



## BBC Complaints Policy and Procedure

Purpose:	To state the policy, including the principles to be applied and the procedures to be followed, in the management of complaints in order to resolve complaints fairly, promptly and efficiently.
Scope:	<p>The scope of this policy extends to complaints brought by students, parents or guardians. When a complaint falls within the provisions of another BBC or PMSA policy, then the complaint will be dealt with under that policy. If a complaint has been dealt with as a formal complaint under another BBC or PMSA policy, the same complaint cannot be the subject of a formal complaint under this policy.</p> <p>Complaints brought by employees shall be addressed and managed under the PMSA Employee Complaints Procedure.</p>
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection Act 1999</li> <li>• Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017</li> <li>• Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017</li> <li>• Education (General Provisions) Act 2006</li> <li>• Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</li> <li>• Complaints Procedure for Non-compliance with PMSA Child Safeguarding processes</li> <li>• BBC Data Breach Response Plan</li> <li>• BBC Privacy Policy</li> <li>• PMSA Child Protection Policy</li> <li>• PMSA Child Safeguarding Processes</li> <li>• PMSA Code of Conduct</li> <li>• PMSA Employee Complaints Procedure</li> </ul>
Brisbane Boys' College adopts a cyclic review process for policies and procedures taking into account new legislation, changes to the College's operations and practices and other relevant considerations.	
Policy Owner:	Headmaster

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## 1.0 Policy Statement

The BBC Complaints Policy and Procedure provides a mechanism for complaints to be dealt with in a consistent, timely, fair and transparent way with sensitivity which gives effect to the above aims, and account to the legal obligations of Brisbane Boys' College, including (but not limited to) work health and safety requirements and the according of procedural fairness and natural justice.

Brisbane Boys' College views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.

## 2.0 Policy Principles

- BBC is committed to having an effective system of complaint management that responds to complaints in a positive way and contributes to the continuous improvement of the teaching and learning environment.
- This Policy and related procedure shall be promoted to and readily accessible by employees, students, parents and members of the wider College community, including through the BBC website.
- A student, parent or member of the wider College community has the right to make a complaint, and to submit an appeal on reasonable grounds about the determination of their complaint, to the College or the PMSA where applicable.
- Individuals are encouraged to resolve their complaint informally in the first instance. Should a complainant deem that informal resolution is not possible, appropriate or satisfactory; the complainant may submit a formal complaint.
- A complainant can appeal the outcome of a formal complaint, or of a determination under another Policy that does not have an appeal process, with regard to the procedural fairness of the complaint resolution process.
- A complainant may at any time withdraw their complaint. If a complaint is withdrawn, any processes arising out of the complaint may, at the discretion of the College, be either continued or discontinued.
- A complainant is not to be treated less favourably, victimised, or otherwise discriminated against as a result of making or withdrawing a complaint.
- Complaints will be resolved in a timely manner.
- BBC will take appropriate action to discharge any of the College's duty of care obligations which arise during the complaint resolution process.
- Confidentiality shall be maintained to the greatest possible extent at all stages of the complaint management process. Communication will be limited to persons to whom disclosure is consistent with their official position and responsibility, or with specific responsibility to assist in the resolution of the complaint or appeal.
- Parties to a complaint are to conduct themselves honestly and courteously and seek to achieve an amicable resolution of the complaint where possible.
- The complaint resolution process shall be conducted in accordance with the principles of natural justice.
- Parties to a formal complaint or appeal are to be kept informed of the progress of the complaint or appeal, and, within a reasonable timeframe, will be provided with written advice of Brisbane

- Boys' College's determination(s) in relation to the complaint or appeal and the reason for the determination(s).
- The availability of the Brisbane Boys' College complaint management processes does not remove a person's right to contact, lodge a complaint with, or seek a review by an appropriate external organisation or to take action under relevant laws.

### 3.0 Confidentiality

BBC is committed to the confidentiality of all complaints, at all steps in the process of their resolution. Only the College and persons directly involved in a complaint will have access to information of the subject of the complaint. It is expected that parties involved will discuss the matter only with their support persons or the other parties involved.

- (i) Complainants and respondents have a duty to uphold strict confidentiality during the complaints procedure for the safety and consideration of others that may be involved.
- (ii) Complainants and respondents must not publicise the grievance or the progress of its resolution. Any breach, or suspected breach of confidentiality shall be investigated under the BBC Privacy Policy and associated Data Breach Response Plan.
- (iii) Any documents created or dealt with during the course of the procedure will be marked "confidential" and put in a safe place. These documents may only be accessed by the parties involved in the grievance or by the College if the matter impacts upon the review of this policy.
- (iv) Whilst confidentiality is important, there may be circumstances in which it is not possible to uphold a person's right to confidentiality. For example, as a matter of procedural fairness, Respondents are generally entitled to know the nature of the allegation being made and who has made the allegation against them. As such, Complainants cannot be guaranteed anonymity with respect to their complaint. For example, disclosure may otherwise be required by law, a person's health and safety may be at risk, or the complaint may involve criminal activity. In these circumstances, the College will always prioritise the safety of students, employees and the wider College community.

### 4.0 Time Limit

Brisbane Boys' College will endeavour to resolve all complaints as quickly as possible. However, the timeframe for resolution of a complaint will depend on the complexity, nature and scope of the complaint.

### 5.0 Types of Disputes that may be Resolved under this Policy

Brisbane Boys' College encourages students and parents to promptly lodge concerns regarding general complaints that include areas such as:

- the school or its employees have acted unfairly or contrary to the BBC standards of acceptable behaviour
- issues of student behaviour that are contrary to the relevant BBC or PMSA policy
- learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning
- communication with students or parents
- complaints where an individual student has reasonable grounds that a process on which a decision was made was flawed or deficient, that is, not merely that the decision was unfair or unjust.

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

## 6.0 Complaints Outside of the Scope of this Policy

This policy **will not** apply in the following circumstances where a complaint relates to:

- harm, or suspected harm to a student under 18 years of age regardless of whether the harm has occurred within the school or outside. Reports of harm or suspected harm to a student should be made using the BBC Child Protection Reporting form available on the BBC website at: <https://www.bbc.qld.edu.au/community/policies/>
- non-compliance of the BBC child protection processes. Complaints relating to non-compliance with child protection processes are managed under the Complaints Procedure for Non-compliance with PMSA Child Protection Processes available on the BBC website at: <https://www.bbc.qld.edu.au/community/policies/>.
- employee allegations of inappropriate behaviour and/or conduct including discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment or victimisation. Such complaints will be made and dealt with in accordance with the relevant PMSA policy available from the PMSA Staff Portal.
- employee complaints where an individual has reasonable grounds that a process on which a decision was made was flawed or deficient, that is, not merely that the decision was unfair or unjust. Such complaints will be made and dealt with in accordance with the PMSA Employee Complaints Procedure available from the PMSA website.
- student bullying complaints should be made and dealt with under the BBC Anti-Bullying Policy.
- student violence or criminal matters may be referred to the Queensland Police Services in the first instance where appropriate.

## 7.0 Responsibilities

Any member of staff, may have a role in the formal complaints process, depending on the particular circumstances. The key persons and their responsibilities under this policy are as follows:

### 7.1 Brisbane Boys' College

Brisbane Boys' College has the following role and responsibilities:

- Develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with the BBC Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Appropriately communicate the BBC Complaints Policy and Procedures to students, parents and employees
- Upon receipt of a complaint, manage the complaint in accordance with prescribed in the 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 appropriate records
- Monitor and report on complaints

## 7.2 All Parties to a Dispute

The complainant and respondent have the following role and responsibilities:

- Apply and comply with the BBC Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Lodge complaints promptly as soon as possible after the issue occurs or as otherwise appropriate.
- Expect that the complaints will be dealt with fairly, objectively and in a timely manner with procedural fairness, confidentiality and privacy maintained wherever practicable
- 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
- Show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame
- 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 complaint or any person associated with them

## 7.3 Employees Receiving Complaints

Employees involved in the management of complaints have the following role and responsibilities:

- Acknowledge and respect that employees, parents and students are **entitled to raise a complaint** in good faith
- Consider the **safety and welfare** of all parties involved where appropriate
- Have a commitment to complaints handling procedures being accessible, promoted within the College and community, and **applied consistently and fairly** to all those to who this Policy and Procedure is expressed to apply
- Have a commitment to ensuring complaints are **dealt with sensitively** and **without undue delay**
- Subject to the affording of natural justice/procedural fairness, maintain **confidentiality** of the process to protect its integrity and the welfare of all parties involved at all times; and
- Act in **good faith**, exercise good judgement, focus on the issues not the person (impartial) and communicate in a courteous, and respectful manner.
- Act in accordance with the BBC Complaints Policy and Procedures
- 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 complainant
- Provide the complainant with a copy of the BBC Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Maintain confidentiality subject to section 3.0 above
- Keep appropriate records
- To forward complaints to more senior employees, including the Headmaster, as appropriate
- To be appropriately supported
- Not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them

## 8.0 Complaints Resolution Procedure

The Complaint procedure supports the BBC Complaints Policy as at the effective date and is to be read and applied in conjunction with the policy. The complaint procedure consists of the following three stage process. A complaint may be resolved at any stage of this process however where possible, complaints should be responded to at the local level and at the lowest level possible.

### 8.1 Process

- (i) **Before an Issue Becomes a Complaint**  
Students and/or parents are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) concerned. Year Team Leaders, Heads of Department and Counselling staff are available to assist students at this level.
- (ii) **Stage 1** outlines the *Informal Process*. If at all possible, a concern, issue, problem or conflict is best dealt with directly between the people involved before it escalates to the stage of making a complaint. Early action at this stage generally provides the best opportunity for positive resolution.
- (iii) **Stage 2** outlines the *Formal Process*. It is anticipated this stage will only be utilised if a resolution cannot be reached using the Informal Process or the circumstances and/or the seriousness of the matter clearly require a formal process to be implemented. During the Formal Process, the outcome of the matter is determined by someone other than the immediate parties.
- (iv) **Stage 3** outlines the Review Process. It is anticipated that this stage will only be utilised if a resolution cannot be reached using the Informal or Formal processes.
- (v) **Support Person**  
From the beginning of the process, Complainants and Respondents are encouraged (but not obliged) to seek out a support person who can provide support and encouragement throughout the process. Support persons are entitled to accompany a Complainant/ Respondent to any meetings that take place during the complaint resolution process, however it is not the role of the support person to be a spokesperson for the Complainant. The support persons should not themselves be directly involved in the matter which is the subject of the complaint.

### 8.2 Stage 1

#### ***Informal Resolution***

Brisbane Boys' College recognises that often complaints are simple misunderstandings that can be satisfactorily resolved via effective communication.

Every complaint should normally be addressed via informal discussion in the first instance. Complaints should not normally be able to progress to the next phase unless both parties have first attempted to discuss the issue, if possible.

In the first instance, if appropriate, every attempt should be made to discuss the matter with the person most immediately and directly concerned. The complainant is to approach the respondent and explain their concerns in a non-threatening manner using effective communication. This list is not exhaustive but includes e.g.:

#### 8.2.1. Student complainant: Curriculum

- (a) Principal Teacher
- (b) Head of Junior School (Prep – Year 6)
- (c) Subject teacher (Years 7 to 12)
- (d) Year Team Leaders (Years 7 to 12)
- (e) Head of Department

The teacher, Year Team Leader or Head of Department will make a record of the complaint and report the meeting and any outcomes to the Head of Junior School (Prep – Year 6), the Head of Middle School (Years 7 to 9), Deputy Headmaster – Head of Senior School and Student Wellbeing (P-12) or the Deputy Headmaster – Academic Performance and Innovation P-12.

#### 8.2.2. Student complainant: Co-Curricular

- (a) Team or Activity coach
- (b) Director of the sport or activity

#### 8.2.3. Parent complainant

If the complaint is about a non-teaching or administrative staff member, or a teacher other than their son's teacher, the complainant shall attempt to discuss the matter with the person to whom the complaint relates by agreement with that person's immediate supervisor.

### 8.3 Stage 2

#### *Formal Resolution*

- (i) If the Complainant determines it is not appropriate to raise the complaint in accordance with the process outlined in 8.2.1, or if, after following that process, is dissatisfied with the manner in which their complaint was addressed then the complainant shall address their complaint, in writing, to the Head of Junior School (Prep to Year 6), Head of Middle School (Years 7 to 9) or the Deputy Headmaster – Head of Senior School (Year 10-12).
- (ii) If the complainant determines it is not appropriate to raise the complaint in accordance with the process outlined in 8.2.2, or if, after following that process, is dissatisfied with the manner in which their complaint was addressed then the complainant shall address their complaint, in writing, to the Head of Co-Curriculum.
- (iii) If after following the process outlined in 8.2.3, 8.3 (i) or 8.3 (ii) above, or if the complainant determines it is not appropriate to raise the complaint in accordance with the process outlined in 8.2 or 8.3, or if, after following that process, is dissatisfied with the manner in which their complaint was addressed then the complainant shall address their complaint, in writing, to the Headmaster. In the event that the Headmaster is the subject of the complaint then the complainant shall address their complaint, in writing, to the PMSA CEO.

### 8.4 Stage 3

#### *Review Process - PMSA*

If the complainant determines it is not appropriate to raise the complaint in accordance with the process outlined in 8.2 or 8.3 above, the complainant may address their complaint in writing, to the PMSA CEO via the PMSA Group Office.

If following finalisation of the complaint the complainant is dissatisfied with the complaint process which was followed by the College, the complainant may request for the matter to be reviewed by the PMSA CEO via the PMSA Group Office. The complainant must clearly

state the grounds on which it is believed the complaint has not been satisfactorily dealt with and not merely state a belief that the decision was unfair or unreasonable.

A request for Review should:

- be received by the PMSA Group Office within fourteen (14) days of the complainant receiving the decision of the formal complaint (outcome of stage two);
- contain full details of all relevant documentation relating to the original complaint; and
- clearly state the reasons why the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint process, and not merely state a belief that the decision was unfair or unreasonable.

## 9.0 Implementation

The BBC Complaints Policy and Procedure is communicated to all BBC staff, students and parents via the:

- BBC website
- BBC Student Diary
- BBC Boarding Handbook

Periodic revisions of the procedures are communicated to all staff by the Headmaster, and appropriate professional development in the area is arranged by the Head of Professional Practice and Partnerships throughout each school year.

## 10.0 Definitions

**“Complaint”** is the mechanism for an individual to raise issues of concern and to seek a resolution.

**“Complainant”** refers to the person making the complaint.

**“Parties to a Complaint”** includes the complainant (person making the complaint) and the respondent (either BBC or the person who is subject to the complaint)

**“Procedural Fairness”**, also known as Natural Justice, requires decision-makers to be objective, free from bias, and have no personal interest in the matter being decided. An individual should be informed of the allegation/s against them and have the opportunity to respond to the allegation/s before a decision is made.

**“Respondent”** refers to the person/s against who the complaint is made.



## 11.0 Review and version control register

Version	Authorising Officer	Approval Date	Effective Date	Change History/Superseded Documents	Next Review Date
1	BBC Executive	01/09/2016	01/09/2016	New policy	01/07/2018
2	BBC Executive	01/01/2018	01/01/2018	Page 1 - Updated references to Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 and Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017	01/07/2020
3	BBC Executive	12/07/2021	12/07/2021	Page 1 – removed reference to BBC Student Discipline Policy replaced with BBC Student Behaviour Expectations Guidelines Page 6 – Replaced reference to Housemasters with Year Team Leaders	01/07/2023
4	BBC Executive	15/09/2022	19/09/2022	Updated section 6 to include reference to BBC Complaints Procedure for Non-compliance with Student Protection Processes	01/07/2023
5	BBC Executive	13/07/2023	14/07/2023	Scheduled review	01/07/2024

## BRISBANE BOYS' COLLEGE COMPLAINTS REPORT

Brisbane Boys' College encourages students and parents to promptly lodge concerns regarding general complaints. All complaints will be managed in accordance with the BBC Complaint Policy and Procedures in order to resolve complaints fairly, promptly, and efficiently.

<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	
Name of Student	
Class	
Name of Parent/s	
Date	
Details of Complaint	
Sub School	
Receipt of Complaint	
<b>Type of Complaint</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The school or its employees have acted unfairly or contrary to the BBC standards of acceptable behaviour.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Issues of student behaviour that are contrary to the relevant BBC or PMSA policy learning programs, assessment, and reporting of student learning.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication with students or parents.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complaints where an individual student has reasonable grounds that a process on which a decision was made was flawed or deficient, that is, not merely that the decision was unfair or unjust.
<b>Assess</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The complaint is deemed not to be frivolous or vexatious, proceed to assess and resolve the complaint.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The complaint is deemed frivolous or vexatious, the complaints officer should advise the complainant that the complaint will not be examined. This will be recorded, and the remainder of this procedure does not need to be followed and the complaint is closed.
<b>Process of Review</b>	
<b>Outcome</b>	
Report Tabled by	
Position	
Date	