

Effective complaint resolution process

Three levels of complaint resolution

Communication

Level 1 - Local resolution in schools and corporate

- Complaints can be received by any school or department staff member
- Staff aim to resolve complaints quickly and at the local level
- Complainants are supported to participate in complaint resolution
- Staff seek advice and support or escalate complaints when required
- Complainants are informed in writing of the outcome and their review rights

End to end complaint resolution in schools and corporate

Level 2 - Internal review of complaints

- Complainants can ask for a review of their complaint if they are dissatisfied with the outcome or the way their complaint was handled
- Internal reviews are conducted by a senior person not involved in the original complaint process
- The Resolution Unit receives and triages all requests for internal review

Centralised receipt and triage

Level 3 - External review of complaints

- All complainants have a right to complain to an external body
- Complainants can ask for an external review of their complaint if they are dissatisfied with the outcome or the way their complaint was handled
- The Resolution Unit coordinates the department's response to external complaint bodies

Centralised coordination

- Anti-Discrimination Commission
- Australian Human Rights Commission
- Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal
- Northern Territory Police Force
- Office of the Children's Commissioner
- Office of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption
- Office of Ombudsman Northern Territory
- Teacher Registration Board

Show empathy
Ensure privacy
Manage expectations
Do what you say

Engage

3 business days

- Listen with care
- Clarify things that are not clear
- Is immediate action required?
- What are my reporting responsibilities?
- Is the complaint in scope?
- Can the complaint be resolved quickly? If so, don't delay
- For more complex complaints, explain the complaint resolution process
- Open a complaint record
- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing
- Provide the 'Your complaint's journey' brochure
- Provide the 'Individual rights and mutual responsibilities' information sheet

Engage



What can be addressed
Who will address it

Assess

10 business days

- Identify main concerns
- Who needs to be informed about the complaint?
- Assign to a complaint manager
- Consider the complainant's individual needs and circumstances
- Address barriers to participation in complaint resolution
- Communicate early; within 10 business days
- Provide time frames for further contact
- Provide complaint manager's contact details to the complainant
- Update the complaint record

Assess



What is to happen
How each party will be involved

Act

10 business days

- Make a plan
- Gather information
- Consult and seek expert advice when necessary
- Be forward focused and conciliatory
- Seek enabling support or escalate the complaint when necessary
- Communicate often, no less than every 10 business days
- Analyse information
- Develop resolution options
- Provide procedural fairness
- Decide the outcome
- Update the complaint record

Act



Advise parties of the outcome
Collect feedback

Close

30 business days

- Quality check the complaint resolution process
- Take action to address any gaps in process before finalising the complaint
- Finalise the complaint within 30 business days
- If more time is needed, let the parties know and provide a new time frame
- Provide the outcome of the complaint in writing
- Inform the complainant of their right to seek a review
- Seek feedback on the complaint resolution process
- Update the complaint record

Close



Follow up on implementation

Learn

- Act on recommendations
- Reflect, debrief and engage employee assistance if required
- Assess professional learning and development needs
- Review complaint data and look for opportunities to learn, grow and improve
- Report complaint data when requested to do so
- Provide feedback on the complaint resolution policy, guidelines and procedures

Learn

