

Complaints against teachers

POLICY

Version: 1.0

Version effective: 1/07/2026

Audience: External - publicly available

1. Purpose

This policy outlines how the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) deals with complaints made about teachers to the QCT to ensure approved teachers, complainants and other individuals and organisations understand the circumstances in which the QCT is able to deal with a complaint.

2. Rationale

The majority of concerns about a teacher can and should be resolved through direct discussion with the teacher or their employer.

The QCT can receive and assess complaints about approved and former approved teachers. However, the QCT can only deal with complaints where the conduct, if proven, is sufficiently serious that the QCT would commence a formal disciplinary action against the teacher.

The QCT is the regulator for the teaching profession and also a sector regulator under *Child Safe Organisation Act 2024* (the CSO Act). The CSO Act is administered by the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC). This policy sets out the QCT's position in relation to all complaints, including those which concern reportable conduct.

3. Scope

This policy applies to complaints received about approved teachers or teachers who were approved at the time that the alleged conduct occurred.

4. Policy statement

4.1. Threshold for dealing with complaints

The QCT prioritises the welfare and best interests of children in all its work and takes disciplinary action in serious matters of conduct or incompetency. The QCT will refuse to deal with a complaint if the QCT reasonably believes that:

- even if the complaint was proved, it would not establish a ground for disciplinary action
- the complaint is trivial, unreasonable or without substance
- the complaint concerns a frivolous matter
- the complaint is vexatious
- the complaint could be more appropriately dealt with by another entity
- the complaint is about something the QCT or another entity is or has already adequately dealt with or is dealing with
- the complaint is about something that happened so long ago, it would no longer be practicable for the QCT to deal with it.

The QCT may also refuse to deal with a complaint if the complainant hasn't provided additional information or verification when requested by the QCT.

The QCT will deal with a complaint where the threshold establishing the existence of a ground for disciplinary action has been met, because the complaint concerns serious matters of teacher conduct or incompetency.

These include:

- a teacher has been convicted of an indictable offence or an offence against this Act

- the teacher is incompetent in performing the work of a teacher and their employment in Queensland has been terminated for reasons of incompetency
- the teacher's registration in another state or territory has been cancelled or suspended
- the teacher did not possess or no longer possesses the qualifications and experience relied on by the teacher to obtain registration or permission to teach
- the teacher has behaved in a way, whether connected with the profession or otherwise, that does not satisfy the standard of behaviour generally expected of a teacher
- the teacher fails to comply with a lawful demand made under the QCT Act by the QCT, an investigator or a practice and conduct body
- the teacher contravenes an order made under the QCT Act by the QCT or a practice and conduct body or a practice and conduct agreement.

4.2. How the complaint must be made

The complaint must be made in writing and include the particulars of the allegation being made. The QCT may ask for more information, or a statutory declaration.

4.3. Connection to Reportable Conduct Scheme

The introduction of the Reportable Conduct Scheme (RCS) under the CSO Act has established new ways and new obligations for organisations to deal with complaints about inappropriate behaviour towards children.

A complaint about an approved or former approved teacher may be about reportable conduct, that is, a reportable conviction or allegation. This information should be provided to the head of a reporting entity or the QFCC under the CSO Act as soon as possible.

The QCT receives mandatory notifications under the *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005* (QCT Act) and also information under the CSO Act. It is possible that the QCT may already be aware of the matter upon which a complaint is made.

If the QCT reasonably believes the complaint may concern reportable conduct, the QCT may redirect the complainant to make a reportable conduct report under the CSO Act and refuse to deal with the complaint on the basis that it is more appropriately dealt with by the RCS reporting entity.

If the QCT is unsure whether the matter has been reported by the reporting entity to the QFCC, it will notify the QFCC and the head of the reporting entity about the complaint and that it has redirected a complainant to make their complaint as a reportable conduct notification under the RCS.

This approach ensures compliance with the RCS, swift response to ensure children are protected, and that the QCT will be able to monitor the actions of reporting entities and determine what, if any, further intervention may be required by the QCT.

4.4. How the QCT deals with complaints

To assist the QCT to consider the complaint, it may request further information from the complainant. If the requested information is not provided, the QCT may refuse to deal with the complaint.

If a complainant has made the same complaint to any other another entity, it is important that they provide all information and documentation from that complaint.

If the QCT deals with the complaint, it will:

- commence an investigation of the complaint; or
- commence a disciplinary action in relation to the complaint.

The QCT may deal with the complaint irrespective of whether the complainant has been redirected to the RCS.

If the QCT refuses to deal with the complaint, the QCT will inform the complainant of this decision as soon as practicable.

4.5. Where the complaint should be referred to another entity

Sometimes a complaint may be better dealt with by another entity. The QCT may refuse the complaint and refer it directly to another agency or suggest the complainant refer the complaint to another agency.

Where the complaint is referred to an employing authority, the referral may include reference to the employing authority's notification obligations under the QCT Act relating to allegations of conduct or competence. The employing authority may then be required to make a formal notification to the QCT.

4.6. Recording complaints

The QCT will maintain a record of all complaints made about approved and former approved teachers.

4.7. Privacy and confidentiality

Privacy and confidentiality are afforded to all parties to the complaint as much as the Act and the CSO Act allows. As a sector regulator for the RCS, the QCT may be obliged to share the details of complaints and complainants with other entities in the RCS. Any information received will be subject to release in accordance with the provisions of the *Information Privacy Act 2009* and *Right to Information Act 2009*, or if required by law.

5. Responsibilities

Role/Stakeholder	Responsibilities
QCT	Receive and manage complaints in accordance with this policy and the Act.
Complainants	Make complaints in accordance with this policy and the Act.

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Approved teacher	A registered teacher or someone granted permission to teach.
Complainant	A person, including an individual or corporation, or a person acting on behalf of an entity, such as an agency or company that alleges in writing that a person's actions may establish a ground for disciplinary action or that a person or entity has breached the QCT Act.
Criminal history	Of a person, means all of the following – (a) every conviction of the person for an offence, in Queensland or elsewhere, whether before or after the commencement of this Act; (b) every charge of an offence made against the person, in Queensland or elsewhere, whether before or after the commencement of the QCT Act.
Employing authority	For a school, means the person or entity responsible for the appointment of teachers to the educational staff of the school.
Former approved teacher	A person who previously was a registered teacher or someone granted permission to teach
Grounds for disciplinary action	Section 92 of the QCT Act details the grounds for disciplinary action.
Head of reporting entity	The head of a reporting entity under the CSO Act may be a specific role designated for the reporting entity or prescribed at law. The person with the highest authority for the reporting entity's service delivery and responsible for compliance with the RCS. This is usually the CEO, principal officer or equivalent, or a person approved by the Commission if no such role exists. This person must ensure the required systems and reporting obligations are met under the CSO Act.
Reportable conduct scheme	Queensland's RCS is implemented through the CSO Act and administered by the Queensland Family and Child Commission. The scheme requires organisations to report and investigate allegations of child abuse and misconduct by their workers. The scheme plays a critical role in identifying and investigating behaviour that is concerning but doesn't necessarily require a police response. The scheme connects information across organisations, regulators and sectors to identify people who pose a risk to the safety of children.

Reportable conduct	Reportable conduct includes: a child sexual offence; sexual misconduct committed in relation to, or in the presence of a child; ill-treatment of a child; significant neglect of a child; physical violence committed in relation to, or in the presence of a child; or behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child. Reportable conduct may be one or a series of acts. It does not need to have occurred as part of the worker's employment – conduct that occurs while the worker is off duty or out of hours is still reportable conduct.
Reportable conviction	A conviction for an offence committed by a worker against a law of a State or the Commonwealth that may involve reportable conduct. This includes a finding of guilt (and the acceptance of a plea of guilty), as well as a spent conviction.
Reporting entity	An entity that cares for, supervises or exercises authority over children and is mentioned in schedule 2 of the CSO Act or prescribed by regulation. A reporting entity is required to comply with the RCS.
Competence	Refers to the skill, ability, or knowledge required to perform the role of a teacher to a satisfactory standard. Performance below the graduate teacher standard of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers could be the threshold for an employer to determine incompetence.

7. Legislation

- [Education \(Queensland College of Teachers\) Act 2005](#)
- [Child Safe Organisation Act 2024](#)
- [Information Privacy Act 2009](#)
- [Right to Information Act 2009](#)

8. Considerations

Commitment to Human Rights, Multiculturalism, Equity, and Child Safety

The QCT is committed to upholding the principles of the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)*, the *Queensland Multicultural Recognition Act 2016*, and the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)*. This policy has been developed to ensure fairness, inclusivity, and the safety and wellbeing of all individuals, including children and young people.

In line with these commitments, this policy:

- Respects, protects, and promotes human rights.
- Supports equitable access to services and opportunities for all individuals, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Embeds principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in its design and implementation.
- Prioritises the safety, wellbeing, and empowerment of children and young people, ensuring compliance with Child Safe Standards.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with these principles and to reflect the evolving needs of Queensland's communities, including children and young people.

9. Related documents

- *Complaint about a teacher form*
- *Statutory declaration template*
- *Employing authority notifications policy*

10. Document details

Title	Complaints against teachers policy
Record number	2026/397338
Owner – Unit/Role	Integrity
Approver	QCT Board
Approved on	12/06/2026
Effective from	01/07/2026
Next review date	01/07/2028

11. Version history

Version	Record number	Date	Author	Changes made
1.0	2026/397338	12/06/2026	Anita Morrison	Board approval 12 Jun 2026
1.1				