1. Policy Title – Student Grievance Policy

2. Policy Number - DU-AD-001-V1

3. Effective Date – 20/03/2013


5. Purpose
Grievance is a feeling that something unfair or wrong has been done which constitutes grounds for complaint. When this feeling develops among the students, it is likely to affect their academic performance. In view of this, DU feels that it is necessary to have a well-defined student grievance handling policy and procedure through which students’ grievances are handled.

6. Scope of Application
The policy applies to students in all the Colleges (CAAS, CCBA and CE) and the Foundation Program (FP).

7. Policy Statement
Ensure that the students are offered adequate opportunities to raise their academic as well as non-academic grievances. Ensure there is consistency, fairness, transparency and promptness in dealing with such grievances. Also, ensure that the students are aware of the opportunities available to them for raising their grievances.

8. Procedure
DU provides a three-tier approach for dealing with student grievances.

8.1. Informal approach
8.1.1 Whenever a student has a grievance, he/she should first discuss the matter with the person concerned and try to settle the issue. DU expects that in most cases the discussion of the grievance with the person concerned will result in a prompt and amicable resolution acceptable to both parties.
8.1.2 However, if the informal approach does not result in an acceptable resolution, the student has the option of lodging a formal complaint with the authorities concerned for the resolution of the grievance.

8.2. Formal Complaint

8.2.1. If a student decides to lodge a formal complaint about his/her grievance, he/she must do so in writing on the prescribed form to the authorities concerned. The authorities concerned in case of academic grievances is the Department Chair (For Foundation students it is the FP Unit Director); in cases of non-academic grievances, it is the Director of the non-academic department concerned; and in case of discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying, it is the Dean of the College (For Foundation students, it is the FP Unit Director).

8.2.2. However, if the authority concerned is the subject of the grievance or is perceived to have a conflict of interest in relation to the matter, then the next higher authority must be approached. The next higher authority in case of an academic grievance is the Dean of the College (For Foundation students, it is the DVC) and the DVC in case of non-academic grievance as well as in case of discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying.

8.2.3. The authority concerned who receives a formal complaint from the student will immediately acknowledge in writing receipt of the complaint made by the student.

8.2.4. The person concerned will review the grievance and attempt to find a resolution. While doing so, he/she must offer an opportunity to both parties involved to put forth their case.

8.2.5. The person investigating the grievance must keep formal records of the actions taken by him/her and notify the student in writing about the outcome of the grievance process within two weeks.

8.3. Formal Appeals

8.3.1. If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of a formal complaint and feels that his/her grievance has not been adequately resolved, he/she has the option of lodging a formal appeal against the decision of the authority concerned to the UC for a review of the decision.

8.3.2. A student seeking to appeal to the UC must submit a written appeal to the Executive Secretary of the VC within seven working days of the date of notification of the outcome of Stage two (Formal Complaint) of the grievance process, citing the grounds on which his/her appeal is based.
8.3.3. The Executive Secretary of the VC will immediately in writing acknowledge receipt of the appeal made by the student. The VC will in turn forward this appeal to an ad-hoc Investigation Committee within two working days.

8.3.4. The Committee will meet within one week of receiving the appeal from the VC. The Committee will investigate the case fully and at all times act fairly, keeping in mind the rules of natural justice and principles of equity. Both parties involved will be given the opportunity to present their case before the Committee.

8.3.5. The Committee may endorse the decision of the earlier authority in relation to the grievance or determine an alternative resolution. The decision of the Investigation Committee has to be ratified by the UC within 1 week.

8.3.6. The UC acts as a final appeal body in all matters relating to students’ grievances against decisions made by the College bodies or by individual officers. The decision of the UC is final and is not subject to further review within the university.

8.4. Withdrawal of complaints or appeal

The student may withdraw the complaint or appeal at any time during the grievance resolution process; in that case it is assumed that the resolution by the earlier authority holds good and is acceptable to the student. The withdrawal of the complaint or appeal has to be done in writing to the authority concerned handling the matter at the time of the withdrawal.

9. Guidelines

9.1. Student grievances at DU are broadly classified in three categories:

1) Academic grievances - These are usually complaints or appeals against academic decisions. They include but are not limited to:
   - Admission
   - Assessment
   - Attendance
   - Probation
   - Dismissal

2) Non-academic grievances - These are usually complaints or appeals against non-academic decisions. They include but are not limited to:
3) **Discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying**

9.2. The student grievance resolution procedure of Dhofar University is based on the following principles:

1) The procedure is fair and equitable.
2) There is fair hearing of all parties involved.
3) Confidentiality is respected by all parties.
4) The student is not put in any disadvantageous position as a result of making a complaint or grievance in good faith.
5) The grievances are handled and settled in a timely manner.
6) All the parties concerned are informed about the outcome of the complaint/appeal.

9.3. The procedure and guidelines specified in this document are in addition to the procedures and guidelines specified in case of certain specific instances laid down in the DU Bylaws and Student Manual and do not contravene those provisions.

9.4. The student shall receive the communication from the Dean’s Office through their DU e-mail within 7 calendar days.

**Authority for lodging a formal complaint**

**Specialization College Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of grievance</th>
<th>Authority for lodging a formal complaint</th>
<th>Next higher authority in case of conflict of interest</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic grievances</td>
<td>Departmental Chair</td>
<td>Dean of the College</td>
</tr>
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<td>Director of the non-academic Department concerned</td>
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#### Foundation Program Students

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. **Custodian**

QA Unit.

11. **Responsibility for implementation**

Department Chairs, College Deans, FP Director, Directors of Non-Academic Departments, DVC and University Council.

12. **Contact Person for answering queries**

QA Unit.

13. **Key Stakeholders consulted**

VC, DVC, College Deans, Department Chairs, FP Director, Directors of Non-Academic Departments.

14. **Approval details**

14.1. **Approval by University Council**

UC Meeting number: [ID]

Meeting date: 20/03/2013

14.2. **Approval by Board of Trustees (If required)**

Not Required.