

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).

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.

Complaints raised by employees in relation to their employment conditions, workload, industrial entitlements or other workplace matters will be managed in the first instance under the procedures set out in the applicable Enterprise Agreement (EA). This policy operates alongside, but does not override, the grievance and dispute resolution processes contained in the EA.

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

Status/Version:	2025.1 DRAFT	Supersedes:	Date April 2023
Authority:	College Council	Date of Implementation:	Date September 2025
Review Date:	March 2025 Biannually	Next Review Date:	Date September 2027

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.
- Complaints raised by employees that fall within the scope of the Enterprise Agreement must follow the EA's grievance and dispute resolution procedure. This policy applies to employee complaints only where the matter is outside the EA (e.g. interpersonal concerns, wellbeing, or non-industrial issues).
- 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.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will be implemented through:

- Sharepoint Policies and Procedures for staff
- St James College Website

RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION

DOCUMENTS:

- Complaints Handling Procedure
- Queensland Lutheran Schools Single Enterprise Agreement 2024 (Annexure C)
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Child Protection Compliance Strategy
- Valuing Safe Communities
- SJLC Staff Code of Conduct

LEGISLATION:

- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld)
- Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
- Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)