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South East Network – VIC, Youth+ Complaints & Feedback Policy – Young People and Community

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Drafted by	Network Principal	Approved by	NP
Responsible person	Network Principal	Scheduled review date	April 2019

Introduction

Youth+ Flexible Learning Centre’s offer an inclusive specialist secondary school setting for young people who are disengaged or are at imminent risk of disengaging from mainstream education. Where a young person has been identified as being particularly vulnerable, extra measures will be taken as required in order to support their positive engagement in the school community.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the parameters in which complaints (including grievances) and feedback from young people and community members are managed within a Youth+ South East Network Flexible Learning Centre. This policy complies with all applicable State and Commonwealth laws.

Policy

Youth+ respects the right of all members of the community to have access to a process, which will give full and fair consideration to any complaint grievance that may arise. All feedback and complaints and subsequent follow up actions will be recorded in a school complaints register.

The process described in this policy aims to address in a timely and equitable manner any complaint raised to ensure that the rules of natural justice are followed.

AUTHORISATION

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Network Principal, Youth+
March 2018

1. Responsibility

It shall be the responsibility of the **Network Principal** (or a delegated authority) to implement this policy and to monitor its performance.

It is the responsibility of the **Head of School/Head of Campus** to ensure that:

- They are familiar with this policy and procedure/s, and follow them accordingly;

It is the responsibility of the **Network Principal** to ensure that:

- All **Heads of Campus/Head of School's** are aware of their responsibilities in regards to this policy; and
- **Heads of Campus/ Head of School's** are given continuous support and guidance to support student placement.

2. Scope

This policy outlines the handling and management of feedback and complaints from young people and community members at Flexible Learning Centres in the South East Network of Youth+. Our schools include:

- St Francis Flexible Learning Centre;
- St Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre (North Melbourne and Geelong);
- St Mary's Flexible Learning Centre; and
- Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre.

3. Using Feedback to Improve Quality and Service Provision

Youth+ is dedicated to providing high quality education and support to the young people enrolled in our Flexible Learning Centres. We consider an effective feedback handling process to be an essential part of what we do and to provide an insight into services that are not working as well as they might.

We view all the feedback we receive as an opportunity to develop and improve the quality of the education and support to young people and their families/carers. Every item of feedback we receive is read by one of our staff members, and where appropriate, fed into our continuous improvement processes.

Youth + reviews the feedback and complaints we receive as part of monitoring and improving our services. Summary information from our feedback and complaints systems is analysed and used in our service design and improvement activities to continually improve the quality and effectiveness of our services.

We may use feedback from stakeholders in our publications (e.g. Annual Report), newsletters, marketing material, and for training and quality assurance purposes. This is always done in a way that protects the identity of the individual, or if this is not possible or appropriate, with their express permission.

4. Responding to Feedback, including Complaints

Youth+ will investigate and respond to all complaints. Youth+ also acknowledges individuals providing other types of feedback e.g. compliments and suggestions. Youth+ will treat any individual making a complaint (or providing any form of feedback) with dignity, respect and confidentiality. Youth+ will not respond to feedback that is provided in an offensive, harassing or malicious manner.

5. Receiving Feedback and Complaints

Feedback and complaints can be received in a number of ways. An individual may:

- Completing a feedback form available at all Flexible Learning Centres;
- Write a letter; and
- Verbally tell a member of staff.

Youth+ may be limited in what action it can take in responding to, investigating and addressing anonymous feedback.

6. Providing Assistance

If requested, Youth+ will assist an individual to provide feedback or lodge a complaint by:

- Guiding the individual to the Feedback Form;
- Recording an individual's feedback or complaint.

An individual providing feedback or making a complaint may appoint a third party to act on their behalf. Youth+ will respond to the third party, subject to the provision of appropriate written authority.

7. Managing Feedback and Complaints

All complaints received by a Flexible Learning Centre will be investigated by either the Head of Campus or Head of School. If the complaint received, concerns a Head of Campus or Head of School, any investigation or follow up be conducted by the Network Principal.

In receiving a complaint, Youth+ will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five (5) working days where possible, and if a response has been requested;
- Investigate the issue raised and decide on any actions or improvements that may be required;
- Advise relevant government departments and/or external agencies where required to under legislation;
- Respond to the individual making the complaint within 28 business days of receipt (or sooner if required by contract or legislation) with the outcome of the investigation. If the matter cannot be resolved within this time, Youth+ will advise the individual of the reasons for the delay and provide a revised timeframe;
- Ensure appropriate records are maintained in accordance with Youth+ policies and procedures, any applicable program or contractual requirements, and applicable Privacy legislation. In receiving other types of feedback, Youth+ will acknowledge the receipt of the feedback with an appropriate expression of appreciation; and
- Details of all complaints and feedback will be recorded at each Flexible Learning Centre using a Complaints and Feedback Register.

8. Reviewing Complaints

If an individual is not satisfied with Youth+'s response to their feedback or complaint, they may request follow up by the Network Principal/s South East Network Youth+