.

## Celebrating Learning at Odyssey College!

The ultimate goal of our program at Odyssey is for all of our residents to return to a life where they feel valued and respected. Our graduates leave us with a positive sense of self-worth, a renewed confidence in themselves and a skill set that allows them to lead productive lives.

The focus at the College is to support each resident in their learning and provide them with the skills and confidence to follow a career path once they graduate. This is quite unique for each student...some will want to return to the work they've done in the past, others are surprised by the new direction they make take! What's for sure is that the Odyssey House program is not like the past school experience from when our residents were children. The teachers are incredibly dedicated and will go out of their way to help our residents. They are accepting, they are patient and most importantly, they genuinely care for all their students, and treat them with respect.

In our **Visual Arts** program, students will typically create 5 - 6 artworks and these projects will allow the individual to express their emotions in a creative way. Art has long been associated with therapy and healing and the creative process has been found to provide relief from stress, whilst encouraging creative thinking, boosting self-esteem, and providing a sense of accomplishment.

Students are afforded time to reflect and re-engage with their emotions and express their feelings in ways where they may not have previously been able to. Completed art often tells a story of a resident's journey and this journey can sometimes be more effectively presented in images rather than words.

In our **Industrial Technology – Timber** course, simple projects ensure students complete set tasks given to a quality standard. This allows students to develop confidence, improve self-worth and gain positive educational experiences early in their treatment. Quite often, people in addiction have damaged relationships, hindering their support network. Timber Technology and Visual Arts allows our students to make quality projects to give to their loved ones. This simple act of giving often assists in the healing process and allows relationships to be rebuilt.

Being literate and numerate are vital skills for everyday survival. All of students at Odyssey College take part in English and Mathematics lessons.

The Stage 6 Life Skills **English** syllabus is flexibly structured allowing for individually tailored, differentiated, relevant and meaningful lessons that directly address the diverse learning needs, strengths, goals, interests, and prior learning of all students. This equips students with the skills and knowledge necessary to undertake further education, upskilling

and or training in a supportively guided learning environment to prepare them for future employment.

Students are provided with opportunities to develop their oral communication skills in different contexts as they view, interpret, and respond to a variety of texts in a range of media. Through the integration of public speaking and mock job interviews into the program, students are encouraged and scaffolded to participate in activities designed to boost their confidence, body language awareness and self-esteem when speaking in front of an audience in a safe environment.

**Maths** at Odyssey College includes 5 main units of work: Number and Modelling, Financial Mathematics, Measurement, Plans-Maps-Networks and Statistics and Probability.

Maths is tailored to the individual residents' needs catering to each students' academic level and their career choice eg a resident who wants to be a landscaper may be working on cubic measurement, while a resident who wants to be a nurse might be working on percentages, ratios and rates.



The **Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE)** course at Odyssey College is designed to equip individuals with the necessary values, attitudes, knowledge, understanding, and skills to lead safe, healthy, and active lives. It focuses on various aspects of personal health and wellbeing that are essential in everyday life, with an emphasis on effective management of these issues.

One key component of the PDHPE course is nutrition. Students are provided with valuable knowledge and understanding about proper nutrition and its impact on overall health and wellbeing. They learn about the importance of balanced diets, essential nutrients, and healthy eating habits. By understanding how to properly fuel their bodies, individuals can feel their best and maintain optimal physical and mental performance.

Another important aspect of the PDHPE course is the development of teamwork skills. Students are



given opportunities to work collaboratively in teams, fostering skills such as communication, cooperation, and leadership. These skills are essential in various aspects of life, including personal relationships, the workplace, and community engagement.

Physical fitness is also a significant focus of the PDHPE course. Students are encouraged to assess their fitness levels and set goals for improvement. They learn about different fitness components, such as cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition. Through regular physical activity and training, students work towards measurable improvements in their fitness levels, promoting a healthy and active lifestyle.

Furthermore, the PDHPE course exposes residents to a range of leisure activities. This allows them to explore different forms of recreation and identify mindful activities that can contribute to their overall well-being such as Dragon Boating and Swimming. Engaging in leisure activities can serve as therapeutic tools, helping individuals relax, de-stress, and find enjoyment in their lives.

Our dedicated teachers at Odyssey College often hear comments like ...

*"Thank you for treating us like human beings!"*

*"I am happy that I have learnt things so that I can help my children with their homework!"*

## Student Characteristics

In 2022, 266 residents studied at Odyssey College, including 47 Indigenous students (17%).

All students are accommodated by the College regardless of disability or medical condition.

Students' participation in the education program is determined at Assessment Phase through analysis of their education, treatment plan, therapists' recommendations, case reviews and self-assessment. Continued enrolment in the education program is dependent on students' health and behaviour in the treatment program so some students may also withdraw.

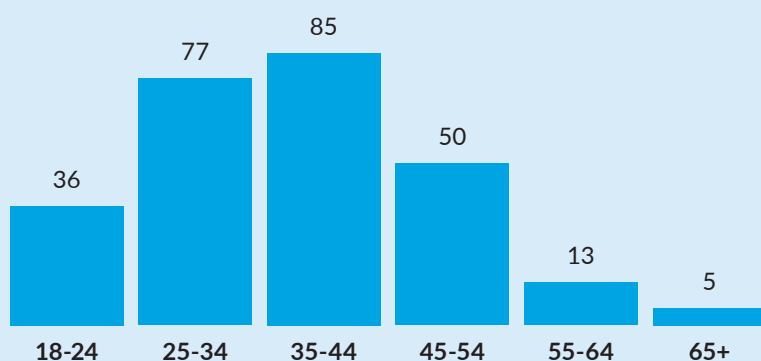
**Students enter the program via the following means:**

- Court stipulation
- Drug court stipulation (Magistrates Early Release into Treatment Program)
- Probation and Parole referral
- Family referral Self referral

## Gender and Age

The composition of the 266 residents in the 2022 student body was 37% female (98) and 63% male (168).

In 2022, residents were a range of ages at date of enrolment. This created a vibrant community in conjunction with students' varying backgrounds and ethnicities.



Gender	Number	Percent
Male	168	63%
Female	98	37%

Age	Number	Percent
18-24	36	14%
25-34	77	29%
35-44	85	32%
45-54	50	19%
55-64	13	5%
65+	5	2%

# Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

Odyssey College is registered for Stage 6 and offers Life Skills courses. As such, it does not have accreditation for presenting candidates for the Higher School Certificate and does not participate in National Literacy and Numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

After admission, each resident is assessed over four to six weeks to ascertain their suitability for the program. At the conclusion of this Assessment Phase a Treatment Plan is formulated and educational goals are set. All students have an Individualised Learning Plan.

Consistent with the philosophy of a self-help program, students are continually required to monitor their own educational progress which is documented in a variety of ways and at regular intervals.

Curriculum outcomes are assessed for each subject area with a rotation of subjects which enable students to complete their mandatory hours.

Certificates of Attainment are presented to students who meet these requirements.

## Senior Secondary Outcomes (Student Achievement)

Odyssey College is not accredited to award the Higher School Certificate. All classes are ungraded; however, course outcomes are continually assessed to assist in evaluating the curriculum overall.





# Teacher Professional Learning, Accreditation and Qualifications

## Teacher Standards

Odyssey College employs six teachers of whom five work full-time and one part-time.

Five of the teachers have teacher qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia.

Category	Number of Teachers
Teachers with teacher education qualifications from a higher institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI_NOOSR) guidelines	6 <i>(includes Principal who is also a teacher)</i>
Teachers with a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines	0

All Odyssey College staff receive internal training at the commencement of each term. Courses are selected to ensure that they enable staff to develop their skills in working with our clientele.

Where possible, expert external providers are engaged to deliver training pertinent to professionals working with substance misuse students.

Description of Professional Learning Activity	Number of Teachers
First Aid and Infection Prevention	All staff
Trauma informed Practice	All staff
NCCD Factsheet and Collection of Data	All staff
Autism – Differentiating the Curriculum	2
Middle Leaders	2
Conflict of Interest	All staff
Safe Remote Learning	All staff
Workplace bullying, harassment, and occupational violence	All staff
Code of Conduct	All staff
Discrimination and equal employment opportunity	All staff
WHS Awareness	All staff
Student Duty of Care	All staff
Child Protection	All staff
Growth Mindset	All staff
Risk Management	All Staff
Responding Together	1
Managing Classroom Behaviour	2
Biological Effects of Childhood Trauma on Brain Development	1
Teaching Mindfulness to Secondary Students	1
Mentally Healthy Communities	1
Introduction to Secondary STEM	1

## Workforce Composition

There are six teaching staff employed within Odyssey College and one Administrative Support. All teachers are full-time permanent employees except for the PDHPE teacher who is part-time. Five of the teachers are female and one is male.

We have actively sought to employ a mix of experienced teachers and new graduates, with one teacher aiming to move from provisional status to proficient next year

## Student Attendance, and Retention Rates and Post-School Destinations in Secondary Schools

All classes are ungraded and students do not sit for any external examinations. Our students are in fulltime care and therefore attend the appropriate classes unless they are sick or have medical or legal appointments, such as court appearances, which they must attend. As such, management of non-attendance is not an issue for our school.

All students are on Individual Education Plans so that non-attendance due to court, medical appointments, illness, etc do not adversely affect the completion of their courses.

### Post-School Destinations

Odyssey College provides a Vocational Guidance Program for all students in the latter stage of the Odyssey House residential program. This course has played a significant role in assisting graduates of the program to gain employment. Some of our graduates enrol in training courses for the first time in their lives while others gain employment for the first time.

There are four points of departure from the program and hence withdrawal from the school. This may occur after the Assessment phase, Foundations of Recovery (3 months), Core (6 months) and Senior (9 months). For a student to graduate from the program, they must spend time serving the community and this generally occurs at around 12 months.





# Enrolment Policy

## (and Characteristics of the Student Body)

Reference number:	14.1
Version number:	4
Document owner:	Odyssey College Principal
Document approval:	The Director of Residential Services
Document endorsement:	The Odyssey College Advisory Committee on behalf of the Board
Document location:	Media Drive/Intranet
Date document approved:	March 2023
Next review date:	March 2024

### 14.1.1 Scope

- Odyssey College is the Education Unit at Odyssey House (OH) and provides educational experiences to foster the personal growth of residents in the OH therapeutic community. PLC is registered by the NSW Department of Education and Communities through NESA (NSW Educational Standards Authority) and is a member of The Association of Independent Schools.

### 14.1.2 Policy

Odyssey College keeps a register of enrolments of all students at the College in electronic form.

- Name, age and address, where applicable.
  - Date of enrolment
  - Date of leaving the College and the Student's destination, where applicable.
- Odyssey College has a closed enrolment policy which only allows admission through referral. As a rehabilitation service, only students 18 years old and over can be referred.
  - Enrolment at Odyssey College is mandatory for any individual participating in the OH residential rehabilitation program.
  - Enrolment is subject to interview at the Admissions and Intake Centre (AIC) at 199 Regent St, Redfern. As part of this process a member of the College staff will meet with individual students before offering a place.
  - Students enrolling at school for the first time must be 18 years of age or over at the time of enrolment.

- Only limited courses are offered at Odyssey College with only Stage 6 Life Skills, non-examinable subjects accessible. Subject selection is the delegated responsibility of the College.
- Odyssey College is committed to meeting the individual learning and other needs of its students. Accordingly:
  - the College will only accept and continue the enrolment of a student if it considers that its resources and facilities will meet their needs, with reasonable adjustments where necessary.
  - the College reserves the right to refuse to enrol a student, if the College is not able to meet their needs, even with reasonable adjustments.
  - the College may also review any student's enrolment and may cancel the enrolment from the school if it is deemed that the College can no longer meet the student's needs.
- Odyssey College has an absolute discretion in determining the weight of each of the factors it considers in determining whether to offer a place for the student.
- Continued enrolment at Odyssey College is dependent upon the student making satisfactory academic progress, attending consistently, and the student observing all behavioural codes of conduct and other requirements of OH Residential Services and Odyssey College which are applicable.

References: AISNSW

## Other School Policies

Odyssey College aims to provide educational and social experiences which foster personal growth and empower students to effectively participate in the wider community.



## Student Welfare Policy

Reference number:	14.4
Version number:	3
Document owner:	Odyssey College Principal
Document approval:	The Director of Residential Services
Document endorsement:	Odyssey College Advisory Committee and the Quality and Clinical Safety Committee on behalf of the Board
Document location:	Media Drive/Intranet
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### 14.4.1 General

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual requires that a school must have in place policies and procedures to ensure that it provides a 'safe and supportive environment' for all students.

### 14.4.2 Support

Odyssey College aims to promote a learning environment where teachers and pupils are mutually supportive. Students and teachers should respect each other and not engage in conduct which undermines this mutual trust and support, and also respects the philosophy and ethics of the College. The College encourages consultation between all members of the community in matters which affect them.

### 14.4.3 Security

The College implements measures designed to promote the safety and wellbeing of students, particularly having regard to its professional judgement as to what is required and includes in its consideration such matters as:

- (a) appropriate levels of supervision including on-site and off-site activities;
- (b) security of buildings;
- (c) procedures in case of fire critical incidents ie. Odyssey House sites evacuation/lock down;
- (d) use of grounds and facilities;
- (e) travel on School-related activities; and
- (f) other appropriate matters ie. Residential Services (where additional procedures need to be put in place e.g. supervision 24/7).



The implementation of these requirements and procedures is monitored for compliance on an ongoing basis in line with Odyssey House Residential Services policies and procedures.

#### 14.4.4 Supervision

Appropriate measures are taken by Odyssey College staff to seek to ensure that all students are adequately cared for and supervised while undertaking both on-site and off-site activities, bearing in mind the type of activities and age of the students involved.

#### 14.4.5 Conduct

The College has in place a Code of Conduct for staff and students which may be supplemented from time to time by specific rules and directives. The Code of Conduct includes such matters as:

- (a) the rights and responsibilities of students and staff within the College community including the rights and responsibilities of students and staff as members of the Odyssey House (OH) therapeutic community.
- (b) behaviour management;
- (c) the role of any College leadership system (or equivalent) in the School and the monitoring of that system; and
- (d) the management and reporting of serious incidents in accordance with the OH Incident Management System (IMS) .
- (e) The College has established and implemented appropriate behaviour management practices for students, consistent with the philosophy of the College and with other aspects of this policy.
- (f) Odyssey College has a student leadership system in place.

#### 14.4.6 Complaints and Grievances

The College has in place processes for dealing with complaints and grievances raised by students. These processes will incorporate, as appropriate, principles of procedural fairness.

#### 14.4.7 Pastoral Care

- (a) Students are made aware of, and have access to, appropriate pastoral care arrangements and access to, and use of, counselling with the College through OH Residential Services.

- (b) The College takes reasonable measures to identify students with special needs and provide them with an appropriate level of support to assist such students with their schooling with minimal disruption, taking into account the resources available.

- (c) Students requiring health and/or medical services and support or medication will be assisted to access these in an appropriate manner in accordance with OH Residential Services policies and procedures.

#### 14.4.8 Communication

- (a) Odyssey College provides both formal and informal mechanisms to facilitate communication between those with an interest in the student's education and wellbeing. This may include communications between some or all of the following: student, spouse or other significant family member of the student; teacher; counsellor; Principal; OH Residential Services staff; representative of an appropriate government, welfare, health or other authority.

- (b) All of the above policies and procedures will apply when the College has made arrangements for students at the College to undertake courses, subjects, tutoring or other education on either site.

- (c) Teachers, staff and any other persons involved in the provision of education or other services for students of the College who are undertaking courses, subjects, tutoring or other education either on or off-site which have been arranged by the School, or who are involved, at the request of the College, in OH Residential Services for the purposes of their schooling, will be subject to the requirements of relevant police screening.

- (d) All of the above policies will be implemented in a manner that is appropriate to the College, its students and the OH Residential Services and with regard to the relevant legislative requirements that apply to the College and the students within its care.

Reference: AISNSW

# Discipline Policy

Reference number:	14.3
Version number:	4
Document owner:	Odyssey College Principal
Document approval:	The Director of Residential Services
Document endorsement:	Odyssey College Advisory Committee on behalf of the Board
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## 14.3.1 Introduction

It is publicly recognised that a strength of independent schools is the ability to maintain discipline and deal with disciplinary matters quickly and effectively to ensure that a positive and productive learning environment is maintained for all students.

The students of the College in Odyssey House are over 18 years of age and reside within a Residential Rehabilitation program. The disciplinary action taken by the College will be the same as that used in the Odyssey House Residential Rehabilitation program.

## 14.3.2 Procedural Fairness

The NSW Government has accepted the recommendations of Part 1 of the Review of Non-Government Schools (Grimshaw Review) which includes requiring schools to develop policies relating to discipline that includes suspension, expulsion and alternatives to corporal punishment (which must be precluded).

To be registered, it is a requirement of a non-government school to have disciplinary procedures that are based on principles of procedural fairness.

The following is an extract from the Odyssey House Residents Manual:

*Procedural fairness is a basic right of all when dealing with authorities. Procedural fairness refers to what is sometimes described as the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision'.*

*The 'hearing rule' includes the right of the person against whom an allegation has been made to:*

- *know the allegations related to a specific matter and any other information which will be taken into account in considering the matter.*
- *know the process by which the matter will be considered.*
- *respond to the allegations.*
- *know how to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations.*

*The 'right to an unbiased decision' includes the right to:*

- *impartiality in an investigation and decision making.*
- *an absence of bias by a decision-maker," and*

*The review mechanism adds to the fairness of the process."*

Odyssey House – Odyssey College holds the view that the right of review or appeal depends on the circumstances of each individual case and it is not a necessary component of providing procedural fairness.

## 14.3.3 Guidelines and potential consequences

Students are required to abide by the College Rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with authority delegated by the College.

Where a student disregards rules, disobeys instructions or otherwise engages in conduct which causes or may cause harm, inconvenience or embarrassment to the College, staff members or other students, the students may be subject to disciplinary action.

The disciplinary procedures undertaken by the



College vary according to the seriousness of the alleged offence. Where the allegation, if proved, may result in the student being asked to exit the College, the student and Odyssey House Residential Director will be informed of the allegations and procedural steps to be followed in dealing with the matter. In relation to all matters to be investigated, students will be informed of the nature of the allegation and given an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

The penalties imposed vary according to the behaviour and the prior record of the student. At the lower end of the scale, an admonition or detention may be appropriate. At the upper end of the scale, the behaviour could result in suspension or expulsion from the OH Residential Program.

The College prohibits the use of corporal punishment in disciplining students attending the College.

The College doesn't explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the College.

The following are suggested options only to assist your school in determining when and how to apply processes that might result in the suspension or expulsion of a student, and what review and appeal rights, if any, are afforded to students in such situations.

Where the offending behaviour is of such a nature that it may result in suspension or expulsion, the student will be:

- (a) informed of the alleged infringement.
- (b) informed as to who will make the decision on the penalty.
- (c) informed of the procedures to be followed which will include an opportunity to have a parent or guardian present when responding to the allegations; and
- (d) afforded a right of review or appeal.

The Principal will reach a preliminary decision in relation to the allegation and any proposed penalty and advise the student of the view. The student would be advised that if they wish this preliminary decision to be reviewed, they may make application for a review to the Principal and submit any information they want to be considered during the review process. The Principal will then either confirm the preliminary decision as final decision or amend the preliminary decision based on the additional information provided; or

The Odyssey College Advisory Council (Board) Principal in consultation with the Director of Residential Services is the body that makes the final determination in relation to disciplinary matters that may result in suspension or expulsion.

References: AISNSW



# Complaints and Grievances Resolution

Reference number:	14.5
Version number:	3
Document owner:	Odyssey College Principal or Manager
Document approval:	The Director of Residential Services and Director of Community Services
Document endorsement:	The Odyssey College Advisory Committee and the Quality and Clinical Safety Committee on behalf of the Board
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Next review date:	March 2024

## 14.5.1 Scope

Odyssey House has the following Procedure to deal with complaints and grievances of a general nature that may be held by students and clients.

Odyssey House recognises that students and clients may have a complaint or grievance over an Odyssey House related issue. This procedure provides a mechanism by which they can seek to have that complaint or grievance addressed. An outcome of this procedure may be that the complaint or grievance is found to be groundless.

Odyssey House will seek to ensure that any complaint or grievance is resolved at the earliest opportunity and in a timely manner and allow reasonable periods of time for discussion.

## 14.5.2 Complaint Investigation Procedure For Alleged Reportable Conduct By A Member Of Staff

a) Making Allegations - Allegations made by a student or other Odyssey House Community member against a member of staff for alleged reportable conduct:

- Should be made in writing to the Principal or Manager either by letter marked CONFIDENTIAL or in person. If inappropriate to contact the Principal or Manager, the Director of Residential Services of Odyssey House (OH) should be contacted
- Should be made confidentially and will be treated as confidential.
- Will be acknowledged in writing by the Principal or Manager, the Director of Residential Services or their delegate.

b) Definition of Reportable conduct is defined as follows: -

- any sexual offence or sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence or an offence involving child abuse material).
- any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child; and
- any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child whether or not, in any case, with the consent of the child The Principal or Manager, the Director of Residential Services or their delegate will respond to the complainant in writing and keep them informed throughout the investigation and of the investigation final findings if appropriate.

## 14.5.3 General Complaints And Grievance Procedure

The student or client complaint or grievance must initially be dealt with as close to its source as possible, with graduated steps for further discussion and resolution at higher levels of authority, for example:

(a) Student or client grievances with other students and clients. If a student or client has a grievance with the way he/she has been dealt with by other students and clients. He/she may:

- (i) ask his/her class teacher or therapist to help resolve the grievance.
- (ii) if the complaint or grievance is not resolved, he/she may take the matter to the Principal or Manager.

(b) Student or client grievance with a staff member or Odyssey House process.

When a student or client has a grievance with a staff member or Odyssey House process, he/she may take the following step. Discuss the matter with the staff member or other trusted adult. If the student or client and trusted adult that was consulted believe it is appropriate, one or both may discuss the matter with the staff member who is the subject of the complaint.

(c) In the situation where the grievance/complaint is against the Principal or a Manager, the student or client should contact the Director of Residential Services of Odyssey House. In the event the matter remains unresolved then the process described below should be pursued.

(d) Any complaint or grievance which arises shall, where possible, be settled by discussion at its source between the student

concerned and the responsible staff member e.g. Class Teacher or therapist. Should it be inappropriate for one of these staff members to be approached e.g. that person is the perceived source of the complaint or grievance then the student should approach the Principal or Manager or the Director of Residential Services, preferably in writing, as to the substance of the complaint or grievance, request a meeting with the Principal or Manager or the Director of Residential Services for bilateral discussions and state the remedy sought.

(e) If the student or client remains dissatisfied then it is acknowledged that they may be entitled to seek assistance from an external person or other appropriate authority. Should that action be taken by the student then Odyssey House may also seek external advice in respect of the matter.

References: AISNSW

## School-determined Priority Areas for Improvement

Area	Priorities in 2022	Achievements
Staff Development	Devise a Professional Training Program for staff to ensure skill development in trauma informed education  Retain the workforce	Continued professional development tailored to the individual and emerging needs of teachers  Teacher appraisal cycle completed  Consolidated middle leadership roles (academic and vocational education)  Feedback sought using Staff Engagement Survey tool and follow up Action Plan devised and implemented
Teaching & Learning	Develop programs to facilitate meaningful learning	Positive student feedback reflecting satisfaction with adjustments made and tailored learning
Facilities	Improve and upgrade teaching and learning spaces	New COLA designed and built for outdoor PE  State of the Art Gym designed and construction begun
Resources	Improve and update teaching resources	Teaching resources researched and developed for maximum student satisfaction
Curriculum	Establish Vocational Training opportunities to provide employment options for students	Students achieved employment in a variety of fields following completion of courses at Odyssey College/House



# Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Odyssey House NSW provides recovery through its therapeutic community, which is based on respect and responsibility, and has a framework of levels through which clients must progress.

Each level has a specific focus aimed at increasing respect and responsibility. Movement through these levels is only possible by demonstrating respect for others and taking on increasing amounts of responsibility.

Students have many responsibilities within the organisation. These include cooking, cleaning, gardening, reception, provision of stationery and toiletries, supervision of visits and escorts for appointments. Level 4 of the program includes a four month 'commitment' to voluntarily work in return for the program and its benefits. Respect and responsibility are therefore inherent in every aspect of the program including the education unit.

## Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

### Parent Satisfaction

Parent satisfaction is not applicable to the College as all students are over the age of 18 and are in residential rehabilitation. On enrolment, each student signs a declaration to acknowledge that no formal qualifications are awarded in relation to the Higher School Certificate or ROSA grades. Odyssey House acts in loco parentis. However, feedback about student progress is given regularly to internal medical and therapeutic staff.

### Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction is paramount. Many students have had limited previous schooling, including negative perceptions about their schooling; therefore, the education unit must not only meet their educational needs, but also their psychological needs to encourage their willingness and participation. We determine student satisfaction through:

- assessment of College reputation
- interactions and discussions
- written comments for self-evaluations, case reviews and course evaluations
- records submitted through the Odyssey House grievance procedure.

Odyssey College's reputation is overwhelmingly positive. Students refer other students to classes, give

teachers suggestions about who they think would benefit from classes and make enquiries regarding their expected participation. On completing courses students are awarded Certificates of Achievement at the weekly assembly and speak about the benefits they have gained from completing the course. In this way, students hear about the benefits from participation directly from their peers.

### Teacher Satisfaction

Teacher satisfaction is assessed in a number of ways:

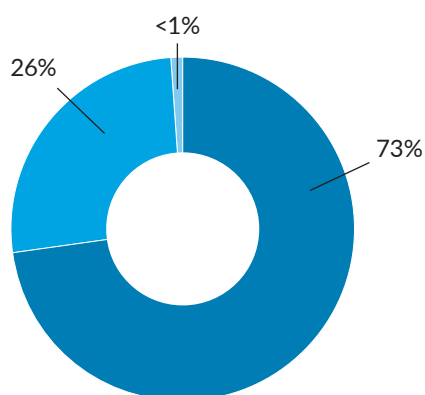
- staff appraisals
- student evaluation of courses
- attendance
- engagement at meetings

All College staff complete an annual appraisal. These appraisals convey each staff member's goals, achievements, maintenance of accreditation, inservice training and feedback which are then discussed with the Principal before final signing off by both parties.

All in all our staff are passionate about the contributions they make to the lives of the students they teach each day. They view their work as a privilege; knowing they are making a difference to the students in their care. The contribution of the teachers touches the lives of our unique students in a meaningful way.

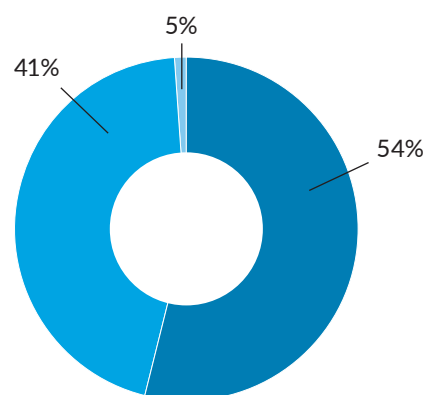


## Summary Financial Information



### Recurrent / Capital Income

- Commonwealth recurrent grants 73%
- State recurrent grants 26%
- Other capital income <1%



### Recurrent / Capital Expenditure

- Salaries, allowances, related expenditure 54%
- Non-salary expenditure 41%
- Capital expenditure 5%

### Publication Requirements

Odyssey College is committed to public disclosure of information regarding College education services and activities in this Annual Report through the Odyssey House NSW website ([www.odysseyhouse.com.au](http://www.odysseyhouse.com.au)).

Odyssey College will provide this Annual Report, on request, to anyone responsible for a student who is unable to access the internet.



# ODYSSEY HOUSE

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