

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS HANDLING POLICY

Patrick School of the Arts (PSA) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all students, staff, contractors and visitors.

This policy outlines the process for raising, managing, and resolving complaints or concerns in a timely manner.

These procedures exist to ensure concerns are addressed appropriately, to protect the wellbeing of all individuals, and to support clear, professional lines of communication within PSA.

OBLIGATIONS

PSA is committed to ensuring that:

- All complaints and concerns are taken seriously
- Matters are handled promptly, fairly, and impartially
- Confidentiality is maintained wherever possible
- Individuals are protected from victimisation or retaliation
- Complaints are resolved at the lowest appropriate level
- Serious matters are escalated without delay

Students, staff, and contractors are encouraged to raise concerns early and in good faith.

RAISING A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN

Complaints or concerns may be raised verbally or in writing and should follow the pathways outlined below where possible.

TERTIARY STUDENTS AND STAFF

The preferred escalation pathway is:

1. **Tertiary Mentor (First Point of Contact)** Concerns should initially be raised with the relevant Tertiary Mentor, either in person or via email.
2. **Studio Manager** If an individual does not feel comfortable speaking with their mentor, or if the issue is unresolved, the concern may be raised with the Studio Manager, who will escalate the matter as required.
3. **Management** Where appropriate, concerns may be raised directly with PSA Management.
4. **External Reporting** Tertiary students may also raise concerns directly with Ausdance.

ARTS HIGH STUDENTS AND STAFF

The preferred escalation pathway is:

1. **Academy Supervisor (First Point of Contact)** Concerns should first be raised with an Academy Supervisor, either in person or via email.
2. **Arts High Director** If the individual does not feel comfortable speaking with their Academy Supervisor, or if the issue remains unresolved, the concern may be escalated to the Arts High Director.
3. **Studio Manager** If the concern relates to the Arts High program or the individual wishes to speak to someone outside the Arts High structure, the Studio Manager may be contacted.
4. **Management** If required, concerns may be escalated directly to higher management.
5. **External Reporting** Arts High students may also raise concerns directly with VSV or their education provider.

ELITE STUDENTS AND STAFF

The preferred escalation pathway is:

1. **Receptionist (First Point of Contact)** Concerns should first be raised with the Receptionist on shift, either in person or via the 'Info' email. This will be escalated to the Elite Director.
2. **Elite Director** If the individual does not feel comfortable speaking with the receptionist, or if the issue remains unresolved, the concern may be escalated to the Elite Director.
3. **Studio Manager** If the concern relates to the Elite program or the individual wishes to speak to someone outside the Elite structure, the Studio Manager may be contacted.
4. **Management** If required, concerns may be escalated directly to higher management.

RESPONSE TIMEFRAMES

PSA is committed to responding to complaints within the following reasonable timeframes. Timeframes may vary depending on the complexity or seriousness of the matter.

Acknowledgement

All complaints will be acknowledged within **two business days** of receipt.

Initial Review

An initial review will be conducted within **five business days** of acknowledgement to:

- Clarify the nature of the complaint
- Determine the appropriate pathway
- Assess whether interim measures are required

The complainant will be advised of the next steps following this review.

Investigation and Assessment

- Where an investigation is required, PSA will aim to complete this process within **ten to fifteen business days**
- Where additional time is required due to complexity or seriousness, the complainant will be kept informed of progress and revised timeframes.

Outcome and Communication

- Once a determination has been made, the complainant will be informed of the outcome as soon as practicable, generally within **five business days** of the conclusion of the investigation.
- Outcomes will be communicated in a manner consistent with privacy and confidentiality obligations.

SERIOUS OR SIGNIFICANT MATTERS

PSA reserves the right to take immediate action in cases of serious or significant concern.

Serious matters may:

- Bypass informal resolution steps
- Be escalated immediately to the Studio Manager or Management
- Require immediate interim action to ensure safety or wellbeing

Examples of serious matters may include, but are not limited to:

- Risks to student safety or welfare
- Allegations of harassment, discrimination, or abuse
- Significant professional boundary violations
- Serious misconduct or unlawful behaviour

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORD KEEPING

- All complaints will be handled discreetly and respectfully
 - Information will only be shared with those required to assess or resolve the matter
 - All complaints, investigations, and outcomes will be formally documented
 - Records will be maintained securely in accordance with privacy and record-keeping requirements
-

PROTECTION FROM VICTIMISATION

- No individual will be disadvantaged, victimised, or treated unfairly for raising a concern or complaint in good faith
 - Any form of retaliation may itself be treated as a serious breach of conduct and addressed accordingly
-

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains current, effective, and aligned with regulatory, educational, and organisational requirements