

Grievance Redressal of Students Policy

1. Background

- a) This policy has been framed in line with the provisions of the “**University Grants Commission Grievance Redressal Regulations, 2012**” of India (hereinafter referred to as the “the Act”). Accordingly, while the policy covers all the key aspects of the Act, for any further clarification reference shall always be made to the Act and the provisions of the Act shall prevail.
- b) These regulations shall be called the “SRM University-AP, Amaravati Regulations Governing Grievance Redressal of Students”.

2. Purpose

SRM University-AP, Amaravati is committed to developing and maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable grievance handling system for its students, which is easily accessible and offered to complainants at no charge.

3. Aim

The aim of these rules is

- a) To develop a culture of understanding, addressing and providing quick redress to grievances and take steps to prevent recurrence of such incidents;
- b) To set in place a grievance handling system that is student focused;
- c) To ensure that grievances are resolved promptly, objectively and with sensitivity and in complete confidentiality;
- d) To ensure that the views of each complainant and respondent are respected and that any party to a grievance is neither discriminated against nor victimized and;
- e) To ensure that there is a consistent response to grievances.

4. Scope and Applicability

- a) These Regulations shall cover any kind of grievance that students of the University may face during their stint in the University.
- b) A ‘Student’ for the purpose of these regulations shall mean a student enrolled for a full-time programme of the University

5. Definitions

- a) ‘Grievance’ is defined as a student’s dissatisfaction with respect to any aspect of the University’s activities and services.
- b) ‘Person’ referred herein shall mean a student on the rolls of the University.
- c) ‘University’ means the SRM University-AP, Amaravati.

Note: In these Regulations wherever 'he' and 'his' occurs, these shall mean to imply 'he/she' and 'his/her' respectively.

6. Types of grievance

Types of Student grievance

These grievances can be in the nature of:

- a) Grievances that are academic in nature
- b) Against faculty
- c) Grievance related to examination
- d) Grievance related to summer internship & placements
- e) Grievance related to amenities & services
- f) Grievance related to stay at hostel
- g) Grievance related to finance
- h) Grievance related to student conflicts
- i) Harassment by fellow students or the faculty/ staff etc.

7. Procedure for redressal of grievance

7.1 Informal Resolution before an issue becomes a formal grievance

- a) Students will be encouraged to resolve concerns or problems directly with the person(s) / Department concerned through personal discussions /counseling.
- b) Aggrieved students should first approach the respective Course Coordinator/Mentor who will informally try to resolve the problem. Wherever necessary, the Course Coordinator may seek guidance from the appropriate authority for the purpose.

7.2 Grievance handling and resolution mechanism

- a) Matrix for grievance redressal mechanism for students is given under clause 10 of these regulations.
- b) The grievance Redressal mechanism has three levels of grievance redressal of which Level-III is the Appellate Authority.
- c) Formal grievances shall be submitted in writing stating full material facts to the First Level Grievance Handling Authority as specified under clause 10 of these regulations.

7.3 Procedure and Stages in Grievance Handling

The following procedure can be followed by the students to seek redressal of grievance of any kind whether academic or non-academic in nature, as specified under clause 6 above:

- a) Stage 1
 - i. Formal complaint by the aggrieved person shall be submitted in writing to the Level-I Grievance Handling Authority, as specified under clause 10.

- ii. The authority concerned will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and initiate the Redressal process within two working days.
 - iii. If felt necessary, the designated authority may allow an opportunity to the complainant to formally present his/her case along with relevant documents in support. The authority may also seek clarification from the complainant or call for further material facts having bearing on the matter. Such clarification may be sought by written or verbal request or by face-to face interview with the complainant.
 - iv. The Authority concerned will then endeavor to resolve the grievance within next seven working days of receiving the formal grievance and convey the outcome / action taken to the complainant.
 - v. The Level 1 authority, may get the matter investigated through a designated subcommittee, if so considered necessary to arrive at a decision.
 - vi. Wherever required, the University will take preventive or corrective action in a reasonable time and advise the complainant of the same.
- b) Stage 2:
- i. If a complainant does not receive any response within the seven working days or is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, s/he may prefer an appeal in writing with the Level-II Grievance Handling Authority concerned as specified under Clause 10 of these regulations.
 - ii. The Level-II Authority will consult with the complainant and other relevant parties within ten working days of receiving the appeal. Wherever possible, such consultations may be in the form of face-to –face discussion.
 - iii. Following the consultation, the Authority concerned will take further steps to address the grievance and communicate the same to the complainant.
- c) Stage 3:
- i. If a complainant is still dissatisfied with the outcome or decision of Level-II Authority on the appeal, he/she may represent the matter to the Appellate Authority as specified under clause 10 of these regulations.
 - ii. The concerned Appellate Authority will convey its decision within five working days from receiving the appeal.
 - iii. The decision of the Appellate Authority will be final and no further appeal will be entertained under any circumstances.

8. Confidentiality

- a) During all stages of the Grievance Handling and Resolution Procedure, the University will take all possible steps to ensure that the complainant and the respondent are not victimized or discriminated against
- b) Implementation of the procedure will be done without prejudice to either party.
- c) At all stages of this procedure, a full explanation (in writing for decisions and) of the actions taken as part of the process will be provided if so requested by the complainant or the respondent.
- d) While dealing with the issue, all possible confidentiality and privacy will be maintained and all records relating to such complaints will be treated as confidential.

- e) Records concerning grievances handled under this procedure and their outcomes shall be maintained for a period of one year.
- f) There will be no cost to the complainant for utilizing this grievance and appeal process.

9. Ombudsman

Appointment of Ombudsman

- a) Ombudsman shall be a person who has been a judge not below the rank of a District Judge or a Retired Professor who has at least ten years' experience as a Professor
- b) The Ombudsman shall not, at the time of appointment, during one year before such appointment, or in the course of his tenure as Ombudsman, be in a conflict of interest with the University where his personal relationship, professional affiliation or financial interest may compromise or reasonably appear to compromise, the independence of judgment towards the university.
- c) The Ombudsman shall be appointed by the university on part-time basis

Term of Ombudsman

The Ombudsman shall be a part time officer appointed for a period of three years or until he attains the age of seventy years, whichever is earlier, from the date he resumes the office and may be reappointed for another term in the same university.

Powers and functions of Ombudsman

- a) The Ombudsman shall exercise his powers to hear any grievance
 - i. Of any student against the university or institution affiliated to it or an institute, as the case may be, after the student has availed of remedies available in such institution for redressal of grievance; and
 - ii. Of any applicant for admission as student to such institution.
- b) No application for revaluation or remarking of answer sheets shall be entertained by the Ombudsman unless specific irregularity materially affecting the outcome or specific instance of discrimination is indicated.
- c) The Ombudsman shall have power to seek the assistance of any person belonging to the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, Socially and Economically Backward Classes, minority or disabled category, as amicus curiae, for hearing complaints of alleged discrimination.

Procedure in redressal of grievance by Ombudsman

Procedure in redressal of grievance by Ombudsman will be followed as per the Act under Clause 7.

10. Matrix of grievance handling authorities

S. No	Nature of Grievances	Level-1 Grievance Handling	Level-2 Grievance Handling	Appellate Authority
1	Grievances that are academic in nature	Department Coordinator	Dean of Respective School	Vice Chancellor
2	Against Faculty	Department Coordinator	Dean of Respective School	Vice Chancellor
3	Grievance related examination	Department Coordinator	Controller of Examination	Vice Chancellor
4	Grievance related to summer internship & placements	Department Coordinator	Director – Corporate Relations & Placements	Vice Chancellor
5	Grievance related to amenities & services	Manager – Student Affairs	Director – Student Affairs	Vice Chancellor
6	Grievance related to stay at hostel	Hostel Warden	Director - Student Affairs	Vice Chancellor
7	Grievance related to finance	Senior Manager - Finance	Chief Finance and Accounts Officer	Vice Chancellor
8	Grievance related to student conflicts	Warden / Manager – student Affairs	Director – Student Affairs	Vice Chancellor
9	Harassment by fellow students or the faculty/ staff etc.*	Warden / Department Coordinator	Dean of Respective School / Director – Student Affairs	Vice Chancellor

*Cases related to Sexual Harassment will follow 'Policy on prevention of sexual harassment at workplace: Guidelines for SRM University-AP, Amaravati'.

9. Appendix 1: List of Student Grievances

a) Grievances that are Academic in nature

- i. Academic Quality
- ii. Suspension of student
- iii. Academic Integrity dispute
- iv. Course material
- v. Class time table
- vi. Inadequate learning resources (IT, Library, Labs / Equipment, etc.)
- vii. Attendance/directed reading
- viii. Internal Assessment
- ix. Co-curricular activities
- x. Grade Dispute

b) Against Faculty

- i. Academic delivery & quality
- ii. Classroom conduct
- iii. Regularity & punctuality
- iv. Any discrimination / victimization of students

c) Grievance related to examination

- i. Registration / Re-registration / Student Records
- ii. Mid-Semester / End-Semester / Supplementary exam scheduling / date sheet
- iii. Evaluation of answer books Grading / results
- iv. Re-checking/ Re- evaluation
- v. De-barred / Year back cases
- vi. Discrepancy in Diplomas / Degrees

d) Grievance related to Summer Internship & Placements

- i. Discrimination in summer Internship selection
- ii. Discrimination or non-adherence of placement procedures /rules

e) Grievance related to Amenities & Services

- i. Common services (Transportation / Canteen / Medical, etc.)
- ii. Extra-curricular facilities
- iii. Student Financial Aid
- iv. Travel Concession
- v. Identity Cards

f) Grievance related to stay at hostel

- i. Quality of Food and Hygiene
- ii. Hostel amenities

g) Grievance related to finance

- i. Fees and Dues
- ii. Fee Concessions
- iii. Scholarships

iv. Refunds

h) Grievance related to student conflicts

- i. Conflict between students of same Program
- ii. Intra-School conflicts
- iii. Inter-School conflicts

i) Harassment by fellow students or faculty/ staff etc.

- i. Bullying