

PRO06 Complaints Handling Procedure

Purpose of this Policy

This document outlines the process to follow as Staff and Directors when a complaint is received as per the Complaints Handling Policy.

Scope

This procedure covers the process for formal complaints made to the school administration, as defined in the Complaints Handling Policy

Definitions

- **The School** - Brisbane Independent School
- **The Management Committee** - The elected board of Brisbane Independent School Inc.
- **Complaint** - a statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable.
- **Complainant** - the person making the complaint
- **Investigator** - the designated person who will investigate the complaint (usually the Principal, however if there are any conflicts of interest, this may be another staff member or the Management Committee Chair).

Feedback Process

If you would like to provide feedback on any aspect of this Procedure please email policy@bis.qld.edu.au

Related Legislation and BIS Documents

POL06 Complaints Handling Policy

F04 Complaint Form: Resolution Request

F05 Complaints Handling Tracking Form

F04 Complaints Register

Change Register and Review Schedule

This policy document is owned by the Management Committee of Brisbane Independent School Inc. As a Procedure any changes to this document must be authorised by the Principal, as the delegate of the Management Committee.

Document control is maintained by ensuring that Versions are saved by each person who has changed the document using the format - Author, yyyyymmdd, description of the change

- Annual
- Next Date: July 2025
- Review responsibility sits with: The Management Committee

Change Register			
Document Version	Change Description	Authorised By	Date Implemented
1.0	Procedure creation	Principal/J. Haynes	2018/04/15
2.0	Transfer from Word to Google Docs Format, complete update.	Principal/L. Bowie	2022/03/22
2.1	F04 converted from Google Form to Google Document (pdf for public).	Principal/L. Bowie	2022/08/29
2.2	Updated form reference	Principal/L. Bowie	2023/01/16
2.3	Reviewed without change	Principal/L. Bowie	2024/03/30
2.4	Reflective of update in POL06 Complaints Handling Policy - full procedure overhaul	Principal/L. Bowie	2024/07/30

Procedure

Inline with our Integral Philosophy and Non Violent Communication goals, complainants are encouraged, in the first instance, to seek resolution of their complaint directly with the staff member responsible for the decision, act or omission which forms the basis for their complaint (e.g. through discussion, meetings). If they believe it is appropriate to do so and they are able, willing and feel confident in approaching the person(s). If the issue can't be resolved a formal complaint can be made filling out and emailing the **F04 Complaint Form: Resolution Request** to complaints@bis.qld.edu.au.

The School is aware of the importance and value of complaints to grow and improve as an organisation. Inline with this we follow best practice guidelines of:

1. Lodging a Complaint
2. Acknowledgement, Assessment and Referral
3. Registration and Support
4. Informal Complaints
5. Formal Complaints Handling Process
6. Complaint Closure
7. Appeals Process

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 student's relevant classroom teacher.
- b. Complaints can be lodged through various methods including:
 - i. Email via complaints@bis.qld.edu.au.
 - ii. In-Person (by appointment)
- c. If the complainant is unsure where to direct their complaint, they can contact the school office for guidance.
- d. If the complainant is uncomfortable directing the complaint to the most appropriate member at the local level or want to make a formal complaint they can submit a complaint by
 - i. Completing **F04 Complaint Form: Resolution Request** to complaints@bis.qld.edu.au.
 - ii. Completing **F04 Complaint Form: Resolution Request** via the website
- e. Where an anonymous complaint is lodged, the school will follow the complaints handling policy where there is sufficient information to do so.

2. Acknowledge, Assessment and Referral

- a. The staff member receiving the complaint will:
 - i. Acknowledge the complaint within (2) business days, outlining the next steps where possible the estimated time frames
 - 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, the school 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.
- b. It may involve constructive discussion and negotiation between the complainant and the relevant staff member(s).

5. The formal Complaints Handling Process

- a. The formal process begins with the assessment of the complaint by a designated staff member (e.g. the Principal or the Management Committee Chair for complaints against the Principal).
- b. The staff member may gather additional information through investigation, interviews, or evidence review
- c. The staff member will determine the appropriate action, which may include:
 - i. Mediation
 - ii. Disciplinary measures
 - iii. Implementation of policy changes
 - iv. Referral to external agencies (e.g. police)
 - v. Provision of written updates to the complainant throughout the process

- vi. Other actions the Principal or delegate determine as appropriate in the circumstances

6. Complaint Closure

- a. **F04 Complaints Register** will be updated with the date the complaint is listed 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 (for complaints not previously managed by the Principal)
 - ii. The Management Committee Chair (for complaints not previously managed by the Management Committee Chair).