

COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

Australian International Islamic College | CRICOS No. 02724C

Approved By: College Board

Status: Approved

Contact: Principal

Reviewed: Annually

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This policy may be updated or revised during the academic year. The College may not notify staff each time the Policy is updated.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all student, parent and employee complaints are dealt with in a professional, timely, efficient, and effective manner, in compliance with Queensland law and accreditation requirements – including the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 and relevant child protection legislation. The policy ensures that the College acts in accordance with all relevant legislative and policy requirements.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of the school community – including students, parents/guardians, staff (full-time, part-time, casual), contractors, volunteers, and work experience placements – who may lodge or be involved in a complaint. It extends to complaints about any staff member (including the Principal or other leaders), ensuring all such complaints are handled under these processes.

REFERENCES

- [Education \(Accreditation of Non-State Schools\) Regulations 2017](#)
- [Australian Education Regulations 2013](#)
- [Fair Work Act 2009](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Sex Discrimination Act 1984 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Age Discrimination Act 2004 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Racial Discrimination Act 1975 \(Cth\)](#)
- AIIIC Enterprise Bargaining Agreement or equivalent
- AIIIC Work Health and Safety Policy

- AIIIC Anti-Discrimination Policy
- AIIIC Sexual Harassment Policy
- AIIIC Students with Disabilities
- AIIIC Privacy Policy

Policy statement

The College acknowledges that while most complaints can be resolved internally, some matters – such as allegations of harm or abuse – will be referred immediately to external authorities in line with our Child Protection Policy and legal obligations. This policy is designed to handle all complaints appropriately while ensuring compliance with mandatory reporting requirements. The Australian International Islamic College recognizes that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to students, parents and employees.

Complaints that may be resolved under this Policy

The Australian International Islamic College encourage students, parents and employees to lodge promptly any concerns regarding sexual harassment, 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 incorrect
- the college, its employees or students having failed to do something 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 the college's 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 school fees and payments
- general administrative

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

Note: Any complaint or information suggesting a student may have been harmed or is at risk (a child protection concern) will be referred immediately to the Principal or authorities per our Child Protection Policy and legal obligations, rather than investigated through the general complaints process.

Issues outside this policy

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

- Child protection concerns or allegations of harm to a child – these are managed under child protection laws and the College's Child Protection Policy, with mandatory reporting without delay. (However, a complaint that the College *failed to follow its Child Protection processes* or legal reporting requirements can be made under this Complaints Policy and will be addressed by the Principal or Board as a serious matter.)

with the law and the college's Child Protection Policy.

- Student bullying complaints should be dealt with under the Student Bullying Policy and Behaviour for Learning policy.
- Student discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the Behaviour for Learning policy.
- Employee complaints related to their employment should be directed to their line manager.
- Student or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to the principal who may involve the Police as appropriate.
- Formal legal

Dispute resolution principles

The AIIC is committed to managing disputes according to the following principles:

- Disputes will be taken **seriously** and addressed as promptly as possible with as little disruption as feasible.
- Anonymous complaints will be treated on their merits like any other complaint, though the scope of action may be limited if crucial information is missing.
- disputes will be dealt with fairly and objectively and in a timely
- mediation, negotiation and informal resolution are available alternatives to
- procedural fairness will be ensured wherever
- the Australian International Islamic College will determine the appropriate person to deal with the complaint in the first Complaints should be resolved with as little formality and disputation as possible.
- confidentiality and privacy will be maintained.
- all parties to the dispute will be appropriately
- all parties are entitled to reasonable progress
- appropriate remedies will be offered and
- a review mechanism will be
- complainants, respondents and people associated with the complaint will not be victimized because of lodging the dispute nor will they suffer any other reprisals.
- the college will keep confidential records of

Responsibilities

The College

The AIIC has the following role and responsibilities:

- develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with the school'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
- upon receipt of a complaint, manage the complaint in accordance with the Complaints Handling policy and procedures.
- ensure that appropriate support is provided to all parties of a
- take appropriate action to prevent victimization or action in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.
- appropriate corrective actions or resolutions
- appropriately educate relevant
- maintain accurate complaint records
- conduct a review/audit of the Complaints Register throughout the academic year.
- report to external authorities where required (such as police, Child Safety, or regulatory bodies)
- report to the college's insurer when that is relevant and appropriate.
- report to the college's governing body (Board) immediately any claim for legal redress is lodged.

All parties to a dispute

The complainant and respondent both have the following role and responsibilities:

- apply and comply with the college's Complaints Handling policy and
- lodge the complaint as soon as possible after the issue
- expect that the complaint will be dealt with fairly and objectively; in a timely manner; with procedural fairness and that confidentiality and privacy will be
- provide complete and factual feedback in a timely manner
- not provide deliberately false or misleading
- not make frivolous or vexatious
- act in good faith, and in a calm and courteous
- act in a non-threatening
- complaints are to be appropriately
- acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all
- recognize that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be
- maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all
- not victimize or act in reprisal against any party to the dispute or any person associated with the complaint or dispute.

Employees receiving complaints

Employees receiving complaints have the following roles and responsibilities:

- act in accordance with the college's Complaints Handling policy and
- inform the party lodging the complaint of how complaints 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.
- provide the complainant with a copy of the college's Complaints Handling Policy and
- maintain
- keep appropriate records
- lodge the complaint in the Complaints
- forward complaints to more senior employees, including the principal, as
- not victimize or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

Diagram: Complaints handling process

Implementation

The AICC 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, and via the clear support and promotion of the policy and procedures.

The AICC 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.

The AICC will keep appropriate records of complaints, will monitor complaints and their resolution and will report on a high-level basis to the school Board on complaint handling at the school.

The AICC will act to encourage students, parents and employees to contribute to a professional college culture where complaints are resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible.

PROCEDURE

Complaints handling process Receive and record

IMPORTANT: If the complaint relates to suspected harm, sexual abuse, or likely sexual abuse of a student, stop the complaint process immediately and follow the *Child Protection Policy* mandatory reporting steps without delay. **Do not investigate** — your legal obligation is to report immediately to the Principal, a director of the governing body, or directly to police/Department of Child Safety in accordance with legislation.

Determine if the complaint is a legitimate complaint or an issue or enquiry.

It is not a complaint when a student, parent or guardian: requests information e.g. about the College service or policy; requests a change in a service or requests a new service from the College; makes suggestions for improving a service from the College; expresses a concern about a situation in the College; or provides feedback on the performance of the College.

Record the complaint. Complaints from students, parents and guardians must be recorded in the College's complaints register. Complaint records must be secure to ensure protection of privacy.

Relevant details of the complainant, the complaint and desired outcome, must be recorded. Information recorded must be objective and factual. Complaints about the Principal, complex complaints and requests for internal review are to be forwarded to the Director of Colleges and must be recorded by the complaints receiving officer in the Board complaints register. Child protection reports are recorded in a separate secure child protection register (aligned with s.16(3) Accreditation Regulation).

Assess

Assessing a complaint involves: clarifying the problem; identifying causes and impacts; gathering information; and talking to relevant employees.

Resolve

Decide solution. Solutions include, providing explanations and reasons; suggesting a compromise; implementing specific actions; referring the complainant to a different process; or making improvements.

Wherever possible, complaints must be resolved immediately at the point where the complaint is received. When resolved, the complaint is updated in the register and closed.

Communicate

Communicate to the complainant the process used, progress made, outcomes decided and the reasons for the decision.

Close (or forward)

If resolved, close the complaint record. Record the outcome, including action to be taken and communications with the complainant. Then close the record. If unresolved, forward to a senior employee.

Response times

While every attempt will be made to promptly initiate a response and resolve complaints, the time required to resolve a complaint will depend on the nature and complexity of the complaint, as well as employee availability.

As a guide:

- simple complaints and reviews may take **up to 20 working days**.
- complaints requiring some assessment may take **up to 45 working days**.
- complex complaints* may take **up to 90 working days or longer**.

Receipt of written complaints or written requests for a review must be acknowledged by the receiving College or office as soon as possible.

These guiding timeframes apply during college terms. Additional time may be required if a complaint from a student, parent or guardian is submitted toward the end of a college term or outside of college academic terms.

The principal must ensure these timeframes are communicated to students, parents and guardians to ensure understanding of the time required by the College to resolve complaints.

Complaints that identify a potential or actual breach of legislation may be subject to specific timeframes.

Internal reviews

Internal review does not apply to matters involving mandatory reporting under the Child Protection Policy. These matters are referred directly to police and/or the Department of Child Safety.

Internal reviews are only undertaken when a complainant submits a written request for a review to the principal. An internal review assesses the merits of the:

- original complaint and
- process used by the College to resolve the complaint and
- outcome

The result of the internal review will either:

- support the original outcome decided or
- propose a modified, or new, Who performs an internal review

The principal will review the complaint resolution of a college employee

When a complainant submits to the principal a written request for a review of a college employee's resolution or process used, the principal must perform the internal review and communicate the result to the complainant.

The Director of Colleges will review a complaint resolution of a principal

When a complainant submits to the principal a written request for a review of a principal's resolution or process used, the Director of Colleges must coordinate the internal review in consultation with the Board and, if required, School Operations. A nominated Board delegate communicates the result to the complainant.

Complex complaints

Complex complaints exclude any matter involving suspected harm, sexual abuse, or likely sexual abuse, which must follow the Child Protection Policy and be reported immediately to the principal or police.

A complaint is complex when it raises several distinct matters or significant system-wide issues; requires legal advice or advice from an external third party; involves an issue that is notifiable under legislation; or requires the involvement of School Operations.

The principal must liaise with the Director of Colleges on complex complaints. If required, the Director of Colleges liaises with the School Operations to determine capacity and appropriate action.

Complaints about a Senior Leader must be forwarded to the Principal and Director of Colleges.

Awareness

Staff will be trained annually on the interface between the Complaints Handling Policy and the Child Protection Policy to ensure mandatory reporting obligations are not delayed or replaced by complaints processes. As per section 7(3)(a) of the Regulation, the college will inform staff, students and parents of its processes relating to complaints management in communications to them and it will publish these processes on its website.

- The College includes information about its Complaints Handling processes in staff inductions and in student/parent orientation materials.
- A copy of the Complaints Handling Policy and procedures is available on the College website and on request from the school office by any parent, student or staff member.

Whistleblower Protection Statement

No complainant, reporter, or witness will be penalised or victimised for raising a matter in good faith, including mandatory reports under the Child Protection Policy.

At Australian International Islamic College (AIIC), we are committed to fostering a culture of integrity and accountability. Whistleblowers who disclose improper, unethical, or unlawful conduct in good faith are protected under relevant legislation, including the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 (QLD), and Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (NT).

Protections:

- Confidentiality: Whistleblowers' identities and disclosures are kept confidential unless required by law.
- Protection from Detriment: Individuals are protected from retaliation, harassment, or adverse actions resulting from their disclosure.
- Immunity: Whistleblowers are safeguarded against legal actions related to their disclosures made in good faith.

Reporting Mechanism:

Disclosures can be made to the Principal, Business Manager, or external authorities such as the Queensland Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) or Northern Territory Independent Commissioner Against Corruption (ICAC).

False or malicious reports will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action. AIIC is committed to investigating all valid disclosures and supporting whistleblowers throughout the process.

This policy ensures AIIC's commitment to ethical conduct and compliance with NT and QLD laws.