

Complaints, Appeals and Grievance (Faculty & Staff) Policy

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Policy Owner:	General Department of HR

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair and transparent process for faculty and staff members employed at UBT to raise and address concerns related to their employment, working conditions or any other related issues. It ensures that the faculty and staff complaints, appeals and grievances are handled promptly, impartially, and in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all faculty and staff members working at UBT in all its campuses and branches, including full time, part-time employees.

3. Definitions & Acronyms

3.1. Definitions

Term	Definition
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Complaint	A complaint can be any expression of dissatisfaction, concern act, treatment, behavior or state which a faculty or staff member perceives as unfair or unjust. It can be oral or written.
Complainant	The employee who file a complaint
Grievance	A grievance refers to the legitimate and official/formal complaint made by a faculty or staff member, regarding unjustified treatment, concerning any faced in their work.
Aggrieved	The employee who file a grievance
Appeal	It is a request made by a staff member dissatisfied with the outcomes of a complaint or grievance in order to have the decision reviewed.
Employee	Any full time or part time faculty or staff members at UBT

3.2. Acronyms

Acronym	Term
HoD	Head of Department

4. Responsibilities

4.1. The General Department of HR is responsible of overseeing the implementation of the policy.

5. Policy Principles

- **Fairness:** All UBT employees have the right to raise concerns without fear of retaliation or unfair treatment. All complaints, appeals, and grievances will be handled with fairness, impartiality, and without any prejudice.
- **Confidentiality:** The university will treat all information related to complaints, grievances and appeals with strict confidentiality, respecting the privacy of all parties involved, except where disclosure is required by law.
- **Accessibility:** The process for submitting complaints, grievances and appeals will be accessible and well-communicated to all employees.
- **Impartiality:** The process will be impartial and unbiased, involving neutral parties for resolution and review.

- **Timeliness:** The university will strive to resolve complaints and grievances in a timely manner to avoid unnecessary delays.
- **Transparency:** All parties will be informed of the progress and outcomes of their case, following the appropriate procedures.
- **Records keeping:** Records of all complaints, appeals, and grievances as well as their resolutions will be maintained securely and separately from the employee's regular personnel file.

6. Policy Statement

6.1. **Complaints:** A complaint is a general expression of dissatisfaction or concern that an employee may have about a specific situation or occurrence. Complaints are often focused on isolated incidents or minor issues that do not necessarily involve broader violations of policies or regulations.

6.1.1. *Informal complaints:*

- Employees are encouraged to resolve minor issues informally by discussing concerns with their immediate supervisor or department head. If the immediate supervisor is a part of the raised case then the employee can informally seek a resolution from the line manager of the supervisor
- If the issue remains unresolved after the informal discussion, the employee may proceed to file a formal complaint.

6.1.2. *Formal complaints:*

- A formal complaint must be submitted in writing within 30 days from the incident, using the university's designated complaint form or through an official email addressed to the General Department of HR.
- The complaint should include a clear description of the issue, supporting evidence (if applicable), and the desired resolution.
- The General Department of HR will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and submit it to the University President's Office.
- The investigation will be conducted by an impartial

complaints/grievance committee appointed by the President's Office. If the complaint is academic, then the members of this committee will be composed from academic staff members, otherwise the committee members will be from administrative staff. In all cases the committee should include an HR and legal representative members (see the Complaints/Grievance Committee ToR)

- After studying the case of the complaint, the committee will communicate its findings and recommendations to the staff who has raised the complaint as well as the appropriate authority for further action within 30 working days maximum.

6.2. **Grievance:** A grievance typically deals with major issues and involves a more formal and structured process to address broader workplace-related concerns or policy breaches and regulations violations. The following characteristics distinguish a grievance from a complaint:

- Complexity: Grievances are often more complex in nature due to their potential to impact the overall working environment, employee morale, and relationships.
- Formal expression: A grievance involves a formal and structured expression of dissatisfaction or concern about the work conditions, treatment, or workplace-related matters.
- Violation of policies and regulations: Grievances often pertain to violations of policies, procedures, agreements, or legal rights within the university
- Formal process: Addressing grievances typically involves a formal process with defined steps of submission, investigation, and resolution.
- Severity: Grievances tend to be more serious and may have implications for legal compliance, employee rights and organizational reputation.

6.2.1. **Informal grievance:**

- Employees are encouraged to resolve minor issues informally by discussing concerns with their immediate supervisor or department head (HoD). If the immediate

supervisor is a part of the grievance, then the employee can informally seek a resolution from the line manager of the supervisor. In some cases, a mediation process may be initiated, where a neutral third party facilitates a conversation between the parties involved to reach a mutually acceptable resolution.

- If the issue remains unresolved after the informal discussion, the employee may proceed to file a formal grievance process.

6.2.2. **Formal grievance:**

a. *Filing a Grievance:*

- The employee may file a grievance in writing using the designated grievance form or through an official email addressed to the university's designated complaint/grievance committee. (need clarification from UBT).
- The grievance should include a detailed description of the alleged injustice or violation, supporting evidence (if applicable), and the desired resolution.
- The complaint/grievance committee will acknowledge the receipt of the grievance

b. *Initial review:*

- The complaint/grievance committee reviews the submitted grievance to understand the details and assess its validity. The committee may schedule a meeting with the employee to discuss the grievance and gather additional information.

c. *Investigation:*

- If the grievance warrants further investigation, the complaints/grievance committee conducts a thorough inquiry into the matter. This may involve interviewing relevant parties, gathering more evidences, and reviewing relevant documents or records.

d. *Formal hearing (if necessary):*

- In some cases, a formal hearing may be conducted.

During hearing, the employee presenting the grievance as well as any relevant witnesses may present their accounts.

e. *Decision and Resolution:*

- Based on the information gathered during the investigation and any formal hearing, the complaint/grievance committee makes a decision regarding the grievance. A resolution may involve corrective actions, policy changes, compensation, or any other appropriate measures to address the issue. The committee submit its final recommendation to the president office for final approval. The president office issues appropriate final decision in this regard to the general department of HR to either confirm the committee decision, amend it or request further investigation. The General department of HR shall coordinate appropriate actions accordingly.

- If confirmed by the president office the decision of the complaint/grievance committee will be final and binding.

f. *Communication:*

- The general Department of HR will communicate the decision on the grievance to the employee who raised the grievance, along with any other parties involved in writing. Clear communication is essential to ensure that all parties understand the outcomes as well as any required actions.

6.3. **Appeals:** Faculty and staff members have the right to appeal against the outcomes of the Complaint/Grievance Committee. The appeal process is presented below:

a. **Filing:** If the staff member is dissatisfied with the resolution, they may file an appeal with the President Office within 30 days, providing the reasons for the appeal. The appeal should clearly state the grounds for the appeal and include any supporting evidence. The appeal must be

submitted in writing using the designated appeal form or through an official email addressed to the President office.

b. **Review:** The President Office will review the case, including the original complaint, investigation, and resolution steps. Additional information may be requested if necessary. The President will nominate an appeal committee for the same.

c. **Decision:** The President Office will issue a final decision and submit it to the General Department of HR. The final decision will be communicated formally to the concerned employee within 60 days from the appeal date via the HR department. The appeal decision is final and binding.

6.4. Retaliation protection: The University strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against its employees who raise complaints, grievances, or appeals in good faith. Retaliation will be treated as a serious offense and may lead to disciplinary action.

6.4. Documentation and records: All documents related to the process of complaints, grievance and appeal maintained confidentially and securely by the General Department of HR in the staff file, with appropriate access management and limitation, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations.

7. Related Documents

This includes the following: (in hierarchical order), legislation, policies, other procedures and standards, guidelines, forms and other useful resources

Docume nt No.	Document Name	Document Type	Location
Human Resources- UBT-04	Human Resources Procedures	Procedures	
X	Employee Handbook	Handbook	

	(Arabic version)		
	Complaints and Grievance Committee Term of References	ToR	Internal

8. Version Control & Revision History

Version control	Date released	Approved by	Summary of changes
Version 1.0	03/08/2023		
Version 2.0	24/08/2023		

9. Approvals

[Council/Board] [Chair Name] [Signature] [Date]

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