

Policy reviewed: March 2022. Policy Updated March 2022.
Policy reviewed annually in November by the accountable personnel as outlined in the Organisational Chart.

1. Our values

Queensland Academies Creative Industries (QACI) is committed to fostering a school environment that is supportive, respectful, compatible with human rights and provides all students with opportunities to engage in quality learning. Effective partnerships with parents, carers, students, school staff and International Baccalaureate Organisation (IB) are essential to achieving this goal. We want to know what we are doing well, but also if there are any areas where we can improve or do things differently.

Purpose

QACI appreciates and acknowledges that parents, carers, students and community members have a right to make a complaint. This document outlines how QACI will manage these complaints. Refer Appendix (i) Making a customer complaint. Information for parents and carers

2. What is a customer complaint?

A complaint is a customer complaint if the person is unhappy with the service or action or our school or staff, and directly affected by the service or action they are unhappy with.

In our school, the person making a complaint will usually be a parent, carer, student or other school community member, but could also be anyone else directly impacted by something at our school.

Some complaints must be managed using different processes. These include:

- issues about harm, or risk of harm, to a student attending a state school, which must be managed in accordance with the Student protection procedure; and
- complaints about corrupt conduct, public interest disclosures or certain decisions made under legislation - refer to the Excluded complaints factsheet for more information.
- complaints and student requests for appeals against IB program-related decisions taken by the school, which must be managed in accordance with IB General Regulations: Diploma Programme and Rules for IB World Schools: Diploma Programme.

3. Roles and responsibilities

We treat everyone with respect, courtesy and fairness, and aim to act compatibly with human rights. Our responsibilities include:

- following the Queensland Department of Education customer complaints management framework, policy and procedure when managing complaints;
- following the IB General Regulations: Diploma Programme and Rules for IB World Schools: Diploma Programme.
- resolving complaints promptly; and
- providing information about our processes, timeframes and any available review options.

If someone makes a complaint, they also have responsibilities, including:

- cooperating respectfully and understanding that unreasonable conduct will not be tolerated;
- giving us a clear idea of the issue or concern and a possible solution;
- providing all relevant information when making the complaint;
- understanding that addressing a complaint can take time; and
- letting us know if something changes, including if help is no longer needed.

4. Complaints management process

At QACI, our complaints management process aligns to the expectations of the Queensland Department of Education and the IB. The process involves the following steps:

i. Receipt

The complaint should be made where the problem or issue arose. At QACI, we ask parents, carers, students or community members who would like to make a complaint to either send an email marked 'private and confidential' to admin@qaci.eq.edu.au or principal@qaci.eq.edu.au or visit the school office to make an appointment to meet with the Principal or another member of the Executive Leadership Team.

The following information should be provided when making a complaint:

- what happened, including when and where it occurred, and who was involved; and
- what outcome or solution you are seeking to address your issue or concern.

The school will accept anonymous complaints; however, it is important to understand that this could limit how a complaint is assessed and resolved, and it may also prevent an outcome being provided.

ii. Assessment and management

The school will examine the issue(s) raised and try to resolve the complaint. We aim to do this promptly, but understand that we have many other responsibilities and it may not be possible to make contact or resolve a complaint immediately. In some instances, where the complaint is related to a decision taken by the school about IB program-related matters, the school may be required to refer to the IB during the assessment and management stage of receiving the complaint.

iii. Providing an outcome

Once we finish examining the complaint, we will let the person who has made the complaint know the outcome and any available review options.

Review options

If the person who has made the complaint is dissatisfied with the outcome or the way the school handled their complaint, they can contact the *regional office* to ask for an internal review. A *Request for internal review form* should be completed and the request should be submitted within 28 days.

There is also an external review option (for example, the Queensland Ombudsman or Queensland Human Rights Commission), which becomes available once the department's complaints process has been exhausted.

5. More information and resources

The following resources contain additional information:

- *Compliments and customer complaints*
- *Customer complaints management framework*
- Making a customer complaint: Information for parents and carers *See Appendix (i)*
- *The IB complaints procedure*

Endorsement



Principal - Gavin Bryce



P&C President - Sarah Johnson

Effective date: March 2022

Review date: March 2023

Making a customer complaint

Information for parent and carers

What is a customer complaint?

As a parent or carer, you can express dissatisfaction with the service or action of the Department of Education (the department) or its staff, including decisions made or actions taken in a school and/or by the local regional office. A customer complaint includes decisions taken by the school about IB Program-related matters.

How does the department manage my customer complaint?

The department is committed to responding to customer complaints in an accountable, transparent, timely and fair way that is compatible with human rights. For information about how the department manages customer complaints you should refer to the *Customer complaints management framework, policy and procedure* and the *Internal review procedure online*.

For customer complaints about school matters, you are encouraged to use the following three step approach:

1. **Early resolution:** the best place to raise any concerns is at the point where the problem or issue arose. You can make an appointment at the school to discuss your complaint with your child's teacher or the principal. You are also welcome to lodge your complaint in writing or over the phone. You can also make a complaint through [QGov](#).

Check the school's website to find your school's complaints management process. The *schools directory* contains contact information for all schools.

The *regional office* may be able to assist you through this process, or provide you with advice.
2. **Internal review:** if, after taking the early resolution step, you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint or how the complaint was handled, you can ask the local *regional office* to conduct a review. You need to submit a Request for internal review form within 28 days of receiving the complaint outcome.
3. **External review:** if you are dissatisfied after the internal review, you may wish to contact a review authority, such as the *Queensland Ombudsman* or *Queensland Human Rights Commission*, and request an independent, external review.

Some matters need to be handled in a different way to school matters and will be referred to other areas in the department. These include:

- issues about harm, or risk of harm, to a student attending a state school, which must be managed in accordance with the *Student protection procedure*.
- complaints about corrupt conduct, public interest disclosures; or certain decisions made under legislation, which will be dealt with as outlined in the Excluded complaints factsheet.

You can make an anonymous complaint; however, please understand that if you do not identify the school, or if you advise that you do not wish the school to be contacted, it may limit how your complaint can be assessed and resolved. If no contact information is provided, the department cannot reply back to you.

What are my responsibilities when lodging a customer complaint?

You have a right to make a complaint to the department, however, you also have responsibilities as a complainant to:

- be respectful and understand that unreasonable conduct will not be tolerated by school, regional or departmental staff
- clearly outline what the problem is, what you are unhappy about and your desired outcome
- provide all relevant information when making a customer complaint and inform the department of any changes impacting on your complaint
- understand that if the complaint is complex, it can take time to assess, manage and resolve.

What happens after I make my complaint?

If your complaint is not resolved during your initial contact, we will aim to resolve your complaint as quickly as possible, taking into consideration the complexity and timing of your complaint. As a general guide, complaints requiring inquiry or some investigation may take longer to resolve. School holidays may also impact the time it will take to resolve a complaint. Refer to the Customer complaints management framework for response times.

Once your customer complaint has been resolved, you will be contacted and informed of the outcome of your complaint, any recommendations, and any review options available to you.

For information privacy reasons, the department is unable to provide you with information about other people involved in your complaint.

Appendix (1)