



**REDWOOD**

**COLLEGE**

Proverbs 22:6

# Complaints Handling Policy

REDWOOD COLLEGE

STATUS: APPROVED

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# Complaints Handling Policy

<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student, parent and employee complaints and 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>Status:</b>	Approved	<b>Supersedes:</b> Draft
<b>Authorised by:</b>	SCEE Board Chair	<b>Date of Authorisation:</b> 2/6/18
<b>References:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2017</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Australian Education Regulations 2013</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Fair Work Act 2009</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</a></li> <li>• Redwood College Complaints Handling Procedure</li> <li>• Redwood College Work Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>• Redwood College Privacy Policy</li> <li>• Redwood College Work Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>• Redwood College Sexual Harassment Policy</li> <li>• Redwood College Workplace Bullying Policy</li> </ul>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	Annually	<b>Next Review By:</b> January 2019
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	SCEE Board	
<b>Note:</b>	This policy may be reviewed at any time at the discretion of the SCEE Board.	

**Version History**

Version	Date	Notes
Draft	26/1/18	Initial Draft Document
1.0	2/6/18	Approved

## **Policy Statement**

Redwood College is committed to ensuring that student, parent and employee complaints are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective and fair way.

Redwood College views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.

Redwood College 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.

Redwood College recognises 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**

Redwood College encourage students, parents and employees to lodge promptly any 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 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.

### **Issues Outside this Policy**

The following matters are outside 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 Positive Behaviour Management Policy.
- Student discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the Positive 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 Principal who will involve the Police as appropriate.
- Formal legal proceedings.

## **Complaints Handling Principles**

Redwood College is committed to managing complaints 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
- complaints will be dealt with fairly and objectively and in a timely manner
- Redwood College 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
- confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible
- all parties to the complaints will be appropriately supported
- Redwood College will give reasonable progress updates
- appropriate remedies will be offered and implemented
- provide a review pathway for parties to the complaint if warranted
- complainants, respondents and people associated with them will not be victimised as a result of lodging the complaints and they will not 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.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Redwood 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 complaint, manage the complaint in accordance with the Complaints Handling procedures
- ensure that appropriate support is provided 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 from time to time
- monitor and report to the governing body on complaints
- report to the College's insurer when that is relevant
- refer to the College's governing body immediately any claim for legal redress.

### **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 procedures
- lodge the complaint as soon as possible after the issue arises expect that the complaint will be dealt with fairly and objectively; in a timely manner; with procedural fairness wherever practicable; that confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible
- 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 complaints have the following role and responsibilities:

- act in accordance with the College's Complaints Handling 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 complaint
- provide the complainant with a copy of the College's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- maintain confidentiality
- keep appropriate records
- to forward complaints to more senior employees, including the Principal, as appropriate
- not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

### **Implementation**

Redwood College 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.

Redwood College 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.

Redwood College will keep appropriate records of complaints, will monitor complaints and their resolution and will report on a high-level basis to the Redwood College Sub Committee on complaint handling at the College.

Redwood College 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.

### **Complaints Handling Procedure:**

All disputes and complaints should be raised in writing to with the College in the first instance. Parents, Students and employees should lodge a complaint in writing directly to the CEO. In the email or letter as much detail as possible should be provided including contact details, details of the complaint/dispute and the parties involved and the remedy sought.

All complaints should be directed to the CEO as soon as possible.

All complaints, including a complaint against the College Principal should be directed to:  
Redwood College CEO – Mrs Kathy Fisher.

Mrs Kathy Fisher

Email: [kathyfisher@rc.qld.edu.au](mailto:kathyfisher@rc.qld.edu.au)

A complaint against the CEO should be referred to the Chairman of the Redwood College Sub Committee for tabling at a Sub Committee meeting:

Mr Stuart Chapman

Email: [stuartchapman@scee.edu.au](mailto:stuartchapman@scee.edu.au)

### **Confidentiality**

Redwood College is committed to the confidentiality of all complaints, at all steps in the process of their resolution.

### **Informal Complaints**

The complaint should be resolved wherever possible by the staff member with immediate responsibility for the issue, with as little disruption and formality as possible.

When or if informal attempts at resolution have failed; the complainant must submit a written complaint.

### **Formal Complaints**

The Complaint is to include in their written complaint:

- What the Complainant heard, saw or experienced;
- Who was involved;
- Whether there were any witnesses; and
- Other relevant information.

Upon receipt of a formal complaint the CEO will decide how best to manage the complaint. This may include handling the complaint under a specific College policy - if applicable, conciliation or mediation; commencing an internal investigation.

If the complaint is regarding staff, the CEO will inform the complainant and respondent to respond to any complaint.

The complainant and respondent will be informed of the chosen process to decide to address the complaint.

If mediation is the agreed upon by both parties an accepted mediator by both parties will be appointed.

- Both parties will be able to bring a support person to the mediation
- Both parties will be asked to sign and support any agreed upon outcomes

If mediation is not supported. The CEO will conduct an investigation.

The investigation will include:

- Interviews of all relevant parties
- A written report summarising findings will be prepared by CEO
- The CEO will decide on the outcomes and consequences of the matters and put these into place
- Names and statements may not be shared with the parties.

### **Record Keeping and Monitoring**

All complaints will be recorded by the staff member managing the complaint and kept on the relevant file/s.

All details of complaints will be recorded on the relevant file/s.

Redwood College and the Redwood College Sub Committee will regularly review the Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures.