



**ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE**

# Complaints Handling Guide

## Complaints Handling Guide

St Patrick's College welcomes and encourages honest and constructive feedback from members of the College community and the public and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. We are committed to resolving any complaints in a timely manner.

This Complaints Handling Guide is designed to assist you to understand our complaints handling procedures which are fair, transparent and equitable to both the complainant as well as the person(s) about whom the complaint is made.

This Guide is intended for dealing with complaints expressed by parents, carers, students and the public. It is consistent with the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Complaints Handling Policy.

### What is a Complaint?

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

### St Patrick's College's Commitment

St Patrick's 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) and the Australian/New Zealand Complaints Handling Standard (AS/NZS 10002:2014 Guidelines for Complaint Management).

### Complaints Management

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. All complaints will be lodged on our internal complaints management system, including those that are resolved informally, so that we are able to identify emerging issues and take appropriate action. Our internal complaints handling process is available at no cost.

### Informal Complaints Resolution

Most issues causing concern can be handled quickly and in an informal manner through discussions with relevant Staff.

### 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 contacting the College Complaints Manager (Deputy Principal) by the following means:

1. Sending an email to [complaints@spc.nsw.edu.au](mailto:complaints@spc.nsw.edu.au)
2. Writing a letter to the College addressed to the 'Complaints Manager'
3. Telephoning the College and asking to speak to the 'Complaints Manager'.

Any complaint regarding the abuse, assault, neglect or ill-treatment of a student of the College, including behaviour that causes psychological harm, should be directed to the Principal who is the College's Senior Safeguarding Officer.

Complaints relating to child safety matters will be dealt with in accordance with our policies and our legal obligations to protect children, including reporting matters to the Police and relevant agencies, as appropriate. It is our commitment to ensure that every child and young person under our care is kept safe and free from all forms of harm and abuse.

Any complaint regarding the misconduct of a College staff member, volunteer, pre-service teacher or contractor, should be directed to the Deputy Principal.

Any complaint made by a College staff member or volunteer will be managed in accordance with our Internal Grievance Policy and Guidelines, or Safeguarding Policies, as appropriate.

Any complaint relating to the Principal, Deputy Principal, or a member of the College Board should be directed to the Complaints Manager of EREA NSW Colleges Ltd through an email sent to [complaints@erea.edu.au](mailto:complaints@erea.edu.au) or telephoning (02) 8705 8610.

### **Complaints Management Process**

All other formal complaints will be managed in accordance with the following procedures.

#### **Step 1**

All formal complaints are screened by our Complaints Manager, the Principal or the EREA Complaints Manager, as appropriate. Complaints relating to Privacy will be referred to the College Privacy Officer.

#### **Step 2**

All valid complaints will be acknowledged in writing as soon as practicable, and in any event 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**

An investigation into the issues raised will be conducted.

#### **Step 4**

Following the determination, if appropriate, a response will be provided 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. Ordinarily, the Principal or their delegate seeks 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 CEO of EREA NSW Colleges Ltd.

#### **Step 6**

All complaints received will be entered into our Complaints Register and, where appropriate, corrective action will be taken 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.

## Vexatious Complaints

False or vexatious complaints made by students or parents of the College may be regarded as a breach of the College's Conditions of Enrolment. All complaints must be made and resolved appropriately and in good faith.

## Administration

Approver:	College Principal
Owner:	College Deputy Principal
Publication Date:	21 July 2025
Review Date:	21 July 2027