

General Warning

The purpose of this fact sheet is to give general introductory information about the complaints process. It does not contain legal advice.

WARNING: Alternative legal action should be considered before making a complaint. What is included in a complaint may be relevant to any current or future legal proceedings. If you are involved in legal action you should immediately see a lawyer and not proceed with a complaint.

If you (or the complainant, if you are complaining on their behalf) want financial compensation, support or money you should see a lawyer before making a complaint.

General complaint information

Complaints are rarely about just one thing. When you have a problem, it may be that a number of things have gone wrong. Below are some of the common areas where issues may arise that could lead to a complaint.

Discrimination	Disability and NDIS services	Policing, Custody and Detention
Seniors and Aged Care supports and services	Consumer and Business disputes	Phone and Internet services
Banking, Insurance and Superannuation	Energy and Water services	Housing and Real Estate
Health Care services	Employment issues	Education and Training providers
Government Agencies and Departments	Child Safety and Protection	State Fines and Debts
Corruption	Privacy and Access to Information	Media and Publications

There are different complaint bodies to handle different types of complaints. You should consider the different pathways available to decide the most appropriate pathway for your circumstances. One event could lead to multiple complaints. That means you may need to lodge more than one complaint to have all of your concerns addressed.

It is usually quickest and easiest to try to resolve a complaint directly with the person or body you are having a problem with. Many complaint handling bodies will not act on a complaint unless you have tried to resolve your complaint directly. If you do not feel it is safe or appropriate to complain directly, you should contact the relevant complaint body to discuss your situation.

Complaints involving discrimination

There are state and federal complaints bodies that handle complaints about discrimination. If your situation involves discrimination, you should consider making a discrimination complaint in addition to any other complaints. Discrimination may occur when someone is treated less favourably on the basis of: race; sex; gender; disability; age; sexuality;

relationship status; pregnancy; caring responsibilities; or having or being thought to have an infectious disease.

WARNING: The state and federal bodies that handle discrimination complaints have different rules, including time limits. You can make a complaint to both the state and federal complaint bodies, but they may decide not to address your concerns if you have already complained elsewhere. For example, if you have already lodged a discrimination complaint to anti-discrimination NSW, it is likely that Australian Human Rights Commission will decide not to act on your complaint. Please carefully review the discrimination factsheets for information about your options before making a discrimination complaint.

Victorian Catholic Education Authority

The Victorian Catholic Education Authority ('VCEA') is the main body for Catholic school education in Victoria. It oversees Catholic schools, including their funding, regulation, and compliance with the Minimum Standards for School Registration and Child Safe Standards.

You can make a complaint to the VCEA if it relates to a Catholic school or boarding premises in Victoria, especially if it involves school safety, student welfare, or other registration requirements. Complaints should first be raised with the school, following their complaints policy. If the issue isn't resolved, or if it's about the school principal, it can be escalated to the school's governing authority or the VCEA.

Legislation and Key Terms

Relevant Legislation:

- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#) (**ETA Act**)
- *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)* (**ETA Regulations**)
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (**CWS Act**)
- [Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration](#) (**Minimum Standards**)
- [Memorandum of Understanding between Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority and State of Victoria \(Department of Education and Training\)](#) (**MoU**)
- [Ministerial Order No. 1359 - Implementing The Child Safe Standards – Managing The Risk Of Child Abuse In Schools And School Boarding Premises](#)

Key terms: Below are the key terms that appear throughout this factsheet and their meaning.

Complainant means a person who has made a complaint.

Complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction where a response or resolution is wanted, expected or required. A complaint is a concern you may have that affects your child's learning or wellbeing. It may include learning support, racism or bullying.

School boarding environment: Any place (physical, online, or virtual) provided or authorised by a school boarding authority for students who live at boarding premises. This includes things like school emails, online systems, camps, homestays, training providers, sporting events, excursions, and competitions.

School boarding premises governing authority: The organisation or body responsible for running school boarding services.

School environment: Any place (physical, online, or virtual) provided or authorised by a school for students. This includes the school campus, online systems (like email or apps), and other locations such as camps, homestays, training providers, sporting events, excursions, and competitions.

School governing authority: The organisation or person legally responsible for running a school. This could be the proprietor, school board, or the principal (depending on who has been authorised).

School staff: Anyone working in a school environment, including employees, contractors doing child-related work, or religious leaders linked to the school.

Student: A person enrolled at or attending the school, including those living in school boarding premises.

Step 1: What type of Complaints can be made to this body?

You can make a complaint to the VCEA if your complaint is about a Catholic school or Catholic school boarding premises in Victoria, and relates to a breach of the Minimum Standards or the Child Safe Standards.

The VCEA does not resolve disputes or force schools to take specific actions. It reviews whether schools are meeting legal standards and may recommend changes or refer concerns to other regulators (like the VRQA).

1. Breach of the Minimum Standards for School Registration

The Minimum Standards are legal requirements that all Victorian schools must meet to stay registered. They cover everything from student welfare and curriculum to building safety and leadership. These include:

Sub-category	Example
Missing or Inadequate School Policies	<p>You should make a complaint if the school doesn't have legally required policies, or they exist but are not followed.</p> <p><i>Example: Paul requested a copy of his daughter's school's bullying and complaints policy after she came home upset multiple times. The school told him it was "internal only" and refused to provide it. No action was taken despite repeated reports. Paul was concerned the school wasn't complying with its policy obligations.</i></p>
Unfair or Unlawful Enrolment Practices	<p>You should make a complaint if the enrolment process is unclear, discriminatory, or does not meet legal or fairness requirements.</p> <p><i>Example: Farah tried to enrol her son at a nearby Catholic school but was told they "don't have the resources for a child with a hearing aid." The school didn't ask for any support plans or discuss possible adjustments. Farah believes her son was unfairly excluded.</i></p>
Poor Record-Keeping or Attendance Tracking	<p>You should make a complaint if the school fails to maintain required records about student enrolment, wellbeing, or attendance.</p> <p><i>Example: Jaspreet noticed her daughter's name on a report marked "absent" even though she had been at school. When asked, the school admitted they hadn't kept daily records for over two weeks due to staff absences.</i></p>
Unsafe or Inaccessible School Facilities	<p>You should make a complaint if the school buildings or grounds are unsafe, unclean, or don't meet legal planning or safety requirements.</p> <p><i>Example: Mick, whose son uses a wheelchair, found that ramps at the school were too steep and one was broken. His son missed multiple classes due to inaccessibility, and the school said repairs were "not a priority."</i></p>

Failure to Deliver a Proper Curriculum	<p>You should make a complaint if the school does not offer the approved curriculum or fails to support student learning appropriately.</p> <p><i>Example: After switching to a new Catholic school, Aaliyah's parents discovered her Year 9 class hadn't had any science lessons for six months. The school couldn't explain why and had no plan to catch up on missed topics.</i></p>
Failure to Follow the School's Philosophy or Stated Values	<p>You should make a complaint if the school's actions contradict its published philosophy or mission.</p> <p><i>Example: The school's website emphasised "inclusive education," but Tom's family felt unwelcome after staff dismissed his child's support needs as "too much to handle." They were told their expectations didn't align with the school's "capacity."</i></p>
Unfit or Improper Leadership	<p>You should make a complaint if a principal, board member, or other responsible person is not "fit and proper" or is acting inappropriately.</p> <p><i>Example: After an internal issue, the school appointed a former board member as acting principal, even though he had been asked to step down over misconduct concerns. No explanation was given, and complaints about the decision were ignored.</i></p>
Poor Handling of Serious Complaints or Incidents	<p>You should make a complaint if the school mishandles complaints, especially serious ones involving student safety or wellbeing.</p> <p><i>Example: Lucy's daughter was assaulted in the schoolyard by another student. After three attempts to follow up, the school said the matter was "closed." They had not interviewed witnesses or informed Lucy of any outcome.</i></p>
Unsafe or Non-Compliant Boarding Premises	<p>You should make a complaint if boarding facilities are not safe, properly maintained, or lack qualified supervision.</p> <p><i>Example: Isabella's son boarded at a Catholic school. He reported that there was no adult present overnight on some weekends. When Isabella asked for staff rosters, the school refused, saying it was "private information."</i></p>
<p align="center">2. Breaches of the Child Safe Standards</p> <p align="center">(Ministerial Order No. 1359 – 11 Standards)</p> <p align="center">The Child Safe Standards are legal obligations for creating environments that protect children and promote their safety and wellbeing. All Catholic schools and boarding premises must follow them.</p>	
Failure to Create a Culturally Safe Environment for Aboriginal Children	<p>You should make a complaint if the school does not actively respect or support the cultural identity and safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.</p> <p><i>Example: Kylie's daughter is a proud Wiradjuri student. She was teased by classmates for speaking about her culture, and teachers</i></p>

	<i>ignored the bullying. No Aboriginal perspectives were included in the curriculum. Kylie felt the school was not culturally safe.</i>
Poor Leadership or Governance on Child Safety	<p>You should make a complaint if the school's leaders don't promote or uphold child safety values or respond appropriately to risks.</p> <p><i>Example: An aide reported that a teacher was texting a student after hours. The principal dismissed the concern as a "personal misunderstanding" and didn't investigate or record the issue.</i></p>
Failure to Empower Students	<p>You should make a complaint if students are excluded from conversations about safety or are discouraged from speaking up.</p> <p><i>Example: Levi tried to report a teacher's inappropriate jokes. He was told to "not be so sensitive" and wasn't shown where he could formally raise a complaint.</i></p>
Excluding Families and Communities from Child Safety Matters	<p>You should make a complaint if families aren't informed about or involved in child safety practices.</p> <p><i>Example: Priya, a parent, asked to see the school's child safety policy after a troubling incident. The school said it was "for staff only" and refused to share it. No family consultation had ever been held.</i></p>
Ignoring Diverse Needs in Child Safety Policies	<p>You should make a complaint if safety practices don't consider or support children from diverse backgrounds, including disability, cultural identity, or LGBTQIA+ identities.</p> <p><i>Example: Kai, a non-binary student, asked staff to use their correct name and pronouns. Several teachers refused, saying it was "against their values." No inclusive policy was in place.</i></p>
Unfit or Unsuitable People Working with Students	<p>You should make a complaint if staff or volunteers are not properly screened or behave inappropriately with students.</p> <p><i>Example: A volunteer without a Working With Children Check was allowed to supervise small groups. When this was raised, staff said "they've been around forever" and dismissed the concern.</i></p>
No Child-Focused Complaint or Reporting Processes	<p>You should make a complaint if the school lacks clear, safe ways for students to report harm or raise concerns.</p> <p><i>Example: Talia wanted to report inappropriate touching by a staff member but wasn't sure who to go to. There were no posters, forms, or instructions about child safety reporting in the school.</i></p>
Lack of Staff Training on Child Safety	<p>You should make a complaint if staff are not trained or kept up to date on child protection laws and safety responsibilities.</p> <p><i>Example: At staff induction, no training was given on the Child Safe Standards. When asked, a teacher said they "didn't really know what those were."</i></p>
Unsafe Physical or Online Environments	<p>You should make a complaint if students are exposed to physical or digital risks due to poor planning or supervision.</p>

	<i>Example: Students were using unsecured chatrooms for group assignments, where outsiders could join and send messages. No safety filters or guidance were provided.</i>
No Review or Improvement of Safety Practices	<p>You should make a complaint if the school never reviews or updates its child safety measures — even after serious concerns are raised.</p> <p><i>Example: After repeated bullying complaints, the school said their procedures were “already good enough” and refused to review them.</i></p>
Missing or Outdated Child Safety Policies and Procedures	<p>You should make a complaint if the school’s child safety documents are missing, unclear, or not followed.</p> <p><i>Example: The school had no current child safety policy. The one on their website was from five years ago and didn’t mention the updated Child Safe Standards.</i></p>
Exclusions	
Exclusions	<p>The VCEA cannot handle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School fees or money problems: They can’t help if you’re upset about fees, payment plans, or refunds. • Suspensions, detentions, or expulsions: They won’t review behaviour or discipline decisions, unless it affects student safety or fairness. • Bad marks or poor teaching: They can’t fix complaints about grades, teaching quality, or learning styles, unless it breaches the school’s curriculum obligations. • Staff or teacher work issues: They can’t deal with staff pay, contracts, or employment disputes. • You haven’t complained to the school yet: They won’t step in unless you’ve already tried resolving the issue with the school first. • Complaints about public or non-Catholic schools: They only deal with Catholic schools and boarding premises in Victoria. • Religious content or Catholic values: They can’t review complaints about Catholic teachings or religious education. • Arguments between students or social issues: They don’t get involved in playground arguments or friendship dramas, unless someone’s safety is at risk and the school hasn’t acted. • General complaints about how a school is run: They won’t investigate if you’re just unhappy with how the school is managed, unless it breaks the rules. • Requests for money or legal action: They don’t offer compensation, legal rulings, or punish people.

- **Anonymous complaints (usually):** They usually can't follow up on anonymous complaints unless there's a serious safety risk.

Step 2: What is the Jurisdiction of the complaints body?

Jurisdiction	Description
State	The VCEA has powers to hear complaints under the law of Victoria.
Geographical Scope	The VCEA has the power to hear complaints for all Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises in Victoria.
Time limitations	There are no time limits for reporting your concerns to the VCEA. However, the earlier your concerns are reported, the better the outcomes.
Exclusions	<p>The VCEA can handle most complaints about a Catholic School or Catholic School Boarding Premises, that has been referred to it by the VRQA, but it cannot handle your complaint if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The matter does not relate to the Minimum Standards. • You have not attempted to resolve the complaint initially through the school and governing authority/proprietor in accordance with the school's complaints policy and procedures. • The complaint has already been made to the school, governing authority/proprietor and is in the process of being addressed, or there has not been a reasonable opportunity for the school or governing authority/proprietor to investigate or resolve the complaint. • The complaint is more appropriately addressed by another person, body, court, or tribunal, such as matters falling under the jurisdiction of family court or local council. • The complaint is deemed trivial, vexatious, or lacking in substance. • There are insufficient details provided to enable the VCEA to conduct a thorough investigation into the complaint.
Exercise of discretion	<p>Discretion to not investigate a complaint</p> <p>The VCEA has discretion to not investigate a complaint if it is deemed trivial, vexatious or lacking in substance, or there are insufficient details provided to enable to VCEA to conduct a thorough investigation into the complaint. The VCEA will notify you in writing of this outcome.</p> <p>Referral of a complaint</p> <p>The VCEA may refer your complaint where it is appropriate that appropriately addressed by another person, body, court, or tribunal, such as matters falling under the jurisdiction of family court or local council. The VCEA will notify you in writing of this outcome and provide details of the relevant person, body, court, or tribunal.</p>

Step 3: Who can you make a complaint against?

Respondent	Description
Teachers, staff or the principal	You can make a complaint to the VCEA about school teachers and staff, or the principal of any Catholic School or Catholic Boarding School in Victoria in relation to compliance with the Minimum Standards (including the Child Safe Standards).
Victorian Catholic Schools	<p>You can make a complaint to the VCEA about Victorian Catholic Schools in relation to compliance with the Minimum Standards (including the Child Safe Standards). This includes primary and secondary Catholic schools registered in Victoria.</p> <p>A register of Victorian Catholic Schools which are governed by the VCEA is available here.</p>
Victorian Catholic Boarding Schools	<p>You can make a complaint to the VCEA about Victorian Catholic Boarding School in relation to compliance with the Minimum Standards (including the Child Safe Standards). This includes schools that offer overnight accommodation for students in addition to standard school activities.</p> <p>A register of Victorian Catholic Boarding Schools which are governed by the VCEA is available here.</p>
Exclusions	<p>The VCEA will not investigate complaints about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Catholic School or Catholic Boarding School located outside of Victoria, • a Victorian government school or • a Victorian independent school. <p>If the complaint is about the clergy or other religious persons of a Victorian Catholic School or Victorian Catholic Boarding School, the complainant should contact and seek advice from the Professional Standards Unit of the Vicar General's Office in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, 228 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne.</p> <p>The VCEA does not accept complaints about parents, guardians, carers, or students. It only deals with complaints from them, related to the school's compliance with the required Standards. For interpersonal disputes involving families or students (e.g. bullying between students), the school should handle the complaint in the first instance.</p>

Step 4: Are you eligible to make a complaint?

Eligibility	Description
Who can make a complaint?	<p>Anyone that has an association with a Victorian Catholic School or Victorian Catholic Boarding School can make a complaint to the VCEA.</p> <p>The VCEA commonly receives complaints from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents / guardians / carers of students (past, present or proposed); • students (past, present or proposed); • mature minors; • adult students (past, present or proposed); • advocates of any of the above; or • members of the public; or • school staff.
Pre-requisite steps	<p>You must attempt to resolve the complaint initially through the Catholic School or Victorian Catholic Boarding School and governing authority/proprietor in accordance with the school's complaints policy and procedures.</p> <p>If the matter remains unresolved, the VCEA may become involved.</p>
Can complaints be made on behalf of someone?	<p>Yes. The VCEA can receive complaints on behalf of other people. For example, you may lodge a complaint with the VCEA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a parent / guardian / carer on behalf of a student (past, present or proposed); • as a student on behalf of another student; • as an advocate of any of the above (eg legal representative, social worker); or • a member of the public. <p>The VCEA will record personal information solely for the purpose of addressing the complaint in accordance with its privacy policy.</p> <p>If you make a complaint on behalf of another person, the VCEA may require the consent of the relevant person you are making the complaint on behalf of.</p>
Exclusions	<p>The VCEA does not consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anonymous Complainants: You usually cannot make a complaint anonymously. VCEA requires contact details to follow up and assess the complaint properly. <p>However, in rare cases involving serious safety risks or systemic issues, anonymous complaints may be accepted at the VCEA's discretion.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who have not tried resolving the issue with the school: You must first raise your concern through the school's internal complaint process before the VCEA will step in. Exception: If the school refuses to accept or escalate a complaint (e.g. about the principal), the VCEA may accept it directly. • People complaining on behalf of someone without permission: You can't make a complaint on someone else's behalf unless they have agreed to it, or unless you're legally authorised (e.g. parent, carer, legal guardian). • People complaining purely about employment, religious, or personal disputes: If your complaint is about employment conditions, disagreements with Catholic beliefs, or interpersonal issues unrelated to school safety or governance, you are not eligible to make that complaint to VCEA.
Additional information you need to know	VCEA is a review body. This means it hears complaints referred to it by the VRQA. It will either review, investigate or assess the school or school boarding premises' compliance with the Minimum Standards.

Step 5: What remedies are available at this body?

Power	Description
Referral to school or governing authority/ proprietor	If the matter has not gone through the complaints management and escalation process as outlined in the school's complaints policy and procedures, the VCEA will refer you back to the school or school governing authority/proprietor.
Notification to Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)	The VCEA will notify the VRQA of any potential or significant breaches that may have arisen from complaints or concerns related to the care, safety, and welfare of students including the Child Safe Standards.
Initiation of review, assessment or investigation	VCEA may, as appropriate, commence a review, assessment or investigation in accordance with the VCEA's complaints policy.
Recommendation for Policy or Procedural Changes	Following an investigation, the VCEA can suggest that a school modifies its policies or procedures to better align with the Minimum Standards and Child Safe Standards.
Provision of Guidance and Support	The VCEA offers advice to schools to help them address compliance issues and improve their complaint handling processes.

Collaboration with Other Agencies	When necessary, the VCEA coordinates with other regulatory bodies, such as the VRQA, to ensure comprehensive oversight and resolution of compliance matters.
Exclusions	<p>The VCEA cannot do any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot offer compensation or financial remedies: The VCEA has no power to order a refund, fee waiver, or any financial payout. • Cannot discipline individual teachers or staff: The VCEA cannot suspend, terminate, or punish school staff, including the principal. Employment decisions must be handled by the school or employer. • Cannot enforce its recommendations: The VCEA can recommend actions, but it cannot force a school to comply or penalise them for non-compliance. • Cannot make legal rulings or findings of liability: The VCEA does not operate like a court or tribunal. It cannot make formal findings of fault, blame, or legal breach. • Cannot act as a substitute complaints handler: The VCEA will not replace the school's complaints process. You must raise your concern with the school and escalate it internally before coming to the VCEA. • Cannot intervene in day-to-day school decisions: The VCEA does not interfere with school operations unless they breach the Minimum Standards. For example, it won't intervene in teacher disputes, timetable changes, or classroom choices. • Cannot respond to every complaint with a formal investigation: Some complaints may be outside scope, too minor, or already resolved — in those cases, the VCEA may decline to investigate.

Step 6: Preparing your complaint. What should it include?

Requirement	Description
Format	<p>Complaints can be made via email or letter to the VCEA.</p> <p>There is no prescribed complaint form.</p> <p>If you would like the assistance of a support person, an interpreter or translator that can be arranged free of charge.</p> <p>Please read the information on the complaints page of the VCEA website prior to lodging your complaint here.</p>
Personal Details	<p>During the investigation of a complaint, the VCEA may rely on the information provided and will need to contact the complainant for clarification or additional details as necessary.</p> <p>The VCEA may request your name and contact details.</p>

	You can choose to lodge your complaint anonymously. However, this may stop VCEA being able to respond to you or being able to look into your concerns.
Respondent's Details	The complaint should disclose the name of the school, governing authority/proprietor and person you have been dealing with regarding the complaint.
Relevant Facts	<p>You should include sufficient details of your complaint including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the nature of the complaint (including date; place; time; witnesses; impact of the problem has caused) details of any steps taken to resolve the complaint details of any communications that may be relevant to the complaint copies of any documentation and correspondence supporting the complaint. the desired outcome. <p>Other important considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be clear about the topic or issue to be discussed; be mindful of the need to ascertain all the facts relating to the circumstances of the topic or issue; think about what would be an acceptable outcome check and observe the school's complaints policy or guidelines.
What NOT to include	Do not include false or misleading statements.
Additional information you need to know	<p>The VCEA will record personal information solely for the purpose of addressing the complaint in accordance with the VCEA Privacy Policy.</p> <p>The VCEA's services are free. You do not need a lawyer for the complaint process, but you can seek legal advice at any time.</p> <p>During the initial review or investigation, there may be circumstances where the VCEA needs to clarify certain aspects of the complaint or request additional documentation. In such cases, the VCEA will explain the purpose of seeking clarification or additional documentation and provide feedback on the status of the complaint.</p>

Step 7: Lodging your complaint and next steps.

Step	Description
Where to lodge your complaint	<p>You can lodge a complaint to the VCEA by email or letter. You can make your complaint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By email to: secretary@vcea.catholic.edu.au

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By post to: Executive Director / Chief Executive Officer Victorian Catholic Education Authority Ltd PO Box 4220 Fitzroy VIC 3065 <p>There is no prescribed complaint form.</p>
Receipt	While there is no fixed time period for when the VCEA must provide a receipt acknowledging your complaint, the VCEA aims to acknowledge receipt within 5 business days.
Initial assessment	<p>When the VCEA receives a complaint, it will first look at whether the VCEA or another organisation is best suited to deal with it. If the VCEA assess that another organisation is better suited to dealing with some of your concerns, the VCEA will provide you with contact information for them.</p> <p>The VCEA may ask whether you have already tried speaking with the school as this may be an effective way to resolve your issues.</p>
Referral to school	<p>If the VCEA identifies that the matter has not gone through the complaints management and escalation process as outlined in the school's complaints policy and procedures, the VCEA will refer you back to the school or school governing authority/proprietor.</p> <p>If after attempting to resolve the matter remains unresolved, you can then make a complaint to the VCEA.</p>
Referral to another organisation / agency	If the VCEA identifies that another organisation or regulator is best suited to deal with the complaint, the VCEA will make an assisted referral and ask that staff from the organisation or regulator to discuss your concerns. As part of the process, the VCEA will contact the organisation or regulator to confirm the progress or the outcome of your complaint. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can contact the VCEA to discuss your options.
Investigations	<p>At any stage, the VCEA may choose to investigate a complaint. Investigations can be initiated following the assessment of the issues and possible outcomes. An investigation is a formal detailed and resource-intensive examination, often used in handling large or highly complex matters.</p> <p>The VCEA may also be referred a complaint by the VRQA. In these cases, the VCEA will consider the facts as provided by the VRQA and may need to reach out to you for further information.</p>
Outcome	Upon completion of the investigation, the VCEA will inform you in writing of the outcome and any actions taken.

Additional information you need to know

You can inquire about the status of a complaint at any time by contacting the VCEA.

Step 8: Post-complaint – what if you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint?

Avenue	Description
Internal review opportunities	<p>If you are not satisfied with the result of the investigation, you can ask VCEA to reconsider a review of their decision.</p> <p>Contact the VCEA via phone, letter or email outlining the reasons for seeking review of their decision.</p>
VRQA	<p>If, after raising your concerns with the VCEA, you are still not satisfied with the result of the investigation, you can lodge a complaint with the VRQA.</p> <p>The VRQA will consider whether the VCEA has acted within the bounds of the MoU and whether the complaint was handled appropriately at all times.</p> <p>You can learn about how make a complaint to the VRQA here.</p>
Victorian Ombudsman	<p>If, after raising your concerns with the VCEA and/or the VRQA, you are still not satisfied with the result of the investigation, you can lodge a complaint with the Victorian Ombudsman.</p> <p>If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the internal review, contact the Victorian Ombudsman.</p>
OVIC	<p>If you are not satisfied with how VCEA and/or the VRQA handled your personal information, you can contact the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner and make a complaint.</p>
Courts or tribunals	<p>If you are not satisfied with how the VCEA and/or the VRQA have handled your complaint, you can raise your concerns with a court or tribunal (such as VCAT) at any time. You may want to seek legal representation. The VCEA and/or the VRQA may be limited in their capacity to review your complaint if you commence legal proceedings.</p>

Step 9: Other bodies that handle similar complaints:

Complaint body	Description
Relevant Catholic school proprietors across Victoria	<p>Prior lodging your complaint with the VCEA, you should consider lodging a complaint under the relevant Catholic school proprietor that the school falls under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools (MACS): Governs and operates 295 schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. • Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL): Governs and operates 64 schools in the Diocese of Ballarat.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Ltd (DOSCEL): Governs and operates 43 schools in the Diocese of Sale. • Catholic Education Sandhurst (CES): Governs and operates 58 schools in the Diocese of Sandhurst. • Catholic Religious Institute and Ministerial Public Juridic Person Schools Proprietors: Govern and operate 48 schools across Victoria. These proprietors are members of Catholic Religious Institute and Ministerial Public Juridic Person Victorian Schools Limited (CRMV). <p>Each of these bodies have a regional office that can respond to complaints if you are not satisfied the matter has been addressed in accordance with the school's complaint-handling policies and processes, or that an acceptable resolution has been reached. The school itself may request assistance from the regional office.</p>
Victorian Ombudsman	<p>The Victorian Ombudsman handles complaints about the general conduct of Victorian government organisations, local councils, statutory authorities, and Victorian universities and TAFEs.</p> <p>Phone: 03 9613 6222 or 1800 806 314 (Regional)</p> <p>Visit: https://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/</p> <p>Access the complaints form here.</p>
Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)	<p>The VRQA is the regulator for Child Safe Standards compliance in Schools</p> <p>Phone: +61 3 9637 2806 (from 9:00 am–5:00 pm, Monday–Friday)</p> <p>Email: vrqa@education.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Visit: https://www2.vrqa.vic.gov.au/</p> <p>Access the complaints form here.</p>
Department of Health	<p>The Department of Health is the regulator for health services, including mental health services, drug and alcohol treatment services (amongst other services)</p> <p>Email: childsafestandards@health.vic.gov.au.</p> <p>Visit: https://www.health.vic.gov.au/childsafestandards</p>
Social Services Regulator (SSR)	<p>Social Services Regulator (SSR) is the Victorian regulator for providers of disability services, housing services, family violence and sexual assault services, and support services for parents and families. They also regulate out of home care services.</p> <p>Visit: https://www.vic.gov.au/ssr-reporting-notifiable-incident</p> <p>Access the complaints form here.</p>
Victorian Disability Worker Commission (VDWC)	<p>The VDWC can receive any enquiry, complaint or notification about any disability worker in Victoria.</p> <p>Phone: 1800 497 132</p> <p>Visit: www.vdwc.vic.gov.au</p>

	Access the complaints form here.
Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHC)	<p>The VEOHC can handle complaints about discrimination that occurs in employment, education, the provision of goods and services, accommodation, sport or the administration of Victorian laws and services. If you have experienced discrimination, bullying or harassment on the basis of you ex, disability, race, age or sexual preference the VEOHC may be able to help.</p> <p>Phone: 1300 292 153</p> <p>Visit: https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au</p> <p>Access the complaints form here.</p>
Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC)	<p>The OVIC can handle complaints about the way personal information has been handled by Victorian Government agencies and some private organisations. The OVIC can also review freedom of information decisions that are made by Victorian Government agencies and ministers.</p> <p>Phone: 1300 006 842 (1300 00 OVIC)</p> <p>Visit: https://ovic.vic.gov.au/</p> <p>Access the complaints form here.</p>
Courts and Tribunals	<p>Unlike the VCEA courts and tribunals can make binding and enforceable determinations. You may want to seek legal advice about the option of pursuing your complaint at court if it relates to: compensation (including workers compensation claims), development application decisions, orders made by local councils, decisions, fines and orders of regulators and licensing authorities and disputes over expert assessments.</p>

Need help to preparing or pursuing your complaint?

Below are organisations that may be able to help you to make your complaint, provide support or advocacy during the complaint process or give you more information.

Organisation	Contact Details	How they can help
VCEA	Website: https://vcea.catholic.edu.au/ Email: secretary@vcea.catholic.edu.au	You can contact the VCEA directly if you have any further questions or need assistance with your complaint.
Translating and Interpreter Service	Website: www.tisnational.gov.au Telephone: 131 450	Provide support to people if English is not their first language.
National Relay Service	Website: www.accesshub.gov.au	Provides a range of services to support people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment to communicate.
1800 RESPECT	Website: 1800respect.org.au/ Telephone: 1800 737 732	Provides support for people who have experienced violence and abuse. They also provide information for people supporting someone who is experiencing violence and abuse.
Kids Helpline	Website: https://kidshelpline.com.au/ Telephone: 1800 551 800	Provides support for children and young people.

Self-help tools and additional resources

Resource	How this helps
About the VCEA	For general information about the VCEA, visit their 'About Us' page.
Where to make a complaint	Guidance from VCEA on how to make a complaint about Catholic Schools or Catholic Boarding Schools.
How to make a complaint to VRQA	Guidance from VRQA on how to make a complaint about the VCEA.
Complaints Victorian Ombudsman	Information on the VIC Ombudsman regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who can be complained about; • The complaints process; • Common complaint topics; • Case examples; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Questions.
Law Society: Know Your Rights	Guidance for individuals who are uncertain about where to start when seeking legal advice.
Call It Out	Online register for racism/discrimination experienced or witnessed towards First Nations Australians. Not an official complaints body.