

Policy on Handling Complaints and Appeals

Nishtar Medical University Multan

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear, transparent, and fair mechanism for addressing complaints and appeals raised by students, faculty, staff, or other stakeholders. It ensures all grievances are resolved promptly, equitably, and with due process, fostering trust and accountability within the institution.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Students, faculty, and administrative staff.
- Issues related to academic decisions, administrative processes, conduct, and institutional services.
- Appeals related to examination results, disciplinary actions, or research disputes.

3. Core Principles

The complaint and appeal process will adhere to the following principles:

1. **Transparency:** All processes will be clear and accessible.
2. **Fairness:** Each case will be assessed objectively, without bias.
3. **Confidentiality:** Identities of complainants and respondents will be protected where possible.
4. **Prompt Resolution:** Issues will be addressed in a timely manner.
5. **Accountability:** Decisions and resolutions will be documented and communicated effectively.

4. Definitions

1. **Complaint:** A formal expression of dissatisfaction regarding a service, decision, process, or behavior.
2. **Appeal:** A request to review a decision that the complainant believes was unfair or incorrect.

5. Complaint Mechanism

Filing a Complaint

1. Complaints must be submitted in writing using the Complaint Form available on the university website or from the Office of Student/Faculty Affairs.
2. The complaint should include:
 - Name, contact information, and affiliation of the complainant.
 - A detailed description of the issue, including supporting evidence.
 - Desired resolution or action.

Submission Channels

Complaints may be submitted via:

- Email to the designated Complaints Office [add address finalized]
- A secure complaint drop box located within the university premises.
- In-person submission at the Office of Student Affairs, Admin, or other office specified.

Complaint Resolution Process

1. **Acknowledgment:** Complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt.
2. **Initial Review:** The Complaint Committee will assess the validity of the complaint within 7 working days.
3. **Investigation:**
 - If the complaint is valid, an investigation will be conducted.
 - Both parties (complainant and respondent) will be given an opportunity to present

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- their case.
 - Investigations must conclude within 14 working days.
 - 4. **Resolution and Communication:**
 - A decision will be made based on the evidence presented.
 - The resolution will be communicated to the complainant in writing.
 - If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may escalate the matter through the appeals process.
 - 5. **Monitoring:** The complaint and its resolution will be documented and reviewed for process improvement.
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6. Appeal Mechanism

Grounds for Appeal

Appeals may be filed under the following conditions:

- Procedural errors during the original decision-making process.
- New evidence that could affect the outcome.
- Perceived bias or unfairness in the handling of the complaint.

Filing an Appeal

1. Appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of receiving the complaint decision.
2. Appeals should include:
 - The original complaint details.
 - Reasons for the appeal and supporting evidence.

Appeal Resolution Process

1. **Acknowledgment:** Appeals will be acknowledged within 3 working days.
 2. **Formation of Appeal Committee:** A neutral Appeal Committee will be established, consisting of:
 - Senior faculty members.
 - Administrative representatives.
 - An external advisor (if necessary).
 3. **Review and Investigation:**
 - The Appeal Committee will review the case and any new evidence presented.
 - Both parties will have an opportunity to provide statements.
 4. **Final Decision:**
 - A decision will be reached within 14 working days.
 - The decision of the Appeal Committee will be final and binding.
 - Outcomes will be communicated in writing to all parties.
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7. Roles and Responsibilities

1. **Complaint Office/Officer:**
 - Receives, documents, and tracks complaints and appeals.
 - Ensures timely acknowledgment and communication.
 2. **Complaint Committee:**
 - Investigates complaints and ensures fairness in the resolution process.
 3. **Appeal Committee:**
 - Reviews appeals and ensures impartiality and fairness in decision-making.
 4. **University Leadership:**
 - Monitors the effectiveness of the complaint and appeal mechanism.
 - Provides resources and support for fair grievance handling.
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8. Confidentiality and Protection

- All parties involved in the complaint or appeal process must maintain confidentiality.

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- The university prohibits retaliation against any individual filing a complaint or appeal in good faith.

9. Monitoring and Reporting

- The Complaint Office will maintain a Complaint and Appeal Log to identify trends and areas for improvement.
- An annual report on grievances and their resolutions will be submitted to the university leadership for review.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years to ensure its relevance, effectiveness, and compliance with national and institutional standards.

Effective Date:

Policy Owner: Registrar office

Approved By:

Mehnaz Khatun
VICE CHANCELLOR
NISHTAR MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
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