

Oxford International English Schools: Complaints Policy

Purpose and Scope

This document explains the Student Complaints Procedures.

Oxford International English Schools (OIES) are committed to providing a high quality EFL learning experience, supported wholly by a range of teaching and administrative services and facilities. However, from time to time, things may go wrong and OIES recognise the need for students to be able to express their dissatisfaction when this occurs. This complaints procedure should be used to make a complaint about the school including services or facilities organised by the school, such as accommodation or transfers.

Principles

1. Students may ask for information, advice and help in making a complaint from anyone they wish. At any stage, the student has a right to be accompanied/represented by another person who may speak on the student's behalf if they require it
2. OIES welcomes comments and suggestions from students as to how the school might be better. Students are encouraged to give suggestions through the student representative in their class.
3. The school recognises that from time to time students may have complaints about Oxford International English School facilities or services they receive from its staff.
4. These procedures aim to provide a simple and comprehensible means by which students may raise comments, suggestions and complaints with appropriate staff.
5. The school will ensure that the service and care provided to any student making a comment, suggestion or complaint will not suffer in any way as a result of the action taken, but the school expects that students will only make complaints which are truthful and serious.
6. The school will maintain the confidentiality of comments, suggestions and complaints as far as possible. However, any third party or company providing a service to the school will be advised that a complaint has been made and that it is being investigated.

7. The above paragraph does not in any way prejudice existing procedures for dealing with staff disciplinary matters.

Complaints Procedure

Informal Stage (refer to 1 above):

It is hoped that many problems will normally be dealt with informally, in a spirit of conciliation without the need for recourse to a formal procedure. As a first step, a student who is unhappy with the service they have received should try to resolve the matter with their teacher or with the Director of Studies or with the School Principal. In many cases, that person can best respond to the complaint. However, if the response to the informal complaint is unsatisfactory the student has the right to use the formal complaints procedure set out below. A student should only use this formal complaints procedure if they consider that the complaint is too serious to be dealt with informally or is dissatisfied with the results of informal discussions.

School Stage

If the student wishes to make a formal complaint under these procedures, they must raise the complaint with the School Principal within one month of the event concerned. The principals can be contacted as follows:

- Elaine Kniveton (Greenwich) ekniveton@oxfordinternational.com
- Clare Ahern (Oxford) cahern@oxfordinternational.com
- Charlie O'Meara (Brighton) comeara@oxfordinternational.com
- Roland Becker (Edinburgh) rbecker@oxfordinternational.com

The Principal will normally respond to the student's letter within five working days, explaining how the complaint will be processed. The complaint will be investigated fully (normally this will involve an invitation for the student to discuss the complaint in person) and the student will normally receive a written response within ten working days. If the student is satisfied with the response received, and does not wish to take the complaint further, the information gained from the complaint will be used to improve the service provided by the school. If the complaint is not resolved within ten working days or is subject to further investigation in a way which is unsatisfactory to the student, the student should refer the complaint to the Managing Director; (Gary Palmer, gpalmer@oxfordinternational.com)

If the student's complaint is regarding the School Principal, it should be submitted to the Managing Director, as above.

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The Managing Director will investigate the complaint (normally this will involve an invitation for the student to discuss the complaint in person with themselves or a person they have nominated) and the student will normally receive a written response within ten working days. If the student is satisfied with the response received, and does not wish to take the complaint further, the information gained from the complaint will be used to improve the service provided by the school.

If the student is not satisfied with the response, a meeting of a Complaints committee will convene. Prior to the meeting the aggrieved student will be informed of the right to be represented at the hearing.

Composition of the Complaints Committee

No member of the Complaints Committee shall have had any previous connection with the case. Therefore, if the Managing Director or any other staff member has handled the complaint in any way they will not form a part of the Complaints Committee and another suitable staff member will take their place. The Complaints Committee will be comprised of:

- one Member of Board of Directors or the School Principal or Director of Studies or the Welfare Manager or a member of the HR team (as appropriate)
- one School Administrator
- one Student Representative
- one teacher

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the Complaints Committee shall be:

1. to consider a student's complaints in respect of her/his experience at the school, including services and facilities provided by Schools or any support departments.
2. to report its decisions to the Board of Directors and Student Representatives where appropriate.

Independent body

An independent ombudsman is available to make judgements on cases that cannot be resolved through this process. We are a member of English UK and complaints that cannot be resolved by this process can be brought to them at the following address for them to investigate:

English UK, 219 St John Street,

London, EC1V 4LY

Tel: +44 (0)20 7608 7960

Fax: +44 (0)20 7608 7961

E-mail: info@englishuk.com