

Complaints Procedure

Purpose and Scope

The purpose is to ensure that student, parent and employee complaints or disputes are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective and fair manner.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is defined as an expression of concern regarding any aspect of the College's operations, including but not limited to teaching, facilities, administration, or student welfare (which include principles of procedural fairness)

Definitions

Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about the College, related to the College's services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. ¹
Informal Complaint	A complaint about a matter that is likely to be simple, straight forward, easily manageable, or minor, where a simple or quick resolution is appropriate such as discussion of the matter with a relevant staff member.
Formal Complaint	A complaint about a matter that is serious, complex or may pose a threat to the health and safety of any person. Examples include serious allegations or breaches of policy, complaints against a senior staff member, including the principal or an informal complaint that could not be resolved informally. Assessment of the complaint is required by Principal.
Complainant	The person, organisation or their representative making a complaint. ²
Respondent	The person who is referred to in a complaint by a complainant as the person responsible for their concerns or who can best respond to their concern.

¹ Standards Australia, Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2018, NEQ), s.4.3

² Standards Australia, Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2018, NEQ), s.4.2

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1. Lodging a Complaint

- a) Complaints can be lodged with the most appropriate staff member at the local level, for example, the initial contact point for many complaints is the student's relevant classroom teacher.
- b) Complaints can be lodged through various methods, including:
 - i. Email - kmcallister@cbcc.qld.edu.au
 - ii. In-person (by appointment)
- c) Complaints about the Principal must be lodged with the Governing Body chairman@cbcc.qld.edu.au
- d) Allegations of *reportable conduct* by the Principal can be lodged with the Board to charman@cbcc.qld.edu.au
- e) In addition to 1.a) and c) allegations of reportable conduct by a worker or the Principal can be made directly to the Queensland Family and Child Commission.
- f) If the complainant is unsure where to direct their complaint, they can contact the Business Services Office for guidance.
- g) If the complainant is uncomfortable directing the complaint to the most appropriate member at the local level, or wants to make a formal complaint, they can submit a complaint by:
 - i. Following the Compliant Handling Policy & Procedure
 - ii. Other method e.g. report to member of the executive
- h) Where an anonymous complaint is lodged, the College will follow the complaints handling policy, when there is sufficient information to do so.

2. Acknowledgement, Assessment and Referral

The staff member receiving the complaint will:

- a) acknowledge the complaint within Two (2) business days, outlining the next steps and where possible the estimated timeframes.
- b) assess the complaint, using the definitions of informal and formal complaints in this policy, and refer the complaint to the informal or formal complaints process.
- c) as part of the assessment, the staff member must consider whether the complaint raises a potential reportable conduct allegation involving a worker.
- d) where this threshold may be met, the matter must be immediately escalated and managed under the College's Reporting Concerns of Harm and Abuse Policy, including consideration of notification obligations to the Queensland Family and Child Commission.

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3. Registration and Support

- a) The recipient of the complaint will promptly enter it into the complaints register, regardless of whether it proceeds through the informal or formal process.
- b) The recipient of the complaint will offer support to the complainant as appropriate, which may include assistance with completing forms or understanding procedures.

If a student is a complainant, respondent or victim, or the child of a complainant, respondent or victim of a matter being managed through this policy, the College may offer the student support where appropriate e.g. discussing suitable adjustments with parents/caregivers.

4. Informal Complaints Handling Process

- a) The informal process is designed to resolve issues promptly and collaboratively at the local level.
- b) It may involve constructive discussion and negotiation between the complainant and the relevant staff member(s).
- c) If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, it will be escalated to the formal process.

5. Formal Complaints Handling Process

- a) The formal process begins with the assessment of the complaint by a designated staff member (e.g., a member of the senior leadership team or the board chair for complaints against the Principal)
- b) The staff member may gather additional information through investigation, interviews, or evidence review. The staff member may consult with appropriate members of the student's or the family's community
- c) The staff member will determine appropriate action, which may include:
 - i. Mediation
 - ii. Disciplinary measures
 - iii. Implementation of policy changes
 - iv. Referral to external agencies (e.g., police)
 - v. Provision of written updates to the complainant throughout the process
 - vi. Other actions the Principal determine as appropriate in the circumstances.

6. Complaint Closure

- a) The complaint register will be updated with the date the complaint is closed and a brief summary of the outcome.
- b) The complainant will receive written notification of the outcome and any actions taken where appropriate.



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7. Appeals Process

- a) Complainants may appeal the outcome of a complaint by writing to:
 - i. the Principal (for complaints not previously managed by the Principal,)
 - ii. the Board Chair (for complaints previously managed by the Principal, or complaints about the Principal).