

Socastee High School IB Diploma Procedures for Guardian and Student Complaints

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures for parents and students to raise concerns or complaints related to the academic or administrative operations of the school, including matters relating to the International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes. Socastee High School is committed to maintaining open communication and resolving issues in a fair, timely, and respectful manner. This policy is available to guardians and students on the school's website under the International Baccalaureate Policy and Procedures as well as during the IB programme orientation sessions for students and families. Policies are reviewed by IB teachers, counselors, and the IB Coordinator annually.

<https://sh.horrycountyschools.net/academics/international-baccalaureate>

Scope:

This policy applies to all students and parents/guardians of students enrolled in the IB Diploma Programme (DP) at Socastee High School.

Complaints may include (but are not limited to):

- Teaching and learning matters
- IB programme implementation
- Assessment practices
- Student wellbeing and safety
- School policies or administrative decisions
- Conduct of staff or other students

Note: This policy does not cover complaints that fall under child protection/safeguarding, which follow a separate mandatory process.

Guiding Principles

- **Respect and courtesy:** All parties are expected to engage respectfully.
- **Confidentiality:** All complaints will be handled confidentially and in accordance with data protection regulations.
- **Fairness:** Complaints will be handled impartially, with all relevant parties having the opportunity to present their perspectives.
- **Timeliness:** Complaints should be raised and addressed in a timely manner.

Procedures

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

1. Initial Contact

Parents or students are encouraged to raise concerns informally with the relevant teacher, staff member, or programme coordinator as soon as possible. Most concerns can be resolved at this level.

2. Meeting/Discussion

A meeting or discussion will be arranged, usually within **10 working days** of the concern being raised. The outcome may be confirmed in writing if requested.

3. Outcome

If the issue is resolved satisfactorily, no further action is required. If not, the complainant may proceed to the formal stage.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

1. Submission of Formal Complaint

Complaints should be submitted in writing to the **IB Programme Coordinator** or the **School Principal**. The complaint must include:

- The nature of the concern
- Steps already taken to resolve it informally
- The outcome sought

2. Acknowledgement and Investigation

The school will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within **5 working days** and investigate the matter. This may involve interviewing staff, reviewing documentation, or meeting with the complainant.

3. Decision and Response

A written response will be provided within **15 working days** of the complaint being acknowledged. If more time is required, the school will inform the complainant with an expected timeline.

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Stage 3: Appeal

1. Request for Appeal

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2, they may submit a written appeal to the **Head of School** or **IB Coordinator** within **5 working days** of receiving the Stage 2 decision.

2. Review Process

An impartial panel or designated senior leader will review the appeal. This may include a meeting with the complainant.

3. Final Decision

A final written decision will be communicated within **15 working days** of the appeal request. This decision is final and concludes the school's internal complaint process.

Record Keeping

All complaints and outcomes will be documented and retained securely in accordance with school policy and data protection laws.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in IB guidelines, legal requirements, or school needs.