

GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISM AT AHMEDABAD UNIVERSITY

OVERVIEW

Ahmedabad University values its students and employees. In any competent organisation, good interventions are required for efficient and effective output. And grievance redressal is one such intervention. Both students and employees need the assurance that a fair redressal will occur in case of a genuine grievance.

A. Defining Grievance

Grievances would encompass a variety of issues like delays, rudeness, inefficiency, inaccuracy, harassment, victimisation, injustice, discrimination, unfairness, bias, malpractice, misbehavior, etc. A grievance may be “perceived grievance” or “real grievance” or it may even be a “disguised grievance”. A dissatisfaction/complaint becomes a **grievance** when the complaint is formally registered in accordance with the redressal procedure.

Pre-requisites:

1. Anonymously registered grievances will not be recognised. The names of the complainant and the accused must be specifically mentioned.
2. Persons must register grievances individually, not collectively as a group.
3. Complaints against posts on social media must be made with the cyber branch of the local police. (The University reserves the right though, to protect its image and interests against such damaging posts and take action against the perpetrators.)
4. The grievance must first be taken to the first level (superior or superior above superior, as the case may be) and only after unsatisfactory resolution, should it be escalated to the Grievance Redressal Committee.

B. Originating points of Grievances

1. Students
2. Employees (Faculty)
3. Employees (Staff)

C. Nature of Grievances

Student Grievances can be:

1. Academic
2. Against peers/senior students
3. Against faculty (for academic matters) or staff (for facilities & services)
4. Against senior management (Dean, Associate Dean, Programme Chair/Major etc.)

Employee Grievances can be about:

1. Policy matters
2. Individuals or group of individuals (seniors, colleagues, admin staff)

D. Separate Mechanisms (and committees) of Grievance Redressal

1. For Students
2. For Faculty
3. For Non-teaching Staff

E. Process of Registration

Authority levels for Students:

- Programme Chair → Associate Dean → Dean → Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) for Students

Authority levels for Faculty:

- Associate Dean → Dean → Grievance Redressal Committee for Faculty

Authority levels for Non-teaching Staff:

- Reporting Authority → Function Head (superior above superior) → Registrar → Grievance Redressal Committee for Non-teaching Staff

Redressal Levels:

- Informal resolution at first level of authority
- Senior management of Programme/School/UO
- Grievance Redressal Committee

The downloadable Grievance Registration Forms for Students and Employees are available on the University website under “Institutional Compliances” section.

F. Timeline

Resolution must be found within 8 to 10 working days at each authority level.

G. Constitution of Committees

For quick and easy reference, UGC Guidelines are provided here.

UGC – Grievance Redressal Committee(s)

1. Shall be constituted by the VC
2. Comprising:
 - Senior professor or administrator as the Chairperson

- Senior faculty members or administrators, on rotation, as Members
 - A student of merit from the Programme where the incident has occurred as a special Invitee in case of a student grievance
3. Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) must have a term of 2 years.
 4. GRC must communicate its decision within 10 days of receiving the complaint.
 5. The aggrieved, if unhappy with the decision can take it to the ombudsman (appointed by the State) within 6 days of the decision of the GRC.

H. Duty of the GRC

On receiving the complaint the GRC must:

- Fix a date – inform the aggrieved – allow him/her to be represented/accompanied by someone – follow the path of natural justice – give the decision within stipulated time frame.
- In case of a fraudulent or frivolous complaint, appropriate action can be taken against the complainant.
- Details of the GRC and the rights and duties of the students must be printed in the prospectus or any other platform like the website, students' handbook or university's intranet

Composition

| S. No. | Committee | Chairperson | Members |
|--------|------------------|------------------|--|
| 1 | GRC for students | Dean of Students | Assistant Dean, Wellness Assistant Dean, Student Engagement Director, Campus Operations Director, Student Housing Academic Registrar Assistant Dean, Office of Dean of UGC Director, Career Development Centre |
| 2 | GRC for faculty | Senior Dean | Dean of the Undergraduate College Dean, Graduate School and Research Associate Dean, Arts |
| 3 | GRC for staff | Registrar | Head of Operations Chief Financial Officer Head, Human Resources |

Grievance Redressal for the Students (as per UGC guidelines)

In a notification UGC has expressed concern and cautioned against discriminatory behaviour towards Dalit and other minority or marginalized students. As a temple of education and intellectual refinement, Ahmedabad University and all associated with it, consciously denounce such unfair practices. All staff members, teaching or non-teaching, must desist from any act of discrimination against all students.

(Summary of UGC's Grievance Redressal Notice Published in the Gazette in March 2013 is provided below.)

Grievances include but are not restricted to:

1. Making admission contrary to merit determined in accordance with the declared admission policy of the institute;
2. Irregularity in the admission process adopted by the institute;
3. Refusing admission in accordance with the declared admission policy of the institute;
4. No publication of the prospectus, as specified (with all details about the course, faculty, fees, policies etc.)
5. Publishing false, misleading or incorrect information in the prospectus.
6. Withhold or refuse to return any document – any form of certificates of degree, diploma or any other award or other document to compel a person to pay the fee for a course he/she does not intend to pursue.
7. Demand excess money.
8. Breach of reservation policy.
9. Discrimination against ST, SC, OBC, Women, Minority or Disabled categories.
10. Nonpayment or delay in payment of scholarships.
11. Delay in conducting exams or declaring results beyond the defined academic year.
12. Non-provision of amenities as promised to or required by students.
13. Denial of quality education as promised.
14. Non transparent or unfair evaluation practices.
15. Harassment (including sexual) and victimization of students.

Mandatory publication of prospectus, it's content and pricing

Fee, fee break-up, no. of seats, eligibility, qualifications, process of admission, teaching faculty details, details of teaching and physical infrastructure, syllabus, discipline etc.

Notification about the prospectus' availability, price etc.
