



Complaints Handling Guide

Edmund Rice 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 Edmund Rice College, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Edmund Rice College's Commitment

Edmund Rice 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 is 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:

1. Sending an email to complaints@erc.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 Deputy Principal.
4. If the complaint is in relation to the Principal, Deputy Principal, or a member of the Board, telephone the EREA Regional Director (Eastern Region) on (03) 94263200 or write a letter addressed to the Regional Director for the Eastern Region at EREA PO Box 91 Richmond VIC 3121.

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 conduct by the College Principal, Deputy Principal or Member of the School Board, the EREA Regional Director.

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 – 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.

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.

Our Commitment to Child Safety

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. Complaints alleging child abuse, neglect or risk of harm 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.

