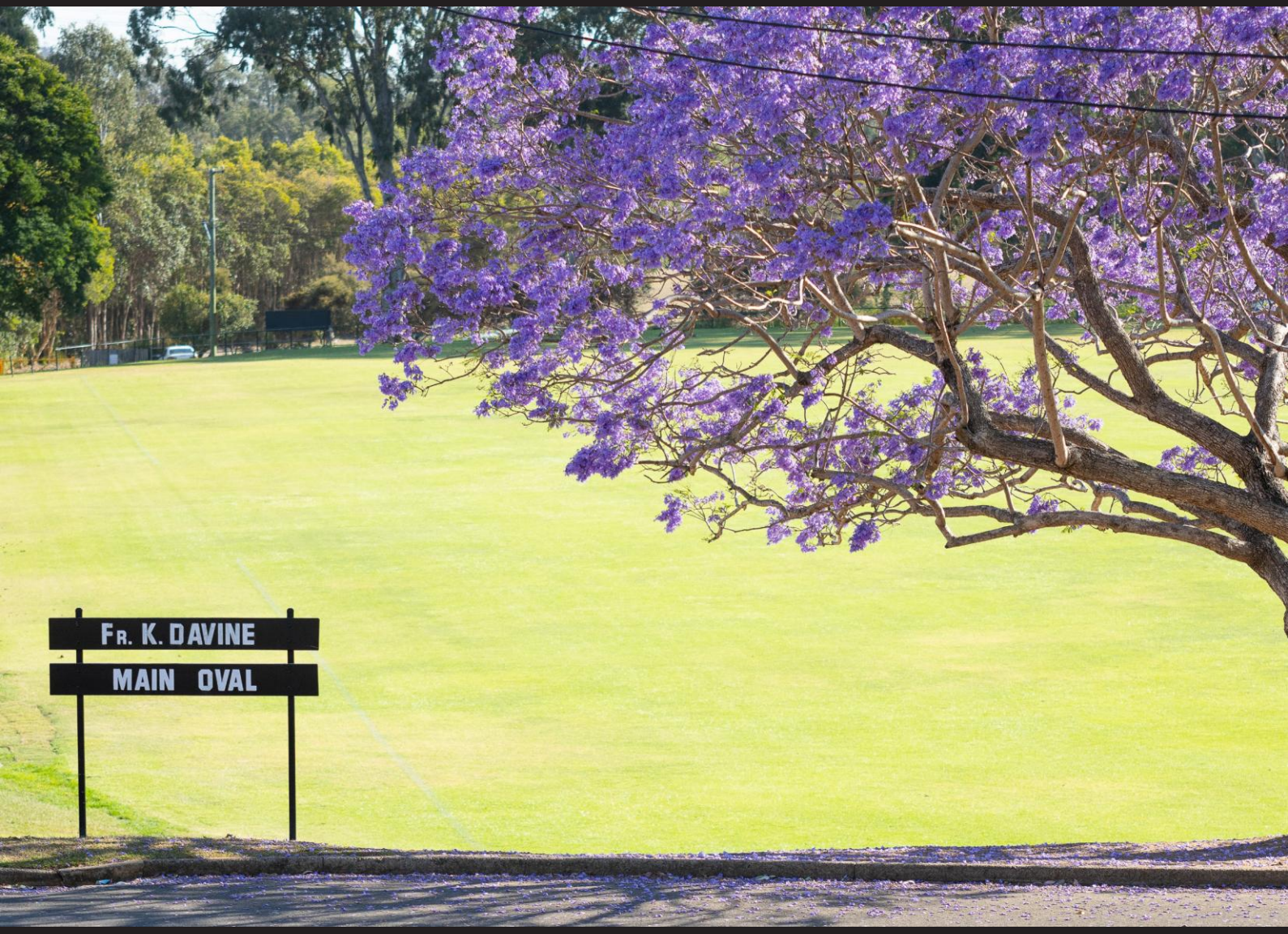
IONA COLLEGE



Complaints Handling Policy

V2.0

1. INTRODUCTION

St Eugene de Mazenod OMI, through the Oblate charism invited us all to "Learn who we are in the eyes of God". This invitation hopefully leads to a discovery of a God-given dignity that has great responsibilities and hopes to promote healthy and life-giving relationships.

Consequently, as a Catholic college in the Oblate tradition, we believe that all human beings are created in the image and likeness of God. As a result of that understanding we believe that each of us has a fundamental human dignity. As a school, that human dignity needs to be recognised, modelled and taught through the way we interact with one another. College policies and procedures in part exist to help us ensure that we treat each other with respect and dignity.

2. PURPOSE

Iona College is committed to ensuring members of the Iona community collaborate in a harmonious and equitable working environment where complaints are dealt with sensitively and promptly. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student, parent, employee or other stakeholder complaints are dealt with in a responsible, efficient, effective, transparent and fair way.

Although the majority of complaints can and should be resolved in an informal way without conducting an investigation, there will be occasional instances where more formal processes should be followed.

3. SCOPE

The policy applies to all complaints made by students, parents, employees, contractors, volunteers or members of the community relating to issues including but not limited to:

- Discrimination, bullying, harassment and other negative behaviours
- The application of Iona's policies and procedures
- Decisions made by management in relation to a person's engagement with the College; and
- Terms and conditions of employment.

Where there is any inconsistency with the Student Protection Processes and Guidelines, the Student Protection Policy and Guidelines will apply.

Exclusions:

- Complaints relating to Student Protection should be addressed to the Principal. If the concern relates to the Principal, then to the Chair of the Iona College Board in line with our Student Protection Processes & Guidelines.
- Student bullying complaints will be addressed in accordance with our College Policy and Rules and Behaviour Management Policy.
- Where an appeal or review of a decision or outcome has been undertaken in accordance with another policy or procedure.

Employee complaints related to their employment should be directed to their Line Manager in the first instance, all reasonable attempts should be made to resolve these matters locally. Where there is inconsistency between this policy and the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement and other industrial instruments, the industrial instrument takes precedence.

4. DEFINITIONS

Complainant	*The person making the complaint.*
Complaint	*An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about the College, our service and/or our staff or the handling of a complaint where the response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.*
Dispute	*An unresolved complaint which is escalated for external resolution.*
Natural Justice	*Applies to any decision that can affect the rights, interests or expectations of individuals in a direct or immediate way and works to ensure that decision making is fair and reasonable.*
Procedural fairness	*Being given a fair and reasonable opportunity to be heard before a decision is made.*
Respondent	*The person that the complaint is about.*

5. POLICY STATEMENT

Iona College ("the College") is committed to ensuring that student, parent and employee complaints are dealt with in a responsive, efficient, effective, sensitive and fair way. The College will seek to resolve issues quickly and use principles of conflict resolution to ensure that complaints are resolved with the least amount of stress for those involved.

The College views complaints as part of an important feedback and accountability process. Iona College acknowledges the right of students, parents and employees to complain when dissatisfied with an action, inaction or decision of the College and the College encourages such feedback. The College recognises that time spent on handling complaints can be an investment in better service to students, parents and employees.

Complaints made and the response to them must reflect the ethos of Iona College as a Catholic School in the Oblate tradition. Complaints will be addressed in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. Procedural fairness will be ensured wherever practicable, including the right of the interested parties to be heard.

6. PROCEDURE

The College encourages informal resolution of concerns and complaints through discussion, negotiation informal facilitation and mediation. This does not prevent a complainant from deciding, at any time to make a formal written complaint to the Principal. Refer to the Complaints Handling Guidelines for further information.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES AND POLICY MANAGEMENT

All stakeholders have obligations under this policy.

7.1 College (Senior and Middle Leaders Included)

- Develop, implement, promote and act in accordance with the College's Complaints Handling Policy and Guidelines.
- Appropriately communicate the College's Complaints Handling Policy and Guidelines to students, parents and employees.
- Ensure that the Complaints Handling Guidelines are readily accessible by staff, students and parents.

- Upon receipt of a complaint, manage the complaint in accordance with the Complaints Handling Guidelines.
- Ensure that appropriate support is provided to all parties to a complaint.
- Take appropriate action to prevent victimisation or actions in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with parties to the complaint.
- Appropriately implement remedies.
- Ensure all relevant staff undertake professional development in support of this Policy and the relevant guidelines.
- Maintain records (including steps taken to resolve complaints) via a confidential Complaints Register.
- Conduct a review/audit of the Complaints Register at least annually or immediately after a substantial breach in policy.
- Regularly report to the College Board in relation to complaint trends and emerging issues.
- Report to the College's insurer when that is relevant.

7.2 All Parties to a Complaint

- Comply with the College's Complaints Handling Policy, and Guidelines and participate in processes designed to address or resolve complaints.
- Raise concerns as soon as possible after an issue arises.
- Expect the complaint to be dealt with fairly and objectively; in a timely manner; with procedural fairness wherever practicable; that confidentiality and privacy will be maintained as much as possible.
- Provide complete and factual information in a timely manner.
- Not provide deliberately false or misleading information.
- Not make frivolous or vexatious complaints.
- Act in good faith, and in a calm, courteous and non-threatening manner.
- Will be appropriately supported.
- Acknowledge that a common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties.
- Recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
- Maintain and respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties.
- Will not victimise or act in reprisal against any party to the complaint or any person associated with parties to the complaint.

7.3 Employees Receiving Complaints

- Act in accordance with the College's Complaints Handling Policy and Guidelines.
- Inform the party raising the concern or complaint how complaints can be lodged, when they should be lodged and what information is required.
- Provide the complainant with information about any support or assistance available to assist them in raising their concern/complaint.
- Provide the complainant with a copy of the College's Complaints Handling Policy and Guidelines.
- Maintain confidentiality of the complaint and complaint process at all times.
- Forward concerns/complaints to more senior employees, including the Principal, as appropriate.
- Not victimise or act in reprisal against the complainant, respondent or any person associated with the matter of concern.

7.4 Principal

- Ensure the compliant handling system is operating in accordance with this Policy and associated procedures/guidelines.
- Inform the College Board of any serious complaints and reporting at least annually on all complaints.

7.5 College Board

- Delegate to the Principal the responsibility for the development, adoption and compliance of this Policy
- At least annually, review a report on all concerns/complaints dealt with by the College in order to ensure appropriate systems are in place for avoiding issues, remedying areas of concern and ensuring the complaint handling system is operating effectively.

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Handling Guidelines
- Complaints Register
- Enterprise Bargaining Agreement
- College Policy and Rules
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Student Protection Policy
- Whistle-blower Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy

9. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every three years, or as necessitated by legislation.

10. INFORMATION & DOCUMENT CONTROL

Issue Date	Oct 2026	**Review Date**	Oct 2029
Document number	POL-GOV-003	**Version**	2
Authorised by	Principal	**Owner**	Deputy Principal

11. AMENDMENTS

Version	Details of the changes made	Section	Date	Author
2	Transferred policy into new template.	All	Oct 2026	Risk & Compliance Manager