

Complaints and Appeals Policy

1. Introduction

Djerriwarrh Community College (the College) is an independent specialist senior secondary school based in Melton. We deliver the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) at Foundation, Intermediate and Senior levels for students aged 15-19 years. We provide a safe and inclusive learning environment for young people who may have been disengaged or are at risk of disengaging from education. The College is committed to supporting students to reach their individual personal, social and educational potential.

The College will take any complaint or appeal from a student/parent/guardian seriously and will handle it in a professional and confidential manner to maintain confidentiality.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to explain clearly how the College responds to Complaints and Appeals.

Complaints and appeals can arise from matters of concern relating to:

- curriculum delivery and assessment
- the quality of teaching
- student support
- materials
- discrimination
- harassment
- venue
- another student
- teacher/trainer/other staff member/volunteer/contractor

3. Scope

This policy applies to College staff, volunteers, students and parents/guardians.

4. Definitions

Appeal	Where a student/parents/guardians disputes a decision arising from a complaint, an assessment decision, or another decision made by the College
Arbitration	The process of solving a disagreement by helping two parties agree to an acceptable solution
Complaint	Any expression of dissatisfaction with an action or service delivered by the College and requires action to be resolved.
Conciliation	The process of helping two sides in a disagreement, to meet talk about the disagreement in the hopes of ending the disagreement
Natural Justice	Natural justice is concerned with ensuring procedural fairness. It involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• decisions and processes free from bias• all parties having the right to be heard• all parties having a right to know how and of what, they are involved/accused• investigating a matter appropriately before a decision is made• all parties being told the decision and the reasons for the decision
Student/parents/guardians	includes the College students and their parents/guardians

5. Responsibilities

The Principal is responsible for ensuring:

- this policy is implemented in accordance with commonwealth and state privacy legislation; and
- information in this Policy is kept up to date.

6. Communication

This Privacy Policy is available on the College website, Compass and hard copies can be obtained from the College Reception.

7. Policy

The College endeavours to resolve complaints or appeals through discussion and conciliation. The College will treat all complaints seriously and attempt to resolve them with confidentiality and fairness in a timely manner and without fear of prejudice, reprisal or victimisation.

When a complaint or appeal cannot be resolved through discussion and conciliation, students/parents/guardians may lodge a formal complaint or appeal in writing. Students, parents/guardians have the right to an advocate.

Natural justice and procedural fairness will be observed in resolving complaints.

Where a formal complaint or appeal cannot be resolved following the relevant procedure, the Principal may approach School Council representatives to mediate between the parties. The College acknowledges there may also be need for an appropriate external and independent agent to mediate between parties.

Any complaint involving a breach of law is referred to an appropriate agency/organisation for action.

Formal complaints will be documented in the Complaints Register and will be used to inform continuous improvement where relevant.

Appeals will be documented in the Appeals Register.

A copy of this policy and relevant complaint or appeal form is available to staff via the internal IT system and to the public and participants via the College website as well as in the Student/Parent Handbook.

7.1 Complaint escalation

At any time throughout the complaints process, the student/parents/guardians may take their complaint to an appropriate external body. It is the College's responsibility to provide contact information for the appropriate external body.

8. Associated documents

Associated policies and procedures	Complaints Procedure Appeals Procedure
Other associated documents Internal	Complaint Form Appeal Form
Relevant legislation	<i>Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</i> <i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</i> <i>Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)</i> <i>Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)</i> <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)</i> <i>Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)</i>
Other associated documents External	VRQA Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration

Document No:	053	Version no:	1	Classification:	Administration
Document owner:	Principal	Authorised by:	School Council		
Issue date:	30 June 2020	Review date:	30 June 2023		