


Category	Human Resources	Policy Number	SUP-HR-15	 جامعة زايد ZAYED UNIVERSITY
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Responsible Office	CAFO	Policy Owner	HR	
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POLICY

Employee Complaints and Grievances

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the guiding principles that ensure a confidential and impartial mechanism for employees to voice their concerns and grievances. It commits to a timely and fair resolution process that upholds equity in addressing all issues raised.

2. Scope of Application

2.1 This policy applies to all complaints and grievances made by Zayed University (“**University**”) employees.

2.2 The policy is for addressing complaints and grievances from individuals only.

2.3 As far as this policy is concerned, issues that are considered complaints and/or grievances include but are not limited to:

- a) Terms and conditions of employment.
- b) Health and safety.
- c) Work relations.
- d) Bullying and harassment.
- e) New working practices.
- f) Working environment.
- g) Organizational change.
- h) Discrimination.

The following issues are excluded from the complaints/grievances process:

- a) Dismissal.
- b) Disciplinary action.
- c) Working hours/Workload.
- d) Job grade/Promotion.
- e) Salary/Compensation.
- f) Bonuses.

3. Definitions

Complaint	A complaint is a concern raised by an employee that they wish to discuss with a person in a supervisory position with the aim of resolving the concern in a mutually beneficial manner. A complaint is not subject to review by a committee.
Grievance	A grievance is a formal, written request for a concern to be heard

	by the Grievance Committee after the employee has been unable to find a satisfactory resolution through the process for raising a complaint.
Working Day	A day (Monday to Friday) when the University is officially open.

4. Policy

- 4.1 All University employees have the right to voice their complaints and grievances by following the principles outlined in this policy.
- 4.2 The emphasis for finding resolutions to employee complaints/grievances is on finding solutions rather than attributing blame.
- 4.3 Raising a complaint/grievance should not have a negative effect on the employee personally, and under no circumstances should the employee be penalized for, retaliated against, or discriminated against for presenting their complaint/grievance.
- 4.4 The University process for dealing with employee complaints/grievances must not be interpreted as a means of restricting or limiting the employee's rights under any other applicable laws.
- 4.5 All those involved in the employee complaint/grievance process must handle all aspects of the process with the utmost discretion and in the strictest confidence.
- 4.6 The employee who raises a complaint/grievance is allowed to be accompanied by an advisor throughout the process, but the advisor may not speak or act on behalf of the employee.
- 4.7 The University Vice-President (“VP”), or designee, may permit reasonable time extensions at any point of the process provided the applicant can demonstrate appropriate rationale. The request for an extension must be submitted in writing, and the approval or denial of the request must also be in writing.
- 4.8 An employee cannot raise the same issue as a new complaint if they are not satisfied with the result after already having gone through the whole process.
- 4.9 University management, administrators, and all those in supervisory positions have the responsibility for ensuring that all University employees are aware of the process for raising a complaint/grievance and all associated policies.

5. Complaints

- 5.1 It is expected that the employee will initially raise their concern with their line manager within ten (10) working days of the employee becoming aware of the problem. It is expected that the line manager will discuss the issue with the employee concerned in confidence and try to resolve the matter with them through informal discussions.

- 5.2 If the employee feels unable to speak to their line manager, the employee should speak informally to another appropriate supervisor.
- 5.3 If the employee and their line manager are unable to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution, the employee may raise the issue with the next senior level supervisor within five (5) working days of having raised the complaint with their line manager.
- 5.4 If the employee fails to raise the complaint before the five-working-day deadline, it will be understood that the employee has waived their right to continue the complaint process, and the complaint cannot be raised again.
- 5.5 If the employee is unable to reach a satisfactory resolution after having discussed the concern with at least two (2) supervisors, they have the right to submit a formal written grievance to the Director of the Human Resources Department (“HR”) requesting that their concern be heard by the Grievance Committee.

6. Grievances

- 6.1 Grievances will only be considered if the employee submitting the grievance has already attempted to resolve the issue through the complaint-handling process.
- 6.2 The employee must submit their grievance to the Director of HR within five (5) working days of having raised their concern with the last supervisor.
- 6.3 If the employee fails to formally submit their grievance before the five-working-day deadline, it will be understood that the employee has waived their right to have their grievance heard by the Grievance Committee, and the grievance cannot be raised again.
- 6.4 The Director of HR must inform the VP, or designee, that a grievance has been received within two (2) working days of its receipt.
- 6.5 **Grievance Committee**
 - 6.5.1 A Grievance Committee (“**Committee**”) is formed by the VP, or designee, to review employees’ grievances and to recommend resolutions.
 - 6.5.2 If the VP is part of the grievance, he/she must recuse himself/herself from the process entirely.
 - 6.5.3 The Committee will consist of four (4) members (quorum) including the Committee Chair (“**Chair**”). The Chair should be the Director of HR, and the remaining members should be representatives from different parts of the University including Academic Affairs and Administrative Support Services.
 - 6.5.4 Committee members, including the Chair, are responsible for disclosing any potential conflict of interest before the review begins. In such instances, the Committee member must be replaced upon a decision of the VP, or designee.
 - 6.5.5 The VP, or designee, has the authority to replace a Committee member at any time should the need arise.
 - 6.5.6 The Chair shall determine the tasks of the Committee members.

- 6.5.7 The Chair has the right to choose a person to act as a non-member rapporteur to record the proceedings of the meetings, provided the rapporteur does not have any voting right.
 - 6.5.8 The Committee is committed to reviewing the grievance that has been submitted by the employee concerned to establish and understand the employee's claims, and to find a suitable resolution. The Committee may consult whomever they deem necessary to assist in the successful completion of the review.
 - 6.5.9 The Committee reserves the right to refer any grievances to the Irregularity Committee for disciplinary measures, including any instances of the submission of false and/or malicious grievances.
 - 6.5.10 The Committee is expected to submit its recommendations for the resolution of the grievance, plus any further actions, to the VP or designee within ten (10) working days of the Committee having been formed.
 - 6.5.11 Upon the VP or designee's approval, the Chair is responsible for notifying all relevant parties of the decision made, and for ensuring that any associated actions are implemented.
 - 6.5.12 HR is responsible for the safe storage of all the records pertaining to the submission of grievances and the Committee's work for a minimum of three (3) years from the date of the VP or designee's approval. The Director of HR is responsible for determining who has access to the records on a case-by-case basis.
- 6.6 The employee may withdraw their grievance at any time during the process as long as they submit their intention to withdraw in writing.
- 6.7 At the end of each semester, the Director of HR will submit a report to the VP or designee detailing all the grievances heard, the decisions made, and the subsequent actions taken. The report is not to include any names, but is to include all appropriate data so that plans can be made for the enhancement of University performance.

7. **Grievance Appeal**

- 7.1 If the employee feels that the decision and recommendations provided by the Committee do not resolve the matter, they may raise an appeal against the decision to the Board of Trustees ("**Board**"), within ten (10) working days from the date of being notified of the Committee's decision.
- 7.2 The appeal must be submitted in writing, and include all relevant supporting documentation.
- 7.3 Not complying with the appeal deadline will be understood as the employee waiving their right to appeal, and the appeal cannot be raised again.
- 7.4 The Board's decision in relation to the appeal will be conclusive and final with respect to the reported grievance. The employee will have exhausted all their rights of appeal once the Board's decision has been issued.

8. Related Policies and Laws

- SUP-FAC-10 Rewards and Incentives Program
- SUP-HR-11 Disciplinary Measures
- SUP-HR-71 Staff Appointments
- SUP-HR-72 Hours of Work for Staff
- SUP-HR-73 Salary Administration for Staff Appointments
- SUP-HR-74 Compensation for Additional Work
- SUP-HR-76 Staff Performance Evaluation
- SUP-FAC-202 Faculty Workload
- SUP-FAC-203 Faculty Performance Evaluation
- SUP-FAC-204 Faculty Promotion
- SUP-FAC-301 Faculty Salary and Compensation

9. Administration

This policy is administered by the Human Resources Department.

10. Revision History

Date	Revision
21 February 2024	Approved by the Board of Trustees.
30 January 2024	Endorsed by the Academic Council subject to minor modifications. <i>(Actions completed)</i>
25 January 2024	Almost entirely rewritten to clarify the difference between complaints and grievances and the subsequent roles, responsibilities, and processes.
22 January 2024	Presented to Deans' Council; recommendations for review and resubmission.
29 November 2023	New policy drafted