



**EDMUND RICE EDUCATION
AUSTRALIA**

Complaints Handling Policy

Approved by the EREA Board: 24 September 2018

Rationale:	EREA is committed to resolving conflicts resulting from complaints. A professional response to valid complaints ensures a prompt and just outcome and provides an opportunity to restore relationships and improve service.
Principles:	<p>EREA is committed to handling complaints in a manner consistent with our values and The Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition, modelling the Gospel practices of forgiveness and reconciliation by the manner in which conflict is resolved.</p> <p>In responding to complaints, EREA will adopt processes that are timely, fair, restorative and respectful. EREA seeks to be transparent in responding to and resolving complaints.</p>
Policy Statement:	EREA will use reasonable endeavors to respond to complaints received by it in a just and timely manner with regard to principles of natural justice, fair process and respect for the rights of the parties involved in a valid complaint.
Applicable to:	All EREA employees, and members of EREA's Board, Council and Committees.
Key Responsibilities:	<p>EREA Council The EREA Council endorses the Complaints Handling Policy and its implementation.</p> <p>EREA Board The EREA Board is responsible for approving the Complaints Handling Policy.</p> <p>Executive Director The Executive Director is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of procedures to ensure compliance with this policy.</p> <p>Principals Principals are responsible for the development, implementation and publishing of Complaints Handling processes in their schools in accord with this EREA policy and any regulatory requirements of state and territory authorities.</p>
Review:	The EREA Complaints Handling Policy will be reviewed every four (4) years unless there is a legislative or regulatory requirement to do so earlier.
Related Information:	EREA Complaints Handling Program – <i>CompliSpace</i> web enabled content EREA Code of Conduct EREA Privacy Policy EREA Conflict of Interest Policy

Complaints Handling Guide

Parade College welcomes feedback from all members of the College community and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. This Complaints Handling Guide is designed to assist you to understand our complaints handling process.

What is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to Parade College, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Parade College's Commitment

Parade College is committed to handling complaints effectively and efficiently. To manage complaints effectively, we have established a Complaints Handling Program in line with both the international complaints handling standard (ISO 10002:2014 Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations), and the Australian/New Zealand complaints handling standard (AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for complaint management in organizations).

Our program includes the establishment of an online complaints management system which allows us to effectively capture, manage and report on complaints. Regular analysis of complaints received and the implementation of rectification action, where deficiencies are identified, are key to the College's commitment. Our internal complaints handling process are available at no cost.

Informal Complaints Resolution

The vast majority of issues causing concern in schools can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. In most cases these issues can be resolved through informal discussions with appropriate staff members. Even if an issue is able to be resolved informally, all staff are required to log issues through our complaints management system so we are able to identify any systemic issues arising, and take appropriate rectification action.

How Do I Make a Formal Complaint?

If you have been unable to resolve a matter informally, or simply wish to make a formal complaint you can do so by any of the following means:

- Writing a letter to the College addressed to the Deputy Principal.

All formal complaints will be logged into our online complaints management system and managed in accordance with the following procedure.

Our Internal Complaints Handling Process

Step 1 – All formal complaints are logged through our online complaints management system where they are screened by one of our Complaints Officers, the Complaints Manager, or, in the case of a complaint directly related to the conduct by the Principal or Member of the School Board, the EREA Regional Director.

Step 2 – Valid complaints will be acknowledged in writing, as soon as practicable (within

10 business days). They will be allocated a status, priority and target resolution date. It is our policy, where possible, to commence an initial investigation and make a preliminary determination within 10 business days of acknowledging the complaint.

Step 3 – The Complaints Officer shall conduct an investigation into the issues raised, following principles of procedural fairness, and make a determination.

Step 4 - Following the determination, if appropriate, the Complaints Officer shall formulate a resolution and provide a written response to the complainant. The matter will be closed if this response is accepted.

Step 5 - If the initial response is not acceptable the matter will be reviewed internally by the Principal or the Principal's delegate, who may seek additional information or submissions from the relevant parties. The Principal or their delegate seek to resolve all disputes within 20 business days of the acknowledgement of the complaint. The matter will be closed if the response of the Principal, or their delegate, is accepted. Where appropriate, the matter may be escalated to the EREA Regional Director.

Step 6 - All complaints received, will be entered into our Complaints Register and, where appropriate, a corrective action request will be made to address any underlying processes which the complaints investigation revealed may require improvement.

Step 7 – If the matter remains unresolved, the complainant may pursue external resolution alternatives.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality applies with respect to both information relating to the person making the complaint, and, if relevant to a person against whom a complaint is made. The College is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of information throughout the complaints process.

Personally identifiable information about a complainant will only be made available for the purpose of addressing the complaint and (unless the complainant consents) will be actively protected from disclosure.

EREA Complaints Officers

The Regional Directors and Chair of Youth Plus have been appointed to act as EREA's Complaints Officers, for complaints in relation to EREA-governed schools and Flexible Learning Centres respectively.

The EREA Complaints Officers are responsible for:

- investigating and, where necessary, escalating complaints to the Deputy Executive Director of EREA
- liaising with complainants
- maintaining accurate records in the Complaints Register.

Who Manages Complaints?

Complaints at the College are handled as follows:

- against a student, parent or volunteer – the Principal or one of the College's Complaints Officers;
- against a teacher – the Principal or one of the College's Complaints Officers;
- against a member of the Leadership Team – the Principal or the Complaints Manager;
- against the Principal or Deputy Principal – the relevant EREA Complaints Officer;
- against a member of the College Advisory Council - the Principal and the relevant EREA Complaints Officer, who will work with the Chair of the College Advisory Council;
- against the Chair of the College Advisory Council – the relevant EREA Complaints Officer.

Complaints Made Involving the Principal or Deputy Principal

If a complaint is made that involves the Principal or Deputy Principal, the complaint will be directed to the appropriate EREA Complaints Officer, who will deal with the matter in consultation with the EREA Deputy Executive Director.