



School Complaint and Appeals Procedure

1. Purpose

This document outlines the procedures for handling complaints and appeals at BME International Secondary School, a high school following the Hungarian National Curriculum and offering the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP) in English. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all complaints and appeals are managed fairly, transparently, and in a timely manner, and that all students, parents, and staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities in this process.

At BME ISGS we are committed to providing a positive and supportive learning and working environment for all students, parents, and staff. It is our objective to prevent the need for making complaints by having in place strong, positive relationships with our students, parents and the wider community. This policy is available on the school website. In accordance with Article 6 of the Rules for IB World Schools (IBO, 2020; updated 2024), BME ISGS ensures that students and their legal guardians are informed of the procedures for addressing complaints and for submitting appeals against school decisions related to the IB programme. These procedures are transparent, accessible, and guided by the principles of fairness, confidentiality, and timely resolution. The school is solely responsible for the implementation and quality of the teaching and learning of the programme. The IB does not intervene in internal school matters or decisions. Therefore, complaints regarding school-based policies, administration, teaching practices, or internal assessment procedures must be addressed to the school, whereas concerns related to external assessment decisions, academic misconduct, or administrative outcomes from the IB must follow the IB's formal appeal process. (International Baccalaureate Organization. (2024). Rules for IB World Schools (Article 3.1) Whether a concern or a complaint, the school always ensures that all raised cases are dealt with, resolved, and communicated with all concerned parties respectfully, fairly, openly, responsively, and confidentially.

2. Definitions

A concern may be defined as 'an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought'.

Complaint - an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem. It may be about the school as a whole, about a specific department or an individual member of staff and any matter about which a parent is unhappy and seeks action by the school.

3. Scope and Limitations of this Procedure

This complaints procedure applies to concerns, decisions, or actions taken by BME ISGS in the context of delivering the IB Diploma Programme. It provides a pathway for students and legal guardians to raise issues related to academic decisions, programme implementation, assessment practices, or school-based actions connected to the IB curriculum.

However, this procedure does not cover:

- Complaints directly related to the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), such as disagreement with official IB results, grading standards, or organizational policies.
- Administrative decisions made solely by the IB.
- Requests for grade reviews, remarking, or appeals already submitted to the IB independently.

Separate procedures govern requests for re-marking IB assessment material. These procedures are set out in the General Regulations applicable to IB programmes.

All requests for the re-marking of work, appeals against examination results or other assessment decisions must follow the procedures outlined in the assessment procedures available to IB World Schools. The relevant IB coordinator will be able to provide further information.

4. Principles of the procedure

This policy is guided by the principles outlined in the IB's Complaints Procedure, which emphasize fairness, transparency, and the right to be heard. The school's approach to complaints and appeals is based on the following principles:

- **Fairness:** All parties are treated with respect, impartiality, and confidentiality.
- **Transparency:** Procedures, timelines, and outcomes are clearly communicated.
- **Accessibility:** Procedures are available in English and accessible to all students and parents.
- **Timeliness:** Complaints and appeals are addressed promptly and within stated timeframes.
- **Compliance:** The process aligns with both Hungarian educational regulations and IB Organisation requirements.
- **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.

5. 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.

6. Right to Submit a Complaint

Any individual with access to the Diploma Programme—including students, parents, or legal guardians—has the right to submit a complaint. The school is committed to addressing all concerns seriously and, in most cases, providing a formal written response.

7. How to Make a Complaint

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution (Recommended First Step) BME ISGS encourages open communication and aims to resolve most concerns quickly and informally at the source. Before submitting a formal complaint, please consider whether the issue falls within the scope of this policy (see above: Scope of Complaints).

- If the concern involves a specific teacher or staff member, the student or parent/legal guardian should first attempt to resolve the matter directly with that individual.
- Open, respectful dialogue often leads to effective and timely solutions.
- If the issue is not resolved through this initial conversation or if the complainant feels uncomfortable addressing the issue directly, they may escalate it to the relevant Programme Coordinator or a member of the leadership team.

Stage 2 – Formal Resolution (Submission of an Official Complaint) If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate given the nature of the concern, the complainant may initiate a formal complaint.

- Complaints should follow the proper chain of communication, beginning with the individual involved and then escalating as needed.
- Formal complaints must be submitted in writing using the school's designated Complaints Submission Form (Appendix A).
- The form should be submitted to the IBDP Coordinator or Head of School, depending on the level and context of the issue. The school will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and begin the formal review process in accordance with its published timelines and procedures.

8. Formal Complaint Procedure: Step-by-Step Process

Once informal resolution efforts have been exhausted or deemed inappropriate, a formal complaint may be submitted using the following process:

1. Submission of Complaint

Formal complaints must be submitted in writing to the IBDP Coordinator. The submission should include:

- A clear description of the issue
- The department or staff involved
- A summary of previous resolution attempts (if applicable)
- Any supporting documentation relevant to the complaint

2. Acknowledgment of Complaint

The IBDP Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of the formal complaint within three (3) and provide an initial response within five working days. Where appropriate, the IBDP Coordinator may consult with the School Principal to determine next steps.

3. Initial Review

A designated member of the IB Programme Leadership Team will conduct a preliminary review to:

- Confirm the issue falls within the scope of this procedure
- Determine whether sufficient information has been provided to proceed If the complaint is deemed valid and complete, it will move to the investigation stage.

4. Investigation

The IBDP Coordinator will oversee an impartial investigation. If additional information is required from the complainant, they will be contacted. Every effort will be made to provide a formal written response with findings and conclusions within fifteen (15) working days of initiating the investigation.

5. Outcome and Communication

The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to the complainant. BME ISGS reserves the right to cease further correspondence if the complaint is deemed frivolous, vexatious, abusive, or has already been fully addressed through the formal process.

6. School-Level Appeal Process

1. The student (or parent/guardian, if the student is under 18) must submit a written appeal to the IB DP Coordinator within 15 working days of the decision being communicated.
2. The appeal must specify the decision being contested, the grounds for appeal, and any supporting evidence.
3. The IB DP Coordinator will collect information and consult all parties involved and a member of the school's leadership team
4. The case may be referred to the School Governing Board for review.
5. The Board's decision will be final within the scope of school governance.
6. If the appeal concerns assessment procedures that fall under the authority of the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO), the IB DP Coordinator will inform the student of the possibility to submit a formal IB appeal following IBO procedures.

9. Accessibility and Communication

- This Complaints and Appeals Procedure is made available to the students through their class tutors
- It is discussed with students during the IB DP orientation and at the beginning of each academic year.
- Clarification is available upon request from the school office or the IB DP Coordinator.

10. Record Keeping and Review

- All complaints and appeals are documented and securely stored in accordance with data protection regulations.
- Records include the complaint, correspondence, investigation notes, and final decisions.
- The policy and its implementation are regularly reviewed by the school leadership and updated as necessary to ensure continued compliance with Hungarian and IB requirements.

Approved by: Ildikó Varga, Principal

Effective Date: 2025.09.01

Next Review Date: [Date + 2 years]

References:

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2020). Rules for IB World Schools (Updated August 2024; effective October 1, 2024).

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2025). Guide to programme evaluation (Updated April 2025).

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2024). IB programme standards and practices (published 2018; updated March 2019, April 2020, April 2022, November 2024).

<https://www.ibo.org/contact-the-ib/feedback-and-concerns/complaints-about-ib-services/>

Access date: 03/11/25

Appendix A

IB Diploma Programme Formal Complaint Submission Form

Instructions: Please fill out this form completely and submit it to the IBDP Coordinator. The IBDP Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days and provide an initial response within five working days. Ensure that all relevant information and documentation are included to facilitate a thorough investigation.

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. List the attached documents here.)

● I understand that the IBDP Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of this complaint within three working days.

● I understand that the IBDP Coordinator will provide an initial response within the next five working days.

● I understand that the IBDP Coordinator, along with the School Principal 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: _____