



## Complaints Handling Policy & Procedure

Authorised by	Board Chair
Review Date	2 years
Next Review Date:	21 November 2025
Policy Owner	Islamic College of Brisbane Board

<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student, parent and employee disputes are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective and fair way.
<b>Scope:</b>	Students, parents and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements.
<b>References:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2017</i></li><li>• <i>Australian Education Regulations 2013</i></li><li>• <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i></li><li>• <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)</i></li><li>• <i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</i></li><li>• <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)</i></li><li>• <i>Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</i></li><li>• <i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</i></li><li>• <i>Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</i></li><li>• <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</i></li><li>• <i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</i></li><li>• <i>Islamic College of Brisbane Collective Enterprise Agreement</i></li><li>• <i>Islamic College of Brisbane Child Protection Policy</i></li><li>• <i>Islamic College of Brisbane Work Health and Safety Policy</i></li><li>• <i>Islamic College of Brisbane Privacy Policy</i></li></ul>

## Policy Statement

Islamic College of Brisbane is committed to ensuring that student, parent and employee disputes are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, and effective and fair way.

Islamic College of Brisbane views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process. The College is committed to ensure that there is total confidence in the process by school stakeholders without the fear of retribution as a consequence of having raised a complaint.

Islamic College of Brisbane acknowledges the right of students, parents and employees to complain when dissatisfied with an action, inaction or decision of the college and the college encourages constructive criticism and complaints.

The legislative and regulatory obligation to provide effective complaints handling stems from a number of sources:

- Regulation 7 of the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017* requires the College to have, and implement, written processes about receiving, assessing, investigating and otherwise dealing with complaints made by its staff, students or a student's parent or guardian.
- Section 16(5) of the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State) Schools Regulation 2017* (the Regulation) requires the College to have a written complaints procedure to address allegations of non-compliance with child protection written reporting processes.

Islamic College of Brisbane recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to students, parents and employees. Encouraging feedback from parties external to Islamic College of Brisbane including complaints from parents/carers, parents/carers of former students, or members of the wider College community, can offer opportunities to improve our service levels and operations.

Complaints can be an indicator of low customer satisfaction, but their absence does not necessarily imply high customer satisfaction. Encouraging complaints, and having an effective system to receive and manage them:

- Encourages constructive feedback.
- Enhances the College's ability to capture and resolve complaints in a consistent, systematic and responsive manner.
- Enhances the College's ability to identify systemic and recurring problems and to continually improve our internal systems and controls.
- Assists the College to develop a customer-focused approach to resolving complaints and assists staff to improve their skills in working with parents/ carers as well as other external parties.
- Ensures that the College complies with its legal and regulatory obligations.

## **Complaints that may be Resolved under this Policy**

Complaints can be generally classified as either frontline complaints or formal complaints.

A frontline complaint is a complaint that can be resolved either at the time the complaint is made and received, or very shortly after it's received. The majority of complaints are frontline complaints – addressed by frontline or first point of contact staff.

A formal complaint is a complaint that requires further investigation and/or a written acknowledgement and response.

Islamic College of Brisbane encourages students, parents and employees to lodge promptly concerns regarding sexual harassment, child protection, discrimination, workplace bullying and privacy breaches as well as more general complaints that include areas such as:

- the college, its employees or students having done something wrong
- the college, its employees or students having failed to do something that they should have done
- the college, its employees or students having acted unfairly or impolitely
- issues of student or employee behaviour that are contrary to their relevant code of conduct
- issues related to learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning
- issues related to communication with students or parents or between employees
- issues related to college fees and payments
- general administrative issues

Student complaints may be brought by students or by parents on behalf of their children, as appropriate in the circumstances.

If the nature of a complaint pertains to the Chief Executive Officer, that complaint will be referred to the Board Chair. If the complaint pertains to the board or an individual board member, then, after the initial complaint has been made in accordance with this policy, that complaint will be referred to the Independent Assessor for determination.

For the purposes of this policy, the “Independent Assessor” will be a suitably qualified independent third party appointed from time to time by the board for the purposes of this policy. The implementation requirements referred to in this policy will apply to the Independent Assessor.

## **Issues Outside of this Policy**

The following matters are outside of the scope of this policy and should be managed as follows:

- Child protection concerns or risks of harm to children should be dealt with in accordance with the law and the college's Child Protection Policy.
- Student bullying complaints should be dealt with under the Behaviour Management Policy.
- Student discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the Behaviour Management Policy.
- Employee complaints related to their employment should be directed to their supervisor
- Student or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to the CEO who will involve the Police as appropriate
- Formal legal proceedings

## **Complaints Handling Principles**

Islamic College of Brisbane is committed to managing disputes according to the following principles:

- complaints will be resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible
- complaints will be taken seriously
- anonymous complaints will be treated on their merits, and will be dealt with fairly and objectively and in a timely manner.
- Islamic College of Brisbane will determine the appropriate person to deal with the complaint in the first instance. Complaints should be resolved with as little formality and disputation as possible.
- mediation, negotiation and informal resolution are optional alternatives
- procedural fairness will be ensured wherever practicable, including the right of interested parties to the complaint to be heard.
- reasonable and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure confidentiality and privacy subject to the limits of the law
- all parties to the complaints will be appropriately supported
- Islamic College of Brisbane will give reasonable progress updates
- appropriate remedies will be offered and implemented
- a review pathway for parties to the complaint will be provided if warranted.
- complainants, respondents and people associated with them will not be victimised as a result of lodging the dispute nor will they suffer any other reprisals
- The college will keep records of complaints.
- The college's insurer will be informed if a complaint could be connected to an insured risk.

## Procedural Fairness

It is critically important that throughout the entire complaints handling process, procedural fairness is accorded to the complainant and the person/s who are the subject of the complaint.

Procedural fairness in complaints handling requires:

- both the complainant and the person against whom the complaint is made to have the opportunity to be heard, in person or in writing as appropriate, and to respond to the allegations and/or evidence offered by the other.
- An objective investigation of issues of facts which are in dispute.
- That the investigator is free from bias, or the perception of bias, and is not 'judge in his or her own cause'.
- That any complaint outcome is supported by the evidence, necessitating a finding on the balance of probabilities in the event of a dispute of fact.
- That the complaint outcome is finalised by an adjudicator, who may also be the investigator, who is free from bias or the perception of bias.
- That the outcome is consistent with the College's established policies and/or procedures relevant to the complaint.

While it is the College's policy that these elements of procedural fairness are to be applied to each complaint received by the College, procedural fairness should not otherwise dictate the outcome of a complaint.

## Maintaining Confidentiality

Maintenance of confidentiality of information throughout the complaints management process is critical.

Confidentiality applies with respect to both information relating to the person making the complaint, and, if relevant, to the person against whom a complaint is made.

Personally identifiable information about a complainant should only be made available for the purpose of addressing the complaint and (unless the complainant consents) be actively protected from disclosure.

Where a staff member receives a complaint, and has logged the complaint through the Complaint Form, they should not discuss the complaint with students, other parents/carers or any person who does not have authority to investigate or manage complaints on behalf of the College. In addition, the details of the complaint should not be discussed with other staff members who are not authorised to manage the complaint.

## **Responsibilities**

### **College**

The College has the following role and responsibilities:

- Develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with the college's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- Appropriately communicate the college's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures to students, parents and employees
- Ensure that the Complaints Handling procedures are readily accessible by staff, students and parents
- Upon receipt of a dispute, manage the complaint in accordance with the Complaint Handling procedures
- Ensure that appropriate support is provided to all parties to a complaint
- Take appropriate action to prevent the victimisation or action in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them
- Appropriately implement remedies
- Appropriately train relevant employees
- Keep records
- Conduct a review/ audit of the Complaints Register from time to time
- Monitor and report to the governing body on complaints
- Report to the school's insurer when that is relevant
- Refer to the school's governing body immediately any claim for legal redress.

### **Complaints Handling Officers**

The Senior Leadership Team have been appointed to act as Complaint Handling Officers. These individuals are authorised to investigate and manage Formal Complaints once they have been lodged.

Complaint Handling Officers have the following role and responsibilities:

- Ensure that all staff are educated about the College's Complaints Handling procedures
- Investigate and, where necessary, escalating complaints when requested by the complainant.
- Liaise with complainants.
- Maintain accurate records in the appropriate secure section of Microsoft 365 SharePoint.
- Ensure systemic complaints are identified and rectified.
- Monitor the effectiveness of, and continually improve, the College's Complaints Handling Procedures.

## **All Staff**

Complaints may be received by a member of staff, at any time, either over the telephone, email or during face-to-face meetings.

All staff are authorised to deal with frontline complaints. Where a person makes a formal complaint, this must be referred to a Complaint Handling Officer.

All staff have the following role and responsibilities:

- Be trained in the College's complaints handling processes, and in particular, be familiar with the processes for receiving and logging complaints.
- Be aware of their roles, responsibilities, and authorities with respect to complaints
- Be aware of what information must be given to complainants.
- Report all complaints they receive.
- Treat complainants in a courteous manner.
- Demonstrate good interpersonal and communication skills.

## **All Parties to a Dispute**

The complainant and respondent have the following role and responsibilities:

- Apply and comply with the college's Complaint Handling Policy and procedures
- Lodge complaint as soon as after the issue arises.
- Expect that the complaint will be dealt with fairly and objectively; in a timely manner; with procedural fairness; in observance of natural justice principles; and by the application of reasonable and appropriate measures to ensure confidentiality and privacy subject to the limits of the law
- Provide complete and factual information in a timely manner
- Not provide deliberately false or misleading information
- Not make frivolous or vexatious complaints
- Act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous manner
- Act in a non-threatening manner
- To be appropriately supported
- Acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
- Recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced
- Maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties
- Not victimise or act in reprisal against any party to the dispute or any person associated with them.

## **Employees Receiving Complaints**

Employees receiving disputes have the following role and responsibilities:

- Act in accordance with the college's Complaint Handling Policy and procedures
- Inform the party lodging the dispute of how disputes can be lodged, when they should be lodged and what information is required.
- Provide the complainant with information about any support or assistance available to assist them in lodging their complaint.
- Ensure that the complainant is aware of, and has access to, the College's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures. Maintain confidentiality.
- Keep appropriate records.
- To forward complaints to a relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team, including the CEO, as appropriate
- Not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

## **Implementation**

Islamic College of Brisbane is committed to raising awareness of the process for resolving complaints at the college, including by the development and implementation of this policy and related procedures (prescribed below), and via the clear support and promotion of the policy and procedures.

The College implements the following steps to encourage feedback, and to make it easy for people to lodge a complaint.

- The College's Complaints Handling Policy with information on how to make a complaint is available on the College website.
- All staff are made aware of the importance of capturing and recording critical feedback. Many complaints are received via telephone, in person, or via email, and the ability for College staff to recognise a complaint, and to capture it effectively, is a central feature of the complaint handling procedures.
- Complaints or disputes do not need to be in writing. Insisting that complaints are in writing can be disincentive for the complainant.
- Where it is identified that a complainant has limited literacy skills, College staff will give them help in expressing their complaints or dispute more clearly.
- Where complainants have special needs, the availability of interpreters and staff who are cross-culturally trained or trained to cater for special needs is ensured.
- The College provides the option to make an anonymous complaint, or make a complaint using a pseudonym, in accordance with Australian Privacy Principle 2.



Islamic College of Brisbane is also committed to appropriately training relevant employees (especially senior staff) on how to resolve complaints in line with this policy and the related procedures.

Islamic College of Brisbane will keep appropriate records of complaints, will monitor complaints and their resolution and will report on a high-level basis to the College Board on complaint handling at the college.

Islamic College of Brisbane will act to encourage students, parents and employees to contribute to a healthy college culture where complaints are resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible.

## **Complaint Handling Procedure**

The 10 steps outlined in this section are intended to provide guidance about how to handle complaints generally:

Section 1 – Receiving and logging complaints is important for all staff.

- Step 1 – Dealing with frontline complaints.
- Step 2 – Receiving and logging frontline complaints.

Section 2 – Managing escalating complaint and

- Step 3 – Screening complaints
- Step 4 – Establishing the facts and communicating with the complainant.
- Step 5 – Making a determination.
- Step 6 – Formulating a proposed resolution.
- Step 7 – Presenting a final response and/or an offer of redress.

Section 3 – Recording and reporting complaints are important responsibilities of the College's Complaint Handling Officers

- Step 8 – Complaints register.
- Step 9 – Rectification and risk management
- Step 10 – Closing a complaint.

Every complaint will vary in degree of seriousness and not all the steps outlined below will be required to be undertaken in full in every circumstance. For example, when dealing with a frontline complaint (Step 1) it generally would not be necessary to send a written acknowledgement of the complaint to the complainant (Step 2).

Complaints must be addressed promptly in accordance with their nature and level of urgency. We aim to acknowledge the receipt of a complaint immediately and seek to resolve all complaints internally within our pre-determined timeframes for resolution of complaints.

## **Section 1 – Receiving and Logging Complaints**

This section is important for all staff at the College because any staff member can receive and log a complaint.

All complaints should be addressed promptly and in accordance with their urgency. For example, significant health and safety issues should be processed immediately.

Complainants should be treated courteously and be kept informed of the progress of their complaint throughout the complaints handling process.

All formal complaints must be logged through the Complaint Form on the College's website. The Complaint Form is designed to assist us in capturing all the information that is relevant, to allow the College to investigate and respond appropriately to a complaint.

Complaints logged through the Complaint Form on the College's website are automatically submitted to a Complaint Handling Officer for screening and further action.

### **Step 1 - Dealing with Frontline Complaints**

There are likely to be many occasions when someone makes a statement, or sends an email, which is an expression of dissatisfaction about some aspect of the College's service or operations that falls within the definition of a complaint, and a resolution can be quickly and easily achieved usually through verbal communications (i.e. no written response is required).

In many of these instances, the person making the statement, or writing the email, may not even consider that they are making a "complaint". Often, they may simply be offering constructive feedback. For example: A parent makes a complaint that their child's teacher kept the class in after school and the student missed the school bus. This is clearly an expression of dissatisfaction about an aspect of the College's operations and therefore falls within the definition of a complaint.

It is also a relatively minor complaint that can be managed through a verbal acknowledgement and an explanation. In this circumstance, the parent would probably not expect to receive a formal written acknowledgement of their complaint, or for the matter to be escalated to a Complaint Handling Officer.

This complaint may, on the surface, appear to be minor; however, if the College was to receive 10 similar complaints from parents/carers, or parents/carers of former students, it would indicate a systemic issue which would require formal rectification action. It is for this reason that even minor complaints should be logged through the Complaint Form

## **Step 2 - Receiving and Logging Formal Complaints**

Formal complaints can be received in two ways:

- Verbal Complaint
- Written Complaint

A formal complaint is a complaint that requires further investigation and/or a written acknowledgement and response.

Formal complaints must be referred to a Complaint Handling Officer. When a formal complaint is received, a Complaint Handling Officer must send a written acknowledgement of the complaint to the complainant.

In less serious instances, this written acknowledgement may be a relatively informal email communication. As the seriousness of the complaint increases, the formality of the communication should also increase.

When dealing with a more serious complaint that requires investigation and time to resolve, a more formal complaints acknowledgement communication should be forwarded to the complainant.

A written acknowledgement should always be provided as soon as possible, and in any event within two business days of receipt of the complaint.

The nominated Complaint Handling Officer should keep in regular contact with the complainant, advising of the status of the matter and each time confirming when the next communication should be expected.

### Receiving and Acknowledging Verbal Complaints

Handling a verbal complaint efficiently requires patience and skill to avoid an initially negative situation becoming even more negative and escalating into a dispute. Applying the L.E.A.R.N.<sup>™</sup> Complaints Handling Technique ensures that all verbal complaints are effectively handled to minimise the likelihood of a dispute.

## Applying the L.E.A.R.N.™ Complaints Handling Technique

When a verbal complaint is received, it is important to follow the L.E.A.R.N.™ Complaints Handling Technique.

The L.E.A.R.N.™ mnemonic is designed as a reminder that every complaint, whether frontline or formal, is an opportunity to learn, and find ways to improve the School's services and operations.



The L.E.A.R.N.™ mnemonic is used because the acronym itself is an important stage in the complaints handling process.

It acts as a 'meta mnemonic' to remind complaint handlers that every complaint, whether frontline or formal, is an opportunity to learn, and find ways to improve the College's services and operations.

### Receiving and Acknowledging Written Complaints

When a written complaint is received, follow these guidelines:

All written complaints must immediately be forwarded to a Complaint Handling Officer.

The Complaint Handling Officer will review the complaint and log its details through Microsoft 365 SharePoint, and allocate the complaint to another staff member, where appropriate.

The Complaint Handling Officer will contact the complainant by telephone (if possible) to acknowledge receipt of the complaint and to obtain additional information which may assist in expediting the matter internally. It is best practice to follow-up such a phone conversation with a written summary of the conversation sent by email to avoid any misunderstandings and establish a written record of the follow-up action.

If it is not possible to contact the complainant by telephone, additional information should be sought through appropriately worded correspondence.

## Section 2 - Managing and Escalating Complaints

This section is important for Complaint Handling Officers because they will manage and escalate complaints as appropriate.

### Step 3 – Screening Complaints

All complaints logged through the Complaints Form via the College’s website will automatically be submitted to an appropriate Complaint Handling Officer.

As we encourage staff to log all complaints through the College’s website, it is important that complaints are reviewed at the earliest possible opportunity to ensure that appropriate action is taken.

### Step 4 – Establishing the Facts and Communicating with the Complainant

Once a formal complaint has been accepted, a Complaint Handling Officer is nominated to conduct an internal investigation.

If the complaint involves a staff member, the investigation will be conducted as follows:

<b>Stage 1</b>	The Complaint Handling Officer will contact the named staff member and agree on a time (within 48 hours) to meet to discuss the matter, and gain access to relevant documentation.
<b>Stage 2</b>	At this meeting, the Complaint Handling Officer will provide the staff member with details of the complaint, interview the staff member, and ask them to provide their version of events. The meeting will be documented.
<b>Stage 3</b>	The Complaint Handling Officer will match the facts of the complaint with the staff member’s response and if the facts vary, through communication with the staff member and the complainant, clarify why they differ.
<b>Stage 4</b>	The Complaint Handling Officer will prepare a report summarising key findings of the investigation. A summary of these findings will be saved into the Microsoft 365 SharePoint folder.

If the complaint concerns a matter which is not related to a staff member, the Complaint Handling Officer will conduct an investigation based on the incident priority considering criteria such as severity, complexity, impact and the need, and possibility, of immediate action.

The Complaint Handling Officer will keep in regular contact with the complainant, advising of the status of the matter, and each time confirming when the next communication should be expected.

## **Step 5 – Making a Determination**

After considering all the facts available, a Complaint Handling Officer must make a determination which addresses all aspects of the complaint. The following options are available:

- Accept the complaint and take rectification action without offering redress.
- Accept the complaint and offer redress.
- Offer redress without accepting the complaint.
- Reject the complaint and provide reasons for such rejection.

Offers of redress or remedies may include:

- Refunds
- Technical assistance
- Information
- Referral
- Financial assistance
- Financial compensation
- Apology
- Goodwill gift or token
- Indication of changes in services, process, policy or procedure arising from complaints.

## **Step 6 – Formulation of Proposed Resolution**

The extent of any remedy will depend upon the nature of the complaint. Some complaints are administrative in nature and the remedy may be to rectify the administrative error and issue a verbal apology or acknowledgement to the complainant. Other remedies are more complex and may, for example, involve financial compensation. Where a financial remedy is considered appropriate, the aim is to provide fair compensation for any loss suffered.

In formulating a proposed resolution, matters to be considered include:

- The extent to which others may have suffered in the same way as the complainant but did not make a formal complaint.
- The level of authority required internally to implement the proposed resolution.
- The implementation of a strategy for following up where appropriate.
- How information will be disseminated to relevant personnel within the organisation.

## **Step 7 – Presenting a Final Response and/or an Offer of Redress**

The complainant must be advised of the outcome of any investigation or subsequent determination. This communication should set out:

- The substance of the original complaint.
- An outline of the investigation.
- Undertaken the finding of the investigation.
- Any proposed resolution or offer of redress.

Where the resolution includes an offer of a financial remedy, a Complaint Handling Officer may discuss the proposed offer with the complainant prior to providing the offer formally. This will allow a Complaint Handling Officer to clearly explain the reasons behind the decision and allow a complainant to have any queries they may have answered directly.

All final responses and/or offers of redress should be approved by the CEO or, in their absence, Chief Learning Officer (CLO). If the complaints involve the CEO, they need to be approved by the Board. Where appropriate, offers of redress should be made in writing.

### **Section 3 – Recording and Reporting Complaints**

This section is important for Complaint Handling Officers who have responsibility for complaints record keeping and complaints reporting at the College.

#### **Step 8 - Complaints Register**

The Complaint Form is designed to capture the key data with respect to any individual complaint and to track the resolution process.

The Complaint Form automatically creates a Complaints Register entry that provides a summary of key data about all complaints in the system at any particular point in time.

The information contained in our Complaints Register can be used to identify trends in complaints and any systemic issues. This helps us determine where to focus attention on improving our internal processes (refer to Step 9 - Rectification and Risk Management) and improve our levels of stakeholder satisfaction.

The Complaints Register is reviewed in Senior Leadership Team meetings and key information is provided to the College Board on a regular basis.

#### **Step 9 – Rectification and Risk Management**

Regardless of whether a complaint has been resolved or not, it is important that we consider the circumstances that led to the complaint arising, and whether or not an opportunity exists to improve our internal systems and procedures, to reduce the risk of a similar complaint occurring again.

To clarify whether or not rectification work is required, the Complaint Handling Officer will meet with the person responsible for the relevant area of work, review the underlying factors leading to the complaint being made, and make a recommendation as to what, if any, rectification work is required.

Where it is agreed that rectification work is required, the Complaint Handling Officer will make a corrective action request by creating a task through the Microsoft 365 SharePoint folder. The use of corrective action tasks allows the College to monitor and report on the progress of rectification work.

## **Step 10 - Closing a Complaint**

A complaint will be closed once:

- The complaint has been resolved with the complainant (either internally or externally) or all reasonable internal and external options of rectification or remedy have been exhausted.
- A Complaint Handling Feedback Form was sent to the complainants to complete after their complaint has been resolved. The data from this form will automatically be captured in the forms app.
- All relevant information about the complaint has been captured.
- Consideration has been given to the underlying risk associated with the complaint and, where appropriate, the risk has been included in the College's Risk Register.
- Any recommendations with respect to rectification work have been recorded in a corrective action task.

### **Processes for Review of a Complaint's Resolution**

Part of the College's complaints handling process includes the option for review of a complaint's management and resolution.

Complainants are afforded a number of avenues throughout the complaints handling process should they feel that the complaint is not being handled as they see fit, including:

- Seeking alternative dispute resolution other than through the College's complaints processes, for example through mediation which involves the assistance of an independent third party who helps parties to negotiate a settlement of the complaint or dispute.
- Seeking legal advice, should a complaint escalate to a dispute, to ensure that they know their rights relating to the issue at hand.
- Making a request for an alternative investigator for the complaint where the complainant perceives a conflict of interest, or potential for conflict of interest.

### **Timeframes for Managing Complaints**

Timeliness in responding to complaints is a key element of successful complaints handling.

#### **Immediate Acknowledgement of Complaint**

We strive to immediately acknowledge the receipt of complaints and address them promptly in accordance with their degree of urgency.

Where we cannot acknowledge a complaint immediately, acknowledgement should be made as soon as practicable and, in any event, within two working days.



### Target Resolution Date

We aim to resolve all complaints within fourteen working days, with the initial investigation completed within seven working days.

If we are unable to respond to a complaint within fourteen working days, a Complaint Handling Officer will, prior to the end of the period:

- Contact the complainant by telephone, if possible, or otherwise in writing
- Advise them of the reasons for the delay in resolution of their complaint.
- Advise them of a new target resolution date.

A Complaint Handling Officer will then keep the complainant regularly updated on the status of their complaint.

### **Record Keeping**

Complete records of all complaints received are recorded through Microsoft 365 SharePoint and are readily accessible to the Senior Leadership Team.

Complaints are either categorised as rejected, open or closed. A complaint may be rejected from the outset as not being a complaint within the scope of this policy. A complaint will be closed once it has been resolved, or once all reasonable options of recourse have been exhausted.

Whenever recording information relating to a complaint, this information may at some time in the future be requested by the complainant or a regulator, or may be made public as a result of litigation (whether related to or unrelated to the particular complaint).

If any information relating to a complaint is requested by an external party, we consider all the circumstances of the request and, if necessary, seek legal advice as to what, if any information, we are legally required to provide.

Records with respect to training undertaken by our staff and representatives relating to this Complaints Handling Policy and procedures are maintained through Microsoft 365 SharePoint.

All complaints records are maintained for a minimum of seven years.

## **Appendix A – Complaints Handling Summary**

Islamic College of Brisbane welcomes feedback from all members of the college community and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. This Complaints Handling Summary is designed to assist you in understanding our complaints handling process.

### **What is a Complaint?**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to Islamic College of Brisbane, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Complaints and allegations of staff misconduct or reportable conduct are managed separately to other complaints.

### **Islamic College of Brisbane Commitment**

Islamic College of Brisbane is committed to handling complaints effectively and efficiently.

Our program includes the establishment of an online complaints management system which allows us to effectively capture, manage and report on complaints. Regular analysis of complaints received and the implementation of rectification action, where deficiencies are identified, are key to the College's commitment. Our internal complaints handling process are available at no cost.

### **Informal Complaints Resolution**

The vast majority of issues causing concern in schools can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. In most cases these issues can be resolved through informal discussions with appropriate staff members. Even if an issue is able to be resolved informally, all staff are required to log issues through our complaints management system so 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 simply wish to make a formal complaint you can do so by filling in the complaints form on the Islamic College of Brisbane website.

All formal complaints will be logged into our online complaints management system and managed in accordance with the following procedure.

### **Our Complaints Handling Process**

Step 1 - All formal complaints are logged through our online complaints management system where they are screened by one of our Complaint Handling Officers, or in the case of complaints against the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), by the Board.

Step 2 – All valid complaints will be acknowledged in writing, as soon as practicable, and allocated a status, priority and target resolution date. It is our policy, where possible, to resolve all disputes within 14 days.

Step 3 – The Complaint Handling Officer will conduct an investigation into the issues raised, following principles of procedural fairness, and make a determination.

Step 4 – Following the determination, if appropriate, the Complaint Handling Officer will formulate a resolution and provide a written response to the complainant. The matter will be closed if this response is accepted.

Step 5 – If the initial response is not acceptable, the matter will be reviewed internally by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)'s delegate, who may seek additional information or submissions from the relevant parties. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or their delegate will seek to resolve all disputes within 14 days from the date that the review process is initiated. The matter will be closed if the response of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or their delegate, is accepted. If the complaint was about the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the matter will be reviewed by the Board Chair.

Step 6 – All complaints received will be entered into our Complaints Register and, where appropriate, a corrective action request will be made to address any underlying processes which the complaints investigation revealed may require improvement.

Step 7 – If the matter remains unresolved, the complainant may pursue external resolution alternatives.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality applies with respect to both information relating to the person making the complaint, and, if relevant to a person against whom a complaint is made. The school is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of information throughout the complaints process.

Personally identifiable information about a complainant will only be made available for the purpose of addressing the complaint and (unless the complainant consents) will be actively protected from disclosure.