

**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE  
for students and/or parents**

<b>Document Title and ID</b>	Complaints procedure for students and/or parents	Version 1.0	
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**Introduction**

UWC Dilijan always encourages an open and honest communication with students and parents about any issues that could arise during the students’ time at the school and is generally in touch with all members of the community on general questions about wellbeing or academic progress. The school encourages students and parents to not hesitate to raise any concerns with the toon parents or mentors and teachers directly.

However, if students or parents do have a complaint or wish to raise a concern, they should follow this complaints procedure, which is available to all students and staff, as well as uploaded on the Intranet.

**Informal Resolution**

It is hoped that all complaints will be resolved as early and informally as possible.

Where appropriate, the student should contact the staff member who is responsible for the issue or concern. If the student does not feel comfortable raising the matter with this person directly, then he or she should speak or write to the person responsible for the academic department (Head of Department), or similar line manager. The school organizational chart will provide information on who is in charge, but toon parents or mentors can be approached. The complaint should be raised as soon as it occurs, or at least within 15 days of the matter arising. The member of staff to which the complaint is addressed will acknowledge a complaint no later than 5 working days after receiving it, and full resolution should be achieved in no more than 28 working days.

A parent raising an informal complaint should contact the Head of School or the Deputy directly via email, describing the matter. If the response received has resolved the informal complaint, no further communication needs to be initiated.

The nature of the potential resolution depends on the subject of the complaint. It may result in

- An explanation of how the matter occurred that is satisfactory to all parties
- A promise that the matter will be put right that satisfies all parties and is in essence realistic and achievable
- A change in procedure to help the student and potentially other students to avoid similar situations in future

### **Formal Resolution**

There may be complaints that cannot be resolved informally, for example for the following reasons:

- The response from the informal procedure has not resolved the complaint
- The complaint is so serious that the student cannot raise it with any member of staff
- The complaint centers on a decision taken by the head or the Board

In such cases the student and/or the parent should send a formal complaint via email to the Head of School or the Deputy providing all the relevant information on the issue. This should be done within 15 days of the matter arising, or within 15 days of the unsatisfactory response given as a result of the informal complaints procedure.

### **Formal complaints procedure**

- The Head of the School will appoint a member of staff responsible for a review of the complaint to make sure it can be considered under this procedure, and will communicate this to the student or parent. This colleague will confirm the outcome of the screening within 7 days of receiving the complaint. If the complaint is eligible, an investigation will be conducted; the member of staff involved in the complaint will be sent a copy of the information provided and will be requested to provide a response.
- The complaint and any responses will be considered by a person appointed by the Head of School who has no knowledge of the case (hereinafter - "the Mediator").
- The Mediator will make a decision about the complaint and suggest a resolution where this is appropriate. The student and/or parent will be informed of the Mediator's decision and any staff responses by email.
- In some cases, the Mediator might require further information from the student and/or parent during the investigation. In such cases, the student and/or parent will be sent the staff responses at this point, before being asked to provide a written statement or to attend a meeting.

- During the meeting, the student raising the complaint has the right to invite a member of the community to accompany him or her. This person must not be involved with the complaint raised in any way to avoid any conflict of interest and to ensure a fair and unbiased process.
- At the mediator's discretion participants may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

In case of a complaint being raised against the Head of the School it should be sent to the Chair of the UWCD Board of Governors.

- The Board will then nominate a Complaint Committee consisting of 3-5 (three to five) Board members who have not been involved and have no connection to the matter in question.
- The Complaints Committee shall review the case and if necessary request additional information from the student.
- Providing that a student's and/or parent's request for review is eligible, it will be considered by the Complaints Committee who can either uphold or dismiss the student's complaint request. Where a request is considered to be fair and reasonable it is upheld, and a remedy can be put in place. The student will receive a Completion of Procedures letter with the final decision that can not be appealed against.

## **Review**

This stage of the complaints procedure will only be necessary if the matter has not been resolved to the satisfaction of either the school or the student and/or parent. Either of these can request a review of the decision on the following grounds:

- procedural irregularities that occurred during Formal Complaints procedure, which were material or potentially material to the decision reached;
- the Formal Complaints decision is unreasonable;
- the availability of new evidence, which materially impacts the complaint outcome and which, for valid reasons, could not have been submitted at an earlier stage.

In order to request a review, the student/parent will need to raise a concern in writing to the Chair of the UWCD Board of Governors. Providing the request for review is eligible, it will be considered by the Chair of the UWCD Board of Governors who can either uphold or dismiss the request. Where a request is upheld, a remedy can be put in place. The student/parent will receive a Completion of Procedures letter with the final decision. This letter confirms the completion of the School's internal procedures.

## **Timeframes**



All complaints will be handled seriously and sensitively. They should be raised within 15 days of the incident occurring, and will be acknowledged within 5 working days after being received at the latest. It is in everyone's interest to resolve a complaint as speedily as possible: the school's target is to complete either informal or formal procedures within 28 days.

The school will keep a record of all complaints that have been raised for 5 years.

### **Recording of complaints**

The school will keep a written record of all formal complaints and will also record the resolution that was achieved, including any action taken by the school. The school will ensure that correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are kept confidential. They will not be added to either student or staff files.