

Complaints Handling Policy

Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to provide written processes about receiving, assessing, investigating and otherwise dealing with complaints. ¹
Scope:	Any person directly affected by the subject of a complaint. Examples may include staff, students or a student’s parent or guardian, contractors, or community members.
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2017 (Cth) • Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) • 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) • Standards Australia, Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2022, NEQ)
Associated Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kairos Community College Complaints Form</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Complaints Register</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Enterprise Bargaining Agreement 2022</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Enrolment Contract</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Complaints Handling Procedure</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Child Protection Policy</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Positive Behaviour Policy</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Work Health and Safety Policy</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Anti-bullying Policy</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Code of Conduct</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Safe Communities Policy</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Sexual Harassment Policy</i> • <i>Kairos Community Disability Discrimination Policy</i>

¹ [Education \(Accreditation of Non-State Schools\) Regulations 2017, s.7](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kairos Community College Workplace Bullying Policy</i> • <i>Kairos Community College Privacy Policy</i> • <i>CYEO Ltd Constitution or Board Charter</i> 	
Status:	Approved	Supersedes Previous Policy: 14 November 2023
Authorised by:	Kairos Community College Board of Directors	Date of Authorisation: 5 September 2024
Review Date:	Annually	Next Review Date: September 2025
Policy Owner:	Kairos Community College Board of Directors	

Policy Statement

Kairos Community College acknowledges the right of students, parents/guardians, staff, and others to complain when dissatisfied with the school’s services, including an action, inaction or decision of the school. The school encourages constructive criticism and complaints. Kairos Community College is committed to ensuring that complaints received are handled in a responsive, efficient, consistent, effective, transparent and fair way.

Kairos Community College will ensure employees can recognise, receive, and appropriately refer complaints to the informal or formal complaints procedure.

Kairos Community College recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to students and parents/guardians and a better culture for employees, and views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.

Definitions

Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about the school, related to the school’s services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. ²
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 <<add role or roles e.g. a relevant member of the senior leadership team>>.
Complainant	The person, organisation or their representative making a complaint. ³

² Standards Australia, Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2018, NEQ), s.4.3

³ Standards Australia, Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2018, NEQ), s.4.2

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.
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Complaints Handling Principles

Kairos Community College will manage complaints according to the following (which include principles of procedural fairness):

- complaints will be taken seriously, dealt with fairly and objectively, without judgement and addressed in a reasonable timeframe
- complaints should be resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible, having regard to the nature of the complaint
- interested parties to the complaint (for example, the complainant and any respondent) will be heard and/or may provide relevant information in relation to the complaint
- confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible
- the complainant and any respondent will be offered support as appropriate
- victimising behaviour towards a complainant, respondent or other people associated with the complaint, will not be tolerated
- complainants that lodge a complaint on reasonable grounds will not suffer any other reprisals on the basis of the lodging the complaint

Complaints that may be resolved under this Policy

Kairos Community College encourages anyone who feels impacted by an issue involving the school to file a complaint. Complaints can address matters such as:

- the school, its employees or students having done something wrong
- the school, its employees or students having failed to do something they should have done
- the school, its employees or students having acted unfairly or impolitely
- issues of student or employee behaviour that are contrary to the Kairos Community College Positive Behaviour Policy or Kairos Community College Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate staff conduct as reported by a student.
- issues related to learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning
- issues related to communication with students or parents or between employees
- general administrative issues.
- issues relating to non-compliance with a process outlined in school policies or procedures, for example the child protection policy, discrimination policy, or privacy policy.⁴

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

Issues Outside this Policy

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

- Child protection concerns including allegations of sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse or harm to children should be dealt in accordance with the Kairos Community College Child Protection Policy.

⁴ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 s.16(5)

- Student bullying complaints should be dealt with under the Kairos Community College Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Student discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with as behaviour by the Head of Campus in Consultation with the Principal.
- Employee complaints related to their employment should be directed to the relevant Head of Campus or the Principal.
- Student or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to Head of Campus who will, in consultation with the Principal, involve the Police as appropriate.
- Disputes between Board Members, between Committee Members and Board Members or between members should be dealt with in accordance with the CYEO Constitution.
- Formal legal proceedings should be managed as appropriate in the circumstances.

Responsibilities

School

The school has the following roles and responsibilities:

- develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with the Kairos Community College Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- appropriately communicate the Kairos Community College Complaints Handling Policy and procedures to students, parents, and employees
- ensure that the Complaints Handling Policy and procedure is readily accessible by staff, students and parents
- upon receipt of a complaint, manage the complaint in accordance with the Kairos Community College Complaints Handling Policy and procedure
- ensure that appropriate support is made available to all parties to a complaint
- take appropriate action to prevent 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 in regular intervals
- report to the school's insurer when that is relevant.

All Parties to a Dispute

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

- comply with the Kairos Community College Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- provide complete and factual information in a timely manner
- not provide deliberately false or misleading information
- not make frivolous or vexatious complaints or retaliatory complaints
- act in good faith and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship of trust and cooperation
- act in a calm, courteous manner and non-threatening manner
- 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 and/or Managing Complaints

Employees receiving and/or managing complaints have the following roles and responsibilities:

- act in accordance with the Kairos Community College Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- refer the complainant to the Kairos Community College Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure and provide additional information as necessary
- maintain confidentiality as far as possible
- keep appropriate records
- forward complaints to more senior employees, including the Principal, if the complaint cannot be resolved at the initial level or if it involves serious issues that require the involvement of more senior employees
- not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

Implementation

Kairos Community College is committed to raising awareness of the process for resolving complaints at the school, including by the development and implementation of this policy and via the clear support and promotion of the policy

Kairos Community College is also committed to regular training of employees on the implementation of this policy.

Kairos Community College will keep appropriate records of complaints, will monitor complaints and their resolution.

Complaint Register

Kairos Community College will maintain a complaint register with details such as the date, source and description of complaints, the employee managing the complaint, the actions taken, outcome and the date the complaint was closed.

The complaint register will be stored securely.

All complaints shall be entered onto the complaint register as soon as practicable after the complaint is received. The complaint register will not contain complaints about the Principal. Records of complaints about the Principal will be maintained by the Board with access restricted to the Board.

To safeguard confidentiality and maintain the integrity of the complaint process, access to the entire complaint register will be limited to the Principal and the Business Manager.

The Principal may authorise the sharing of specific, relevant entries from the complaint register with other designated staff members (such as the senior leadership team), provided measures are taken to protect the confidentiality of all parties involved, particularly ensuring that respondents to a complaint do not gain inappropriate access to information about the allegations against them.