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PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (PUE)

COMPLAINTS POLICY & GUIDELINES

August 2025

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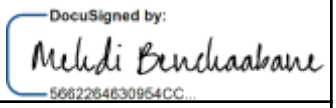
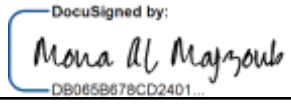
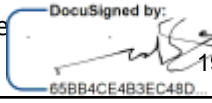
Manual Control

Record of Approvals		
Proposer(s)	Mehdi Benchaabane Executive Director - QFIB schools	Signature 
Reviewer(s)	Mona Al-Majzoub Manager, Governance & Educational Policies	Signature 
Endorser(s)	Academic Committee	Endorsed on: June 22, 2025
Approver	Abeer Al-Khalifa President, Pre-University Education	Signature  Date 19-Aug-25

Record of Revisions				
Version	**Revision**	**Additions**	**Modifications**	**Deletions**
1.0	N/A	All sections	N/A	N/A

Terminologies & Abbreviations

While developing this document, a number of terminologies and abbreviations were used. For ease of reference, there is a clear explanation for each terminology and abbreviation used within each section. However, the table below includes common terminologies and abbreviations that are used:

Term/Abb.	Explanation
QF	Qatar Foundation for Education, Science & Community Development
PUE	Pre-University Education
QFS	QF Schools
School(s)	Refers to QF Schools that this policy applies to. This policy applies to all QF Schools
Parent(s)	Refers to a parent or guardian, with legal responsibility or significant caregiving duties for a student, as documented in the school enrolment records.
MoEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
ACCOM	Academic Committee

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Title	PUE Complaints Policy & Guidelines	Code	PUE-ACD-P&G-007

Pre-University Education (PUE) Complaints Policy

POL1. Purpose

Pre-University Education (PUE) is committed to fostering a positive, transparent, and collaborative environment where concerns and complaints are addressed respectfully, promptly, and effectively.

The Complaints Policy sets forth the general principles for managing parent complaints in QF Schools. This document is intended to provide uniformity of expectation among QF Schools, while at the same time allowing for individual schools to promulgate procedures that reflect the uniqueness of their school environment. Accordingly, and pursuant to the objectives outlined herein, the Complaints Policy addresses the following questions:

- What constitutes a complaint?
- How are complaints resolved?
- What is the timeline for dealing with complaints?
- How are complaints reported, recorded and managed?

The policy should be used in conjunction with other PUE policies, including Admissions, Promotion & Retention and Child Protection. Each QF school will have its own handbooks or procedure document that details how the policy and guidelines are implemented.

POL2. Scope and Authority

This Policy applies to all schools and educational centers operating under the oversight of Qatar Foundation's Pre-University Education (PUE) division. It governs the management of complaints from parents, guardians, students, and community members, and supersedes all previous versions.

POL3. Definition

A **complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction concerning a service, decision, or behavior related to the school, its staff, or its practices. Complaints may involve academic, pastoral, disciplinary, or operational matters.

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POL4. Policy

• All complaints must be filed in writing.

All complaints must be submitted in writing, whether via email, online portal, or official forms provided by the school. Written complaints allow for accurate record-keeping, clearer communication, and a systematic approach to resolution.

• Concerns discussed during meetings or phone calls must be formally acknowledged in writing by the school representative summarizing the discussion and outlining the next steps.

When a concern is raised verbally, the school representative must provide a written summary to the complainant within 24–48 hours. The summary should capture the main discussion points, confirm agreed actions, and outline timelines for resolution.

• All complaints will be handled seriously, fairly, and confidentially.

All complaints must be treated with seriousness, impartiality, and respect. Investigations will be carried out fairly and confidentially, sharing information only with those directly involved in addressing the complaint, and adhering to applicable privacy regulations.

• Encourage respectful, open, and prompt communication with the relevant staff member.

Stakeholders are encouraged to address their concerns directly with the relevant staff member through respectful and timely communication. Early engagement fosters trust, promotes understanding, and increases the likelihood of swift resolution.

• Ensure that internal resolution avenues are exhausted before escalation.

Complainants must engage fully with the internal complaints process before escalating to higher leadership levels. Every effort should be made to resolve concerns at the initial stages before progressing to formal escalation.

• Maintain fairness, transparency, and professionalism at all times.

The complaints process must uphold principles of natural justice, ensuring a fair hearing for all parties involved. Regular updates should be provided to the complainant, and all communications and outcomes must be clear, professional, and well-documented.

• Thoroughly document each complaint from initial receipt through final resolution.

All complaints must be carefully documented from the moment of receipt until final resolution. Records must include dates, names, summaries of meetings or discussions, correspondence, investigative notes, and the resolution status.

• Discourage direct escalation to external authorities, unless internal procedures have been completed.

Complainants should be encouraged to respect the internal escalation structure and avoid approaching external authorities without first exhausting the internal resolution channels. Schools must remind stakeholders of the proper process and document such reminders.

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- **Refer stakeholders back to applicable policies and guidelines for clarity.**

Throughout the complaints process, stakeholders must be directed to relevant policies and guidelines (e.g., Child Protection, Admissions, Code of Conduct) to ensure decisions are grounded in clear, established expectations.

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Pre-University Education (PUE) Complaints Guidelines

GDL1. Complaint Resolution Process

GDL1.1 Resolution and escalation process for complaints by parents about the school:

Level	Action by Parent (complainant)	Action by School	Expected Response Time
Level 0: Concern to be addressed with the relevant staff	Parent should address concerns directly with the relevant teacher, counsellor, lead teacher or assistant principal	Member of staff: documents discussions with parents and informs the line manager of the matter.	Staff should acknowledge within 1 working day; aim to resolve within 3 working days.
Level 1: Complaint to the Principal	If the concern is not addressed by the relevant member of staff, the parent should file a written complaint, by email, to the principal explaining their dissatisfaction in the way their concerns were addressed	Principal: should respond based on evidence aligned with policies and procedure.	1 working day: Acknowledge receipt 2 working days: Informed response and an invitation for a meeting (if needed)
Level 2: Escalation to the school Director	If the parent is dissatisfied with the principal's resolution of the complaint, they can escalate it by forwarding the written complaint to the director.	Director: reviews principal's report and any additional input from the complainant and issues recommendation/ decision.	1 working day: Acknowledge receipt 2 working days: Informed response and an invitation for a meeting (if needed)
Level 3: Escalation to the relevant PUE Executive Director	If the parent is dissatisfied with the director's resolution of the complaint, they can escalate it by forwarding the written complaint to the relevant PUE Executive Director.	Relevant Executive Director: reviews Director's report and any additional input from the complainant. Involves the relevant members of the executive/academic committee or Crisis Leadership Taskforce, if relevant. Communicates final decision to the parent.	1 working day: Acknowledge receipt 10 working days: final decision based on investigation.

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GDL1.2 Resolution and escalation process for complaints by staff about parents:

Level	Action by Staff Member (Complainant)	Action by School Leadership	Expected Response Time
Level 1 Escalation to Principal	Staff member reports inappropriate or concerning behavior by a parent (e.g., verbal aggression, harassment, breach of boundaries) to their line manager or directly to the principal.	- Principal documents the concern and meets with the staff member to gather full context. - Principal holds a respectful but firm conversation with the parent to address the issue and clarify expectations, referring to relevant school policies.	- Within 1 working day: Acknowledge staff report. - Within 3 working days: Parent is contacted, and a resolution attempt is made.
Level 2 Escalation to school Director	If the issue persists or is deemed severe, the principal becomes the complainant and escalates the case to the school director.	- Director reviews the case, including documentation from the staff member and Principal. - Director meets with the parent and issues a formal resolution. - If necessary, further action (e.g., restricted access, written warning) may be taken in alignment with QF policy.	- Within 1 working day Acknowledge escalation. - Within 5 working days: Case reviewed, and parent meeting and resolution issued.

Note: If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome at Level 2, they may escalate the matter to the Executive Director of Pre-University Education in accordance with Escalation Guidelines GDL.1.1.

However, once a complaint is resolved by the Director on behalf of the institution, the staff member is not subject to further escalation or investigation unless new facts emerge.

GDL1.3 Escalation process for complaints by staff about other staff:

Refer to PUE HR policy and procedures

GDL2. General Guidance for Stakeholders

- Addressing Concerns Early: Stakeholders are encouraged to resolve concerns directly and

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respectfully with the relevant staff member.

- Requirement for Written Filing: All complaints must be submitted in writing. Meetings or phone conversations regarding complaints must be followed by a written acknowledgment from the school summarizing key points and actions agreed upon.

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- Respectful Communication: All interactions must be conducted respectfully, professionally, and collaboratively.
- Supporting Documentation: Complaints should be supported with pertinent details, including names, dates, and relevant evidence.
- Confidentiality: Complaints will be managed confidentially in line with PUE's policies, except where disclosure is required by law.

GDL3. Record Keeping

Schools are required to maintain accurate, confidential written records for each stage of the complaint process, including:

- Date of complaint.
- Name of complainant and student.
- Detailed description of the issue.
- Records of meetings, phone calls, and correspondence.
- Investigative steps and findings.
- Resolution outcomes.

Records will be handled in accordance with PUE's Child Protection Policy and applicable confidentiality guidelines.

GDL4. Timeline Expectations

- Urgent complaints will be acknowledged within 1 working day.
- Non-urgent complaints will be acknowledged within 2 working days.
- Resolution at each level is expected within 3 to 10 working days, depending on complexity.
- Appeals requiring a Complaint Committee hearing will be resolved within 10 working days.

GDL5. Handling Malicious or Frivolous Complaints

Complaints must be founded on genuine concerns. Complaints deemed frivolous, malicious, or unfounded after a thorough review may be dismissed, ensuring fairness and transparency throughout the process.

GDL6. Handling Complaints that Bypass Due Process

If a parent or stakeholder submits a complaint directly to external authorities (e.g., Ministry of Education and Higher Education) without following the school's internal escalation process:

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- The school must inform the complainant, in writing, of the established PUE complaint resolution process.
- The complainant will be requested to resubmit the complaint through the proper internal channels, starting with the staff member, then escalating through the Principal and Director levels if necessary.
- Schools must immediately inform the Executive Director of Pre-University Education (PUE) of any direct intervention of an external entity on behalf of a complainant.
- A record of all correspondence relating to the incident must be maintained.
- PUE Leadership, through the Academic Committee (ACCOM), will liaise directly with external authorities where appropriate.

Parents and community members are respectfully reminded that proper escalation is essential to ensure fair and efficient resolution of concerns.

GDL7. Role of the PUE Complaint Committee

- Convened by the Executive Director for Level 3 complaints.
- Comprised of impartial representatives with no prior involvement in the case.
- Reviews submitted documentation, interviews relevant parties, and issues a binding resolution.
- In complex cases, the Committee may seek input from the Academic Committee (ACCOM) or coordinate with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) if external reporting is necessary.

GDL8. Referral to Relevant Policies

Stakeholders are encouraged to refer to PUE's suite of policies and guidelines, including but not limited to:

- Admissions Policy & Guidelines
- Academic Policies & Guidelines
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behavior Policy & Guidelines

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