

Policy for Handling Student Complaints and Suggestions

Purpose

- Every student has the right to submit a complaint if they are dissatisfied with the quality of service provided by the college, whether the complaint is academic or non-academic.
- Every student also has the right to submit a suggestion aimed at improving the educational process or administrative procedures in the college.
- The college aims to provide its services at the highest level, so it encourages students to submit any complaint in order to resolve it and reduce any negative impact.
- Student complaint procedures include feedback from students about the services provided by the college, and therefore this process is an important source for improving the services the college provides to its students. Faculty members are encouraged to cooperate with students, examine their complaints, and respond to the results of any investigation arising from these complaints.
- The college has an administrative system within its organizational structure that ensures:
 - Quick resolution of student complaints.
 - Complete confidentiality of complaints.
 - No harm to the student because of submitting a complaint.
- There is a specialized committee for reviewing student complaints and suggestions called the Student Affairs Committee, which meets regularly as soon as complaints or suggestions are received through the college administration.

Time Limit

- A complaint must be submitted within three working days from the date the problem occurred, except in some special cases depending on the nature of the issue.
- Complaints should be raised to the department head, vice dean, dean, student council, or by email to the Student Affairs complaints address: **eng-students@psau.edu.sa** after completing the complaint form obtained from Student Affairs or the college website.

Advice and Guidance

- Information and guidance provided to students about complaint procedures can be found on the college website or through the academic advisor.

Role of the Student Affairs Committee

- Follow up on procedures for handling student complaints and suggestions.
- Provide advice and guidance to students on how to submit complaints and suggestions.
- Hold meetings of the Student Affairs Committee to discuss problems among students in the college and how to solve them, as well as best practices for dealing with them.
- Ensure that the academic departments in the college cooperate with the Student Affairs Committee and accept the results of first-stage investigations. The committee writes a report to the Dean about cases in which such cooperation does not occur.

Criteria for Submitting Complaints

- Complaints may relate to:
 - Deficiencies in administrative procedures.
 - Deficiencies resulting from failure to fulfill obligations and regulations related to the educational process or other services provided by the college.
 - Failure to make a decision on the above within a reasonable time.
- Complaints cannot be anonymous.
- The sensitivity of the complaint will be taken into account, and the complainant will not be subjected to any discrimination or hardship as a result of submitting the complaint.
- Before submitting a formal complaint, students should consider other ways of expressing their views to the academic advisor, department chairs, or academic departments.
- It should be noted that there are informal procedures to try to resolve a student complaint before it is submitted formally.
- The student may seek help from the academic advisor when submitting the complaint.

Working Procedures

Methods for Submitting Complaints and Suggestions

- Use the dedicated form to submit a complaint or suggestion through the Google Form.
- Complaints or suggestions can be submitted through the designated Google Form for complaints and suggestions at the college, or submitted directly by hand to the department chair.
- Submissions through the Google Form will be received and complaints and suggestions will be collected daily.

Methods of Responding to Complaints and Suggestions

- The complaint or suggestion is sent to the relevant party as soon as it is received from the student.
- The Student Affairs Committee receives a written response, along with a copy of the complaint, from the college administration within four days from the date it was submitted to the competent authority.
- The student who filed the complaint is contacted to inform them of the result or to clarify the complaint if necessary.
- If the complaint cannot be resolved through the departments, it is referred to the Dean.

Student Representation and Accompanying Persons

- There is a direct relationship between the college and its students, so the student is expected to present the issue personally. The system should encourage students to represent themselves at all stages of complaint handling, as this increases their life experience and ability to express what they are going through.
- Since the student complaint process is an internal college system for resolving student issues, the presence of a representative from the student council or any other party is only allowed in exceptional circumstances when the student is unable to express themselves or has a

language issue. In such cases, the student must provide prior written consent before the meeting.

Mediation

- Mediation is a method of solving problems by finding positive solutions to a particular situation without assigning blame, and it is an effective way to restore professional relationships.
- Mediation involves neutral parties trained to manage constructive dialogue between the parties in dispute, and since it is a voluntary process, it must be approved by all disputing parties.
- Mediation may be requested by the student complainant, a faculty member, or suggested by the college Student Affairs Committee at any stage of complaint handling. If mediation is unsuccessful in resolving the issue, another stage of the complaint process is activated.

Stage One: Informal Stage

Filing the Complaint

- The complaint is handled informally as soon as it is submitted and as close as possible to where it occurred, if possible, and the appropriate person deals with the problem.
- The student may submit the complaint orally or in writing to the responsible person, who records and investigates it and clarifies the circumstances surrounding the student and others.
- The person responsible for investigating the complaint informs the student of the outcome of the preliminary investigation in writing, or by email, as soon as practically possible, within three working days from the date the complaint was submitted.

Stage One Investigations

- The Student Affairs staff member investigates the student's complaint on behalf of the academic department, including speaking with the student about the matters related to the problem and determining what would satisfy them in resolving it.

- They may clarify matters related to faculty members as well as students.
- This task is completed within ten days from the date of submitting the complaint.

Results of Stage One Investigations

- The academic department implements any recommendations resulting from the stage one investigations and informs the vice dean for educational and academic affairs.
- The student is informed of the results of the stage one investigation. If the student is not satisfied, the complaint moves to stage two of the student complaint process.

Stage Two: Formal Stage

- If the student is dissatisfied with the result of the stage one investigation, they submit a written request to the Office of the Vice Dean for Educational and Academic Affairs stating that it is a second-stage case.
- This form can be obtained from Student Affairs or the college website, and the request must be submitted with documents supporting the complainant's position within ten days of receiving the written results of the stage one investigation.
- Complaints submitted after this date will only be considered in some exceptional cases, and the Vice Dean's decision in this regard is final.

Stage Two Investigations

- If the complaint is deemed appropriate for review by the Vice Dean for Educational and Academic Affairs, the Student Affairs staff member is informed and becomes the contact point between the academic department and the Vice Dean's office for any inquiries that may help the investigation.
- The investigation may require discussions with the complainant, other students, faculty members, or college staff related to the complaint.
- After the investigations are completed, the Office of the Vice Dean for Educational and Academic Affairs writes a report on the complaint and the findings.

- The academic department or the person concerned may comment on the report to review the findings before it is sent to the complainant.
- Depending on the nature of the complaint, a written report is usually sent to the complainant within 25 days of receiving the complaint. If more time is needed, the complainant will be informed.

Results of Stage Two Investigations

- The academic department or responsible college official implements the recommendations resulting from the stage two investigations.
- If any of these recommendations are not implemented, the matter is escalated to the department head or the dean.

Stage Three: Complaint Committee

Principles of Complaint Appeal

- The student complainant may appeal to the Dean against the stage two decision in the following cases:
 1. Improper procedures in the stage two investigation.
 2. New information emerging that was not available during the stage two investigation.

Appeal Request

- Any student wishing to appeal must submit the request to Student Affairs so that it can be forwarded to the Dean's Office.
- The appeal request must include:
 1. Evidence supporting the appeal.
 2. Names of any witnesses the complainant wishes to hear.
 3. A copy of the complaint form.



Complaint Committee Meeting

- If the Dean decides that the appeal request meets the agreed rules, the Complaint Committee meets. It consists of the Vice Dean for Educational and Academic Affairs and the college Complaint Committee.

Complaint Committee Procedures

- The Complaint Committee invites the student personally, or their representative if applicable, to provide testimony. The committee's decision is final, and the complainant may summon witnesses necessary for the appeal process.
- The complainant and witnesses are interviewed.
- The committee may accept the appeal partially or fully, or reject it.