



<b>Policy Name</b>	COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY		
<b>Purpose</b>	As an independent school, AITC is required under legislation to have a Complaints Handling policy in place (s7, Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017). The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Young Person, parents/guardians and employee complaints and disputes are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective and fair way.		
<b>Scope</b>	This policy applies across the College to young people, parents/guardians and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as employers, contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements.		
<b>Policy Category</b>	Corporate		
<b>References</b>	<i>Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld)</i> <i>Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Cth)</i> <i>Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)</i> <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)</i> <i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</i> <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)</i> <i>Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</i> <i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</i> <i>Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</i> <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</i> <i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</i> AITC Complaints Handling Procedure AITC Work Health and Safety Policy AITC Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy AITC Privacy Policy and Collection Notices		
<b>Key Links</b>			
<b>Status</b>	Approved	<b>Supersedes</b>	All previous versions
<b>Authorised by</b>	AITC Board	<b>Date of Authorisation</b>	22 Feb 2023
<b>Policy Owner</b>	CEO	<b>Version</b>	5.0
<b>Review Period</b>	1 Year	<b>Next Review Period</b>	2024 - T1

## COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

### Policy

The Australian Industry Trade College (AITC) is committed to ensuring that young person, parents/guardians, industry, and employee complaints are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, and effective and fair way.

The AITC views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.

The AITC acknowledges the right of young people, parents/guardians and employees to complain when dissatisfied with an action, inaction or decision of the College, and the AITC encourages constructive criticism and complaints.

The AITC recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to young people, parents/guardians, industry and employees.

## Complaints that may be resolved under this policy

The AITC encourage young people, parents/guardians 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 young people having done something wrong
- the College, its employees or young people having failed to do something they should have done
- the College, its employees or young people having acted unfairly or impolitely
- issues of young person or employee behaviour that are contrary to their relevant Code of Conduct
- issues related to learning programs, assessment and reporting of young person learning
- issues related to communication with young people or parents/guardians or between employees
- issues related to College fees and payments
- general administrative issues

Young person complaints may be brought by young people or by parents/guardians 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 AITC's *Child Protection Policy*.
- Young person bullying complaints should be dealt with under the *Bullying and Harassment and Performance Management Policy*.
- Young person discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the *Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy*.
- Employee complaints related to their employment should be directed to their line manager.
- Young person or employee violence or criminal matters should be directed to the relevant Principal, line manager or Executive leader who will involve the Police as appropriate.
- Formal legal proceedings.

## Complaints Handling Principles

The AITC is committed to managing complaints according to the following principles:

- complaints should be resolved with as little formality and disputation as possible; mediation, negotiation and informal resolution are optional alternatives
- 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

- the AITC will determine the appropriate person to deal with the complaint in the first instance
- 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
- the AITC 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 AITC will keep records of complaints
- the AITC's insurer will be informed if a complaint could be connected to an insured risk.

## Responsibilities

### The AITC

The AITC has the following role and responsibilities:

- develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with the AITC's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- appropriately communicate the AITC's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures to young people, parents/guardians and employees
- ensure that the Complaints Handling procedures are readily accessible by employees, young people and parents/guardians
- 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 of the complaint handling
- have the Complaints Register reviewed/audited by an appropriately independent person, annually
- monitor and report to the governing body on complaints
- report to the AITC's insurer when that is relevant
- refer to the AITC'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 AITC'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 AITC'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 AITC's Complaints Handling Policy and procedures
- maintain confidentiality
- keep appropriate records of the complaint handling
- to forward complaints to more senior employees, including the relevant Principal or line manager, as appropriate
- to forward complaints involving the Principal, a member of the Executive Leadership Team, or the CEO/Executive Principal to the Board Chair
- not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

## Implementation

The AITC is committed to raising awareness of the process for resolving complaints at the AITC, including by the development and implementation of this policy and related procedures, and via the clear support and promotion of the policy and procedures.

The AITC is also committed to appropriately training relevant employees (especially management) on how to resolve complaints in line with this policy and the related procedures.

The AITC will keep appropriate records of complaints, will monitor complaints and their resolution and will report on a high-level basis to the AITC Board on complaint handling at the AITC.

The AITC will act to encourage young people, parents/guardians and employees to contribute to a healthy culture where complaints are resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible.

## Definitions

<b>Complaint</b>	An expression of dissatisfaction or concern made to the AITC related to our services, decisions, actions or the actions of our people where a resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
<b>Complainant</b>	Any person who makes a complaint.
<b>Procedural fairness</b>	Procedural fairness is a principle that ensures fair decision making. Generally, procedural fairness requires decisions to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• free from bias or apprehension of bias by the decision-maker.</li> <li>• rational or based on evidence that is logically capable of supporting the facts.</li> <li>• providing people likely to be adversely affected by decisions an opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- present their case, and</li> <li>- have their response taken into consideration before the decision is made.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Review and change register

VERSION	EFFECTIVE DATE	CHANGE HISTORY	AUTHORISED BY
8.0	2 March 2023	Minor amendments to role titles made.	AITC Board

## Policy approval (current version)

APPROVAL	DATE	SIGNATURE
Endorsed by CEO	15 Feb 2023	NA
AITC Board	22 Feb 2023	Approved at AITC Board Meeting