



Complaints and Grievances Policy & Procedure

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ETASC Complaints and Grievances Policy & Procedure

Rationale

ET Australia Secondary College (ETASC) encourages the resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible, provided that the concerns are dealt with quickly, fully and fairly and within clearly defined time limits.

Purpose

- To encourage the resolution of complaints informally and at the lowest level wherever possible
- To ensure timely, full and fair handling of all complaints
- To provide effective responses and appropriate redress
- To maintain good working relationships between all people involved with the school
- To maintain records of complaints and the determination made in each case
- To manage communication issues concerning complaints, within and outside the school

Note: - For child safety, welfare and protection matters, including reportable conduct, ETASC adheres to the guidelines for complaint and investigation practices outlined in the NSW Office of Children's Guardian. These matters are dealt with quite separately. The investigation process and the outcome for these matters is completely different. For more information, please refer to ETASC's Child Protection Policy and Procedure.

Implementation

A complaint may be made by anyone who has a concern or complaint about any aspect of the school. The complaint or concern can be made verbally or in writing. Formal complaints can only be made in writing.

Complaints made may be resolved:

- Informally - Discussion and resolution by parties involved
- Formally - Investigation by the Principal or representative
- Externally - Investigation by an external body

It is stressed that the majority of complaints are resolved on an informal basis however where upheld may proceed to the next level. A complaint made to the Principal may be referred to the parties for informal resolution.

Time must be allowed to interview parties, examine documents and review the evidence.

At all formal stages of the complaints procedure, the following information should be recorded in writing and stored securely on Teams:

- The name of the complainant
- The date and time at which complaint was made
- The details of the complaint (including staff members and witnesses)
- The desired outcome of the complainant
- How the complaint is investigated (including written records of interviews held)
- Results and conclusions of investigations
- Any action taken
- The complainant's response (satisfaction or further pursuit of complaint)

In formal or external investigations all parties must be advised in writing of the outcome.

Complaint may be upheld (in part or in full) or not upheld. In each case reasons for this are clearly given. In the first instance, conciliation may be possible following:

- An apology
- An explanation
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better
- An assurance that the event complained of will not recur
- An explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again
- An undertaking to review school policies in light of the complaint
- Issues related to child protection, criminal investigations and employee grievances must also all be handled separately from this policy

This policy is distinct from formal staff disciplinary proceedings.

Complaint Procedures will be published and available in the College Handbooks available on the college website – <https://etaustralia.com/secondary-college/>

Confidentiality is vital. All conversations and correspondence will be treated with discretion. Complainants have the right to know what use will be made of personal information and, accordingly, personal information will only be shared between staff on a 'need to know' basis. The Principal is the only person authorised to speak to the media on school issues.

The Principal may write to a complainant and refuse to consider their complaint if he/she feels it is appropriate, if the complaint has already been considered, is frivolous or if it has been closed.

If at any stage, as the result of a complaint, a decision or course of action is taken with regards to an individual (apart from the complainant) which they feel is ungrounded, unjustified or incorrect they have the right to appeal. ETASC will use their established appeal procedures in order to facilitate this.

This complaints policy is distinct from formal staff disciplinary proceedings. Where a complaint gives rise to disciplinary procedures it will put the complaints process on hold. If and when this occurs, the complainant should be informed. Non-disciplinary aspects of a complaint may continue to be dealt with through the usual complaints procedures.

Additional Information

Providing College website details.

References

ETASC Complaints and Grievances Policy & Procedure			
Version Number	Purpose / Change	Author	Date
0.1	Policy reviewed and updated with new version control policy.	Jessica Pitscheider	6 July 2021
1.0	Reviewed / Approved – Current Document	Tony Mylan	
1.0 APPROVED BY:	Tony Mylan		DATE: 6 July 2021
1.1	Updating the website hyperlink, fixed some grammatical and formatting errors	Jessica Pitscheider	27 July 2021
2.0 APPROVED BY:	Tony Mylan		DATE: 27 July 2021
2.1	Added a note to clarify that this policy is not to be used for child safety, welfare and protection matters including reportable conduct.	Jessica Pitscheider	7 July 2022
3.0 APPROVED BY:	Tony Mylan		DATE: 7 July 2022