

1. Introduction

- 1.1 RSAD takes any form of complaint(s) (verbal or written) very seriously and assures all the parties involved shall receive just and appropriate judgement(s).
- 1.2 Complaints may pertain to personal matters, workplace issues, behavioural concerns, or physical and verbal interactions. They may also involve violations of RSAD or ADEK policies, non-compliance with Cultural Considerations, or breaches of National Identity Principles, among other matters.
- 1.3 Glossary:
 - 1.3.1 A complaint is a written or spoken statement in which someone says that somebody has done something wrong or that something is not satisfactory.
 - 1.3.2 An investigation is a thorough search for facts, especially those that are hidden or unknown or need to be sorted out in a complex situation. The goal of an investigation is to determine how or why something has happened.
- 1.4 Anonymous complaints will not be pursued.
- 1.5 This policy and associate procedures are subject to regular review and improvement through continuous improvement processes.

2. Objective

- 2.1 The objective of this policy is to provide the clear and consistent guidelines about receiving, handling and investigating complaint(s) from the staff, students, parents, visitors or The Russian School of Abu Dhabi (RSAD) employees.
- 2.2 This policy is defining RSAD's Investigation and Complaint(s) handling principles and procedures to ensure that all the necessary information that proves or disapproves the allegation(s) made by the complainant(s) is gathered and fair judgement is provided.

3. Verbal/ Written Complaint

- 3.1 A formal complaint is a complaint made by a student, parent, visitor, an employee, representative of employees, or relative of an employee who has provided their written signature for the complaint. Formal complaints are assigned to an Investigation Officer for an official investigation immediately.
- 3.2 Non-formal complaints are complaints made verbally by a student, parent, visitor, employee, former employee, or by individual who did not provide a written statement or signature for the complaint. Non-formal complaints shall be immediately alerted by receiver to the direct Line Manager/ Head of Department or HR which in turn should communicate the issue to the school's Principal in written for possible violations and appropriate action/s to be taken. If such complaint is not followed by a formal complaint, depending on the circumstances, the formal investigation may not take place. The non-formal complaints will be taken into consideration and verbally discussed with RSAD employees to ensure that any negative actions that may damage RSAD's reputation won't be repetitive. The meeting notes will be placed into the "complaints" file.

4. Responsible Officer(s)

- 4.1 Head of Departments, Vice Principal or Curriculum Coordinator are responsible for the initial investigations related to the parents, students or visitor complaint(s) about the school's staff (subcontractors inclusive). The assigned Officers shall ensure that the complaints received from students, parents or visitors are investigated and managed in accordance with this policy and associated procedures.

5. Complaint Procedures

- 5.1 RSAD is committed to effective complaint handling and transparency of the process;
- 5.2 Complainants will not be victimized or discriminated against;
- 5.3 Complainants have the right to be represented and/or supported by third parties;
- 5.4 Complaints and complaint appeals are managed in accordance with the principles of natural justice;
- 5.5 Complaints and complaint appeals will be investigated in a transparent, objective and unbiased manner;
- 5.6 Complaint and complaint appeal outcomes are systematically analyzed and improvements arising from complaints are implemented;
- 5.7 There are no fees for engaging in the complaint and complaint appeal processes.

6. Complaint Management

- 6.1 Complaints may be lodged by the students, parents or visitors.
- 6.2 Complaints may be submitted via the Complaint Form or other written means that clearly identify the matter as a complaint.
- 6.3 Complaints must be raised within 1 week of the issue or incident. RSAD may consider complaints submitted after this period where it determines that there are exceptional circumstances only.
- 6.4 RSAD will confirm receipt of all complaints in writing within a week and allocate an officer to investigate the matter. Complainants will be provided the contact details for the investigating officer with the confirmation of receipt of the complaint.
- 6.5 RSAD aims to complete complaint investigations within 2 weeks. If the investigation takes longer than 2 weeks, the investigating officer will advise the complainant in writing.
- 6.6 The complainants will be updated (verbally or written) about the outcome of their complaint, including reasons for decisions and, where is required, options available to the complainant.

7. Complaint Appeal

- 7.1 Where a complainant is unsatisfied with the resolution of their complaint, they may lodge a complaint appeal.
- 7.2 Complaint appeals may be submitted via the Complaint Appeal Form or other written means that clearly identify the matter as a complaint appeal.
- 7.3 Complaints' appeals must be raised within 1 month of formal complaint investigation report completion and communication of such report outcome to the complainant. If RSAD does not receive the complaint appeal within a month, the complaint is deemed to have ended automatically.
- 7.4 RSAD will confirm receipt of all complaint appeals in writing within a week and allocate an officer to investigate the matter. Complainants will be provided the contact details for the investigating officer with the confirmation of receipt of the complaint appeal.
- 7.5 RSAD aims to complete complaint appeal investigations within 2 weeks. If the investigation takes longer than 2 weeks, the investigating officer will advise the complainant in writing.
- 7.6 All complainants will receive a written outcome to the complaint appeal, including reasons for decisions and options available to the complainant.
- 7.7 The Complaint Appeal decision shall be considered as final outcome of the conflict or the issue.

8. Review and Improvement

8.1 Complaint and Complaint Appeal Officers (Head of Department/s, Vice Principal, Curriculum Coordinator) will have periodic meetings with the school's Principal to review data and trends emerging from complaints and complaint appeals to identify and implement improvements as part of the Continuous Improvement processes as required.

9. Initial Complaint Management Guidelines

9.1 Complainant lodges Complaint in writing.

9.2 RSAD receives the complaint, log the details and:

- a) Allocates a Complaint case number,
- b) Allocates an Investigating Officer.

9.3 RSAD acknowledges receipt of the complaint in writing to the complainant within a week including:

- a) Complaint case number, and
- b) Contact details for the Investigating Officer (where required).

9.4 The Investigating Officer investigates the complaint including but not limited to via:

- a) Obtaining additional information from complainant if required;
- b) Reviewing available information/evidence/records;
- c) Referencing relevant RSAD policy and procedures;
- d) Consulting with RSAD staff/ witnesses as required; Written and signed reports of the witnesses on the incident shall be collected.
- e) Who is involved in the situation(s) and their relationship to the person(s) involved;
- f) When and where each incidence occurred;
- g) The event, including what they said and how you reacted;
- h) Any witnesses to the situation(s);
- i) Any evidence: including recordings, emails, notes, or photographs;
- j) Providing written detailed summary/ report of the investigation.

9.5 The Investigating Officer determines the complaint outcome.

9.6 The Investigating Officer provides the outcome to the complainant in writing including the reasons for the outcome and advises that the Complaint Appeal process is available.

9.7 RSAD aims to provide written complaint outcomes within two weeks. Where an investigation exceeds two weeks, the Investigating Officer will provide the complainant with regular updates in writing until the outcome is determined.

9.8 The Investigating Officer logs the complaint outcomes including:

- a) Any corrective actions in the Corrective Action Register;
- b) Any improvements in line with the Continuous Improvement process;
- c) Provide feedback to relevant RSAD Management units.

10 Complaint Appeal Management Steps

10.1 Complainant lodges a Complaint Appeal in writing.

10.2 RSAD receives the Complaint Appeal, log the details and:

- a) Allocates a Complaint Appeal case number;
- b) Allocates an Investigating Officer.

10.3 RSAD acknowledges receipt of the Complaint Appeal in writing to the complainant within a week including:

- a) Complaint Appeal case number, and
- b) Contact details for the Investigating Officer.

10.4 The Investigating Officer investigates the complaint including but not limited to via:

- a) Reviewing the initial Complaint and outcome in the context of the Complaint Appeal grounds;
- b) Obtaining additional information from complainant if required;
- c) Reviewing available information/evidence/records;
- d) Referencing relevant RSAD's policy and procedures;
- e) Consulting with RSAD's staff as required.

10.5 The Investigating Officer recommends the Complaint Appeal outcome to the Complaint and Appeal Committee for review.

10.6 The Committee/Manager reviews and endorses the recommendation.

10.7 The Committee may instruct an alternate outcome to be implemented.

10.8 The Investigating Officer provides the outcome to the complainant in writing including the reasons for the outcome and advises the complainant of any external review process available.

10.9 RSAD aims to provide written complaint appeal outcomes within 20 business days. Where an investigation exceeds 20 business days, the Investigating Officer will provide the complainant with regular updates in writing until the outcome is determined.

10.10 The Investigating Officer logs the Complaint Appeal outcomes including:

- a) Any corrective actions in the Corrective Action Register;
- b) Any improvements in line with the Continuous Improvement process;
- c) Provide feedback to relevant RSAD Management units.

11. Linked Documents

- a) Code of Conduct Policy;
- b) Health and Safety Policy;
- c) Staff Handbook;
- d) ADEK Cond of Conduct Policy;
- e) ADEK Cultural Consideration Policy;
- f) ADEK National Identity Policy;
- g) Disciplinary Policy.