

Complaints Handling Procedure

Challenge Trade and Business College (CTBC) is committed to providing a clear and fair process for managing complaints. This procedure ensures that all concerns are handled respectfully, transparently, and in a timely manner.

Complaints are viewed as valuable feedback that helps improve services, policies, and relationships within the CTBC community.

This document outlines the complaints process for all complaints received concerning CTBC, ensuring accessibility, confidentiality, and compliance with relevant policies and legislation.

By following these steps, CTBC aims to resolve complaints efficiently while fostering a positive and supportive environment for students, parents, caregivers, employees, and community members.

This procedure supports Principle 2 and 6 of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Office for Child Safety, 2025) to ensure children and young people are:

- Accessible
- Are encouraged to participate in decisions that affect them
- Are taken seriously

Complaints that may be resolved under this procedure

Conduct of employees, contractors, volunteers, student, parents, caregivers and trainees relating to:

- bullying
- privacy breaches
- sexual abuse
- inappropriate behaviour
- reports of harm
- discrimination
- unsafe actions
- non-compliance with colleges policies
- non-compliance with codes of conduct

Issues related to:

- learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning
- communication with students or parents or between employees

- college fees and payments
- general administrative issues.

Complaints may be received in a number of ways including:

- CTBC website
- Phone
- In person
- Email
- Written correspondence

Student complaints may be brought by students or by parents on behalf of their children, as appropriate in the circumstances. Anyone can make a complaint.

Informal – Early resolution

Formal

Throughout the process

- Ensure confidentiality and privacy in handling complaint information. Remove the conversation to a private location if needed.
- Support children and young people to feel safe and respected, be approachable, compassionate and patient.
- Support complainants who need assistance in lodging a complaint by offering appropriate services to assist with communication barriers.
- Refer the complaint using the correct pathway as set out in **Appendix 1 Receiving Officer Complaints Referral Chart**.
- Follow the correct record management process as set out in the **Appendix 2 Complaints Record Management**
- If a complaint is anonymous, record in the CTBC Complaints Register and respond as far as the available information allows.
- Should a conflict of interest be identified by the complaint recipient or referred handler the matter must be referred to another employee to process.
- Complainants can be supported by a friend, advocate, interpreter or community elder.
- Aim to resolve complaints within 30 working days
- Keep all parties informed

Stage 1: Receive and Register Complaint

*If there is **immediate** danger or risk of harm call 000 report immediately to the police and advise the Principal as soon as possible.

In person and phone complaints:

1. Listen to the persons concerns *
2. Advise the person of the complaints process.
3. Record details of the complaint according to **Appendix 2 Complaints Record Management** ensuring details relating to all persons including contact details are accurately and thoroughly recorded.
4. Follow up the complaint in writing within 48 hours, via email, using the Initial response to complaint email template and attach the CTBC Complaints Policy and Procedure.
5. **For general CTBC Complaints** in the subject line of the email use: Response to complaint (#) using the assigned number # from the CTBC Complaint Register.
Note- Employee and volunteer complaints relating to employment and HR matters will be recorded separately by the actioning officer in the employee or volunteer personal files, these complaints are not to be recorded in the general CTBC Complaints register. Email subject: Receipt of HR concern.
6. Refer the complaint to the appropriate person see (**Appendix 1 Receiving Officer Complaints Referral Chart**) add them as CC in the Initial response email (if you are the appropriate person continue to Stage 2). All complaints must be CC'd to the Principal.

CTBC website, email or written correspondence:

1. Respond promptly to the complaint * in writing within 48 hours via email using the Initial response to complaint email template and attach the CTBC Complaints Policy and Procedure
2. Record details of the complaint according to Appendix 2 Record Management, **ensuring** details relating to all persons including contact details are accurately and thoroughly recorded.
3. **For general CTBC Complaints** in the subject line of the email use: Response to complaint (#) using the assigned number # from the CTBC Complaint Register.
Note- Employee and volunteer complaints relating to employment and HR matters will be recorded separately by the actioning officer in the employee or volunteer personal files, these complaints are not to be recorded in the general CTBC Complaints register. For these complaints insert the Email subject: Receipt of HR concern.
4. Refer the complaint to the appropriate person see (**Appendix 1 Receiving Officer Complaints Referral Chart**) add them as CC in the Initial response email (if you are the appropriate person continue to Stage 2). All complaints must be CC'd to the Principal.

Stages 2,3,4, and 5 of the complaints process are to be conducted by the person assigned (referred) according to Appendix 1.

Stage 2: Assess, Resolve, or Escalate

- Assess the nature, risk, seriousness, and urgency of the complaint and prioritise according to risk.
- Ensure complaints that require legal or mandatory reporting are escalated immediately.
- Inform the complainant in writing about the next steps, who their point of contact is estimated timelines, supports available and how information will be managed.
- Pursue resolution if an opportunity is made available.
- Update the relevant complaints record with actions undertaken and file any communication or evidence as per **Appendix 2 Complaints Record Management**.
- If the complaint is deemed frivolous or vexatious, advise the respondent if they are aware, cease further action, record the reason for the decision on the Complaints Register and close the complaint.

Stage 3: Evaluate Action Needed

- Investigate the complaint fairly and impartially, ensuring all parties involved have an opportunity to present their perspective.
- Ensure power imbalances are identified and considered.
- Where children and young people are involved be patient, let them use their own words and don't dismiss their concerns. Refer to: Helping children and young people to make a complaint. (National Office for Child Safety , 2025)
- Ensure complainants are protected as from retribution, maintaining anonymity as much as lawfully possible.
- Where risk has been identified re-evaluate and adjust actions accordingly.
- If the complaint develops into a legal or criminal matter, refer it to the CEO or relevant authorities.
- Request additional information as needed and ensure all phone calls, meetings, evidence and actions are recorded and filed in the assigned complaints folder.
- Refer to the relevant policy, procedures and codes of conduct when assessing information.
- Maintain confidentiality, only involving individuals necessary for resolution, do not share information between parties that is private.
- Ensure findings are based on facts, following procedural fairness principles.

- Document the findings and reasoning as per **Appendix 2 Complaints Record Management**.

Stage 4: Communicate Action

- Provide the complainant with a clear explanation of the outcome, reasons for the decision, and any actions taken.
- Ensure communication is respectful and transparent while protecting the privacy rights of individuals involved.
- Inform the complainant of options for further review, appeal, or referral to an external authority.
- Inform respondents of relevant findings and outcome and options for further review, appeal, or referral to an external authority.

Stage 5: Close Complaint

- Confirm that the complaint has been resolved, or all possible actions have been taken.
- Ensure that records of the complaint decisions made, and any follow-up actions are complete and securely stored as per Appendix 2 Record Management Schedule
- Retain student protection-related records as per Queensland legislation (Queensland State Archives , 2024) 100 years.
- Enter the close date in the relevant complaint register.

Stage 6: Identify Opportunities for Improvement

This section is to be by

- The Principal or delegate will bi-annually review and analyse CTBC complaints for that period and present this analysis to the CTBC board for consideration.
- The Principal or delegate will review board recommendations and assign improvement actions to relevant teams.
- CTBC will remove all personal identifying information should the data be required for external reporting.

Appendix 1 Receiving Officer Complaints Referral Chart

The chart below is to be used by the first person who receives the complaint to ensure the complaint is managed by the most appropriate person and according to legislation.

Complaint type	First Refer to:	Escalation	Related Document/Policy
Sexual abuse	Principal	Mandatory - Police If the accusation relates to a teacher - Queensland College of Teachers	CTBC Child Protection Policy CTBC Child Risk Management Strategy
Reports of harm	Principal	Mandatory- Child safety If the accusation relates to a teacher - Queensland College of Teachers	CTBC Child Protection Policy CTBC Child Risk Management Strategy
Inappropriate behaviour	Principal	As required - Board	Staff Code of Conduct, Community Code of Conduct
Bullying	Senior Teacher	As required - Principal	CTBC Managing Unacceptable Behaviour Policy CTBC Staff Code of Conduct Workplace Bullying Policy
Discrimination	Principal	As required - Board	CTBC Antidiscrimination Policy CTBC Inclusive Education Policy CTBC Students with a disability Policy
Sexual Harassment	Principal	As required - Board	CTBC Sexual Harassment Policy
Unsafe actions or situations (WHS)	Senior Teacher	As required - Principal Board	CTBC Work Health and Safety Policy
Non-compliance with colleges policies	Principal	As required - Board	Relevant Policy
Non-compliance with codes of conduct	Senior Teacher	As required - Principal	Relevant Code of Conduct
Learning programs, assessment and reporting of student learning	Senior Teacher	Principal/ Board	
Communication with students or parents or between employees	Senior Teacher	Principal	Staff Code of Conduct, Community Code of Conduct

College fees and payments	Senior Teacher	Corporate Services Manager Principal	CTBC Tuition Fees Policy
General administrative issues	Corporate Services Manager	Principal	CTBC Enrolment Policy
Privacy breaches	Principal/CEO	Board	CTBC Privacy Policy
Employee and Volunteer complaints	Immediate Supervisor	Corporate Services Manager/Principal/Fair work Ombudsman	Workplace Bullying Policy CTBC Staff Code of Conduct Policies and Procedures Part 6 Human Resource Management.
Complaints about the Principal	Board		Staff Code of Conduct Delegations of Authority Policy and Procedures Conflicts of Interest Policy
Complaints about the Board	Board	NSSAB	Board Code of Conduct

Appendix 2 Complaint Record Management

Complaint Type	Record Type	Location Stored
Complaints relating to CTBC general operations, Bullying, discrimination, curriculum and educational matters, inappropriate behaviour	CTBC Complaints Register	CTBC – Quality and Compliance - Complaints and feedback – Complaints register
Complaints relating to Sexual and Physical abuse, Harm or suspected harm	Report Template	Authorised access only - CTBC - Student Welfare – Mandatory reporting
Complaints relating to employees or volunteer human resource matters	CTBC Human Resource Records	Authorised access only CTBC People, Leadership and Culture – Grievances and complaints

References

National Office for Child Safety . (2025). *Helping children and young people to Speak up and make a complaint*. Retrieved from National Office for Child Safety :
<https://www.childsafety.gov.au/resources/speak-up-make-complaint/adults-helping-children>

National Office for Child Safety. (2025). *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*. Retrieved from National Office for Child Safety:
<https://www.childsafety.gov.au/resources/national-principles-child-safe-organisations>

Queensland Government. (2017). *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017*. Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2017-0197#sec.7>

Queensland State Archives . (2024, July). *Education and Training Sector retention and disposal schedule*. Retrieved from
https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0021/506253/education-and-training-sector-retention-and-disposal-schedule.pdf

Section	1. Student Learning and Welfare	
Item	Procedure	Item NO: 1.70
Owner	CTBC Board	
Approver	Principal	
First Approved	01 March 2023	
Revision Cycle	2 years	
Revision Dates	21 February 2025	
Revised Version	V2.0 21022025	
Summary of Revision	Clarify complaint pathways and recording procedures, build in Principles for child safe organisations, particularly Principles found in 2 and 6. Align procedure with SO 10002:2018 Quality management, Customer satisfaction Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations.	