



SREENARAYANAGURU
OPEN UNIVERSITY

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KOLLAM

STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

Version 1.0

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STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

Sreenarayanaguru Open University is committed to ensure a student centric atmosphere at all levels of its academic operations. The university believes that quality student experiences are the legitimate right of the student community and therefore the policy on student grievances is a mandatory requirement.

Definition:

The university runs on the definition that a grievance is considered to be a complaint or conflict which arises out of an action of the university which the grievant considers to be unlawful and discriminating.

In general, grievances fall *under* two categories viz. academic & non-academic.

Academic grievance may include issues relating to, but not limited to:

- i. Delivery of the programme and the content.
- ii. Eligibility criteria.
- iii. Examinations.
- iv. Cancellation of enrolment.
- v. Publication of result
- vi. Victimization.

Non-academic grievance may include issues relating to, but not limited to:

- i) Fee payment
- ii) Scholarship
- iii) Misconduct
- iv) Sexual harassment
- v) Harassment
- vi) Facilities

The university has two fold approach towards the student learning experiences.

- i) Administrative platform
- ii) Flow chart through well-defined procedures

Administrative Platform

The university has established a dedicated administrative unit known as Student Grievance Redressal Cell in sync with the guidelines of the University Grants Commission. The unit is

headed by a Deputy Registrar and supported by the required human resources. It is housed in the headquarters and the students have free access to the cell.

The learning Support centres and regional centres stay connected with student grievances cell.

Flow chart through well-defined procedures

Flow chart of operations for the student redressal mechanism is defined in the student grievance policy. The policy provides a method for aggrieved student to express substantive complaints about academic and administrative issues and also it prescribes the procedures for appropriate resolutions.

The grievances are broadly divided into two: Informal grievance and Formal grievance.

Informal Grievance

As the university doesn't have a regular format for classroom engagement the problems amongst cohort of student as a reflection of their interpersonal relationship do not figure prominently. However, the academic counselling sessions organised through learning support centres may provide space for these sorts of interpersonal issues. In that case the university recommends that the issues be settled at the respective learning support centres through their procedures.

Moreover, students are encouraged to attempt to resolve differences amongst them in an informal manner prior to initiate a formal grievance. This instruction will be disseminated at the time of the induction of students.

However, they are free to submit grievances to the coordinator for appropriate resolutions.

The coordinator is expected to register the complaint and inform the student redressal cell about the decision taken in that case. The student shall have the right to appeal to the student grievance cell of the university in writing against the decision of the coordinator which in turn will be examined and processed as per the policy.

Formal Grievances

The university has a prudent and transparent procedure to address the student grievance. The university deploys different steps in this regard.

Step 1: An aggrieved student shall submit a formal grievance in writing to the coordinator of the learning support centre or the Regional Director or the Headquarters as the case may be.

- A formal grievance must be set forth in writing a statement which clearly defines the basis of the grievance.
- The grievances can be sent by e-mail or by post. Students are encouraged to submit grievances in e-mail.
- Grievances of confidential nature related to harassment must be submitted by registered post to the Registrar.

Step 2: The grievances thus received shall be examined by a committee of 3 members constituted by the student grievance cell.

- The committee shall examine the grievance on its merit and shall report the decision to the student grievance cell.
- The committee shall submit the report within 7 days from the day of the constitution of the committee.

Step 3: Student redressal cell shall put up a file in this regard for its implementation. If it is of administrative matter it shall be forwarded to the office of the Registrar and the matters related to the examinations shall be forwarded to the Controller of Examinations.

- Registrar or Controller of Examinations shall review the procedures deployed in the case in order to ensure strict adherence to the procedures.

Step 4: The Registrar or the Controller of Examinations as the case may be shall bring the matter to the Pro Vice Chancellor/Vice Chancellor for approval of the decision.

- The approved decision will be implemented by the respective departments with notifications to the student as well as the student grievance cell.
- The decision shall be implemented within a week from the date of the approval.

Step 5: Student has a right to appeal against the decision of the committee for which he should submit a separate letter in writing.

- The appeal shall carry adequate justifications and must be in sync with general procedures of the university.

Step 6: The appeal shall be handled by the Pro Vice Chancellor/Vice Chancellor directly for which they may or may not constitute another committee or they may call for further explanation from the same committee.

Grievances regarding sexual harassment

Any grievance in relation to sexual harassment of women at the learning centres/headquarters is considered to be a human rights violation and separate guidelines to deal with these case is in place.

Student Portal

A dynamic student portal shall be available on the website for submission of the grievance as well as notification of the decisions.