

Complaints Management Policy

This policy sets out how the Harding Miller Education Foundation (HMEF) manages complaints and concerns from external stakeholders (scholars, donors, volunteer coaches, parents and others), as well as internal complaints from employees.

The Foundation is committed to ensuring all complaints are handled promptly, fairly, respectfully and confidentially. We recognise that complaint provide an opportunity to improve our programs, processes and the experience of those we support.

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about the service, conduct, decisions or actions of the Foundation, its employees, volunteers or representatives.

Guiding Principles

HMEF manages complaints in accordance with the following principles:

- **Fairness and impartiality:** all complaints are assessed objectively without bias
- **Respect and professionalism:** All parties are treated with dignity throughout the process
- **Accessibility:** Complaints can be raised through a range of channels and in a way that is appropriate for the individual
- **Confidentiality:** Information is handled sensitively and shared only where necessary
- **Child Safety:** The safety and wellbeing of scholars is the highest priority and any concerns will be escalated immediately
- **No victimization:** Individuals raising a complaint will not be disadvantaged or treated unfairly
- **Timeliness:** Complaints are addressed as quickly as possible, with clear communication throughout the process

External Complaints Made Against a Foundation Employee

If an external stakeholder makes a complaint about a Foundation employee, the following process applies:

- The complainant will be asked to submit their complaint in writing to the Manager
- The Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five (5) business days
- The Manager will advise the employee that the complaint has been made and provide an opportunity to respond
- The Manager will assess the information, undertake any necessary enquiries and determine an appropriate outcome.
- The complainant will be informed of the outcome, where appropriate
- The employee will be advised of the outcome.

Generic Complaints or Concerns

For complaints or concerns not directed at a Foundation employee:

- The relevant Manager will assess the complaint and determine an appropriate course of action in consultation with the COO.
- An acknowledgement will be provided within five (5) business days
- The complaint will be reviewed and, where required, investigated
- A response will be provided to the complainant within ten (10) business days

Internal Complaints & Grievances

Employees who have a work-related grievance or concerns that cannot be resolved with their direct manager should raise the matter in writing with the COO.

- The COO will acknowledge receipt within five (5) business days
- The matter will be reviewed and, where required, investigated
- The Foundation aims to respond to internal grievances within ten (10) business days where possible

In addition to the formal process, the Foundation supports an open-door approach, encouraging employees to raise concerns early and seek support from their manager or senior management.

If a complaint is made against the COO, the following applies:

- The complaint should be submitted in writing to the Executive Chair
- The Executive Chair will acknowledge receipt within five (5) business days
- The matter will be reviewed and, where required, investigated
- The Foundation aims to respond to internal grievances within ten (10) business days where possible

Child Safety

HMEF is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all scholars.

Any complaint or concern relating to the safety, welfare or protection of a scholar must be escalated immediately to the COO, and managed in accordance with the Foundation's Child Safety obligations and applicable legislation.

Confidentiality and Privacy

All complaints will be handled confidentially to the extent possible. Information will only be shared with those directly involved in managing and resolving the complaint or where required by law.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every **two years** or earlier if required by legislative changes or organisational needs.