



Complaints Handling Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

St James Lutheran College is committed to providing a safe, fair, responsive, accessible and transparent environment in which complaints and concerns can be raised, addressed by means of a professional and effective process, and resolved appropriately.

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

The completed work of Christ in his life, death, resurrection and ascension is the foundation and focus of our Christian life and activity (2 Cor 5:16). Through faith in Jesus Christ, human beings become reconciled to God, and to one another.

Nevertheless, our old sinful nature continues to lead us into situations of conflict with one another. This makes reconciliation an ongoing challenge. We are reconciled to God. As a result, we have the opportunity to share God's ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18–19). Christians can experience complaints, disputes and concerns as opportunities to glorify God (1 Cor 10:31), to serve others (Gal 6:2) and to grow to be more like Christ (1 Cor 11:11).

Responsibility

College Council

Point of Contact

Principal

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to enable St James Lutheran College to provide an environment where complaints and concerns can be raised and addressed in an appropriate manner and consistent with scriptural principles.

Conflict is broadly defined to encompass disagreements and/or unhealthy differences of opinion. It is not restricted to disputes of a personal nature between individuals.

The policy and any subsequent procedures apply to:

- All activities of St James Lutheran College;
- All, employees, members, volunteers and visitors

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Promote reconciliation of relationships and resolution of issues based on sound scriptural principles.
- Encourage an environment in which a complaint or concern can be raised without fear of reprisal or unfair treatment.
- Enable the complainant and the respondent to be provided with pastoral care and support.
- Enable all complaints to be addressed in accordance with principles of natural justice.
- Enable a process where confidentiality is maintained in the assessment and/or investigation of complaints.
- Enable a fair, impartial and transparent process which is applied in a consistent manner.

DEFINITIONS

Grievance or conflict situations involve two or more people with different expectations and views, each one taking a position and acting on what they believe is right. In addition, the organisation has expectations that must also be taken into account.

Complex issues in this context are where situations vary from standards to such an extent that efficiency and effectiveness of stated outcomes are jeopardised. Grievance and complaint processes are a subset of complex issue resolution.

Within the context of this process, a Complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction by an employee, volunteer, parent or student of the organisation about any act, behaviour, omission, situation or decision that the employee, volunteer, parent or student considers unfair or unjustified.

PROCEDURAL PRINCIPLES

The application of the policy will provide for:

- All complaints to be addressed in accordance with scriptural principles and consistent with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Church.
- Clear and transparent procedures for lodgement and processing of complaints.
- The handling of complaints in a confidential and respectful manner that safeguards the integrity and dignity of both the complainants and the respondents.
- The availability of pastoral care and support to all parties during the complaints handling process.
- Timely response to complaints.
- A system that ensures appropriate records are maintained.
- Effective external communication of the policy.



POLICY RELEASE DETAILS

Date of Policy

May 2021

Approved by St James Lutheran College Council

May 2021

Review Date

Biennially

RELATED ST JAMES LUTHERAN COLLEGE PROCEDURAL AND TEMPLATE DOCUMENTS

- Complaints Handling Procedure
- Complaint against staff covered by Enterprise Agreement (Annexure D)
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Child Protection Compliance Strategy
- Valuing Safe Communities
- Workplace Bullying and Harassment Statement
- Anti-Discrimination Statement