

# Complaints Policy

## Parent or legal guardian and student complaints procedures



### 1. INTRODUCTION

The document "Complaints Policy and Procedure" is a school document that students and their parents/legal guardians are familiarized with before starting the IB DP program in the third year of high school.

At the Adam Mickiewicz High School with Bilingual Units in Piastów, we prioritize a friendly and relationship-based work atmosphere. We value the opinions and viewpoints of every member of our school community. We focus on building relationships founded on respect, tolerance, and openness. By doing so, we hope to resolve problems in a way that satisfies all parties involved. We also hope that most disputes can be resolved informally through conversation. Therefore, it is essential that complaints are raised as soon as possible to prevent potential conflicts from escalating.

We take every complaint seriously, and any complaint can be withdrawn at any time. We do not accept anonymous complaints; however, we may initiate an investigation if serious allegations are made. The decision to initiate an investigation is made by the school's Head Teacher based on a written, non-anonymous complaint.

### 2. TYPES OF COMPLAINTS COVERED BY THE PROCEDURE

2.1 Complaints related to the educational process (e.g., academic results, teaching methods, curriculum delivery, etc.)

2.2 Complaints concerning school life (e.g., relationships with other students, teachers)

2.3 Complaints regarding school procedures (e.g., violations of the school's statute)

Additionally, the school will treat "concerns" as complaints, understood as expressions of worry or doubt (in order to prevent concerns from escalating into problems).

Each complaint or concern will be addressed either informally or formally.

### **3. “UNREASONABLE” COMPLAINTS:**

- a. Persistent, insistent, repeated complaints;
- b. Complaints based on unrealistic expectations and unfounded allegations;
- c. Complaints aimed at causing disruption and disorganization;
- d. Complaints that are repeated by one complainant (or their family/legal guardian) about a matter that has been closed;
- e. Complaints seeking compensation/reimbursement of fees incurred;
- f. Reasonable complaints that seek unreasonable solutions;
- g. Complaints concerning incidents that occurred more than three months before the complaint (exceptions to this rule are allowed).

The complaint review team cannot include a person involved in the complaint. The person receiving the complaint should be attentive, friendly, and inquisitive. They may ask additional questions, request explanations, and clarify details. Additionally, during the conversation with the complainant, a second person acts as a witness and takes notes. (With the consent of both parties, the conversation may be recorded.)

### **4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- a. Filing and resolving complaints should be done in full confidence;
- b. Filing reasonable and justified complaints should never make the complainant feel apprehensive;
- c. All relevant facts must be accepted and investigated before taking action. Both parties are treated fairly, impartially, and equally;
- d. All communication should be based on mutual respect, trust, and adherence to cultural norms;
- e. Students and parents/legal guardians may file complaints regarding issues or concerns with any member of the IB DP teaching team;
- f. Every complaint is taken seriously and not dismissed;
- g. We strive to ensure that complaints are addressed promptly and effectively;
- h. Persons responsible for receiving, hearing, and resolving complaints: the class teacher, the school’s IB DP coordinator, the Deputy Head, and the School Head.

## **5. PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF FILING A COMPLAINT**

The complaint process consists of three stages, though we hope that most problems can be resolved in the first stage.

### **5.1 STAGE 1: Informal Resolution of the Problem**

In most cases, the issue can be resolved in the first stage with the person directly involved in the conflict. It is essential to do this as quickly as possible.

#### **a. Contacting the person causing the complaint**

If a student or parent/legal guardian has a complaint about a member of the IB DP teaching team, they should respond and speak directly with them or write a message (via the Librus system or Microsoft Office email). They should do this quickly, describing the issue clearly and in a manner consistent with general principles of culture.

#### **b. Contacting the class teacher**

If the issue cannot be resolved, contact the class teacher asking for support and advice, and sometimes for a conversation with the person against whom the complaint is directed.

#### **c. Contacting the school's IB DP coordinator**

If the class teacher's actions are also ineffective, the student or parent should contact the school's IB DP coordinator. This should also be done if the complaint directly involves the homeroom teacher. You can arrange an individual meeting with the coordinator or contact her/him by phone or electronically (via the Librus system, Microsoft Office email, or school mail: [koordynatorib@piastow.pl](mailto:koordynatorib@piastow.pl)).

The coordinator has seven business days to respond to the complaint and provide feedback. If the issue is not resolved within this time or if the outcome is unsatisfactory, the next step is to move to Stage 2, i.e., submitting a formal complaint.

### **5.2 STAGE 2 - FORMAL STAGE**

This stage begins when the issue cannot be resolved informally.

a. Filing a formal complaint involves submitting a written complaint to the school's IB DP coordinator (or to the School Head if the complaint concerns the IB DP coordinator).

What should a formal complaint include?

- Contact details of the person submitting the complaint;
- A description of the problem;
- Previously taken actions to resolve the issue.

b. After reviewing the complaint, the principal or the IB DP coordinator will set a meeting for the parties involved to discuss the content of the complaint. The student may be accompanied by a supporting person. The outcome of the meeting should be a written report, which must include: A. The type of complaint; B. Details of the conflict; C. Proposed solutions.

c. The deadline for resolving the complaint and providing a written report is 14 working days.

Unfortunately, Stage 2 does not always lead to the resolution of the conflict. In such cases, it is necessary to move to Stage 3.

### **5.3 STAGE 3 - PANEL HEARING**

This stage is initiated when the complainant is dissatisfied with the response to the written complaint. Stage 3 begins with the notification to the School Head, who is responsible for organizing the following activities:

a. Panel hearing. The panel should include members of the teaching staff, members of the parent council (none of whom are directly involved in the conflict), and a member of the school's management (the School Head, the Deputy Head, or the school's IB DP coordinator);

b. The student has the right to be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian or a representative from the student council;

c. Written report: The report should include the findings and recommendations. It is received by the School Head, the complainant, and the accused person;

d. Documentation: The school records detailed information on the actions taken to resolve the situation.

e. Timeline: The period from submitting the complaint to the School Head, is 14 working days. The final School Head's decision is binding and ends the process of the complaint procedure.

## **6. Complaints and Concerns Regarding the Implementation of the IB DP at High School**

a. Complaints should be submitted immediately to the school's IB DP coordinator, the School Head, or the Deputy Head. The resolution process follows the three stages outlined above.

b. Nature of complaints:

A. Violation of IB DP rules and regulations.

B. Misconduct of IB DP teachers (e.g., lack of supervision or improper supervision, failure to provide required information such as assessment criteria, discrimination, unjustifiable and excessive use of the Polish language as the medium of instruction in subjects apart from Group 1 – Polish Language/other Group 1 languages).

c. Unacceptable complaints:

- A. Concerning rules, regulations, and policies unrelated to IB DP requirements;
- B. Concerning program requirements;
- C. Concerning deadlines associated with the internal school calendar (students should receive information about deadlines in the school calendar at the start of the school year);
- D. Regarding the refusal to accept student's work submitted after the deadline set by the school;
- E. Concerning matters beyond the school's control (e.g., the need to overcome language barriers).

### **7. Appeals Against Semester and Final Grades**

These are regulated by the school's normative acts, and the appeal procedure is determined by the school's statute, in compliance with Polish education law.

### **8. Separate Procedure for Reassessing Work Under the IB DP**

a. Requestss for reassessment of work, appeals against exam results, etc., must comply with the procedures specified in the school's documents: the school's statute, the IB DP internal assessment system (the Assessment Policy), and IB regulations. These applications are reviewed by the school's IB DP coordinator (who registers candidates for exams, helps with various issues, and is the person students or legal guardians should approach in the first place).

### **Final Provisions**

1. All written complaints are registered along with written responses or records/logs of verbal responses (by the school's IB DP coordinator, the School Head, the Deputy Head, or a person designated by the management team).
2. The records also include a note on which stage the complaint was reviewed.
3. Additionally, a description of the actions taken by the school to resolve the situation should be included.
4. All records related to complaints (e.g., statements, correspondence) are treated as confidential. They can only be disclosed at the request of a controlling body such as the school inspector, IB representative, etc.
5. The complaints policy and its related procedures are subject to review (every three years).

**Piastów, May 2024**

## **Bibliography:**

- The IB Complaints Procedure (2018), Published by the International Baccalaureate Organization;
- I LO im. Adama Mickiewicza w Olsztynie Complaints Procedure (2023);
- Statut Liceum Ogólnokształcącego z Oddziałami Dwujęzycznymi im. Adama Mickiewicza w Piastowie (2024);
- Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures 2022, published by the International Baccalaureate Organization;
- Diploma Programme: Assessment Appeals Procedure (for use from September 2016), published by the International Baccalaureate Organization;
- Feedback and Complaints – IB website: Feedback, Whistleblowing, and Complaints - International Baccalaureate® (ibo.org);
- Rules for IB World Schools (2020), Published by the International Baccalaureate Organization.