

IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN AND STUDENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This procedure has been produced in alignment with:

- *Programme Standards and Practices* (IBO October 2018, last update April 2022)
- *Rules for IB World Schools* (IBO June 2020, updated November 2023)
- *The IB complaints procedure* (IBO 2018)
- *Diploma Programme Assessment procedures* (IBO 2024)
- *Diploma Programme: Assessment appeals procedure. For use from September 2018* (IBO September 2016)

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1. IB mission statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

2. IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

It needs to be highlighted that although the profile describes the IB learner attributes, we understand it is a profile that applies to the whole school community, our students and teachers.

As IB learners we strive to be:

- **Inquirers** – We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.
- **Knowledgeable** – We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.
- **Thinkers** – We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.
- **Communicators** – We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.
- **Principled** – We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.
- **Open-minded** – We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.
- **Caring** – We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

- **Risk-takers** – We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.
- **Balanced** – We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives – intellectual, physical, and emotional – to achieve well-being for ourselves and others.
- **Reflective** – We thoughtfully consider the world and our ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.
- We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

3. Purpose of the procedure

This procedure has been created to resolve any complaints from students and their parents/legal guardians related to services provided and decisions made by the school, and no other alternative process exists for addressing that complaint.

The school internal *Complaints procedure* adheres to the principles set out in the *IB Complaints procedure (2018)*:

- *Fairness* - we aim to have a fair complaints procedure that ensures everyone is treated equally.
- *Courtesy* - all communication in relation to this procedure should be based on mutual respect, trust and courtesy.
- *Accessibility* - we aim to have a complaints procedure that is easy to understand, easy to access and well publicized.
- *Timeliness* - we aim to ensure that all complaints are dealt with in a timely manner.
- *Effectiveness* - the complaints procedure is monitored and reviewed to ensure it continues to be effective.
- *Attentiveness* - you will be given every opportunity to put forward your complaint, and you can be assured that we are listening. We will update you on the process and status of your complaint as appropriate.'

4. Types of complaints

This procedure covers the following complaints:

- 1) related to a student's academic performance or to their school life outside the classroom,
- 2) involving a student's interaction with other students or with members of the school staff,
- 3) related to the school procedures and facilities, including the running of the IB Diploma Programme and the decisions made by the school.

5. The principles

The school operates in accordance with local laws and regulations and IB requirements concerning learning, teaching and assessment, and ensures students and their parents/legal guardians are informed about the formal requirements and any changes that have been made to them.

As an IB World School, Akademickie Dwujęzyczne Liceum Oxford Secondary School regularly updates students and their parents/legal guardians about the IB Diploma Programme. It includes published programme material, email communications, information on the school website and information meetings for students and their parents/legal guardians.

The school understands that there might occur occasions when students and parents/legal guardians would like to raise concerns or submit complaints they would like to be resolved. In such cases the school will attempt to resolve the issue internally, following the rules stipulated in this Complaints procedure.

The school holds direct relationship with students and parents/legal guardians and is responsible for the implementation of the IB Diploma Programme. The school will consider complaints about the services it directly offers to its students:

- admissions
- fees
- premises and facilities
- rules and policies
- teacher performance or quality
- student support.

The school promotes a friendly and open atmosphere of mutual understanding and cooperation, and respects each other's differing views. All members of the school community are entitled to have their points of view properly heard and considered. Therefore, we take all concerns and complaints seriously and we believe that many of them can be resolved in an informal manner, between the individuals involved, and through constructive discussion as early in the process as possible. However, if this is not

possible, the school will make every effort to hear and resolve your questions, concerns or complaints. It is crucial that an effective partnership is maintained at all times between the school and students' parents/legal guardians.

In case of any concerns about the quality of teaching or other services delivered by the school. contact the school DP coordinator directly in the first instance.

When the complaint regards decisions that have been made by the school, only the school (and not the IB) holds responsibility for resolving the issue.

In order to ensure a quick and effective resolution, we ask you to submit your complaint as soon as possible, within a period of not more than three months from the occurrence of the issue. Concerns and complaints relating to issues which occurred more than three months before will generally be ruled out of date.

It is crucial that all complaints are dealt with as swiftly and as fairly as possible.

When a complaint has been made, it can be either resolved or withdrawn at any stage.

Members of staff should not investigate when a complaint has been made about their own actions. The same applies to the school leadership team members with reference to taking part in the review panel.

When investigating a complaint, the investigator should try to establish what happened, find out what the complainant feels would remedy the situation, and interview those involved, keeping notes of the interviews. It may be appropriate to have another person present to take notes on occasions.

It is in everyone's best interest to resolve concerns and complaints at the earliest possible stage.

Many issues can be resolved informally by contacting the IB Diploma coordinator or the head of school, without the need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure outlined below.

- A **concern** is understood as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought.'
- A formal **complaint** is defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about school policies or procedures, the conduct, the standards of teaching and learning, the delivery of the Diploma Program, and actions taken or a lack of action or omissions of members of the school staff.'
- An **appeal** may be defined as 'a request for the review of a decision or action taken.'

Any concern or complaint will be taken seriously, whether formally or informally, and the relevant procedure will be followed.

Where possible complaints will be held in confidence.

No action will be taken against anyone who makes a reasonable complaint.

Students and parents/legal guardians may take their concerns, problems and complaints to any member of the staff.

The following school community members hold particular responsibility for listening and trying to resolve complaints:

- Form (Homeroom) teachers
- IB DP coordinator
- Deputy head of school
- Head of school.

All relevant facts will be established and examined fairly before any action is taken.

Anonymous complaints will not be normally investigated, unless the head of school decides that the provided evidence is sufficient to warrant investigation.

For the purpose of this policy, by 'unreasonable complaints' the school understands vexatious complaints, which are persistent, harassing and repetitious, duplicated (sent by the same complainant or their relative) once the initial complaint has been closed, meant to cause disruption or annoyance, or insist upon pursuing them in unreasonable manner, or are expected to bring about unrealistic outcomes.

6. Rights and responsibilities

Student and parents/legal guardians making a complaint with the school can expect to:

- be treated with respect, courtesy and consideration,
- have their complaint dealt with in an efficient and timely manner,
- have personal information treated as confidential,
- have their complaint considered impartially and in accordance with due process.

In return the school requests the complainants to:

- treat all parties with respect and courtesy and maintain confidentiality,
- raise the concern or complaint as soon as possible after the issue has arisen,
- provide complete and factual information about the concern or complaint,
- ask for assistance or further information as needed,
- act in good faith to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties,
- have realistic and reasonable expectations about possible outcomes.

7. Procedure to address concerns

Concerns can be dealt with in an informal manner.

Anyone with a concern is encouraged to discuss the matter with the person involved as soon as possible to prevent escalation of the problem.

- A concern related to subject teaching (e.g. IB content or assessment) should be discussed with the subject teacher first.
- A concern with course placement or assignment should be discussed with the DP coordinator.
- A concern with courses or subjects offered by the school, scheduling of teaching hours should be discussed with the head of school.

In the vast majority of cases a problem can and should be resolved by contacting the teacher or member of staff directly involved with the problem. If a student or parent/legal guardian has a concern or complaint about a member of the staff, they should act immediately and either speak directly to the person responsible, if appropriate, or write to the person responsible, outlining the nature of the concern or complaint. In most cases the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means.

If your problem is still unresolved, then you should:

- contact your form (homeroom) teacher and ask for advice on what to do or ask them to speak to the person responsible on your behalf;
- contact the head of school if the problem regards your form (homeroom) teacher.

If the issue is not resolved within 5 working days or it is not resolved in a manner that is satisfactory to you, you may wish to report it formally, In this case, please follow the procedure for a formal complaint.

8. Procedure to address formal complaints

If you wish to submit a formal complaint, the following procedure outlines how to do it.

You are expected to make a formal complaint in writing, address it to the head of school and submit it at the school secretary office. The complaint should include the following:

- your name and contact details (email address, phone number),
- general information what the complaint relates to,
- details of the issue, including details of efforts that have been made to resolve the matter,
- copies of any relevant documentation, if applicable.

Once the complaint is submitted, you can be assured it will be investigated and dealt with.

When a formal written complaint is received, the head of school will discuss the matter with you before deciding what further action should be taken. You may have a support person with you when you discuss your complaint, if you wish. This meeting will be documented.

Your complaint will generally be treated in confidence and investigated. However, in the interest of resolving the complaint, other staff members (e.g. the DP coordinator) may be involved.

A record of the complaint investigation process will be kept and a written report with the outcome of the investigation will be produced.

You will be informed in person and/or in writing of the outcome of the investigation after sufficient time has elapsed for investigations to take place. However, it should not exceed 28 working days.

9. Procedure for appeals

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint investigation, you may file an appeal in writing to the head of school to review the complaint.

The head of school will organize a panel hearing for your case within 14 working days.

Your complaint will be reviewed by a panel consisting of members of the school community who are not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint.

One person on this panel will be a member of the school leadership team (usually the deputy head of school), one a member of the teaching staff, and one a member of the parent council.

You may be accompanied by a support person to a panel hearing (e.g. a parent/legal guardian of the student who filed a complaint), if you wish.

A written record will be kept of the process.

The panel will produce a written report including findings of the hearing and a final resolution.

The head of school and the complainant are given a copy of the written report.

This is the final stage of the internal complaints procedure at the school.

10. Complaints relating specifically to the IB Diploma Programme at the school

Concerns and/or complaints regarding the running of the IB Diploma Programme by the school should be immediately communicated to the school DP coordinator.

If the complaint regards the DP coordinator's actions or decisions, the head of school should be contacted.

The concerns or complaints can regard the following:

- violation of the IB rules and regulations,
- conduct, actions or omission on the part of any member of the DP teaching faculty, DP, EE or CAS coordinators (e.g. lack of proper supervision where required, failure to inform the students of assessment requirements and criteria, discriminatory behaviour, etc.).

The concerns or complaints that will not be accepted:

- any complaints regarding specific rules, principles, regulations which are the requirements of the IB,
- complaints regarding the requirements of the programme,

- complaints regarding deadlines specified in the school calendar of deadlines for DP assessments and communicated to students at the beginning of the Diploma Programme,
- complaints regarding refusal to accept a student's work if submitted after the school deadline,
- any unreasonable complaints.

Appeals against end-of-semester, end-of-year or final grades are regulated by the school normative acts, e.g. the school Statute, and fall within the Polish educational law.

In case of requests for enquiries upon results, appeals and other assessment decisions, students and parents/legal guardians can contact their school DP coordinator who will help with questions and concerns related to IB assessment.

There is a separate procedure for dealing with re-marking of Diploma Programme coursework. All requests for the re-marking of candidates' work or appeals against examination results or other assessment decisions must follow the procedures outlined in the *Diploma Programme assessment procedures* and the *General Regulations: Diploma Programme*.

Requests for re-marking must be made by the DP coordinator, who can also register students for retakes and will assist with any assessment issues.

11. Complaints procedure review

For the purpose of a regular review of IB-related school documentation it has been agreed that the DP Faculty meets on a yearly basis (preferably in late spring) to discuss how the document is working and implement any modifications, if applicable.

Any necessary changes to this document, which have been introduced during the annual general meeting, will come into effect from 1 September the following school year. Yet in order to introduce any urgent amendments, a special meeting can be summoned at any point in the school year. The last review meeting was held on 11 April 2024.

12. Access to Parents or legal guardian and student complaints procedure

The procedure may be accessed on the school's website, via the school's e-register mobiDziennik as well as on the school premises – at the secretary's office, at the head of school's office, and at the DP Coordinator's office. In an electronic version it is stored for the school community reference on a shared Google cloud named 'IB Diploma Programme.'

Whenever the procedure is updated, a new version is made available in the above-mentioned places. Before submitting an application form to the Diploma Programme both the candidate and their parents/legal guardians are expected to become familiar with the rules stipulated within this procedure.

At the start of the Diploma Programme both DP students and their parents/legal guardians sign a statement that they have read and understand the Complaints procedure along with other school policies and regulations concerning participation of students in the Diploma Programme.

13. Communicating Parents or legal guardian and student complaints procedure

This procedure will be presented to all DP students by the DP coordinator at the beginning of DP Year 1. It will be also communicated and explained to parents/legal guardians at the beginning of DP Year 1 at an information event. Similarly to other school documents connected with the Diploma Programme, the Complaints procedure will be made available to parents and students via mobiDziennik – the school's online register, which they can access with login details provided by the school.

14. Final provisions

All written complaints are recorded and filed by the head of school together with written responses or records of verbal responses. Action taken by the school as a result of the complaint will also be recorded.

All correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints will be kept confidential except situations when a higher instance body will request legitimate access to the documentation.

For any matters not directly addressed herein, especially with regard to the issues beyond the scope of this procedure, the current IB publications, especially the *IB Diploma Programme Assessment procedures* and *Diploma Programme: Assessment appeals procedure* should be referred to. The DP coordinator should be contacted to explain the rules stipulated in these documents and serve with guidance on the further steps to be taken.