



# STUDENT CONCERNS PROCEDURE

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## **GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS:**

During your life at MES Cairo your teachers and school management may express concern about your progress or behaviour. They will of course meet with you in an effort to help you make the most of your time here. We know that, as a student, you also might have some concerns. A concern is something that is causing you anxiety.

### **What might you have a concern about?**

You may have a concern about anything within the overall provision of the school. For example, within the school a minor concern might be not liking the food on offer, or a sanction that has been given, or a concern about homework provision.

### **What if the concern is not about the school?**

You may have a concern about other people or agencies that are not directly connected to the school. If this is the situation, then we will try to advise you on the best way to deal with this.

### **How is a minor concern different from a concern which is more significant?**

A minor concern is something that can be dealt with by a teacher who will work with you to resolve the concern immediately or within two days. Depending on the nature of the concern, the following action will take place:

- They may talk through the concern with you and ensure that you are provided with the full information so that you are able to make an objective judgment on the situation.
- They may speak to other people connected to your concern (if applicable) and call a meeting between you and them so you can discuss the situation.
- If the concern is surrounding house issues, a house meeting may be called so that a discussion can take place. Likewise, if it is about class, it may be discussed with your homeroom teacher, the relevant class teacher or subject teacher in homeroom time.
- It may be that your concern is relevant to be discussed at a higher level meeting (this would only be with your agreement).
- It may be relevant to refer your concern to a senior member of staff.
- It may be relevant to refer your concern to the School Director and/or the Managing Director.

### **What should you do if you have a significant concern?**

If your concern involves a person being at risk of harm, either from another person or themselves, or from a situation where they may put themselves at risk, or you hold the view that there has been a lapse in what the school agrees to offer, or if more general then you have a number of options available to you:

You should discuss the matter with the Head Teacher. If your concern is about the Head Teacher, you should speak with the School Director who may refer the matter directly to the Managing Director.

### **If you wish it, will your concern be kept confidential?**

Yes. However, we should make you aware that the nature of your concern may mean that we need to share it with others in order to collect all the relevant information for your concern to be dealt with fully. If this is the case, then we will ask your permission to do this. If you do not allow this, it may mean that we will be unable to proceed any further or that we will have to consider another form of investigation.

Note that if the situation is deemed to be a Child Protection or Safeguarding matter then any promises of confidentiality will be necessarily revoked.

#### **How would a student go about airing a concern?**

All our members of staff are approachable and understanding. It is a simple task to tell any of them that you are concerned and to tell them the details.

#### **What happens when a significant concern has been made?**

Information will be collected from all involved parties in writing by one of the senior members of staff or, in the case of a complaint against a senior member of staff, by the Head Teacher, School Director or Managing Director. Once all of this information is collected, a decision will be made on how to proceed and to consider what action may be taken if any. You will be kept informed throughout the process. If your concern has to be dealt with by others outside of the school it may take longer.

#### **How long will it take to deal with a significant concern?**

The school will try to deal with concerns of this nature within five working days and you will be written to explaining how your concern was dealt with. This will however be dependent on how difficult it is to gather information from all parties or to arrange to meet with those involved.

#### **What will happen if I am not happy with the way my concern has been dealt with?**

If you are not happy with the outcome of your concern you may appeal against the decision to the School Director. In response to this they will set up a hearing with a panel made up of two Senior Managers and a member of the Board of Directors. You may be present at the hearing and you may bring a responsible person to accompany you. At the end of the hearing you will be notified of the outcome in writing within five working days.

#### **Stage One: The Informal Stage**

We know that students learn best when there is an effective partnership between teachers, parents and students. All members of the school community are entitled to have their points of view properly considered. It is very important that all concerns are dealt with as swiftly and fairly as possible.

Initially, most concerns will be verbal and dealt with by their appropriate investigator ie, teacher, HOD or Homeroom teacher. There is not a requirement that you as a concerned individual put your concern in writing at this informal stage. If language is a problem, then an interpreter will be provided.

If an anonymous concern is made, in the majority of cases the only action taken will be for the teacher or Head Teacher to log the concern and keep a record of any actions taken in response to the concern.

However, there may be exceptions to this where the Head Teacher feels further action should be taken and it is for the Head Teacher to use his/her discretion in making that decision and in deciding how to proceed in such cases.

Concerns relating to issues which occurred more than three months before will generally be ruled 'out of time'.

By establishing the full facts together, and by all parties submitting ideas about how to remedy the situation, it is expected that the vast majority of cases will be resolved at this informal Stage One.

## **Stage Two: The Formal Stage**

In the unlikely event that the concern is not fully resolved, there is a set MES Cairo procedure which requires that the concern is made in writing to the appropriate Head Teacher. Where the Head Teacher is the subject of concern, then the written concern should be submitted to the School Director.

The Head Teacher will be responsible for carrying out an investigation or appointing another senior member of staff to carry out the investigation and report their findings to the Head Teacher who will then reach a conclusion based on the investigation. Notes will be kept of any interviews held as part of the investigation. In order to clarify the specific details of the concern, the nature of the concern and any background to the concern, the investigating officer may feel it necessary to meet with the concerned individual. The investigating officer will produce notes of this interview. All documentation will be sent to the School Director who will decide if this is passed on to the Managing Director and/or Chairman of the Board.

At the conclusion of their investigation the investigating officers will compile a report detailing their findings and any recommendations or actions they propose need to be considered by the Head Teacher.

When writing to the Head Teacher you should seek to include details that might assist the investigation, such as witnesses, dates and times of events and copies of relevant documents.

The Head Teacher will communicate to you within five school days of receipt of their letter, setting out who is conducting the investigation and that the Head Teacher will communicate again within a further 20 school days, detailing the actions taken to investigate the concern and the findings.

If an interview is required you, as a student, may be accompanied by a nominated support person.

Once satisfied that the investigation has been concluded and they have reached a decision on the concern, the Head Teacher will notify you of their conclusions and any actions that will be taken as a result of the concern (except where this would involve taking any formal action against individual members of staff which would remain confidential). This will be done no later than 20 school days as set out in paragraph 3.5 above.

The outcome of the investigation would usually be one of the following but not limited to:

- The evidence indicates that the concern was substantiated and therefore upheld
- The concern was substantiated in part or in full (some details would be given of the actions the school will take in response to the concern except where they may be of a disciplinary or other such nature relating to an individual member of staff)
- There is insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion so the concern is inconclusive
- The concern is not substantiated by evidence and therefore not upheld

At this stage you will be told that consideration of the concern by the Head Teacher is now concluded. You will also be informed that if you are not satisfied with the manner in which the process has been followed, you may request that the School Director review the process.

## **Stage Three: The Concerns Review Panel**

A request to the School Director to review the Stage Two must be made in writing within 10 school days of receiving the outcome from the Head Teacher and must include a statement specifying reasons for the request for the review and any perceived failures arising from the investigation process followed.

The School Director, another Senior member of staff and the Managing Director or Chairman of the Board, will form the Concerns Review Panel. They will review the findings and reach a conclusion which you will receive in writing within five days.

### Model Student Concerns Procedure – Flowchart

#### Stage One: Informal Stage

Concerned student contacts the appropriate staff member

Concerned student decides to raise a concern

## Stage Two: Formal Stage

Concerned student writes to

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Head Teacher replies setting out in

Head Teacher writes to student with

## The Concerns Review Panel (Stage Three)

Concerned student writes to School Director  
School Director receives letter  
followed in Stage Two

Note: If the concern is about the actions of the Head Teacher, then the School Director carries out the Head Teacher's role indicated above.

School Director receives letter

If the concern is about the actions of the School Director, then the Managing Director carries out the Head Teacher's role indicated above.

School Director reviews the process  
of Managing Director

School Director completes  
student's concerns