

I Liceum Ogólnokształcące im. Adama Mickiewicza w Olsztynie, Poland



## **Complaints Policy and Procedure**

### **Parent or legal guardian and student complaints procedures**

Rules—Article 6: Internal complaints procedure

Article 6.1: The school must have in place written procedures for how it will deal with complaints and students' requests for appeals against IB programme decisions taken by the school, ensure that details of these procedures are made widely available and accessible to all students, and operate in accordance with such procedures.

Article 6.2: The school must inform parents or legal guardians about the school's procedures for addressing complaints and students' requests for appeals of IB programme decisions taken by the school.

Leadership 4.4: The school ensures that students and legal guardians are informed of the general characteristics of relevant programme(s) and how the school implements them. (0201-04-0400)

Approaches to assessment 3.4: The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews consistent and fair systems and processes for reporting student progress and handling appeals or challenges. (0404-03-0400)

The school has written procedures for how it will:

- deal with complaints towards the school or IB programme(s)
  - deal with students' requests for appeals against IB programme decisions taken by the school
- ensure that procedures are made available to all students

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### **IB Mission Statement**

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become *active, compassionate and lifelong learners* who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

### **I LO Mission Statement**

Our school's mission is to educate independent, communicative, open, cooperative, reflective, creative, curious and responsible young people who develop their knowledge and skills throughout their life. Our students are active members of contemporary society. They are able to set targets for themselves and achieve them for the good of the community. Thanks to it, young citizens understand the need to help others and are willing to take part in the process of creating not only themselves as individuals but also the community better. Our students know how to take advantage of their academic and social skills in their different types of activity. Therefore our mission is to ensure each student achieves optimal educational and personal potential by providing a safe, tolerant, fair and nurturing learning environment, which builds a strong foundation for character development and lifelong learning. Our school is a friendly, respectful and well-balanced place, which with the support of all members of the school community encourages students to become principled, caring and open-minded adults. Our approach is to help young learners develop their interests, passions and academic competence in order to prepare them to apply for universities all over the world.

### **IB Learner Profile – a set of guidelines for I LO school community to follow**

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. It needs to be highlighted that although the profile below describes IB Learners, we understand it as a profile that applies to the whole school community, our students and teachers.

As I LO school community we strive to be:

INQUIRERS	We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.
KNOWLEDGEABLE	We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.
THINKERS	We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.
COMMUNICATORS	We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

PRINCIPLED	We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.
OPEN-MINDED	We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience
CARING	We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.
RISK-TAKERS	We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.
BALANCED	We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.
REFLECTIVE	We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

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This procedure may be used by students and their legal guardians who have a complaint they wish to resolve.

## 1. Introduction

At I Liceum Ogólnokształcące we are proud of our friendly and open atmosphere and our respect of each other's differing views and opinions.

We take all complaints and concerns seriously. Our experience shows that the vast majority can often be resolved informally and through discussion as early on in the process as possible.

We prefer if complaints can be dealt with in an informal and friendly manner by the individuals involved, however we understand that this may not always be possible.

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints, we would like to hear about them as soon as possible, so they can be resolved to the satisfaction of individuals and the whole school community.

Even when a complaint has been made, it can be resolved or withdrawn at any stage.

Anonymous complaints will not normally be investigated. The school Principal or the DP Coordinator may, however, choose to determine if the complaint warrants an investigation.

## **2. What complaints are covered by this procedure?**

The procedure covers the following complaints / concerns:

- 2.1 related to a student's academic performance or to their school life outside of the classroom;
- 2.2 involving a student's interaction with other students or with members of the school staff;
- 2.3 related to the school procedures and facilities, including the running of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme and the decisions made by the school.

## **3. Points for consideration when using this procedure**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made by a student or their legal guardians with a legitimate interest in the school. It may be about school policies or procedures, the conduct, actions or omissions of members of staff employed at the school, the standards of teaching and learning, or the delivery of the programme.

A "concern" can be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt' where reassurance is required.

For the purpose of this policy, concerns will be classed and addressed as complaints.

For the purpose of this policy, "unreasonable complaints" include:

- Vexatious complaints;
- Complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious;
- Complaints which Insist upon pursuing unmeritorious complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason;
- Complaints which insist upon pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner;
- Complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance;
- Complaints which demand for redress which lacks any serious purpose or value;
- Serial or persistent complaints;
- Complaints which are duplicated, sent by the same complainant (or their spouse, relative, etc ) once the initial complaint has been closed.

Any complaint or concern will be taken seriously, whether formally or informally, and the appropriate procedures will be implemented.

This complaints procedure is intended to be used by those individuals who have a complaint relating to the school and no other alternative process exists for addressing that complaint.

It is important that all concerns are taken seriously. Young people learn best when there is an effective partnership between the school and the legal guardians.

All members of the school community are entitled to have their points of view properly considered and heard.

It is very important that all complaints are dealt with as swiftly and as fairly as possible. Failure to address complaints promptly frequently results in greater dissatisfaction. Complaints and concerns relating to issues which occurred more than three months before will generally be ruled "out of time".

Members of staff should not investigate (or, in case of the leadership team members, be a member of the review panel) when a complaint is about their own actions.

When investigating a complaint the investigator should try to establish what happened, discover what the complainant feels would remedy the situation and interview those involved, keeping notes of the interviews. It may be appropriate to have another person present to take notes on such occasions. The governing body should consider using recording devices too so the students and / or legal guardians with communication difficulties can access and review discussions.

#### **4. The principles**

1. Where possible we will handle complaints in confidence.
2. We will not take action against anyone who makes a reasonable complaint.
3. All relevant facts will be established and examined fairly before any action is taken.
4. We understand that in some situations people do not intend to offend others; instead they are misunderstood.
5. Parents/carers and students may take complaints, problems or concerns to any member of staff.
6. The following people have a particular responsibility to listen to and to try and resolve complaints:  
Homeroom Teachers  
Vice Principals  
DP Coordinator  
Principal

#### **5. The Practice**

##### **5.1 Stage one: - Local resolution of the problem (the informal stage)**

In the vast majority of cases a problem can and should be resolved by contacting the teacher or member of staff directly involved with the problem.

If a student or parent has a complaint about a member of staff, they should act immediately and either speak directly to the person responsible, if appropriate OR write to the person responsible, outlining the nature of the complaint.

In most cases, the matter will be resolved straightaway by this means.

We prefer if complaints can be dealt with in an informal and friendly manner by the individuals involved.

If your complaint is still not resolved, then you should contact the Homeroom Teacher and ask for advice on what to do or ask them to speak to the person responsible on your behalf; if the complaint is about the Homeroom Teacher, then contact the Vice Principal or the DP coordinator.

The Vice Principal or the DP coordinator to whom the complaint is referred will investigate it and respond within 5 working days. Should the matter not be resolved within 5 working days or in the event that a satisfactory resolution is not reached, then you are advised to proceed with

the complaint to the next stage of this procedure.

### **5.2 Stage 2: Formal resolution**

Where the above actions do not lead to the problem being resolved then the complaint should be dealt with through the formal stages.

In this case, it may be necessary to make a formal complaint in writing. You should address your complaint to the Vice Principal (or to the Principal if you are complaining about the Vice Principal).

The complaint will be investigated, dealt with and a response made including a written report, within 28 working days.

If you are still not satisfied with the decision, you should proceed to the final stage of this Procedure.

### **5.3 Stage 3: Panel Hearing**

If you are not satisfied with the response to the written complaint, please contact the Principal who will organise the following:

- a hearing before the panel consisting of members of the staff and parent council who are not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint;
- one person on this panel will be a member of the teaching faculty, one a member of the parent council, and one a member of the school leadership team, usually a Vice Principal ;
- you may be accompanied to a panel hearing if you wish e.g., a student may ask their parent to accompany them;
- a written record will be kept of the process. The panel will make findings and recommendations. The complainant and Principal, and where relevant the person complained about, are given a copy of any findings and recommendations. The records will provide details of the action taken by I Liceum Ogólnokształcące as a result of the complaint (regardless of whether the complaint was upheld).

Stage 3 will be completed (i.e. points 1-4 above) within 15 working days of your contact with the Principal. It represents the final stage in the complaints procedure.

## **6. Complaints and concerns relating specifically to the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme at the school**

1. Complaints or/and concerns regarding the running of the IBDP by the school should be immediately communicated to the DP Coordinator.

2. If the complaint regards the DP Coordinator's actions or decisions, then you should contact the Principal. Depending on the nature of the problem and the Stages 1 to 3 apply here.

3. The complaints/ concerns can regard the following:

- violation of the rules and regulations of the IB;
- conduct, actions or omission on the part of any member of the DP teaching faculty, DP, EE or CAS Coordinators (e.g. lack of proper supervision where required, or no

supervisor at all, failure to inform the students of assessment principles and criteria, discriminatory behaviour, using Polish as the language of instruction in subjects other than Polish A Literature, etc).

4. What complaints/concerns will not be accepted:

- Any complaints regarding specific rules/principles/regulations which are the requirement of the IB;
- Complaints regarding the requirements of the programme;
- Complaints regarding deadlines specified in the calendar with deadlines and communicated to the students at the beginning of the two-year programme;
- Complaints regarding refusing to accept a student's work when submitted after the school deadline;
- Any unreasonable complaints such as Complaints regarding the fact that the student has to overcome a language barrier when they study in a language which is not their mother tongue.

5. Appeals against end-of-semester and final grades are regulated by the normative acts of the school and the appeal procedure is indicated in the school's statute, which complies with the Polish Education Law (Act of 14 December 2016 on Educational Law).

6. There is a separate procedure to deal with re-marking of Diploma Programme work. All requests for the re-marking of work or appeals against examination results or other IB assessment decisions must follow the procedures outlined in the Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures (a handbook of procedures for IB coordinators) and the General Regulations. Requests for remarking must be initiated by the DP Coordinator, who also registers candidates for retakes and will assist with any assessment issues. Candidates or their legal guardians should contact the DP Coordinator.

## **7. Final provisions**

All written complaints are recorded and filed by the Vice Principal together with written responses or records of verbal responses. The records will state whether the complaint was resolved at Stage 2 or whether it proceeded to Stage 3 (a panel hearing). Action taken by the school as a result of the complaint will also be recorded.

Please note that all correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the body conducting an inspection (the Superintendent or the Department of Education) requests access to them.

This policy and procedure are reviewed annually.

Created and reviewed: August 2024 by the Policy Board, School principal and the IB DP Coordinator



## Sources

- 1) The IB complaints procedure (2018), published by International Baccalaureate Organization:  
<https://www.ibo.org/contentassets/fab8ccef45b743c0a68de6f9ea989385/ib-complaints-procedure-nov-2018-en.pdf>
- 2) Statut I Liceum Ogólnokształcącego (2023):  
[https://lo1.olsztyn.eu/images/2023\\_2024/statut\\_2023.pdf](https://lo1.olsztyn.eu/images/2023_2024/statut_2023.pdf)
- 3) Diploma Programme Assessment procedures 2022, published by International Baccalaureate Organization:  
<https://holyheart.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Diploma-Programme-Assessment-Procedures-2022.pdf>
- 4) Diploma Programme: Assessment appeals procedure For use from September 2016, published by International Baccalaureate Organization:  
<https://peda.net/jao/lyseo/isac/key-documents2/aapftd:file/download/6aba5cd5d711c1f9cb264487399a182b9979fcfb/Appeals%20procedure.pdf>
- 5) Rules for IB World Schools (2020), published by International Baccalaureate Organization:  
<https://www.ibo.org/contentassets/93f68f8b322141c9b113fb3e3fe11659/rules-for-ib-world-schools-en.pdf>

## Useful links

IB learner profile:

<https://www.ibo.org/contentassets/fd82f70643ef4086b7d3f292cc214962/learner-profile-en.pdf>

IB learner profile (polish):

<https://lo1.olsztyn.pl/mm/profil-uczni-a-ib/>

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