



Whistleblower Policy

1 Purpose

Brisbane Girls Grammar School (the **School**) is committed to maintaining and promoting high standards of integrity, governance and ethical behavior within the School community.

The purpose of this Whistleblower Policy (the **Policy**) is to encourage the reporting of any suspected unethical, unlawful or fraudulent conduct involving the School, its staff and the School's Board of Trustees.

2 Scope

You can make a complaint under this Policy if you are a current or former Trustee, staff member (including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at the School, or are a supplier of goods or services (whether paid or unpaid) including their employees to the School), and any close relative, spouse or dependent of any of these individuals.

3 Policy

Where appropriate, the School will investigate any complaint made under this Policy and will deal with it in a confidential and sensitive way.

The School will ensure that all complaints remain confidential, unless the complainant gives their consent to disclose their identity.

The School may investigate complaints raised on an anonymous basis, where possible.

At all times, the School will ensure that anyone who makes a complaint under this Policy is treated fairly and does not suffer any detriment as a consequence of making a complaint.

The School will apply principles of procedural fairness and natural justice to the conduct of any investigation and will ensure that any person who is the subject of a complaint is treated fairly.

Appendix A sets out the steps to follow if your complaint relates to:

- (a) conduct which constitutes an improper state of affairs or circumstances in relation to the School
- (b) fraud, negligence, default, breach of trust or breach of duty under Australian law
- (c) conduct which constitutes an offence against, or a contravention of the financial sector laws as applicable either under federal or state laws
- (d) any other law of the Commonwealth that is punishable by imprisonment for a period of 12 months or more, or
- (e) conduct which represents a danger to the public or the financial system (even if the conduct does not involve a breach of a particular law).

Complaints related to other matters are not covered by Appendix A and therefore will not receive the same protections. Those complaints may be made in accordance with relevant complaints handling processes established by the School, available on the School's [website](#).

4 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the regular review and monitoring of this Policy to ensure compliance with legislation and best practice.

4.2 Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring all staff are regularly trained in the application of this Policy, and for maintaining a culture of constant vigilance and awareness of this Policy throughout the School. A copy of this Policy will be placed on the School's intranet.

5 Review and monitoring

This Policy shall be reviewed annually or in the event of any information, incident, legislative changes or organisational practice that would demonstrate the need for a review.

Document title	Whistleblower Policy	Author	Principal
Version	BD002/2022v2	Approval	Board of Trustees
Distribution	Minerva	Date	July 2023

6 Related documents

Staff Code of Conduct

Complaints Handling Policy

Employee Grievance Resolution Policy

Complaints about the Public Official (Chair) Policy



Appendix A: Complaints process

1 Who can make a complaint?

You can make a complaint if you are a current or former Trustee, staff member (including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at the School or are a supplier of goods or services whether paid or unpaid including their employees to the School), and any close relative, spouse or dependent of any of these individuals

2 What can I make a complaint about?

You can make a complaint about the following types of conduct in relation to the School (including its employees):

- (a) fraud
- (b) negligence
- (c) default
- (d) breach of trust
- (e) breach of duties under Australian law
- (f) conduct which constitutes:
 - an improper state of affairs or circumstances in relation to the School
 - an offence against, or a contravention of the financial sector laws or any other law of the Commonwealth that is punishable by imprisonment for a period of 12 months or more
 - a danger to the public or the financial system (even if the conduct does not involve a breach of a particular law).

You must have reasonable grounds to believe that the information you are disclosing (your complaint) is true, however you will still qualify for protection under this Appendix if the information you provide turns out to be incorrect. If you are unsure whether to make a complaint or whether you are eligible for the protections under this Appendix please contact

the School's Secretary to the Board of Trustees who will act as the School's Whistleblowing Investigation Officer (WIO), or seek independent legal advice.

3 Who do I make a complaint to?

- (a) Principal
principal@bggs.qld.edu.au
Tel: (07) 3332 1407
- (b) Board Chair
bggschair@bggs.qld.edu.au
Tel: (07) 3332 1300
- (c) any member of the School's Senior Leadership Team or Board of Trustees
- (d) an internal or external auditor
- (e) Your Call Whistleblowing Solutions (refer clause 10 for the external reporting process).

You may also make a complaint to the Australian Securities & Investments Commission (ASIC), the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) or Australian Tax Office (ATO) to an external legal practitioner and in limited circumstances you may also make a public interest disclosure or an emergency disclosure to a journalist or Member of Parliament. Further details are below.

4 What information should I provide?

Please provide as much information as possible, including the details of the conduct, people involved, dates, and locations and any other evidence or material which may be relevant and your contact details, unless you wish to remain anonymous.

You will still qualify for protection under this Appendix if you make a complaint to a recipient as noted at clause 3 about conduct covered by this Appendix and choose to remain anonymous over the course of the investigation and after the investigation is finalised.

There are various mechanisms available for protecting your anonymity including using an anonymised email address or adopting a pseudonym.

5 What happens next?

- (a) If you have made your complaint internally, the person to whom you make the complaint will acknowledge receipt, ideally within three business days. You will also be asked for your consent to pass your details on to the WIO.
- (b) Your complaint will then be referred to the WIO (or, where there is a conflict of interest, another appropriate person).
- (c) The WIO will assess your complaint and determine whether it qualifies for protection and whether an investigation is necessary or appropriate.
- (d) If an investigation will be conducted, the WIO will determine the next steps, including the nature and scope of the investigation, the investigator and the nature of any technical, financial or legal advice that may be required and the timeframe.
- (e) You will be contacted, ideally within 14 business days of the WIO receiving your complaint to discuss next steps and during key stages in the process.
- (f) Once the investigation is completed, the WIO will determine the recommended course of action (if any) that the School will take in response to the findings.
- (g) Subject to any applicable confidentiality, privacy or legal constraints, you (and any respondent) will be notified of the outcome of the investigation.
- (h) The WIO will be responsible for receiving any investigation reports and ensuring that all records are kept confidential and secure. They will also provide an annual report to the Board of the complaints received under this Appendix whilst ensuring confidentiality is maintained.

6 How will I be protected?

Providing that you comply with clauses 1, 2 and 3 of Appendix A, except in limited circumstances, the School will protect your confidentiality and take all reasonable steps to ensure that you do not suffer any detriment as a result of your complaint as follows:

6.1 Confidentiality

- (a) The recipient of your complaint (see clause 3) cannot disclose your identity, or information that is likely to lead to your identification, except: to ASIC, APRA, or a member of the Australian Federal Police; to a legal practitioner; or, with your consent.
- (b) The School can only disclose without your consent if the disclosure of this information is reasonably necessary to investigate the issues raised by you provided that: the information does not include your identity; and, all reasonable steps have been taken by the School to reduce the risk that your identity will be revealed from the information provided.
- (c) Absent consent by you to disclose your identity, the School will protect your identity by redacting all personal information or reference to you witnessing an event and where possible, liaising with you to identify any aspects of the complaint that could inadvertently identify you.
- (d) Any concerns regarding breach of confidentiality should be raised with the WIO. You may also lodge a complaint with a regulator, such as ASIC, APRA or the ATO.

6.2 Detrimental Conduct

- (a) The School will, so far as is practicable, ensure that you do not suffer any detriment, however this does not include taking action that is reasonable for the purpose of protecting you from detriment or managing any misconduct or unsatisfactory work performance by you, where the action is in line with the

School's performance and conduct management framework.

- (b) The School will put in place processes for assessing risks of detriment against you and other persons, which will commence as soon as practicable after receiving a complaint; and may provide you with support services including counselling or other professional services.

Detrimental Conduct includes dismissal, discrimination, harassment or intimidation, position or duties to their disadvantage, physical or psychological harm; or damage to a person's property, reputation, business or financial position. If you believe you have suffered a detriment you may wish to seek independent legal advice or report this to ASIC, APRA, or ATO.

7 What is a Public Interest Disclosure?

A public interest disclosure is the disclosure of information to a journalist or a parliamentarian but you may only qualify for the protections if before you disclose you:

- (a) confirm that at least 90 days have passed since the report to ASIC, or APRA or ATO was made
- (b) do not have reasonable grounds to believe that action has been or is being taken to address the matters raised in the report
- (c) reasonably believe further disclosure is in the public interest and
- (d) disclose information that is not greater than necessary to inform the recipient of the misconduct, or improper state of affairs.

8 What is an Emergency Disclosure?

An emergency disclosure is the disclosure of information to a journalist or parliamentarian, but you may only qualify for the protections if before you disclose you:

- (a) reasonably believe that the information concerns a substantial and imminent danger to the health or safety of one or

more persons or to the natural environment;

- (b) have previously disclosed this information to ASIC, APRA or the ATO and before you make the emergency disclosure have notified ASIC or APRA (which ever received the initial report) that you intend to disclose and have provided them with sufficient information to be able to identify your original disclosure and
- (c) disclose information that is not greater than necessary to inform the recipient of the substantial and imminent danger.

9 Protections and remedies available

In addition to the protections specified above at clause 6, providing you comply with clauses 1, 2 & 3 of this Appendix, you may be eligible to apply for the following:

- (a) no administrative liability (e.g. disciplinary action for making the complaint); and no contractual or other remedy may be enforced or exercised against you based on you making a complaint.
- (b) compensation for loss, damage or injury, or other remedies through the courts if you have suffered as a result of detrimental conduct arising from making a disclosure or where the School failed to take reasonable cautions and exercise due diligence to prevent the detrimental conduct

You are encouraged to seek independent legal advice in relation to these matters. Please note that you will still receive the protections under this Appendix even if your legal practitioner concludes that your complaint is not conduct covered by this Appendix.

10 External reporting process

If you are not comfortable or able to report misconduct internally, you may report it to Brisbane Girls Grammar School's external and independent whistleblowing service provider.

Brisbane Girls Grammar School has contracted Your Call Whistleblowing Solutions (**Your Call**) to receive and manage your report with impartiality and confidentially.

This option allows you to:

- (a) remain completely anonymous
- (b) identify yourself to Your Call only
- (c) identify yourself to both Your Call and Brisbane Girls Grammar School

The Your Call reporting options include:

- (a) Website:
<https://www.yourcall.com.au/report> (24/7)
- (b) Telephone: 1300 790 228 (7am and 12am, recognised business days, AEST)

Online reports can be made via the website address listed above. You will be required to enter Brisbane Girls Grammar School's unique identifier code **BGGS**.

Your Call remains the intermediary at all times, receiving and forwarding communication between all parties. The School's Secretary to the Board of Trustees will act as the School's Whistleblower Investigation Officer (WIO) and will have access to your reports.

Your Call can circumvent the WIO upon your request.

10.1 National Relay Service

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, you can contact Your Call online or through the National Relay Service. Simply choose your contact method at www.relayservice.gov.au and request Your Call's hotline 1300 790 228.

If you have difficulty speaking or understanding English, contact us through the [Translating and Interpreting Service](#) (TIS) [131 450](tel:131450) and ask for Your Call on 1300 790 228.