


WORKPLACE COMPLAINTS POLICY



Telethon Speech & Hearing

Topic: Workplace Complaints Policy
Responsible: Principal
Location: TSH Intranet
Approved by: Chief Executive Officer **Signature:** 
Review Date: 2 years from procedure approval date or as and when required

Effective Date:	April 2024	Review Date:	April 2026	Policy Version:	V4
-----------------	------------	--------------	------------	-----------------	----

1. AIM and OBJECTIVE

TSH welcomes feedback and believes that being open to suggestions for improvement, complaints and compliments and taking them seriously is an important component of our culture. Feedback enables the organisation to improve the quality of our work, enhance the trust and confidence of stakeholders, identify areas of work that need to be improved and the support to do it, ensuring that TSH learns from the feedback provided through the process.

2. SCOPE and APPLICATION

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers of TSH. This policy should be read in conjunction with the TSH Workplace Complaints Procedure.

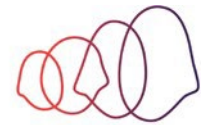
3. RELATED LEGISLATION and STANDARDS

Fair Work Act
Whistleblower Policy
Workplace Complaints Procedure
Disciplinary Policy
TSH Code of Conduct and Values

4. DEFINITIONS

A **workplace complaint (referred to herein as “a complaint”)** is a complaint from a staff member concerning treatment in the workplace that is inconsistent with the organisation’s values, inequitable or procedurally unfair; or a matter that pertains to an action by another staff member that is inconsistent with the organisation’s values.

WORKPLACE COMPLAINTS POLICY



Telethon Speech & Hearing

Complainant is a person or persons who lodge a complaint.

Complaints Coordinator shall mean person designated by the CEO to formally receive, investigate and report on complaints.

The **role of the Director** as referenced in the [Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools \(January 2024\)](#) as:

“The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the school observes the registration standards, including the standard about its complaints handling system. Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website. While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, she does not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the school’s decision.”

Vexatious means that:

- the main purpose of a claim is to harass, annoy or embarrass the other party; or
- there is another purpose for the complaint other than the settlement of the issues arising in the claim (or response).

Without reasonable cause means that a claim is made without there being any real reason, basis in fact(s) or purpose. Such claims include allegations that are:

- so obviously untenable that the claim cannot possibly succeed;
- manifestly groundless;
- insufficiently particularised.

5. POLICY

a. Guiding Principles

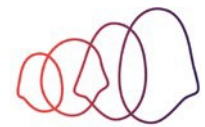
All staff have the right to provide feedback constructively, thoughtfully and in a considered manner. Staff also have the right to raise a complaint, have that complaint addressed in a timely manner, and receive an accurate and thoughtful response. Every effort will be made to resolve the complaint in a satisfactory manner and, if appropriate, to keep the complainant’s identity private.

TSH is committed to recognising the importance and value of listening and responding to concerns and complaints and ensuring its feedback and complaints handling process is fair, effective, safe, confidential and accessible to all and without prejudice. TSH will receive and respond to all feedback, complaints and compliments irrespective of who makes them or the nature or subject of the feedback or complaint.

The following principles will guide the organisation in the handling of complaints and ensure that we comply with high standards relating to feedback handling as follows:

- The feedback and complaints handling process is as effective, safe, confidential and accessible to all staff, irrespective of their gender, status or background and without prejudice to their future participation.

WORKPLACE COMPLAINTS POLICY



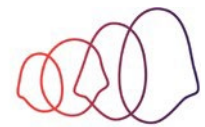
Telethon Speech & Hearing

-
- *Visibility:* Information about the process for providing feedback or making a complaint will be clear and well publicised.
 - *Accessibility:* The feedback and complaints handling process is easily accessible to all staff and made available electronically.
 - *Responsiveness:* All complaints and constructive feedback will be taken seriously and handled as quickly as practicable. All complainants will be treated courteously and kept updated on the progress of their complaint through the complaints handling process.
 - *Objectivity:* All feedback, suggestions and complaints are addressed in a fair, equitable, objective and unbiased manner throughout the complaints handling process. Issues of conflict of interest will be identified to ensure objectivity.
 - *Confidentiality:* Confidentiality relating to a complaint will be safeguarded so far as reasonably practicable including the person(s) to whom the complaint is addressed.
 - *Accountability:* Accountability for handling feedback and complaints and reporting on complaints-related actions and decisions of the organisation with respect to complaints handling will be clearly established. Complaints will be addressed at a local level as much as possible using the organisation's procedure and only escalated to the Senior Leadership Team if they are of a serious nature or Complaints Coordinator if not resolved at the local level.
 - *Continuous improvement:* The organisation is committed to the continual improvement of the workplace feedback process and the quality of the organisation's work. The commitment is practically supported by:
 - a. the collection and classification of complaint trends;
 - b. analysis and reporting of complaints trends;
 - c. monitoring of complaints handling processes; and
 - d. auditing / management reviews.
 - *Natural Justice:* The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness will underpin every step of the feedback or complaints process.

b. Complaint and Compliments Handling Standards

The organisation's handling of complaints and compliments will meet the following minimum standards:

- i. All feedback, suggestions, complaints and compliments will be acknowledged as soon as possible, ideally within five working days by the recipient.
- ii. Any staff who provides feedback or suggestions for improvement shall receive a response to that feedback as soon as possible, and, as a standard rule, at least within ten working days from receipt.
- iii. If a staff member makes a complaint, that person will receive a full response to their complaint giving the outcome (within applicable legislation, legal advice or other requirements) as soon as possible and, as a standard rule, at least within twenty working days from receipt. If the matter is more complex and this timeframe proves impossible, the complainant will be notified of the likely timeframe for resolution. Such



a response shall be in writing unless otherwise requested by the complainant.

- iv. All complainants will be treated respectfully, whether it is felt the complaint is justified or not.

c. Safeguards for People Who Raise a Complaint

TSH will ensure safeguards are in place where a staff member has made a complaint in good faith:

- *Protection from reprisal:* TSH recognises that the decision to report an issue can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal from those being reported. The organisation will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take all practical steps to protect those who raise a complaint in good faith.

TSH shall also ensure that the accused is treated fairly and in accordance with the principles and processes of natural justice.

- *Confidentiality:* TSH will protect an individual's identity when he or she raises an issue and does not want their name to be disclosed. It should be understood, however, in certain circumstances there may be a need to identify the source of the information and a statement by the individual may be required as part of the evidence.
- *Untrue or unproven allegations:* If an allegation is made in good faith but it is not confirmed by an investigation, TSH will ensure that no action will be taken against the complainant. However, individuals should not make malicious or vexatious allegations aimed at damaging the character of any person.
- *Referral to Law Enforcement or Related Agencies:* Any situation which allegedly may involve the contravention of the law will be referred to the appropriate external agency promptly for investigation.

d. Vexatious Claims and Claims Made Without Reasonable Cause

Staff members should not raise complaints which are vexatious or without reasonable cause. Where a claim is determined as vexatious or made without reasonable cause, the staff member who raised the complaint will receive written notification of the determination which will include reasons as to why the complaint was deemed as vexatious and/or without reasonable cause.

Where a claim has been found to be vexatious or made without reasonable cause, nothing prevents the organisation in taking appropriate disciplinary action against the complainant.

e. Confidentiality and Victimisation

The parties to any complaint are required, at all stages of this policy and procedure, to maintain confidentiality in relation to the concern or complaint.

The parties must not disclose, by any form of communication, either the fact or the substance of the allegations or issues to anyone other person within or connected to TSH, or in any way that may be detrimental to the other party or the organisation.

A person must not victimise or otherwise subject another person to detrimental action as a

WORKPLACE COMPLAINTS POLICY



Telethon Speech & Hearing

consequence of that person raising, providing information about, or otherwise being involved in the resolution of a complaint under this policy and procedure.

Any breach of either the confidentiality or non-victimisation requirements will be treated seriously by the organisation, and may result in disciplinary action. Any such breach will be referred for investigation and handling in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy

6. SUPPORT SERVICES

The following services and organisations can provide help, advice and support to the complainant:

EAP service provider

Uprise – 1300 208 971

Email – team@uprise.co

Family Helpline – 9223 1100 / 1800 643 000

This is a free confidential telephone counselling and information service for families.

Lifeline Australia – 13 11 14

This service operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can provide information about other support services, if required.

Crisis Care – 9223 1111 / 1800 199 008

24-hour phone service for people in crisis and needing urgent help.

Beyond Blue - 1300 224 636.

Website: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

Prime Corporate Psychology Services - 9492 8900 / 1800 674 188

This is a support service available for anyone who may experience personal issues resulting from making a report. They offer an employee assistance program including counselling, management and referrals.

7. POLICY UPDATES

This policy may be updated or revised from time to time. TSH will notify all staff each time the policy has been updated. If you are unsure whether you are reading the most current version, you should contact the CEO or Principal.

Originated	Version 1	November 2015
Updated	Version 2	April 2019
Updated	Version 3	May 2022
Updated	Version 4	April 2024