

Complaints & Escalation Policy

XCL Education Malaysia



Approved by:	[Anthony Partington]	Date: [3 Feb 2025]
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Last reviewed on:	[3 Feb 2025]
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Next review due by:	[1 Dec 2025]
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Rationale

All XCL Education Malaysia (XCL MY) schools are required to have a complaints procedure which must be made available to parents or carers of children attending the school and prospective parents or carers via the school website and when requested to do so by email or in hard copy. XCL MY schools take all concerns, complaints, and feedback seriously to ensure that students remain safe, happy and successful.

Aims

- To provide a system for expressing satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the service provided to customers.
- To deal promptly and professionally with concerns, complaints, and petitions, always seeking to find a way forward which is agreed and understood by all concerned.

Managing Compliments

When a compliment is received, a compliment form is completed (Appendix 1). This is filed in the setting office and a copy sent to the line manager and person concerned. A letter is sent to the originator of the compliment thanking them for giving the compliment. If appropriate, ask the sender of the compliment if their letter may be part of a display.

Managing Complaints

Stage 1: Informal Procedure

Most expressions of dissatisfaction are not formal complaints and are resolved quickly and informally. All concerns/complaints must be treated seriously and responded to within 2 working days of receipt. If parents have a complaint, they should normally contact their son/daughter's teacher. If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary to consult with his or her line manager. A written record must be kept of all concerns and complaints and the date on which they were received (Appendix 2). The Campus/ Executive Principal is responsible for monitoring complaints and ensuring that they are properly managed.

Stage 2: Formal Resolution

If the complaint cannot be resolved on an informal basis, the parents should put their complaint in writing to the Campus/ Executive Principal. The Campus/ Executive Principal will decide, after considering the complaint, the appropriate course of action to take. In most cases, the Campus/ Executive Principal will meet/speak to the parents concerned, normally within 2 days (and no more than 5 working days) of receiving the complaint, to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may be necessary for the Campus/ Executive Principal to carry out further investigations. The Campus/ Executive Principal will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the complaint, including a record of the stage at which the complaint was resolved. Once the Campus/ Executive Principal is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Campus/ Executive Principal will also give reasons for his/her decision. A copy of the record of the complaint and associated decision must be placed with XCL MY Central Office for reference and recorded as part of the Head's professional dialogue.

Stage 3: Panel Hearing

If parents feel that process and policy has not been followed during Stage 2, they may seek to escalate the matter for XCL MY (country) leadership consideration and review by a panel.

Parents should set out details of their complaint and grounds for escalation (see Appendix 4) due to a failure to follow policy or process at Stage 2. If after review, the XCL MY leadership determines that the grounds for review are founded and with merit, the matter will then be referred to a Complaints Panel for consideration within 10 working days. Dissatisfaction with the outcome of Stage 2 is not grounds alone for escalation and review.

The complaints panel consists of the following three people, none of whom should be directly involved in the matter detailed in the complaint:

- Representative from XCL MY Central Office
- Independent person (a person who has held a position of responsibility and is used to analysing evidence and putting forward balanced arguments e.g. campus principal or senior member of staff at another campus/school, school advisory board member, governor, board director, people with a legal or relevant background)
- Campus/ Executive Principal of the setting concerned, or campus principal of an alternate campus if this is precluded by involvement in the complaint

The Campus/ Executive Principal is responsible for arranging the panel unless the complaint is against the Campus/ Executive Principal. In this instance, a nominated person from XCL MY Central Office makes the following arrangements:

- Organising the panel meeting & sending letters to all concerned about the details of the hearing including informing the complainant that he/she may be accompanied at the panel hearing if they so wish
- Gathering appropriate information and evidence and circulating to the panel members
- Providing for the panel to make findings and recommendations (at the end of the hearing of evidence the panel adjourns to discuss the evidence and draw conclusions)
- Providing a copy of the findings and recommendations to the complainant, and where relevant, the person complained about within 5 working days; and made available for inspection on the setting premises.
- Ensuring that correspondence, statements and records relating to the complaint are held on file at XCL MY Central Office and are kept confidential.

The panel's decision is final and no further escalation of the complaint will be considered. Parents should not write directly to board members or the group leadership if the above processes have not been followed.

Details of formal complaints and matters handled at a panel hearing may be shared with the registrar general of the Ministry of Education (MOE) for information purposes.

Managing Petitions

Acknowledgment and Initial Assessment

Petitions will be reviewed by the Campus/Executive Principal or a designated neutral party. The content of the petition will be evaluated against the Complaints & Escalation Policy to determine:

- Whether the issues raised align with the institution’s scope of responsibility.
- If sufficient evidence or detail is provided to warrant further investigation.
- If the Campus/Executive Principal is the subject of the petition, it will automatically escalate to the Country CEO for review and decision-making.
- If the Country CEO is also the subject of the complaint, the matter will escalate to the Group CEO for impartial review and resolution.

Handling Petitions in Line with the Complaints & Escalation Policy

If the petition raises concerns that fall under Stage 1 (Informal Procedure) or Stage 2 (Formal Resolution) of the Complaints & Escalation Policy, the matter will proceed as follows:

- **Stage 1 (Informal):** The petition’s concerns will be reviewed by the appropriate staff member(s) or leadership, and efforts will be made to address them promptly and informally. A summary of actions taken will be recorded as per Appendix 2 of the policy.
- **Stage 2 (Formal):** If informal resolution is not feasible, the petition will be escalated to the next level of leadership (e.g., Country CEO or Group CEO if applicable). An investigation will be conducted following the policy’s standard procedure, including written records of meetings, evidence, and decisions.

For both anonymous and signed petitions, the process must ensure that decisions are based solely on the merit of the concerns raised, avoiding bias stemming from anonymity or volume of signatories.

Special Considerations for Collective Petitions with Multiple Signatures

- **Student-Led Petitions:** If a petition is signed primarily by students, its validity and relevance will be assessed considering:
 - The students’ understanding of the issues raised.
 - Whether the concerns involve areas of school life directly impacting students.
 - Student petitions will be handled with sensitivity to avoid undue pressure on participants and ensure that student voices are respected without compromising professional standards.
 - Student signatories may be invited to informal focus groups (when anonymity is not a factor) to elaborate on their concerns, following guidelines in Stage 1.
- **Petitions from Parents or Mixed Stakeholders:** For petitions signed by parents or mixed groups (parents and staff), priority will be given to investigating the root cause of the concerns.

Where multiple signatures indicate a collective experience, a structured approach may involve:

- Group consultation meetings to understand the specific issues raised.
- Ensuring all relevant parties have an opportunity to contribute additional context or evidence.
- Collective petitions will not override the individualized investigation process for verified complaints but will inform the decision-making process by highlighting patterns of concern.

Staff ought to use the Grievance and Whistleblowing Policies to raise concerns before raising a petition.

Adults must never ask students to sign a petition because minors cannot give consent and might feel pressured. This is considered abusive and exploitative according to our safeguarding procedures. Employees who do this may face disciplinary action, and a parent's involvement in such actions could lead to their child's enrolment being terminated.

Investigation Process

Where the petition requests significant actions, such as leadership changes:

- Specific incidents, documented evidence, and adherence to school performance review processes will be considered.
- Anonymous or collective concerns alone will not constitute grounds for immediate action.
- The XCL MY Complaints Panel (referenced in Stage 3 of the Complaints & Escalation Policy) may be convened if required to ensure impartiality.
- Records of all findings and decisions will be maintained in line with Appendix 2 of the Complaints & Escalation Policy.

Communication and Outcome

- **For anonymous petitions:** Acknowledgment and general updates may be shared via appropriate school communication channels (e.g., newsletters or forums), respecting confidentiality.
- **For petitions with identifiable signatories:** Where permitted by the Complaints & Escalation Policy, responses will be shared directly with representatives or individuals who raised the concerns.

Limitations and Safeguards

- Petitions will not bypass formal procedures or justify immediate action without due process.
- Unreasonable or defamatory petitions, as outlined under “Serial and Unreasonable Complaints,” will not proceed.

Special Provisions for Collective Petitions

- **Engagement with Student Representatives:** Schools are encouraged to provide forums such as student councils to address concerns informally before formal petitions arise.
- **Parental Consultations:** Schools may organize parent consultation meetings to address collective concerns, ensuring balanced participation and avoiding reliance on petitions alone.

Anonymity vs. Confidentiality

XCL Education Malaysia values transparency and accountability in handling complaints and petitions. While we respect the need for confidentiality, we emphasize the importance of linking complaints to identifiable sources and owners for the following reasons:

- **Accountability:** Identifiable complaints allow us to hold individuals accountable for their actions and ensure that the concerns raised are addressed appropriately.
- **Effective Resolution:** Knowing the source of a complaint enables us to gather more detailed information, which is crucial for a thorough investigation and effective resolution.
- **Prevention of Abuse:** Handling only identifiable complaints helps prevent the misuse of the complaints process, such as false or malicious allegations.
- **Follow-Up:** It allows us to provide feedback to the complainant and ensure that they are satisfied with the resolution process.

While we handle all complaints with the utmost confidentiality, ensuring that the identity of the complainant is protected throughout the process, we do not process anonymous complaints. This policy ensures that all concerns are addressed fairly and effectively, maintaining the integrity of our complaints and petitions procedures.

Review, Action, and Follow-Up on Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will be reviewed and assessed to determine if they raise significant concerns that warrant further investigation. However, the following limitations apply:

- **General Reporting:** We will provide general updates and outcomes through appropriate school communication channels (e.g., newsletters or forums) without sharing specific details of findings and actions.
- **No Detailed Feedback:** We will not share detailed findings or actions with anonymous complainants, as we cannot verify their identity.
- **Policy Adherence:** Complaints can only be handled according to the policy if we can identify the stakeholder. This ensures that all concerns are addressed in a fair and transparent manner, maintaining the integrity of our procedures.

Implementation Review

This policy will be reviewed annually alongside the Complaints & Escalation Policy or earlier if trends in petitions highlight gaps in existing procedures.

Approval

This policy aligns with the rationale and aims of the Complaints & Escalation Policy approved for implementation by XCL Education Malaysia Leadership.



Appendix 1: Record of Compliments

Date:	
Name of person making the compliment:	
Name of person receiving the compliment:	
Child's Name (If applicable):	
Child's Class (If applicable):	

Details of the Compliment: (Attach copy of any written communication)

Action Taken: (Who, What, When)

Reported To:

Review/Follow Up:



Appendix 2: Setting Record of Concern/Complaint

Date:	
Name of person raising the concern:	
Name of person receiving the concern:	
Child's Name (If applicable):	
Child's Class (If applicable):	

Details of the Concern: (Attach copy of any written communication)

Action Taken: (Who, What, When)

Reported To:

Review/Follow Up:



Appendix 3: Complaint FAO of the Campus/ Executive Principal

Date:	
Name of person making the complaint:	
Name of person receiving the complaint:	
Child's Name (If applicable):	
Child's Class (If applicable):	

Details of the Complaint and action taken so far: (Attach copy of any written communication)

Reasons why the complainant is still dissatisfied:

Action by the Campus/ Executive Principal:



Appendix 4: XCL MY Complaints Form

[For use where a complaint is not resolved at Stage 2]

Name of Person Making the Complaint:	
Setting:	
Child's Name:	
Address of Complainant:	
Telephone of Complainant:	

<p>Please give details of your complaint <i>(Continue on the back of this form if necessary)</i></p>

<p>On what grounds are you escalating this complaint beyond the campus-level <i>(Link to failure in policy or process – please note that not agreeing with the formal outcome [Stage 2] is not grounds for escalation)</i></p>

Thank you for completing this form.

Please send it to: contactus@xcl.edu.my & to the relevant Campus/ Executive Principal.



Appendix 5: Parental Consultation Form

Date:	
Name of Child:	
Class:	

Present at Meeting:

Reason for Meeting:

Action:	
Date of Next Meeting if Required:	
Signature (Parent)	
Signature (School)	