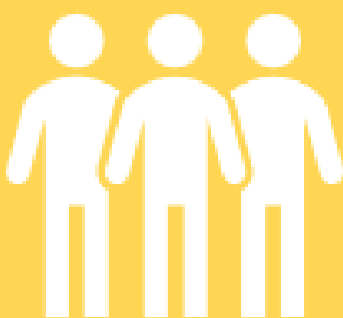


Conflict Management Framework for PGR Supervision

Enhance and expand supports for management of conflict in supervision relationship

WP#6 – Staff Experience



What you said (voice of the community):

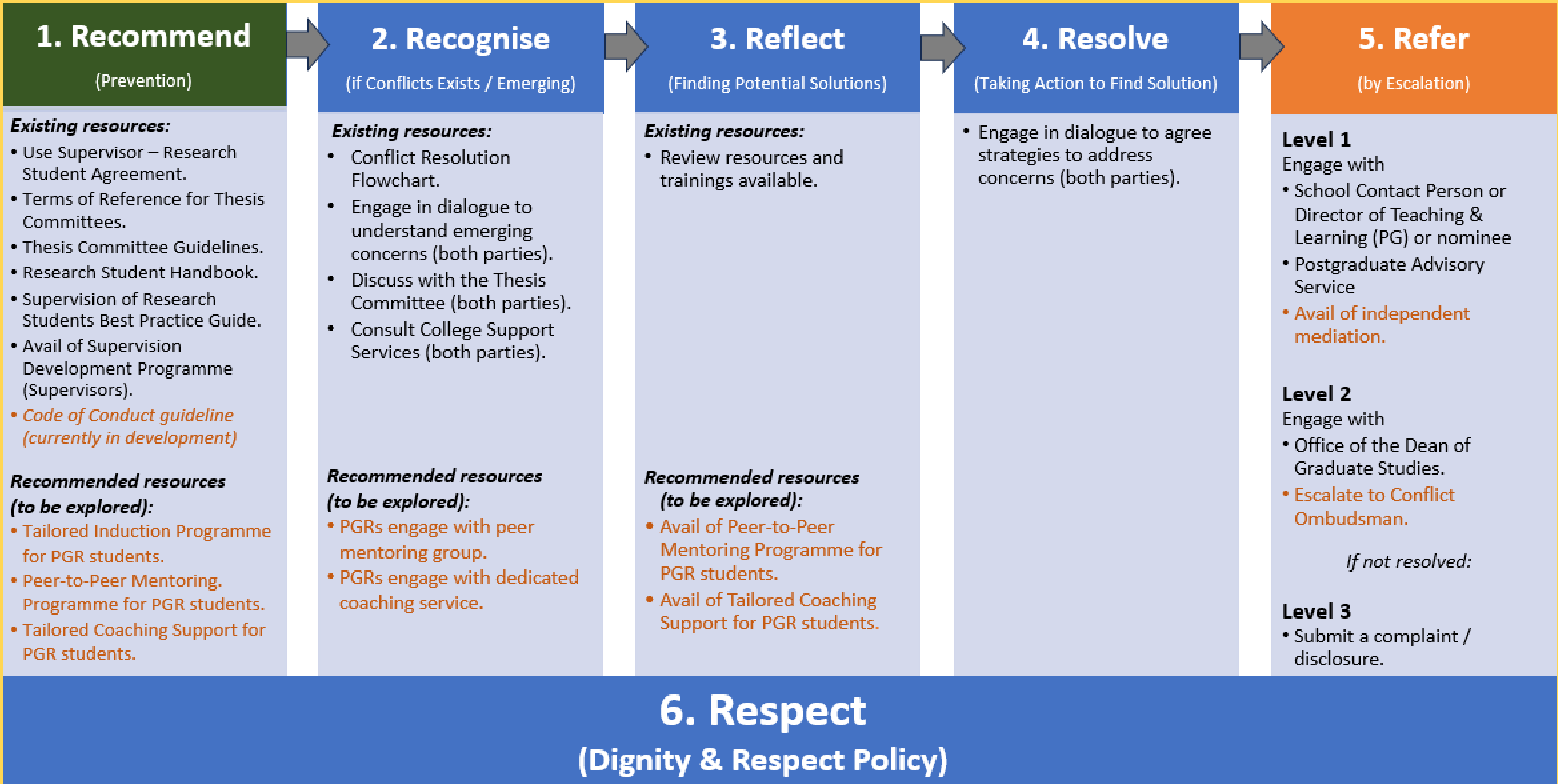
- Lack of visibility on available guidance on managing and resolving conflict in the supervision relationship.
- Tailored and dedicated supports for postgraduate research students are required such as peer-to-peer mentoring, coaching.
- Provide enhanced training and support for supervisors of postgraduate students.

What we learned (Analysis):

- The pathways to conflict resolution are not clearly marked as there is not a College-wide guideline for conflict resolution.
- The current conflict resolution supports are decentralized, ad-hoc and vary across Schools, adding complexity and frustration to parties experiencing difficulties, often resulting in conflict escalation.
- Although there are several institutional services supporting resolution of conflict in supervision of research students, they experience significant workload issues.
- Delays in access to appropriate help may lead to escalation of conflict and impacts negatively on students' and supervisors' experience, mental health and well-being.

Horizon 2: Mapping out and enhancing resources for management of conflict in the supervision relationship

6 Rs Conflict Management Framework for Supervisors and Research Students



Still to do:

Horizon 2 (ending December 2025)

- Present proposed Code of Conduct for Supervisors and Research Students for consideration by College governance.
- Develop proposal for pilot Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Programme for research students.
- Identify feasible opportunities for providing tailored coaching supports to research students.
- Develop proposal for introduction of Independent Mediation and Conflict Ombudsman service.

Impact (what would success look like):

- Transparent procedures and support structures to enable early and local management of issues between supervisors + students.
- Specialist resources in place to offer impartial, independent and sustainable supports.
- Adequately trained and supported staff and students who are empowered to resolve issues informally and constructively.
- Reduction in the number of conflict cases that escalate or remain unresolved, decrease in the attrition rates.
- Fewer formal complaints.

Conflict Resolution Flowchart for PGR Supervision

Identifying pathways and supports for early + local resolution of disagreements if they arise

WP#6 – Staff Experience



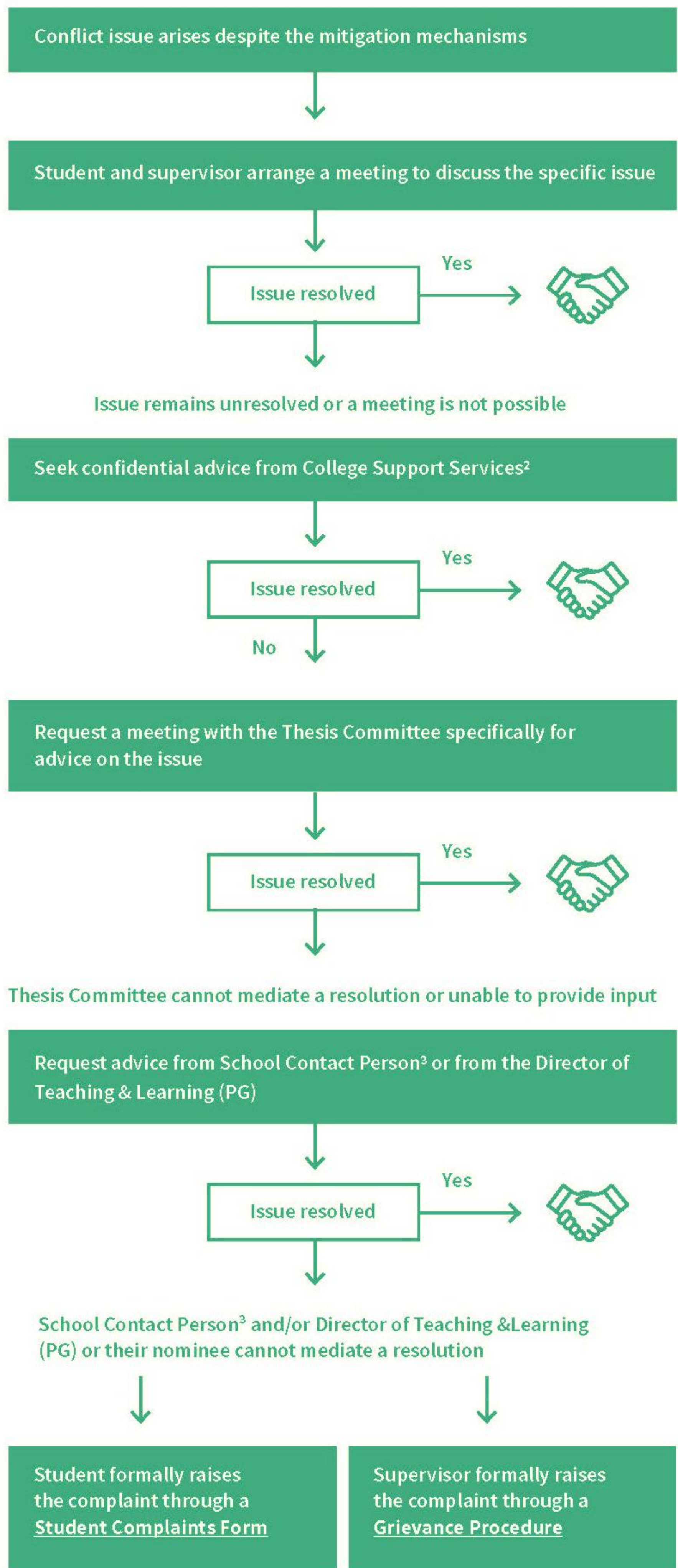
What you said (voice of the community):

- The pathways to conflict resolution are not clearly marked as there is not a College-wide guideline for conflict resolution: “Provide clear guidance about what measures to address problems are available and how one can access them”.
- The current conflict resolution supports are decentralized, ad-hoc and vary across Schools, adding complexity and frustration to parties experiencing difficulties, often resulting in conflict escalation.

What we learned (analysis):

- Unresolved conflict in the relationships between supervisors and research students may have severe impact on the student well-being and progression.
- Escalation of conflict may contribute to the increased demands on the College support services including Postgraduate Advisory Service, Student Counselling, Schools and the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies.
- Unresolved conflicts can cause stress and reputational damage for supervisors.
- A transparent conflict resolution process creates an opportunity to validate the circumstances of conflict for both parties.
- Trinity should foster a culture of conflict prevention.

Horizon 2: We outlined the pathway with step-by-step supports available to supervisors and research students to resolve issues:



Conflict Resolution Flowchart and enhanced guidance for conflict resolution

- We published **conflict resolution guidance** on the Graduate Studies website and in the Research Student Handbook.



Scan to view conflict resolution resources

- We developed a Conflict Resolution Flowchart to guide supervisors and students in identifying conflicts, considering mitigation strategies, and implementing solutions.

Still to do:

Horizon 2 (ending December 2025)

- Explore and design options for providing structured supports for navigating difficulties in the supervisor – research student relationships, including:
 - Peer-to-Peer Mentoring
 - Coaching Programmes
 - Conflict Ombudsman

What success looks like:

- Trinity fosters a culture of conflict prevention, which supports a safe and respectful social foundation of the University.
- Transparent procedures and structures in place to enable an early and local resolution of issues between supervisors and research students.
- Provision of training to empower supervisors and students to constructively discuss disagreements and resolve difficulties.
- Trained resources available to offer impartial, independent and sustainable mediation supports.