



# DUBAI COLLEGE

*A tradition of quality in education*

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### Introduction

At Dubai College we pride ourselves on our quality of provision and aim to treat all members of our community fairly at all times. Inevitably, however, on occasions complaints may arise and in such a situation the following procedure will be followed.

### Stage 1: Informal Resolution

- It is hoped that most complaints and concerns will be resolved quickly and informally by direct contact with the relevant individual.
- If parents wish to take the matter further they should contact in the first instance a relevant senior teacher such as Head of Sixth Form, Head of Middle School or Head of Lower School for pastoral issues or the relevant Head of Group (Head of English, Maths, Science, Creative Arts or Modern Foreign Languages) or Head of Department with regard to academic matters. The Deputy Head: Pastoral, the Deputy Head: Academic, the Deputy Head: Learning and Teaching or the Assistant Head: Assessment, Reporting and Student Progress might be contacted if more relevant. These senior staff have specific responsibility for Assessment, Admissions, Curriculum, Learning and Teaching. Complaints of a non-academic or non-pastoral nature should be directed to the Bursar. In most cases we would hope to resolve the matter promptly. Please refer to the COMMUNICATIONS POLICY for details of how to contact staff members.
- We will note the complaint or concern and the date on which it was received. If the matter cannot be resolved within 5 working days parents will be guided to the next stage of the procedure.

### Stage 2: Formal Resolution

- If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, then formal complaints must be made to the Head (unless they are about the Head). This may be done in person, in writing, or by telephone.
- The Head's PA will record the date the complaint is received and will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within two school days. The Headmaster will consider the matter and decide upon the most appropriate way forward.
- Within this response, the Head will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. The Head can consider whether a face to face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.

**PLEASE NOTE: The Head may delegate the investigation to another member of the school's senior leadership team but not the decision to be taken.**

- During the investigation, the Head (or a member of the SLT) will:
  - if necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
  - keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation
- At the conclusion of their investigation, the Head will provide a formal written response within 7 working days of the date of receipt of the complaint.
- If the Head is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with an update and revised response date.
- The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions Dubai College will take to resolve the complaint.
- The Head will advise the complainant of how to escalate their complaint should they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2.
- If the complaint is about the Head, or a member of the governing body (including the Chair or Vice-Chair), a suitably skilled governor will be appointed to complete all the actions at Stage 2: Formal Resolution.
- Complaints about the Head or member of the governing body must be made to the Clerk, via the school office.

### **Stage 3: Hearing of the Complaints Committee**

- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome to Stage 2 they may invoke Stage 3 - a meeting with members of the governing body's complaints committee, which will be formed of the first three, impartial, governors available. This is the final stage of the complaints procedure.
- A request to escalate to Stage 3 must be made to the Clerk to Governors within 7 school days of receipt of the Stage 2 response. The Clerk is currently the Bursar at Dubai College.
- Should the complaint be against the Clerk this role will fall to the Headmaster.
- The Clerk will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within two school days.
- Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.
- The Clerk will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within fourteen school days of receipt of the Stage 3 request. If this is not possible, the Clerk will provide an anticipated date and keep the complainant informed.
- If the complainant rejects the offer of three proposed dates, without good reason, the Clerk will decide when to hold the meeting. It will then proceed in the complainant's absence on the basis of written submissions from both parties.

- The complaints committee will consist of at least three governors with no prior involvement or knowledge of the complaint. Prior to the meeting, they will decide amongst themselves who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee.
- The committee will decide whether to deal with the complaint by inviting parties to a meeting or through written representations, but in making their decision they will be sensitive to the complainant's needs.
- If the complainant is invited to attend the meeting, they may bring someone along to provide support. This can be a relative or friend but not legal representatives.
- If the complaints committee deems it necessary, it may require that further particulars of the complaint or any related matter be supplied 5 days in advance of the hearing.
- If possible, the complaints committee will resolve the complaint immediately without the need for further investigation.
- Where further investigation is required, the complaints committee will decide how it should be carried out. After due consideration of all relevant facts, the complaints committee will reach a decision, making any findings and recommendations as deemed appropriate, and inform the complainant in writing within 7 days of the hearing, giving reasons for its decision. The decision of the complaints committee will be regarded as final.
- The complaints committee's findings and any recommendations will also be sent in writing to the Headmaster and, where appropriate, the complainee.
- Complainants can rest assured that all concerns and complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially except where other legal obligation prevails.
- In the case of significant complaints made against the Headmaster or Bursar, the procedures outlined in Stage 3 above will be followed.

<b>Policy Details</b>	
Version date	6 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
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Responsible SLT	Headmaster