


ANNEXURE - 20
STAFF GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL POLICY

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STAFF GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL POLICY

1) OBJECTIVE:

APU believes in a comfortable and pleasant working environment. The University tries to make every effort to ensure that the employee's work life is comfortable; however, there may be times when problems occur. In these situations, it is necessary to:

- i. Provide employees with an easily accessible mechanism for settlement of their individual grievances;
- ii. Ensure fair, just and equitable treatment and consideration for resolving work related problems;
- iii. Clearly define the process of addressing any complaint or concern highlighted by any employee.

2) APPLICABILITY:

This policy is applicable to all employees of APU, including those appointed on Fixed Term/ deputation / third party payroll or visiting basis.

3) GUIDELINES:

- a) Minor differences can be resolved without recourse to the process listed below.
- b) A complainant / aggrieved employee is an individual who believes his/her rights have been violated.
- c) A grievance can be defined as any sort of dissatisfaction, which needs to be addressed in order to enable employees to function efficiently and effectively within the University.
- d) For the purpose of this policy, 'Grievance' means individual grievance and is defined as employee's expressed feeling of dissatisfaction concerning conditions of employment or treatment by senior colleagues, Reporting Officer, or other employees, which includes all matters, including those related to:
 - i. Employment (such as salary disbursement, deputation, relocation, penalty, leaves, and other policies / practices);
 - ii. Unfair / biased / prejudiced treatment or interpersonal issues;
 - iii. Alleged discrimination, including harassment, because of race, color, sex, age, disability, national origin, marital status, or any other non-merited factor;
 - iv. University's facilities like accommodation, canteen, library, etc.
- e) However, this policy does not cover grievances pertaining to, or arising out of, the following:
 - i. Annual performance appraisal and Increment;
 - ii. Disciplinary action, or appeal against such actions;
 - iii. Termination / dismissal;
 - iv. Sexual Harassment
- f) It should be noted that grievances pertaining to or arising out of disciplinary action should be reported and handled in accordance with APU Ethics, Code of Conduct and Discipline Rules, whereas grievances pertaining to Sexual Harassment should be



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addressed under the Policy on Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace as per Annexure - 19 of the APU Service Rules, 2020.

4) **PRINCIPLES OF GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL PROCEDURE:**

- a) Usually, the resolution of a complaint or grievance involves resolution of the problem / issue; not punishment of those involved.
- b) APU expects each stakeholder, who has been entrusted with the responsibility of receiving and addressing employees' grievances, to ensure fairness and timeliness of the process. They should undertake impartial fact-finding and provide adequate opportunity to the involved person(s) to present their case.
- c) Counseling should be provided to the involved person(s), to the extent possible, to resolve issues.
- d) Grievances reported under this policy will be treated with utmost confidentiality and sensitivity.
- e) APU expects all stakeholders involved to participate in the grievance redressal process in an open, empathetic and respectful manner. University does not tolerate any form of retaliation against employees availing themselves of this procedure.
- f) However, the procedure should not be construed as preventing, limiting, or delaying APU from taking disciplinary action against any individual, including possible termination, in circumstances (such as those involving problems of overall performance, conduct, attitude, or demeanor) where the disciplinary action is deemed as appropriate.
- g) University also expects its employees to use the process judiciously and in good faith. If any employee is found to be misusing this policy by filing a false grievance, providing false witness, or impeding the process in any manner, knowingly or intentionally, University will consider disciplinary action against the employee. The disciplinary action will be based on the level of offence involved, and it may range from warning to suspension of the employment.

5) **PROCEDURE:**

- a) **Level - 1: Reporting Officer and Head - Establishment Section**
 - i. Employees may communicate her/ his grievance in writing to their Reporting Officer with a copy to the Head - Establishment Section within 15 working days of the occurrence of the incident or event.
 - ii. In case the grievance involves the Reporting Officer, then the employee should contact the Registrar with a copy to the Vice-Chancellor.
 - iii. The concerned Reporting Officer, to whom the grievance has been raised by the employee, must immediately acknowledge the receipt of the grievance in writing and invite the employee for a formal meeting to discuss the grievance.
 - iv. The concerned Reporting Officer should go through the facts mentioned in the grievance, follow the guidelines provided in this policy, and identify a course of action / solution, in discussion with the Registrar.
 - v. The concerned Reporting Officer should revert to the employee with a course of action / solution within 7 working days from the date of receipt of the grievance, with a copy to the Registrar and Head - Establishment Section.



- vi. The course of action suggested may be either talking to employee/s to put matters in perspective, mediating with those involved in the grievance or changing certain practices at work.

b) Level - 2: Registrar

- i. In case an employee is not satisfied with the solution provided by the first level of Grievance Redressal process or if grievances relate to the Reporting Officer, he / she may represent the grievance to the Registrar on **Appendix - A**.
- ii. The Registrar should acknowledge the receipt of the grievance in writing, and should revert to the employee with a course of action / solution within 15 working days from the receipt of the grievance, in consultation with the Vice Chancellor.

c) Level - 3: Vice-Chancellor

- i. Vice-Chancellor, is the final authority for escalation of grievances, who can be approached if an employee is not satisfied with the solution provided by previous levels, or if grievance relates to Statutory Officers (Registrar, COE & CFO).
- ii. The specific grounds to be addressed while addressing the employee grievance are:
- Were the procedures followed?
 - If a procedural error occurred, were the rights of the grievant violated to the extent that a fair review was not conducted?
 - Was the review conducted in a way that did not permit the aggrieved employee adequate notice and opportunity to present facts?
 - Was the information presented during the review sufficient to justify the decision reached?
 - Was there relevant information existing at the time of the review that was not discovered until after the review that is sufficient to alter a decision?
- iii. An appeal must be in writing and contain:
- The appellant(s)'s name, Employee ID, and contact information, including email address;
 - A detailed description of the nature of the appeal;
 - A copy of the findings of the complaint review/hearing and supporting documents;
 - The specific grounds supporting the appeal. This must be one of the criteria listed above;
 - A detailed description of the relief sought;
 - Signature of appellant(s);
 - Date of grievance submission;
- iv. The decision of the Vice-Chancellor will be final, and further appeals can be made as per Section 42 of the APEX Professional University Act, 2012 (No. 7 of 2013).

6) GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL COMMITTEE:

- a) At any stage in the above indicated grievance redressal process, a Grievance Redressal Committee may be constituted by the Vice Chancellor as per APU Statutes - 48 for the resolution of a specific issue, which is of a complex, multi-dimensional nature.



- b) The Grievance Redressal Committee will undertake fact-finding and provide an opportunity to the aggrieved employee to present her/ his concern.
- c) In the event of an appeal, no less than three (3) members of the committee must be present to hear the case. In the event of a split vote the appeal is denied.
- d) Except as the Grievance Redressal Committee determines necessary to explain the basis of new information, an appeal is limited to a review of underlying decision, the file supporting the decision as provided by the decision-maker, and any statement supporting the appeal submitted by the appellant:
 - To determine if the grievance procedures policy and investigation was conducted fairly in light of the complaint and grievance made and information presented and giving the appellant(s) a reasonable opportunity to present information. A deviation from procedures required by this process will not be a basis for sustaining an appeal unless significant prejudice of impartial consideration of the case results;
 - To determine whether the decision reached regarding the matter was based on substantial information, that is, whether there were facts that, if believed by the Reporting Officer / Registrar were sufficient to support the grievance decision;
 - To consider new information sufficient to alter a decision or other relevant facts not brought out in the original complaint or grievance, but only if such information or facts were not known to the aggrieved employee at the time of presenting the grievance.
- e) If the Grievance Redressal Committee overrules a decision in whole or in part, it may:
 - Modify the decision; or
 - Remand for further proceeding.
- f) No appeal shall be allowed unless the appellant cites specifically to the grievance record and states with specificity the grounds under which the appeal shall be allowed. Any appeal submitted that does not include the required information will be dismissed without review.
- g) The Grievance Redressal Committee will give their recommendation to the University within 15 working days. The University will take a decision based on this recommendation and communicate their decision through the Registrar to the aggrieved employee within 30 working days from commencement of inquiry.

7) APPEALS:

- a) If Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) is unable to resolve the matter amicably within 45 days, an employee shall have the right to represent against such action to the Board of Management in accordance with section 42 of the Apex Professional University Act, 2012 (No. 7 of 2013) in such manner as may be prescribed in the APU Service Rules, 2020.
- b) Every appeal preferred under these rules shall contain all material statements and arguments relied on by the appellant and shall contain no disrespectful or improper language, and shall be complete in itself.
- c) Every such appeal shall be addressed to the authority to which the appeal is preferred and shall be submitted through the proper channel to which the appellant belongs.
- d) Any employee, who is aggrieved by the decision of the Board of Management, may


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address a representation to the Chancellor and the decision of the Chancellor shall be final.

8) GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL REPORTS:

Establishment Section shall maintain and record all grievances referred to the Grievance Redressal Committee, number of grievances settled / pending and the same shall be reported to the Chancellor Secretariat and Office of the Vice Chancellor on a quarterly basis.

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Appendix - A

PROBLEM SOLVING WORKSHEET

This Worksheet is a quality management tool, is a vehicle for a cross-functional team to articulate thoughts, provides scientific determination to details of problems and provides solutions. University can benefit from the Worksheet approach by applying it to all areas. The Worksheet provides excellent guidelines allowing us to get to the root of a problem and ways to check that the solution actually works. Rather than healing the symptoms, the illness is cured, thus, the same problem is unlikely to recur.

Question: Is this problem or an inconvenience?

Answer: _____

Question: If Problem, Define the Problem. (Provide a concise problem description)

Answer: _____

Question: 5 (five) Why Analysis (Analyze for "Root Cause" of the problem)

Answer: Brainstorm the possible causes of the problem.

- Ask - Why did this happen? _____
- Ask - Why did this happen? _____
- Ask - Why did this happen? _____
- Ask - Why did this happen? _____
- Ask - Why did this happen? _____

Note: Begin to complete the Root Cause Action Plan to verify and validate the root causes.

Question: Identify 3 (three) Permanent Corrective Actions. (Solutions that address and correct the root cause)

- Answer:** 1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Question: Kindly recommend one solution determined to be the best of all the alternatives.

Answer: 1. _____

Question: What is the reason for recommending the above solution.

Answer: _____

Name & Designation: _____

Date: _____

Full Signature: _____



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