



## Complaints Handling Policy

Newman College welcomes feedback from all members of the college community and takes all complaints or concerns that may be raised seriously. This Complaints Handling Policy is designed to assist you to understand how to make a complaint.

For the purposes of this policy, we use the terms “staff” and “staff member” to include all teaching and non-teaching staff, Council members, volunteers, contractors and external providers.

### What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to Newman College, related to our services or operations, or the complaints handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Complaints about child abuse, grooming or other harm, or other breaches of our Child Safe Codes of Conduct, relating to conduct by:

- current or former staff members
- current or former students
- other people on College premises or at College events are managed differently to other complaints.

Refer to the section at the end of this policy – Complaints About Child Safety Incidents or Concerns At or Involving the College or its Staff Members – for more information.

### Newman College’s Commitment

Newman College is committed to handling complaints effectively and efficiently. To manage complaints effectively, we have established a Complaints Handling Program in line with:

- Principle 6 of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, using the Office of Child Safety’s “Complaints Handling Guide: Upholding the Rights of Children and Young People”
- the international complaints handling standard (ISO 10002:2018 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 internal complaints handling process is available at no cost.

Our Complaints Handling 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.

### Informal Complaints Resolution

The vast majority of issues causing concern in schools can be handled quickly and in an informal manner. We therefore ask that, where appropriate, you first raise your concern directly with the relevant staff member. Even if the issue is 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:

- Complete the 'Contact Newman College' Form on the College website [www.newman.wa.edu.au](http://www.newman.wa.edu.au) located under the Contact heading
- Writing a letter to the College addressed to the Vice Principal, or if this person is subject to your complaint, the Principal
- Telephoning the College and asking to speak to the Vice Principal.

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, or in the case of complaints against the Principal by the Chair of the Council.

**Step 2** – All valid complaints will be acknowledged in writing, as soon as practicable, and allocated a status, priority and target resolution date. It is our policy, where possible, to resolve all disputes within 14 days.

**Step 3** – The Complaints Officer will 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 will formulate a resolution and provide a written response to the complainant. The matter will be closed if this response is accepted.

**Step 5** – Internal reviews: 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 14 days from the date that the review process is initiated. The matter will be closed if the response of the Principal, or their delegate, is accepted.

**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.



## Complaints About Child Safety Incidents or Concerns at or Involving the College or its Staff Members

Complaints about or allegations of:

- breaches of the Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- child abuse, grooming or other harm of a current or former student by
  - current or former staff members
  - current or former students
  - other people on College premises or at College events

are managed by the College in a different manner to other complaints. This is because of the additional confidentiality and privacy requirements surrounding these kinds of matters.

We refer to these as child safeguarding-related complaints.

If your complaint is a child safeguarding-related complaint, please make your complaint to the College's Senior Child Safeguarding Officer Andrew Watson, Principal, by emailing [andrew.watson@newman.wa.edu.au](mailto:andrew.watson@newman.wa.edu.au) or if this person is the subject of your complaint please notify the Vice Principal or the College MSA Regional Director (call 08 9204 9402 for contact details).

For information about how the College manages child safeguarding-related complaints, as well as **any** child safety incidents or concerns at or involving the College or its staff members, please refer to our **Procedures for Managing Child Safety Incidents or Concerns at or Involving the College or its Staff, Volunteers or Contractors**, available on our public website.

### The Role of the Director General

The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school observes the registration standards, including the standard about its complaints handling system. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website. While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, she does not have the power to intervene in a complaint or override the school's decision.