

Complaints management system procedure

GUIDELINES

1. Overview

This procedure should be used when a member of the public, a teacher or an interest group complains about the service or actions of the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) or its employees.

It does not apply to employee complaints or grievances, complaints or allegations made against teachers, or reviews and appeals provided for under the *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005*.

The process for a complaint to the QCT is outlined below.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Complaints may be submitted by <u>telephone</u> , <u>facsimile</u> , or <u>mail</u> or may be made <u>online</u> . Complaints may be lodged on behalf of an individual if the individual cannot lodge the complaint themselves. The QCT will verify the authenticity of the complaint with the complainant.	Complainant
2. Other than minor complaints which can be resolved immediately, complaints will be acknowledged in writing within five (5) working days.	Complaints Coordinator
3. Complaints will be recorded and monitored by the QCT. Confidentiality of the complaint will be maintained.	Complaints Coordinator
4. Complaints will be assessed by the Complaints Coordinator who will refer the complaint to the appropriate unit leader. The unit leader will appoint an officer to manage the complaint. Due to the substance of some complaints, e.g. allegations that may be assessed as official misconduct, the QCT may be required to refer the complaint to an external agency, e.g. the Crime and Corruption Commission.	Complaints Coordinator
5. The unit manager or delegated officer will contact the complainant to discuss possible resolution of the issue. The QCT attempts to resolve all complaints within twenty (20) days. Regular contact will be maintained with the complainant throughout the process to ensure that they are kept informed of the progress of their complaint.	Complaints Manager
6. Where complainants are dissatisfied with the outcome of the review, they may refer the matter to an external complaint management organisation such as the Queensland Ombudsman's Office.	Complainant

2. Assessment

On receiving a complaint, the Complaints Coordinator will assess it to determine the urgency required for action and the level to which the complaint should be escalated. Various levels of complaints will include:

- **Negligible or Minor** – resolvable at the point of service
- **Moderate** – issues that may require more comprehensive assessment or review

- **Major** – significant issues or issues causing lasting detriment that require review
- **Extreme** – issues about serious adverse events, or long-term damage that requires management

Major or Extreme complaints may require the complainant to provide a statutory declaration before any action is taken.

3. Data collection and analysis

Complaints provided to the QCT will be acknowledged and recorded on the QCT's Complaints Management System to assist the QCT to continue to improve its level of customer service. Anonymous complaints will be accepted; however, this may make open and ongoing interaction by officers of the QCT with a complainant challenging and prevent a satisfactory resolution for a complainant. Anonymous complaints will be treated with the same degree of commitment by the QCT as those complaints received from identified complainants.

4. Outcomes and actions

- Regular reports and audits will be carried out on complaints provided to the QCT and on the time taken to resolve complaints. This information will be used to improve the QCT's performance and business practices. The QCT aims to complete its complaints management process within twenty (20) days.
- Where a complaint is justified an appropriate remedy will be implemented. Remedies may include, but not be limited to, an apology, an explanation, a change of decision or a change of policy, procedure or practice.
- Where appropriate the QCT will make complainants aware of any review options should they be dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint.
- Where it has been established that an employee of the QCT has not performed their duties to the standards required by the QCT and/or as documented in the employee's position profile, appropriate training will be provided for the employee or performance counselling will be implemented for the employee.
- Where a complaint is considered trivial, unreasonable or vexatious, the QCT may refuse to deal with the complaint. Complainants may then wish to pursue the matter through an external agency.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The **Complaints Coordinator** is responsible for:

- Monitoring, analysing and reporting on complaints and compliance with the policy and procedures
- Acknowledging feedback to the complainant
- Ensuring employees are aware of the policy and procedures
- Conducting audits and surveying complainants for feedback on the complaints process and satisfaction with the resolution
- Reviewing and recommending improvements to increase customer satisfaction

The **Complaint Managers** are responsible for:

- Managing complaints and providing feedback to the complainant and Complaints Coordinator on timeframes and resolutions
- Liaising with the Queensland Ombudsman's Office on complaints issues

The **Director** is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the policy and procedure are maintained in accordance with the relevant legislative provisions
- Liaising with the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman
- Training of staff
- Ensuring the complaints management process and system are part of the QCT's induction program for new employees and that staff receive "refresher" training annually.

6. References

- *ISO 10002:2006 Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations*
- *Office of the Public Service Commissioner Complaints management procedures, Aug 2013.*
- *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005*

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