

Plaksha University

Grievance Redressal Policy

Policy	Grievance Redressal Policy
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Preamble:

The "Grievance Redressal Mechanism for Students, Academic, and Non-Academic Staff" at Plaksha University, Punjab, was first implemented in 2021. In response to University Grants Commission (UGC) guidelines advising the establishment of a dedicated "Students' Grievance Redressal Committee" at the university level, a separate committee was constituted and formally announced via letter PU/VC/R/2024/007, dated September 23, 2024.

In light of these developments, the comprehensive "Grievance Redressal policy for Students, Faculty, and Executives" is hereby discontinued. To address the distinct needs of students and staff effectively, two separate policies have been developed as per the UGC guidelines prescribed time to time—one dedicated to student grievances and the other to the grievances of university faculty and executives.

Objective

Plaksha is committed to providing a productive and conducive work environment where grievances are dealt fairly, objectively and constructively. The objectives of the grievances process to resolve work related grievances within the University as fairly and as swiftly as possible.

Definitions

1. What is a Grievance?

A grievance may be any form of discontent, dissatisfaction, or negative perception—whether expressed or not—arising from anything connected with the university that faculty and executive perceive as unfair, unjust, or inequitable. Any grievance or complaint related to sexual harassment is not covered under these rules, as there is a separate mechanism for such matters managed by the Internal Complaint Committee (ICC).

2. Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) refers to the committee established to address issues of sexual harassment under the POSH Policy.

Applicability

To address individual and grievances of faculty and executive, a grievance redressal mechanism has been established. "Faculty and Executive" refers to all faculty and executive members, including full-time, part-time, or visiting faculty, teaching fellows, academic support staff, research staff and full-time or part-time employees and consultants involved in administrative or non-academic work. It also applies to former employees, provided that the grievance is received in writing within 30 days of the end of their employment.

Scope

The Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) shall consider only individual grievance of specific nature of members of the faculty and executive raised individually by the concerned aggrieved individual.

The GRC shall not consider any grievance of general applicability or of collective nature of raised collectively by more than one individual.

Typically, a grievance is defined as a concern, problem or complaint that the individual raises with the management. Individual grievances could cover but not be limited to grievances such as:

- Service matters like Promotions, Appointments and reappointments, Salaries, duties.
- Violations of the Code of Conduct
- Working conditions/ Health & Safety
- Administration or Academic issues
- HR Policy administration
- Interpersonal conflicts

General Guidelines

1. The individual shall bring up a grievance immediately or within a reasonable period not exceeding 30 days.
2. Faculty and executive members of Plaksha University should adhere to the Grievance Escalation Matrix Levels.
3. The formal procedures described under the policy are intended to be used only when matters cannot be resolved informally. If the grievance remains unresolved at the final level of the Grievance Escalation Matrix, the faculty or executive member may lodge a complaint.
4. The complaint should be submitted to the Grievance Redressal Committee, either by email (at grievance@plaksha.edu.in) or in writing. If the complaint is verbal, the Grievance Redressal Committee member who receives it will document it in writing, and the complainant must authenticate it with their signature as soon as possible.
5. During the grievance redressal procedure, the complainant and any person against whom a grievance has been submitted will have the opportunity to state their case before any decision is made.
6. Individuals have the right of appeal against the outcome of the grievance procedure. The decision of the Vice Chancellor will be considered final.

Grievance Redressal Committee for faculty and executive

The Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) will be responsible for addressing all the grievances submitted to the committee. The composition of Grievance Redressal Committee is as follows –

- Dean / Functional Head (1)
- Faculty / Executive Staff (3 employees nominated by VC)
- HR Representative (Convenor) (1)
- Representative of Office of Registrar (1)

Note: There should be at least two women members in the GRC.

The members of the GRC are nominated by the Vice Chancellor for a period of three years.

Grievance Redressal Committee Chair - The GRC Chair is a full-time senior employee authorized by the Vice Chancellor for the purpose of receiving complaints/ grievances from complainant and ensuring appropriate action. The responsibility of ensuring that documentation requirements from the GRC are complied with lies with the GRC chair.

The Grievance Committee will report to the VC. A quarterly written report of grievances handled will be submitted to the VC. At the end of the year, an annual report shall be compiled and submitted to the VC.

The annual report will include a section on recommendations to facilitate the VC/ Management on formulating policies to reduce grievances at the Institute.

Grievance Redressal Procedure

The Grievance Redressal Procedure is as follows:

Stage 1 – Immediate Manager/Functional Leader/Dean/Human Resources

- The person who feels aggrieved should first seek an informal resolution at their management level before filing a formal grievance. The formal procedures described under the policy are intended to be used only when matters cannot be resolved informally.
- It is a good practice to document the grievance by the individual. The individual can also directly contact the Human Resources (HR) department, or the grievance can be referred to HR by the superior.
- Grievances received by HR will be attempted to be addressed and responded to within 10 working days if possible and in any case, not later than one month. In case the grievance is beyond the scope of HR, the CHRO would forward the grievance to the GRC Chair/VC as the case may be.

Stage 2 – Grievance Redressal Committee

- In case the grievance is against the Dean/Functional head, the aggrieved member shall submit their petition to the GRC Chair.
- In case the grievance is against the Vice Chancellor, the aggrieved member shall submit their petition to the Chairman of the Board of Management with a copy to the GRC Chair.
- In case the aggrieved individual is not satisfied with the response from the HR Head, they can submit the grievance along with the HR Head's response to the GRC Chair.
- The GRC Chair will provide an acknowledgement of the receipt of the grievance.
- The GRC Chair takes the grievance to the Grievance Redressal Committee.
- The GRC shall convene a grievance hearing and attempt to resolve the matter within one month if possible, and in any case not later than 3 months.
- At least 3 members of the GRC must be present at the meetings. If the GRC Chair so feels, they can also set up an Ad-hoc committee to resolve a matter. This can be done with the approval of the VC to add any non GRC member(s) for cases which need more specialized knowledge or if the complaint is against a GRC member.
- The GRC shall have access to all files or otherwise relevant to the individual's grievance, subject to approval of Vice Chancellor.
- The GRC shall study the petition and after looking into the relevant documents and any further fact-finding conversations with concerned individuals, discuss within the Committee to finalize its recommendations.
- The GRC will submit its recommendations and report to the Vice Chancellor as expeditiously as possible, but in any case, within three months of the date of petition.
- In case of any difficulty, the GRC shall have discussion with the Vice Chancellor/Chairman (in case of complaint against the Vice Chancellor) before a decision is taken.

- The final settlement of any grievance shall be made within a reasonable period (normally not exceeding one month) after the recommendations are submitted to the Vice Chancellor/Chairman by the GRC.

UGC e-Samadhaan Portal

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has implemented the "e-Samadhan Online Grievance Registering and Monitoring System" to streamline grievance redressal for stakeholders. This digital platform merges existing portals, except the Anti-Ragging Helpline, into a single window system, available 24x7, for registering complaints. Stakeholders can lodge grievances via email or toll-free number, with issues resolved in a timely manner.

FAQs

Q. Can a grievance be filed in any language?

- A.** A grievance should be in English/ Hindi language. Any document/s in Hindi or in any Regional Language should be sent along with English translation thereof, duly verified as "true copy".

Q. Is there any specified period within which a grievance is to be filed?

- A.** A grievance/ complaint shall be filed within 30 (thirty) days of the occurrence of the cause of action for the grievance or the complaint.

Q. Is there any extension of time provided if the grievance is not filed within the specified period?

- A.** A grievance or a complaint may be filed after the aforesaid period, if there are sufficient reasons justifying the delay, but such period shall not exceed a further 15 days, i.e., total 45 days.

Q. Can a reverse action be taken against the Complainant?

- A.** In case the Committee, on investigation of the complaint, finds that a false complaint has been made or that a complaint has been made with a malicious intent, the Committee shall take such reasonable steps as they deem necessary to curb the initiation of such false and malicious complaints in the future. A mere inability to provide adequate proof to substantiate the complaint shall not be construed as false and malicious complaint.

Q. What if I'm not satisfied with the outcome of the grievance process?

- A.** If you are not satisfied with the outcome, the aggrieved party may appeal to the Vice Chancellor or if the complaint is against the Vice Chancellor, the Board of Management as the case may be.

