



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.

All members of staff are entitled to know the details of the complaint against them, including the name of the person raising the complaint and the specific details of the complaint. That individual will also be given an appropriate and adequate opportunity to respond to the complaint made against them. Consequently, we are unable to investigate any anonymous complaints. If the complaint compromises the safety of the complainant, it may be more appropriate to refer to the 'whistleblowing policy'.

Time scales

A complaint must be raised within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame only if exceptional circumstances apply (for example, if the incident giving rise to the complaint has only more recently been discovered and could not reasonably have been discovered earlier).

Complaints received outside of term time

We will consider complaints made outside of term time to have been received on the first school day after the holiday period.

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

- It is expected 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, Mathematics, Science, Creative Arts, Social Studies or Modern Foreign Languages) or Head of Department regarding academic matters. The Deputy Head: Pastoral, the Deputy Head: Academic, the Deputy Head: Learning and Teaching, the Assistant Head: Assessment, Reporting and Student Progress or the Assistant Head: Wellbeing and Inclusion might be contacted if more relevant. These senior staff have specific responsibility for Assessment, Admissions, Curriculum, Learning and Teaching and Pastoral. 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 should be made to the Head (unless they are about the Head). This may be done in person, in writing, or by telephone. The complaints form in [Appendix One](#) should be used to record the complaint.
- 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 Head will consider the matter and decide upon the most appropriate way forward.
- Within this response, the Head may seek to clarify more detail relating to the complaint. The Head is also free to consider whether a face-to-face meeting is the most appropriate way of doing this.
- **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 the investigation, the Head will provide a formal written response within 7 working days of the date of receipt of the complaint. 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.
- If the Head is unable to meet this deadline, they will provide the complainant with a revised response date.
- 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 members of the governing body must be made to the Bursar, via the school office.

Stage 3: Hearing of the Complaints Committee

- If the complainant seeks to invoke Stage 3 following failure to reach an acceptable resolution via Stages 1 and 2 of this procedure, they may request a hearing before a panel known as a Complaints Committee. This is the final internal stage of the complaints procedure.
- The Complaints Committee will consist of at least 3 persons:
 - 1) A member of the Board of Governors
 - 2) Another member of the Board of Governors or a member of the College's teaching staff
 - 3) An independent individual who is not directly involved with the daily operation of the school as per the standards for British Schools Overseas
- No member of the Complaints Committee should have been directly involved in the matters detailed within the original complaint or have been involved in dealing with the grievance at an earlier stage in the process.
- Prior to the meeting, they will decide amongst themselves who will act as the Chair of the Complaints Committee.
- A request to escalate to Stage 3 must be made to the Clerk to Governors within 7 working days of receipt of the Stage 2 response. The Clerk is currently the Bursar at Dubai College. Requests received outside of this time frame will only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply.
- Should the complaint be against the Clerk this role will fall to the Head.
- The Clerk will record the date the complaint is received and acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing (either by letter or email) within 2 working days.
- The Complaints Committee has full discretion as to how to conduct an investigation and how the complaint will be dealt with. In doing so it may invite affected parties to a meeting or invite written representations, having regard to the nature of the complaint made and all surrounding circumstances. Complainants should be aware that the powers of the Complaints Committee are necessarily limited (for example, the Committee does not have the legal power to compel production of documents or the attendance of witnesses).
- If the Complaints Committee decide that a meeting will be appropriate the Clerk will write to the complainant to inform them of the date of the meeting. They will aim to convene a meeting within 14 working days 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. If the complainant does not turn up to the meeting it will then proceed in the complainant's absence.
- 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 a legal representative.

- 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 15 working days of the hearing or the submission of written representations (whichever is later), giving reasons for its decision. If the Complaints Committee believes it will need more time to investigate the complaint it will communicate this through the Clerk.
- The Complaints Committee's findings and any recommendations will also be sent in writing to the Head, the complainant and the complainee. However, information gathered in the investigation may be redacted or anonymised to ensure the protection of those involved in the investigation, but external to the complaint.
- 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 Head or Bursar, the procedures outlined in Stage 3 above will be followed.

Stage 4: Referral to KHDA

If the Complainant feels that the Complaints Committee has not adequately dealt with the complaint they may refer the case to the KHDA. Please note that the KHDA will not consider any complaints or issues that have not been subject to all complaint levels set out in this policy.

Policy Details	
Version date	6 th May 2025
Last review	6 th May 2025
Next review	5 th September 2026
Responsible SLT	Head

APPENDIX ONE

Complaint Form

Please complete and return to the Head's PA by emailing laurette.benade@dubaicollege.org. Normally the Head will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken. In the case of complaints against the Head, normally the Chair or a nominated member of the Board of Governors will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:
Pupil's name (if relevant):
Your relationship to the pupil (if relevant):
Address:
Day time telephone number:
Evening telephone number:
Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the school about it.
What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?
Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:
Date:
Official use
Date acknowledgement sent:
By who:
Complaint referred to:
Date: