

Complaints Policy 2026-2027

This policy is available to students, parents, staff, host families, guardians and coordinators.

Amber Guardianships recognises that there may be legitimate concerns or complaints from students, staff, schools, parents or homestays relating to Amber Guardianships. As a company, we encourage these concerns or complaints to be made known to Amber Guardianships staff so that they can be addressed in partnership with us, and we can continuously improve our service.

If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they may refer the matter to AEGIS (the Association for Education and Guardianships of International Students) for independent review.

If students, parents or members of staff have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated with care and seriousness and in accordance with this Complaints Policy.

Aim of The Policy

- To ensure that all complaints are responded to and resolved promptly.
- To ensure that all complaints are treated with dignity and respect throughout the process within Amber Guardianships.
- To ensure that the complaints procedure is clearly accessible through handbooks, policies and appropriate communication channels.
- To ensure the policy and procedures should be regularly reviewed.
- To ensure that staff, parents and students know where to file a complaint and who to pass it onto when it is first written.

Definition & Purpose

Amber Guardianships defines a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction relating to services, welfare, safeguarding, accommodation or communication that requires a response or investigation.

The complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

Amber Guardianships will:

- Make every effort to deal with complaints informally and at an early stage.
- Take all concerns and complaints seriously.
- Amber Guardianships aims to resolve complaints within 28 working days wherever reasonably possible.

- Ensure that complaints are dealt with in line with the procedures set out in this document.
- Ensure that, where appropriate, a full and fair investigation of the issue is undertaken.
- Ensure that no one, including pupils, is penalised for making a complaint in good faith.
- Keep written records of complaints in accordance with safeguarding and data protection retention requirements.
- Review regularly at senior management level, the written record of complaints and their outcomes.
- A record of formal complaints and their outcomes is kept by Harry Lee, CEO of Amber Education Ltd. in electronic form regardless of whether they were upheld.

Confidentiality

Except in exceptional circumstances, confidentiality will be respected wherever possible. However, information may be shared where necessary to safeguard a student or comply with legal obligations. However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Time Frame for Dealing with Complaints

- If a student, parent or staff wishes to make a complaint, they can contact a member of Amber Guardianships by email or telephone to discuss the complaint. The staff member will speak with the complainant about their complaint and explain the options which are available to them.
- The details of the complaint will be recorded and the Operations Manager will record the complaint and determine whether safeguarding procedures also need to be followed.
- The Operations Officer will discuss with the complainant and obtain all related information and a timeline of events. Where appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will also be informed and involved.
- The Operations Manager will record it and report the matter to the Project Manager.
- The Operations Manager must send a reply to the complainant on the same day as the complaint is received. The reply could be in the form of a holding email, allowing further time to look into their grievance.
- A final response will be drafted, acknowledging the complaint and presenting a solution, where possible.

Procedure of the complaints

Our complaints procedure is in two steps and we hope to find a resolution to any complaint at the earliest possible stage.

Step 1 - Informal Resolution

Many complaints can be resolved quickly and informally. You can speak to any member of staff about your complaint, no matter how small. A concern or complaint can be made in person, in writing or by telephone. They may also be made by a third party acting on behalf of a complainant, as long as they have appropriate consent to do so.

If you make an informal complaint:

1. It will be acknowledged immediately (if made in person or over the phone), or within 1 working day if made via email (Our office is open from Monday to Friday, 09:30 – 18:30).
2. We may ask you further questions, to repeat and clarify information and/or to provide evidence (photos, for example) to support your complaint.
3. We will investigate the concern or complaint.
4. We will tell you when and how you will receive an outcome or update, normally within 2 working days wherever possible.
5. We may give you an 'action plan' to tell you what will happen next.
6. You will be asked to confirm if you are happy with the solution.
7. We will keep a confidential record of your complaint.

Step 2 - Formal Complaint

If the complainant is not satisfied with how the complaint has been handled, they can make a formal complaint.

Please email or post a letter directly to the Operations Manager. To make a complaint, please contact the Amber Guardianships UK Office by email at:

Ms Joey Tang,
Operations Manager,
joey.tang@amberedu.co.uk
AG@amberedu.co.uk

OR
Phone +44 20 77340274

Or in person
Amber Education Services UK Ltd.
2nd Floor
Kingsland House
122-124 Regent Street
London, W1B 5SA, UK

If the complaint is about the Operations Manager, please email or write to Alex Leung, the Project Manager (alex.leung@amberedu.com.hk).

- Please write as much detail as possible, including names and dates if applicable and how you want your complaint to be resolved.
- We will respond initially to the complainant within 24 hours.
- Amber Guardianships will keep the complainant informed of progress throughout the investigation.
- Report back to the complainant formally in writing no later than 28 working days;
- We may invite you to a formal meeting to discuss your case further.
- You will receive the outcome of your complaint within 28 working days.
- We will keep a confidential record of your complaint.

- A written record of all complaints will be kept, in chronological order, of all correspondence, subsequent responses and action taken.

Step Three- Referral of the Matter to AEGIS

If you are still unhappy or feel you have been treated unfairly, you can ask for help from AEGIS.

You can write to them here:

Yasemin Wigglesworth

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students (AEGIS)

The Wheelhouse, Bond's Mill Estate, Bristol Road, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, GL10 3RF

Telephone: +44 (0)1453 821293

Email: info@aegisuk.net

Website: www.aegisuk.net

You should write details about how you have already tried to resolve your complaint with Amber Guardianships and include any supporting documents, including the written outcome of your complaint.

AEGIS is an independent registered charity that will give impartial support to parents who have an ongoing complaint that cannot be resolved directly with the guardianship organization.

How Amber Guardianships Staff Handle Complaint

Where a complaint raises a safeguarding concern, the DSL will be informed immediately and safeguarding procedures will take priority over the complaints timescale.

Amber Guardianships staff should:

- Provide a comprehensive, open, transparent and fair consideration.
- Be sensitive towards the issue and thoroughly interview the complainant to establish what has happened and who has been involved;
- Be considerate of records and other relevant information.
- Interview staff and children/young people and other people relevant to the complaint;
- Analyse information-
- Effectively liaise with the complainant as appropriate to clarify what the complainant feels would put things right.
- Identify solutions and recommend courses of action to resolve the problems-
- Be mindful of the timescales to respond, and respond to the complainant in plain and clear language responding to complaints in a timely manner.
- Make sure that they conduct interviews with an open mind and be prepared to persist in the questioning.
- Keep notes of interviews or arrange for an independent note taker to record minutes of the meeting.
- Ensure that all people involved in the complaint procedure are aware of relevant equality, safeguarding and data protection legislation.
- Be understanding about the feelings of the complainants and be open-minded.

Recording Complaints

Following the resolution of a complaint, the Head Office will keep a written record of all complaints, whether they are resolved at the informal step or beyond.

Record keeping is done to enable any patterns of concern to be monitored. Key information will be included as part of the complaint, such as:

- The date when the issue was raised
- Name of parent
- Name of pupil
- Description of the issue
- Records of all the investigations (if appropriate)
- Witness statements (if appropriate)
- Name of the member(s) of staff handling the issue at each stage
- The action that has been taken as a result of those complaints.

Amber Guardianships are obligated under the General Data Protection Regulation to keep copies of all correspondence on the issue (including emails and records of phone conversations) for no longer than is necessary.

Initially, most complaints will be oral. There should not be a requirement for the complainant to put their complaint in writing at the informal stage. However, Amber Guardianships is aware that English may not be the complainant's first language. Amber Guardianships will provide additional support, including interpretation support.

* Complaint information will only be shared with staff who need the information in order to investigate, resolve or safeguard.

Review

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on 1st May 2026

Version number: v6.2

Signed:.....

Next review date: May 2027