



# Complaints Handling Program

## Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures

### Introduction

Our School welcomes feedback from all members of the school community and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to the School, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected. This definition is taken from the Australian Complaints handling standard AS 10002:2022.

### Purpose

This Policy is designed to: help us comply with this obligation; help you understand how to make a complaint; and inform you about how the School responds to different kinds of complaints.

### Scope

This Policy and its procedures apply to all staff, volunteers and contractors at the College.

### Roles and Responsibilities

The Chief Operating Officer is the Complaints Manager at Radford College

### Policy Statement

#### Child Protection-Related Complaints

We have a different procedure for handling complaints about, or disclosures or allegations of:

- breaches of the Child Protection Codes of Conduct
- abuse or other harm of a current or former student by:
  - current or former staff members
  - current or former students
  - other people, while on College premises or at College events
- “Reportable Conduct” as defined in the Ombudsman Act 1989 (ACT); and
- other child safety-related staff misconduct.

Refer to the “Complaints About Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Involving the College or its Staff Members” subsection at the end of this Policy and Procedures.

## **The College’s Commitment**

The College is committed to handling all complaints effectively and efficiently.

To manage complaints effectively, we have established a Complaints Handling Program in line with:

- Principle 6 of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, using the Office of Child Safety’s “Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people”
- the Australian complaints handling standard (AS 10002:2022 Guidelines for complaint management in organizations)
- the Australian Privacy Principles (APP).

Our Complaints Handling Program includes the establishment of an online complaints management system which allows us to effectively capture, manage and report on complaints.

We regularly analyse complaints received and their outcomes. When this analysis identifies deficiencies, we take corrective action as part of College’s commitment.

## **Making a Complaint**

There is no fee associated with making a complaint.

Complaints may be made anonymously or using a pseudonym. However, if you make an anonymous complaint, we will be unable to provide you with feedback on the progress and outcome of your complaint. It may also limit our ability to fully investigate the complaint if we are unable to contact you to obtain further details.

We will support and provide practical assistance to complainants to make a complaint and throughout the complaints process.

We insist on all complainants being respectful to and cooperating with staff as a prerequisite to the management of their complaint.

## **Confidentiality and Privacy**

The College is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of information throughout the complaints process. This includes maintaining the privacy of information relating to the person making the complaint and any person named in the complaint.

## **Procedures**

### **Informal Complaints Resolution**

Most issues causing concern in schools can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. We therefore ask that, where appropriate, you first raise your concern directly with the relevant staff member.

Even if the issue is resolved informally, the relevant staff member will log it through our online complaints management system so that we are able to identify any systemic issues arising, and take appropriate rectification action.

### **How Do I Make a Formal Complaint?**

If you have been unable to resolve a matter informally, or if you otherwise wish to make a formal complaint, you can do so in the following ways:

Complaints can be made through the following [process](#)

All formal complaints are logged through our online complaints management system and managed in accordance with the following procedure.

### **Our Internal Complaints Handling Process**

The following process is a guide only and may be varied by the College as circumstances require:

1. When a complaint that is not about the Principal. Diocese events should also be approved by the Principal or Chief Operating Officer. or a member of Radford College Board is logged through our online complaints management system, it is screened by a Complaints Handling Officer.  
Complaints about the Principal. Diocese events should also be approved by the Principal or Chief Operating Officer. or a member of Radford College Board will be properly investigated but they may be dealt with by someone other than a Complaints Handling Officer.
2. All complaints, except those made anonymously, are acknowledged in writing, as soon as practicable, and allocated a status, a priority and a target resolution date. It is our policy, where possible, to resolve all disputes within 14 working days. We will keep in regular contact with the complainant prior to the target resolution date, advising of the status of the matter and each time confirming when the next communication should be expected.
3. The Complaints Handling Officer (or if the complaint is about the Principal. Diocese events should also be approved by the Principal or Chief Operating Officer. or a member of Radford College Board, the person responsible for investigating the complaint) will conduct an investigation into the issues raised, following principles of procedural fairness.

*The investigation may involve:*

- providing an opportunity for the complainant to fully communicate the complaint in detail
  - if the complaint is about a staff member, providing details of the complaint to them and seeking their response.
  - accessing any other relevant information in relation to the complaint.
4. Following the investigation, if appropriate, the Complaints Handling Officer (or if the complaint is about the Principal. Diocese events should also be approved by the Principal or Chief Operating Officer. or a member of Radford College Board, the person who has investigated the complaint) will formulate a resolution and, unless the complaint was anonymous, provide a written response to the complainant. If the complainant accepts this response, the matter is noted as “resolved” and closed.
  5. If the complainant does not accept the response, the matter will be reviewed internally by the Principal. Diocese events should also be approved by the Principal or Chief Operating Officer. or the Principal. Diocese events should also be approved by the Principal or Chief Operating Officer’s delegate, who may seek additional information or submissions from the relevant parties. The Principal. Diocese events should also be approved by the Principal or Chief Operating Officer. or their delegate seeks to resolve all disputes within 14 working days from the date that the review process is initiated. If the complainant accepts the Principal. Diocese events should also be approved by the Principal or Chief Operating Officer’s, or their delegate’s response, the matter is noted as “resolved” and closed. If the complaint was about the Principal. Diocese events should

also be approved by the Principal or Chief Operating Officer., the Chief Operating Officer will review the matter.

6. All complaints received are entered into our Complaints Register and, where appropriate, corrective actions will be made to address any underlying processes which the complaints investigation revealed may require improvement.
7. If the matter remains unresolved, and/or the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome or the way that the complaint has been managed, the complainant may pursue external resolution alternatives.

## **Complaints About Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Involving the College or its Staff Members**

If a complaint, disclosure or allegation is about:

- a breach of the [Child Protection](#) Codes of Conduct
- abuse or other harm of a current or former student by:
  - a current or former staff member
  - a current or former student
  - another person, while on College premises or at a College event
- “Reportable Conduct” as defined in the Ombudsman Act 1989 (ACT)
- other child safety-related staff misconduct

the College does not follow the above procedures (although its handling of the matter may be informed by them). This is because:

- the College has legal obligations to report certain staff conduct to external authorities and to conduct investigations in a particular way; and
- there are additional confidentiality and privacy requirements involved in these kinds of matters.

We refer to these kinds of complaints as child protection-related complaints.

Our [Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns](#), which is available on our public website, explains how the College manages child protection-related complaints, as well as any child safety incidents or concerns that occur at the College or College events, or that involve Students, staff members, Visitors or other members of the College community.

## **Implementation**

This subsection does not apply.

# Breach

Breach of this Policy and its Procedures may result in disciplinary action.

# Definitions

| Term                          | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Complaint/<br><br>Complainant | <p>A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to Radford College, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.</p> <p>A complaint may be made by a student, parent/carer, former student, parent/carer of a former student, member of the wider College community, strategic partner, regulator or a member of the public generally. A complaint can also be made anonymously.</p> <p>We refer to anyone who makes a complaint as a “complainant”. They could be a natural person, an organisation, or a representative of an organisation.</p> |

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# Source of Obligation

This subsection does not apply.

# Related Policies

This subsection does not apply.

# Related Documents

No

# References

Yes

# Policy Administration

| Date | Owner | Change |
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