



Padua College Whistleblower Policy

1. Policy Statement

At Padua College (the College) we aim to maintain a positive working environment of trust and respect where we are guided by Gospel values and inspired by the work of St Francis. Fundamental to this is our aim to ensure all voices can be heard and our commitment to protecting the rights of anyone who reports a wrongdoing in good faith.

Padua College is bound by the Corporations Act 2001(Cth) and the Australian Standard AS8004-2003 Whistleblower Protection Program for Entities, as amended from time to time. The College may, from time to time, review and update this Policy to take account of new laws and technology, changes to the College's operations and practices and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing College environment.

2. Purpose

This policy exists to encourage the reporting of corrupt, illegal or other undesirable conduct at Padua College. It outlines how individuals can appropriately make disclosures about these matters, and how the College will protect those individuals from detrimental consequences.

3. Scope

Padua College Board, Officers, Staff, Contractors and Service Providers, Other Persons associated with the College, including students and parents.

4. Definitions

Eligible Whistleblower

A Whistleblower who is eligible for protection is an individual such as an officer, employee, service provider or associate (or their relative) who is or has been in a relationship with Padua College and who brings a Disclosable Matter to the attention of the school under this policy.

Disclosable Matter

A disclosure is eligible for protection if it relates to actual or suspected conduct within Padua College that is:

- misconduct, or an improper state of affairs or circumstances in relation to Padua College
- contravention of the *Corporations Act 2001*
- conduct that represents a danger to the public or the financial system
- an offence against any other law of the Commonwealth that is punishable by imprisonment for 12 months or more.

Eligible Recipients

Disclosures qualify for protection if they are made to eligible recipients. The eligible recipients include:

- Senior Leadership Team of Padua College
- the Whistleblower Investigations Officer of Padua College
- Human Resources Officer

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Refer to the Policy page on the website (www.padua.q.edu.au) for the latest version

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- an auditor, or a member of an audit team conducting an audit of Padua College.

Disclosures made to a legal practitioner for obtaining legal advice or legal representation are also protected.

Under exceptional circumstances, the law makes provisions for whistleblowing disclosures to professional journalists and members of parliament. These are called “emergency disclosures” and “public interest disclosures”; however, they require strict adherence to prescribed processes before being made to qualify for protection.

Detriment

This policy seeks to prevent Whistleblowers from Detriment, which includes the following:

- dismissal of an employee
- injury of an employee in his or her employment
- alteration of an employee’s position or duties to his or her disadvantage
- discrimination between an employee and other employees of the same employer
- harassment or intimidation of a person
- harm or injury to a person, including psychological harm
- damage to a person’s property
- damage to a person’s reputation
- damage to a person’s business or financial position
- any other damage to a person

5 Policy Statement

Padua College is committed to maintaining and promoting high standards of integrity, governance and ethical behaviour within the organisation by people at all levels, starting with the governing body, the Rector, and senior leadership team. Padua College is, therefore, encouraging the reporting of wrongdoing through appropriate channels.

Padua College is committed to complying with the applicable laws and practices included in the [Corporations Act 2001\(Cth\)](#) and Australian Standard AS8004-2003 Whistleblower Protection Program for Entities. All Padua College employees and associates have a responsibility to help detect, prevent and report instances of suspicious activity or wrongdoing.

5.1 Whistleblower Investigations Officer

The Rector is appointed as a Whistleblower Investigations Officer and will investigate the substance of the complaint to determine whether there is evidence in support of the matters raised or to refute the report.

The Whistleblower Investigations Officer can be contacted by the following means:



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- Email: pelmore@padua.qld.edu.au
- Phone: 07 3857 9999
- In person

5.2 Whistleblower Protections Officer

The HR Risk and Compliance Officer is appointed as a Whistleblower Protection Officer and will safeguard the interests of the Whistleblower in terms of this policy and any applicable legislation and standards. The Whistleblower Protection Officer will be readily accessible by all staff and will have direct, unfettered access to independent financial, legal and operational advisers as required.

The Whistleblower Protection Officer can be contacted by the following means:

- Email: cperrett@padua.qld.edu.au
- Phone: 07 3857 9987
- In person

The responsibilities of the Whistleblower Protection Officer and Whistleblower Investigations Officer will not reside in the same person. They should operate, and be seen to operate, independently of each other and should act in such a way that they discharge the two quite separate functions independently of each other.

6 Reporting

Padua College is committed to providing a safe, reliable and confidential way of reporting any Disclosable Matters. A report under this policy can be made if individuals falling into the category of Eligible Whistleblower have reasonable grounds to suspect that Disclosable Matters have taken place.

A report can be made by an internal Whistleblower (current or former Directors, employees, volunteers, contractors or consultations) or external Whistleblower (other people with a relationship with Padua College— parents, students) to any of the following persons, noting it may depend on the matter and the person who is the subject of the matter:

- Rector
- Whistleblower Investigations Officer
- Board Chair or Board Director
- HR Risk and Compliance Officer

At any stage, a person in the list above can be skipped if that person is the subject of the report or if the Whistleblower has another reason to believe that the person is not likely to deal with the report properly. While reports can be made anonymously if preferred, this may affect the ability to investigate the matter properly and to communicate with the Whistleblower about the report.



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7 Investigation

Investigation processes will vary depending on the precise nature of the conduct being investigated. The purpose of the investigation is to determine whether or not concerns are substantiated, with a view to rectifying any wrongdoing uncovered to the extent that this is practicable in all the circumstances.

The investigation will be thorough, objective, fair and independent of the Whistleblower and anyone who is the subject of the Disclosable Matter. The investigation will also have proper regard to the principles set out in the [Australian Standard AS8004-2013 on Whistleblower Protection Program for Entities](#).

The Whistleblower will receive feedback regarding the investigation arising from their report, subject to considerations of the privacy of anyone who is the subject of the Disclosable Matter and standard confidentiality requirements.

8 Protections

The [Australian Securities & Investment Commission \(ASIC\)](#) provides general information about protections available to Whistleblowers.

At Padua College, a Whistleblower will not be disadvantaged by having made a report. This includes not being disadvantaged by way of dismissal, demotion, any form of harassment, discrimination or current or future bias (see definition of “Detriment” above). This protection extends to the Whistleblower’s colleagues and relatives.

If reprisals are taken or are claimed to have been taken against a Whistleblower, the Whistleblower Protection Officer will investigate the matter and recommend appropriate action to be taken. The Whistleblower has a right to make requests through the Whistleblower Protection Officer for positive actions of protection to be taken.

Padua College will keep the reporting confidential and secure within the law. It will not disclose the identity of a Whistleblower, nor disclose information that is likely to lead to the identification of the Whistleblower, unless required under law.

9 Awareness

Padua College will ensure that all its officers and employees are aware of this policy in the following ways:

- Induction process
- Annual staff professional learning
- Staff Handbook
- Website and intranet



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10 Other Complaints Mechanisms

This policy is not intended to replace:

- Complaints and grievance process - which allows members of the Padua College community (staff, students, parents or other associated people) to raise any matters or concerns they may have which arise from actions or decisions by staff or parents/students.
- Other reporting structures such as those for discrimination, sexual harassment or workplace bullying.

11 Authority

- Corporations Act 2001(Cth)
- Australian Standards AS 8004-2003 Whistleblower Protection Program for Entities
- Staff Code of Conduct

Review

This Policy will be reviewed every three (3) years or as required by Law.

Version	Author	Authorisation	Approval Date	Next Review
1.0	C.Perrett	Board	01/01/2020	2023

Accountability

Role	Responsible for
Board	Oversight and Governance
Rector	Whistleblower Policy, Implementation and Complaints
HR, Risk and Compliance Officer	Policy review and updates