



TKIS Complaints Handling Policy

Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to provide written processes about receiving, assessing, investigating and otherwise dealing with complaints. ¹	
Scope:	Any person directly affected by the subject of a complaint. Examples may include staff, students or a student’s parent or guardian, contractors, or community members.	
Status:	Approved	Supersedes: Previous Policy
Authorised by:	School Governing Body	Date of Authorisation: October 2025
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) • Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) • Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) • Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) • Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) • Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth) • Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) • Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth) • Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) • Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) • Standards Australia, Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2022, NEQ) • Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld) • Child Safe Organisations Queensland Family and Child Commission • Child Safe Standards – Statement of Commitment • TKIS Child Protection Policy • TKIS Work Health and Safety Policy • TKIS Behaviour Management Policy • TKIS Anti-bullying Policy • TKIS Student Code of Conduct • TKIS Anti-Discrimination Policy • TKIS Sexual Harassment Policy • TKIS Disability Discrimination Policy • TKIS Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy 	

¹ [Education \(Accreditation of Non-State Schools\) Regulations 2017, s.7](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TKIS Privacy Policy • TKIS Constitution or Management Committee Charter • TKIS Sexual Harassment Policy 	
Review Date:	Annually	Next Review Date: October 2026
Policy Owner:	School Governing Body	

Policy Statement

The Kooralbyn International School (TKIS) acknowledges the right of students, parents/guardians, staff and others to complain when dissatisfied with TKIS' services, including an action, inaction or decision of TKIS. TKIS encourages constructive criticism and complaints. TKIS is committed to ensuring that complaints received are handled in a responsive, efficient, consistent, effective, transparent and fair way.

TKIS will ensure staff can recognise, receive, and appropriately refer complaints to the informal or formal complaints procedure.

TKIS recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to students and parents/guardians and a better culture for staff, and views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process.

TKIS promotes a safe, inclusive and culturally responsive environment for all students, ensuring their safety and wellbeing are prioritised. TKIS is committed to students exercising their right to speak up and participate in school processes and decisions that affect them.

TKIS statement of commitment to student safety and wellbeing

TKIS is committed to protecting children and young people from harm and ensuring that all those engaged in our school community promote the fundamental right of children and young people to be respected and nurtured in a safe school environment.

We are committed to taking all reasonable steps to promote the safety, protection, and wellbeing of every student in our care. We value student voice and are committed to listening to, taking seriously, and responding to the views, experiences, and concerns of children and young people.

We affirm that safeguarding children is a shared responsibility and the foundation of an environment where young people can learn, flourish, and participate confidently. We are committed to creating inclusive and culturally safe environments for all students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

We uphold a child safe culture in accordance with the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld), embedding child safety into our governance, leadership, and everyday practices. We implement the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle to create a safe, inclusive, and accountable environment. We have clear processes for raising concerns and responding to allegations of harm.

We do not tolerate any form of child abuse, harm, or unsafe conduct.

Definitions

Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about TKIS, related to TKIS' services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. ²
Informal Complaint	A complaint about a matter that is likely to be simple, straight forward, easily manageable, or minor, where a simple or quick resolution is appropriate such as discussion of the matter with a relevant staff member.
Formal Complaint	A complaint about a matter that is serious, complex or may pose a threat to the health and safety of any person. Examples include serious allegations or breaches of policy, complaints against a senior staff member, including the Principal or an informal complaint that could not be resolved informally. Assessment of the complaint is required by the deputy Principal.
Complainant	The person, organisation or their representative making a complaint. ³
Respondent	The person who is referred to in a complaint by a complainant as the person responsible for their concerns or who can best respond to their concern.

Complaints Handling Principles

TKIS will manage complaints according to the following (which include principles of procedural fairness):

- complaints will be taken seriously, dealt with fairly and objectively, without judgement and addressed in a reasonable timeframe
- complaints should be resolved with as little formality and disruption as possible, having regard to the nature of the complaint
- interested parties to the complaint (for example, the complainant and any respondent) will be heard and/or may provide relevant information in relation to the complaint
- confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible
- a child-centred approach will be maintained, and all complaints will be managed in a manner that prioritises the student's safety, wellbeing, and voice
- a trauma-informed and culturally safe approach to managing complaints will be prioritised
- the complainant and any respondent will be offered support as appropriate
- victimising behaviour towards a complainant, respondent or other people associated with the complaint, will not be tolerated
- complainants that lodge a complaint on reasonable grounds will not suffer any other reprisals on the basis of the lodging the complaint

² Standards Australia, Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2018, NEQ), s.4.3

³ Standards Australia, Guidelines for complaint management in organizations (ISO 10002:2018, NEQ), s.4.2

Complaints that may be Resolved under this Policy

TKIS encourages anyone who feels impacted by an issue involving TKIS to file a complaint. Complaints can address matters such as:

- TKIS, its staff or students having done something wrong
- TKIS, its staff or students having failed to do something they should have done
- TKIS, its employees or students having acted unfairly or impolitely
- issues of student or staff behaviour that are contrary to the TKIS Behaviour Management Policy or TKIS Code of Conduct, including inappropriate staff conduct as reported by a student ⁴
- issues related to learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning
- issues related to communication with students or parents or between staff
- issues related to school fees and payments
- general administrative issues
- issues relating to non-compliance with a process outlined in school policies or procedures, for example the child protection policy, discrimination policy, or privacy policy. ⁵

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 including allegations of sexual abuse, likely sexual abuse or harm to children should be dealt in accordance with TKIS Child Protection Policy.
- Student bullying complaints should be dealt with under the TKIS Behaviour Management Policy.
- Student discipline matters, including matters involving suspension or expulsion, should be dealt with under the TKIS Behaviour Management Policy.
- Student or staff violence or criminal matters should be directed to the Principal who will involve the Police as appropriate.
- Disputes relating to a staff member's employment should be directed to their manager and dealt with under the enterprise agreement and/or employment law. This does not include disputes about work health and safety matters or complaints about relevant unlawful conduct under the Sexual Harassment Policy, which may be dealt with under TKIS' Complaints Handling Policy.
- Formal legal proceedings should be managed as appropriate in the circumstances.
- Complaints relating to the education and training services provided by TKIS to an overseas student should be dealt with in accordance with the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* and National Code and TKIS International Student's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Process.

⁴ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 s.16(2)(a)

⁵ Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 s.16(5)

Responsibilities

School

TKIS has the following roles and responsibilities:

- develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with the TKIS Complaints Handling Policy
- appropriately communicate the TKIS Complaints Handling Policy to students, parents and staff
- ensure that the TKIS Complaints Handling Policy is readily accessible by staff, students and parents
- upon receipt of a complaint, manage the complaint in accordance with the TKIS Complaints Handling Policy
- ensure that appropriate support is made available 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 staff
- keep records
- conduct a review/audit of the Complaints Register in regular intervals
- report to the TKIS' insurer when that is relevant.

All Parties to a Dispute

The complainant and respondent both have the following roles and responsibilities:

- comply with the TKIS' Complaints Handling Policy
- provide complete and factual information in a timely manner
- not provide deliberately false or misleading information
- not make frivolous or vexatious complaints or retaliatory complaints
- act in good faith and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship of trust and cooperation
- act in a calm, courteous manner and non-threatening manner
- 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.

Staff Receiving and/or Managing Complaints

Staff receiving and/or managing complaints have the following roles and responsibilities:

- act in accordance with the TKIS Complaints Handling Policy
- refer the complainant to the TKIS Complaints Handling Policy and provide additional information as necessary
- maintain confidentiality as far as possible
- keep appropriate records
- forward complaints to more senior staff, including the Principal, if the complaint cannot be resolved at the initial level or if it involves serious issues that require the involvement of more senior staff

- not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with them.

Implementation

TKIS is committed to promoting awareness and understanding of TKIS' complaints resolution process. This will be achieved through the development, implementation, and regular communication of this policy. The policy will be made readily accessible to members of TKIS community, including through publication on TKIS' website and inclusion in relevant school handbooks, and communication through appropriate school channels to ensure that students, parents, and staff are aware of the procedures for raising and resolving complaints.

TKIS is also committed to ensuring that staff are appropriately trained in the implementation of this policy. Training on the policy and associated procedures will be provided to staff during induction and through regular refresher training sessions, including at least annually thereafter.

Complaint Register

TKIS will maintain a complaint register with details such as the date, source and description of complaints, the staff managing the complaint, the actions taken, outcome and the date the complaint was closed.

The complaint register will be stored securely.

All complaints shall be entered onto the complaint register as soon as practicable after the complaint is received. The complaint register will not contain complaints about the Principal. Records of complaints about the Principal will be maintained by the Management Committee with access restricted to the Management Committee members.

To safeguard confidentiality and maintain the integrity of the complaint process, access to the entire complaint register will be limited to the Principal and Deputy Principal.

The Principal may authorise the sharing of specific, relevant entries from the complaint register with other designated staff members (such as the senior leadership team), provided measures are taken to protect the confidentiality of all parties involved, particularly ensuring that respondents to a complaint do not gain inappropriate access to information about the allegations against them.

Complaint Handling Procedure

1. Lodging a Complaint

- a) Complaints can be lodged with the most appropriate staff member at the local level, for example, the initial contact point for many complaints is the HoSS or Deputy Principal.
- b) Complaints about the Principal must be lodged with the Management Committee at chairperson@tkis.qld.edu.au
- c) Complaints can be lodged through various methods, including:
 - i. Phone

- ii. Email
 - iii. In-person (by appointment)
- d) If the complainant is unsure where to direct their complaint, they can contact TKIS' administration office on 5544 5500 for guidance.
- e) If the complainant is uncomfortable directing the complaint to the most appropriate member at the local level, or wants to make a formal complaint, they can submit a complaint by:
 - i. Completing the online complaint form (available on TKIS website)
 - ii. Using the anonymous reporting system
 - iii. Report to a member of TKIS Management Committee.
- f) Where an anonymous complaint is lodged, TKIS will follow the complaints handling policy, when there is sufficient information to do so.

2. Acknowledgement, Assessment and Referral

- a) The staff member receiving the complaint will:
 - i. acknowledge the complaint within two (2) business days, outlining the next steps and where possible the estimated timeframes.
 - ii. assess the complaint, using the definitions of informal and formal complaints in this policy, and refer the complaint to the informal or formal complaints process.

3. Registration and Support

- a) The recipient of the complaint will promptly enter it onto the complaints register, regardless of whether it proceeds through the informal or formal process.
- b) The recipient of the complaint will offer support to the complainant as appropriate, which may include assistance with completing forms or understanding procedures.
- c) If a student is a complainant, respondent or victim, or the child of a complainant, respondent or victim of a matter being managed through this policy, TKIS may offer the student support where appropriate e.g. discussing suitable adjustments with parents/caregivers.

4. Informal Complaints Handling Process

- a) The informal process is designed to resolve issues promptly and collaboratively at the local level.
- b) It may involve constructive discussion and negotiation between the complainant and the relevant staff member(s).
- c) If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, it will be escalated to the formal process.

5. Formal Complaints Handling Process

- a) The formal process begins with the assessment of the complaint by a designated staff member (e.g., a member of the senior leadership team or the Chairman of the Management Committee for complaints against the Principal)
- b) The staff member may gather additional information through investigation, interviews, or evidence review. The staff member may consult with appropriate members of the student's or the family's community
- c) The staff member will determine appropriate action, which may include:
 - iii. Mediation
 - iv. Disciplinary measures
 - v. Implementation of policy changes
 - vi. Referral to external agencies (e.g., police)

- vii. Provision of written updates to the complainant throughout the process
- viii. Other actions – the Principal will determine as appropriate in the circumstances.

6. Complaint Closure

- a) The complaint register will be updated with the date the complaint is closed and a brief summary of the outcome.
- b) The complainant will receive written notification of the outcome and any actions taken where appropriate.

7. Appeals Process

- a) Complainants may appeal the outcome of a complaint by writing to:
 - i. the Principal
 - ii. the Chairman of the Management Committee (for complaints about the Principal).