



OXFORD INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE BRIGHTON

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS

POLICY INTENDED FOR:	Students
CATEGORY:	Complaints
POLICY IMPLEMENTED BY:	Principal
REVIEWED BY:	Principal
REVIEWED DATE:	July 2024
NEXT REVIEW:	July 2025

Introduction

This policy is addressed to students at Oxford International College (OIC) Brighton so that if a student has cause for complaint that relates to any aspect of College life, every effort can be made to address this complaint in accordance with a fair procedure.

TIMESCALES

This procedure needs to be applied with common sense and judgement; the College recognises that it is of utmost importance that students' complaints are addressed in a timely manner. However, due to limitations on personnel during the College holidays, it is only natural that complaints raised in term time will be dealt with more quickly than those raised in college holidays. The College is aware that students' concerns can be particularly upsetting to their studies and may have an impact on their time out of College, so it is important to the College to deal with these matters swiftly.

However, the College asks students to be tolerant of the limitations imposed by the working week and understand that only the most serious of complaints will be dealt with in special meetings after working hours or over the weekend. For any normal concern, it is reasonable to expect redress within the timescales set out below.

The College takes any threat to the safety and welfare of students very seriously and will respond to any student complaints that are indicative of a health and safety concern, a threat to a student's welfare inside or outside of the College, or a situation that may place or have placed a child or vulnerable adult in danger immediately.

All complaints will be acknowledged within 24 hours and the College aims to give you a more detailed response (following the steps outlined below) within a week (during term time).



CONFIDENTIALITY

A written record will be kept of all students' complaints and their resolution. Correspondence, statements, and records relating to grievance matters will be kept *confidential*. No student should feel afraid that their complaint will harm their standing at the College by influencing teaching or administrative staff; or feel afraid that registering a complaint might unduly influence their applications to other educational institutions. The College is aware that fear of reprisals can prevent complaints and would like to reassure students: please feel free to register your concerns with the College, confidentiality is taken very seriously.

COMPLAINTS STEP BY STEP PROCEDURE

The following steps should be followed by any student who has a complaint:

1. Share Your Concern

If you have a concern, it is best to share it as soon as possible. Problems should be resolved promptly, fairly and as directly as possible. The Deputy Principal Pastoral & Wellbeing, Mr Jonno Melia, will be happy to see you to discuss any concerns you would like to raise. If you feel more comfortable talking to your strategy tutor or to a member of the boarding team in your boarding house then do raise the concern with them so that they can relate the details of your concern to the Deputy Principal Pastoral & Wellbeing or to the Principal on your behalf.

2. Raise a Formal Complaint

It may be the case that your concern is of such a serious, detailed or delicate nature that you would prefer to write out an explanation of your concern. In many cases, writing down the nature of your concern, including details and the resolution you desire can be very helpful toward the process of resolving the concern. After writing down your concern please give it to the Deputy Principal Pastoral & Wellbeing or the Principal, as you prefer.

Please note that it is not necessary to formally raise a concern in writing for it to be taken seriously; concerns raised orally or in an informal note or electronic mail will be given due attention.

Investigation

Your strategy tutor, the Deputy Principal Pastoral & Wellbeing or the Principal will investigate the facts and potential solutions to your concern.



Meeting

After your concern has been raised and investigated, you will be invited to a meeting with the Principal or Deputy Principal Pastoral & Wellbeing to discuss the matter if it has not been resolved informally. You will be informed in advance of the date, time and location of the meeting. The College will make sure that, unless the complaint is about a very serious matter, the meeting does not conflict with your classes. The purpose of this meeting is to listen to your concerns. If you feel you would be more comfortable discussing how you feel with a friend, parent, guardian or other staff member present, you may be accompanied by one person to support you. You may be asked to write down some of your specific concerns, if you have not already done so. Any minutes or notes taken will be shared with you, and the copy kept by the College will remain confidential.

The meeting is intended to be a sympathetic, as in not adversarial, environment. Students should not worry about preparing for this meeting.

Decision

While in the meeting, the Principal or Deputy Principal will make decisions and help you form plans of action to make sure that your complaint is addressed. Solutions discussed in this meeting will need to not only satisfy your complaint, but also meet the needs of the College, especially in respect of safeguarding the rights of other students and respecting the needs of staff. In the meeting, an action plan with dates and times to follow up on the outcome of the meeting will be agreed. The Principal or Deputy Principal Pastoral & Wellbeing may also want to schedule a follow up meeting to check and see that your complaint is being successfully addressed.

You should expect to know:

- what steps the College will take to address your complaint; and
- an estimated timescale for review of those steps.

Appeal

Should you be dissatisfied with the outcome of the meeting, you may appeal the decision by notifying the Principal or Chair of the Board of Governors. At this point, it will be necessary for you to write down the nature of your complaint, and the reasons why you would like to appeal the outcome of your meeting. The email addresses for these staff members can be found at the end of this policy.



Appeal procedure

The Principal or a Member of the Board of Governors will investigate your complaint and invite you to attend a further meeting. If your complaint is about the Principal this will be considered by the Chair of Governors. As at the earlier meeting, you may be accompanied by one person for support. At this point, the College may also wish to invite your parents or guardians to the meeting.

NB: If the matter remains unresolved, the student's appeal will be completely independent. Therefore, if the Principal has been involved at an earlier stage, at the point of appeal, an independent person will become involved, such as a member of the Board of Governors.

Outcome

After the appeal meeting you will be notified in writing of the decision.

RECORD KEEPING

It is in the interest of all parties involved that students' complaints are resolved in a timely manner and in such a way that the resolution is perceived to be fair and productive for improving the learning environment at OIC Brighton. To help achieve this, meticulous records must be kept as follows:

- a record is made of every complaint; and
- each stage of the process is recorded with clear dates and references to everyone involved.

COLLEGE INDEPENDENT LISTENER

The College has an independent listener and students are made aware of this. The listener can be called in confidence by any student if they want to discuss any concern of any nature. Details of the College Listener are displayed in communal and boarding areas: Richard Tuset 07480 140743

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about complaints at OIC please speak with the Principal, Tess St Clair-Ford or Deputy Principal Pastoral & Wellbeing, Jonno Melia.

CONTACT DETAILS

Clerk to the Chair of Governors
Principal, Tess St Clair-Ford
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