



IB Diploma Programme Complaints Procedures

2024-2025

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INTRODUCTION

This document is designed to provide clear guidelines and a structured process for addressing complaints within the IBDP framework; this procedure aligns with the principles outlined in the *IB Complaints Procedure*.

Our goal is to ensure that any concerns raised by students or parents/legal guardians are handled fairly, respectfully and efficiently. This document details the definition of a complaint within the IBDP context at La Paz, the purpose of the complaints procedure, principles guiding the process, confidentiality protocols, and step-by-step instructions on how to submit a complaint.

By adhering to these procedures, we aim to foster a supportive and transparent environment where issues can be resolved promptly and effectively, maintaining the high standards of the IB Diploma Programme.

DEFINITION OF COMPLAINT WITHIN THE IBDP CONTEXT

A complaint is a formal expression of discontent submitted to the school by a student, parent, or legal guardian. It pertains to a real or perceived issue related to school policies or procedures, the conduct, actions, or omissions of staff or faculty members, or the standards of teaching and learning.

PURPOSE OF THIS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The purpose of this procedure is to facilitate the resolution of complaints related to situations within the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) at La Paz Community School. It aims to provide a structured and transparent process for addressing concerns raised by students, parents, or legal guardians, ensuring that complaints are thoroughly examined and resolved in a fair and effective manner.

PRINCIPLES OF THE PROCEDURE

Aligned with the *IB Complaints Procedure* (2018), the principles of this document aim “to ensure the complaints principles are applied throughout the complaints process and provide a framework for communication between stakeholders and [the school]” (IBO, 2018). It then bases itself on the following elements:

- *Fairness*: the school aims to have a fair complaints procedure that ensures everyone is treated equally.
- *Courtesy*: all communication in relation to this procedure should be based on mutual respect, trust, and courtesy.
- *Accessibility*: we aim to have a complaints procedure that is easy to understand, easy to access, and well publicized.
- *Timeliness*: the school aims to ensure that all complaints are dealt with in a timely manner.
- *Effectiveness*: the complaints procedure is monitored and reviewed to ensure it continues to be effective.
- *Attentiveness*: everyone will be given every opportunity to put forward their complaint and be assured that the school is listening. There will be updates on the process and status of the complaint as appropriate.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is a crucial aspect for all parties involved. It is imperative that any complaint is handled in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible and with respect. Complaints made by parents or students should not have adverse consequences for the students.

The school may address a problem without explicitly naming individuals. However, even if no names are disclosed, the source of the complaint might be apparent, making complete confidentiality challenging. Depending on the nature of the complaint and the circumstances, it may be impractical to investigate without identifying the staff member or the child. In some cases, it may also be in the best interest of the child to disclose this information.

Members of staff have the right, under procedural fairness, to be informed about complaints that could harm their reputation. Such complaints will be known only to the individuals directly involved and those who need to be consulted. The school will offer support for staff members facing complaints, upon request, and this support will be provided by a colleague who is not otherwise involved.

WHAT THIS PROCEDURE ADDRESSES

Any individual with access to the Diploma Programme at La Paz Community School, including students, parents, or legal guardians, has the right to file a complaint. In most instances, a formal response will be provided. LPCS encourages the prompt reporting of concerns related to sexual harassment, child protection, discrimination, bullying, privacy breaches, and general complaints. These may encompass situations where:

- The school, students, staff, or faculty have engaged in perceived wrongdoing.
- The school, students, staff, or faculty have neglected their responsibilities.
- Unfair or disrespectful conduct is observed from the school, students, staff, or faculty.
- Matters related to learning programs, assessment, and reporting of student progress.
- Communication issues with parents or legal guardians.

For a swift resolution, the IBDP at La Paz advises submitting complaints within three business days of the incident. The process will be handled with sensitivity and efficiency, aligning with the aforementioned principles.

WHAT THIS PROCEDURE DOES NOT ADDRESS

It is essential to note that certain issues fall outside the purview of this procedure due to either a lack of legal authority or the existence of separate protocols. Matters that cannot be addressed include:

- Complaints concerning decisions made by the International Baccalaureate Organization, as these are subject to a distinct procedure and associated costs.
- Complaints related to decisions made by other IB World Schools in proximity to La Paz or in Costa Rica. Other IB World Schools operate independently of La Paz, holding sole responsibility for the execution and quality of the International Baccalaureate Diploma

Programme (IBDP). La Paz Community School does not have jurisdiction over decisions made by these other IB World Schools.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

Prior to Making a Complaint

1. Before submitting a complaint under this procedure, please carefully assess whether the issue at hand falls within the scope of matters that can be addressed through this process (refer to the information above).
2. Complaints submitted for matters that are outside the purview of this procedure will not be treated as complaints.

3. Additionally, if the issue involves a specific teacher, we strongly encourage you to first attempt to resolve the matter by directly contacting the teacher. Open communication with the teacher can often lead to a quicker and more effective resolution. If, however, the issue persists or cannot be resolved through direct communication, you may then consider proceeding with the formal complaint procedure outlined below.

Submitting a Formal Complaint

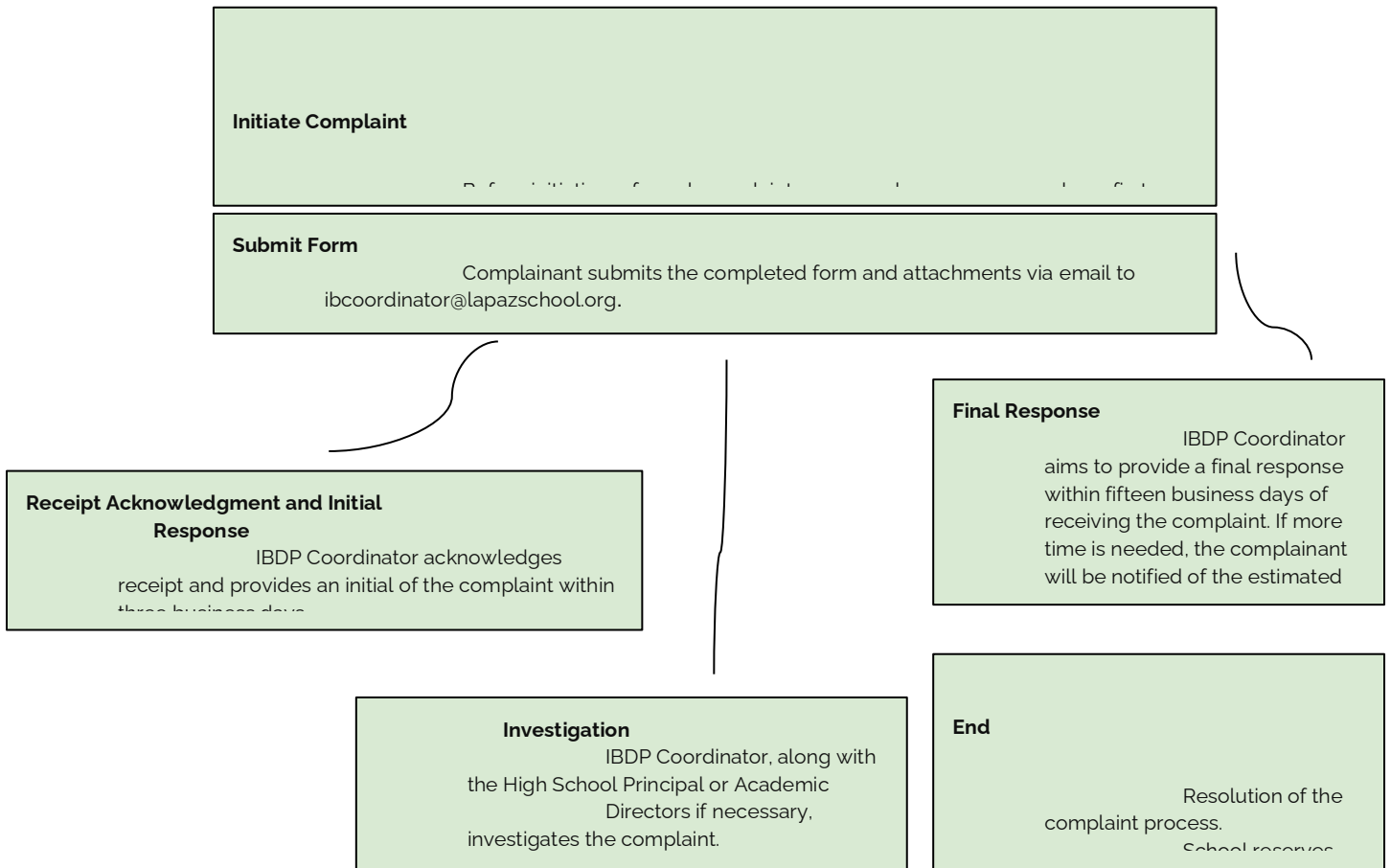
If it has not been possible to resolve the issue informally (following the chain of command, whether the complaint comes from a parent or student, they should approach the staff member involved first) and a formal complaint needs to be submitted, please follow the procedure below and complete Appendix A.

1. Formal complaints should be submitted in writing to the IBDP coordinator's email address ibcoordinator@lapazschool.org. Please note that the IBDP Coordinator cannot accept a formal complaint via telephone.
2. Please provide enough information about the nature of the complaint; the department your complaint relates to and the details of the complaint including any previous attempts to resolve the matter and copies of all relevant documentation (where available).
3. The IBDP Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three business days and will deal with the situation along with the High School Principal or Academic Directors if necessary.
4. The IBDP Coordinator will oversee an investigation of the matter and if further information is required, you will be contacted. The IBDP Coordinator will aim to respond to you with the conclusions within fifteen business days

of receipt of the complaint. If more time is required, you will be notified with an estimate of the timeline for receiving a final response.

5. The school reserves the right to cease correspondence with a complainant if their correspondence is, in its opinion, frivolous, vexatious, abusive or if the matter has reached a conclusion within the framework of the formal complaint process.

Formal Complaint FLOW Chart



Bibliography

"The IB Complaints Procedure." International Baccalaureate Organization, 2018.

Appendix A

IB Diploma Programme Formal Complaint Submission Form

Instructions:

Please fill out this form completely and submit it to the IBDP Coordinator via email at ibcoordinator@lapazschool.org. The IBDP Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three business days and provide an initial response within the next three business days. Ensure that all relevant information and documentation are included to facilitate a thorough investigation.

Note: The IBDP Coordinator cannot accept complaints via telephone.

Personal Information

- Name of Complainant:
- Role (Student/Parent/Guardian):
- Student Name (if applicable):
- Contact Email:
- Contact Phone Number:

Complaint Details

1. Nature of the Complaint: (Please provide a brief summary of your complaint)
2. Department or Individual Related to the Complaint: (Specify the department or the name of the staff/faculty member involved)
3. Detailed Description of the Complaint: (Include all relevant details, dates, and any specific incidents related to your complaint)
4. Previous Attempts to Resolve the Matter: (Describe any prior steps taken to address the issue, including communications with staff or faculty)

Supporting Documentation

- List of Attached Documents: (Please attach any relevant documentation, emails, or other evidence that supports your complaint)

Acknowledgment

- I understand that the IBDP Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of this complaint within three business days.
- I understand that the IBDP Coordinator will provide an initial response within the next three business days.
- I understand that the IBDP Coordinator, along with the High School Principal or Academic Directors if necessary, will investigate the matter.
- I understand that the IBDP Coordinator will aim to provide a response within fifteen business days of receiving this complaint. If more time is needed, I will be notified of the estimated timeline for a final response.
- I understand that the school reserves the right to cease correspondence if my complaint is deemed frivolous, vexatious, or abusive, or if the matter has been resolved within the framework of the formal complaint process.

Signature:

- Name of Complainant:
- Date:

Submit this completed form along with any supporting documentation to ibcoordinator@lapazschool.org.