

REGULATION OF OPERATION OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS & OBJECTIONS MANAGEMENT MECHANISM



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PREAMBLE

The present regulation aims to set the framework for the optimal and effective management of the complaints of the students of the MSc "Contemporary Sports Communication, Journalism and Photojournalism". The regulation has been approved by the decision of the 182TH/29-12-2023 Meeting of the Assembly of the Department of Sport Organisation and Management.

The regulation is posted in the "STUDENTS" section of the website of the MSc (<https://sportjournalism.uop.gr>).

Article 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the MSc "Contemporary Sports Communication, Journalism and Photojournalism" is the continuous improvement of the quality of educational and administrative services provided with a student-centred perspective and guided by the principles of transparency, integrity and accountability. For this purpose, the MSc has an appropriate mechanism for the management of student complaints and objections, in order to ensure their immediate and fair processing with efficiency and confidentiality, in accordance with the Internal Regulations (decision 1 of the 148th meeting of the Senate of the University of Peloponnese, Government Gazette 1563B/9 May 2019 (<https://www.uop.gr/images/300719-esoterikos.pdf>

Article 2. FIELD OF APPLICATION

The complaints and objections management policy is addressed to the entire student population of the MSc "Contemporary Sports Communication, Journalism and Photojournalism". This procedure applies to any form of complaint or objection concerning the quality of the educational and administrative services provided by the MSc. In particular, the complaints management policy aims to resolve a disagreement or problem, such as:

- i. disagreement on matters of study and attendance
- ii. inappropriate behaviour by a member of academic or administrative staff
- iii. inadequate information provided to students by a member of academic or administrative staff

Before expressing a complaint or objection, students should carefully study the Guide to Studies and the Regulations of the MSc and the general rules of the University, so that they are clearly aware of their rights and obligations.

Responsible for the monitoring and proper implementation of the procedure for the management of student complaints and objections is the respective Director of the MSc. The data of complaints, the results and the actions taken are recorded and stored in a special and secure place for the maintenance of confidentiality within the MSc Secretariat and are used for the improvement of the services provided.

Article 3. USEFUL DEFINITIONS

1. . A Complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction (verbal or written) on the part of the student of the Department, due to the refutation of his/her expectations regarding the quality level of the services provided.
2. An objection is defined as any written and formal expression of doubt or objection on the part of the student to the decision of the competent body of the Department regarding his/her submitted request.

Article 4. MANAGEMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE FOR LODGING COMPLAINTS AND OBJECTIONS

The effective management of any complaint or grievance enhances the validity and reliability of the educational and administrative or other services provided for the benefit of the student population and staff (teaching and administrative). To this end, the MSc implements specific stages in the management of student complaints and objections. At all stages of the resolution process, the protection of the personal data of all parties involved is strictly observed, as defined by the legislation in force at any given time.

The following is a description of the management process.

STEP 1. Internal/informal procedure

The student discusses the matter with the responsible lecturer or supervisor or member of the administrative staff, depending on the nature of the complaint, in order to find an immediate solution to his/her problem. After an interactive discussion, the proposed solution will be accepted or rejected. At this stage, the dispute may be resolved between the two parties without the involvement of a third party or with the intervention of a third party through mediation. If the current solution is accepted by all parties, the problem is resolved and no further action is needed.

In the event that the problem is not resolved through this procedure, the student may contact the faculty advisor to obtain his/her opinion and request his/her mediation to resolve the problem. If an acceptable solution is reached at this stage, the problem is resolved and no further action is required.

STAGE 2. Internal/Official Procedure

If the problem is not successfully resolved through the above procedure, students may proceed to a written complaint or appeal, depending on the degree of severity. The written submission of a grievance or appeal shall be made in writing and shall be made by the student himself/herself and not by any other person.

This procedure is described as follows

1. The student shall submit his/her request in writing within 30 days of the date the problem occurs. For recording the complaint or objection, the Complaints & Objections Form of the MSc (see Appendix) is available through the Department's website and also through the Registrar's Office. The form must be completed and submitted to the Secretariat of the MSc, receiving a protocol number. In this form, the student is requested to record with maximum clarity, honesty and objectivity, the problem he/she is facing. If an informal resolution procedure has been followed, the student should indicate, inter alia, the hearing and mediation procedure followed.
2. The Departmental Secretariat shall forward the student's complaint or objection together with any additional material to the Director of the MSc.
3. The Director of the MSc examines the problem and takes appropriate action on how to deal with the complaint/objection, informing and/or referring, as appropriate, to the MSc Steering Committee. He/she may, depending on the nature of the problem, invite the student concerned to present his/her views before taking further action. If the Director of the MSc considers that the student is in need of protection, he/she must offer him/her appropriate protection.
4. In case the Director and/or the Coordinating Committee are unable to resolve the problem due to its complexity, the matter is referred to the Dean of the School of Human Movement and Quality of Life who acts as the Chair of the Department of Sport Organisation and Management. The President may refer the matter to the Departmental Assembly if he/she deems it necessary.

5. In case the matter is referred to the Department Assembly, the Assembly may request the assistance and/or refer the case to the competent administrative or other body and institution of the University of Peloponnese (e.g. Student Advocate, Gender Equality Committee, Ethics Committee, Research Ethics Committee, etc.). If the current solution is accepted by all parties, then the problem is resolved and the case is closed or referred to the appropriate bodies, in accordance with the current regulations of the University of Peloponnese.

In case of rejection of an appeal, no new appeal on the same issue will be accepted. The decisions taken by the Departmental Assembly are final and irrevocable. In case the proposed solution does not satisfy the student, he/she may appeal in writing to the competent body of the Institution for re-investigation.

ARTICLE 5. RIGHT TO INFORMATION

The student is informed of the outcome of his/her application within one month.

At the last meeting of the Coordination Committee of each academic semester, a special discussion is held on the axes of requests/complaints recorded during the semester in all the above ways and proposals are made to the institutions of the University.

ARTICLE 6 : OTHER MEANS & PROCEDURES FOR LODGING COMPLAINTS AND OBJECTIONS

Course Evaluation Questionnaires

Students have the opportunity, through the use of questionnaires for the evaluation of the educational process at the course level, as provided by the National Authority for Higher Education (NAHE), to evaluate the performance of the MSc and its teaching staff and to express their dissatisfaction with any failures in the provision of services.

For issues not related to courses and quality of studies, students can address the institutionalized bodies of the University of Peloponnese, which will deal with them in accordance with their rules of operation. In particular, students may address the following academic bodies:

Student Advocate

The institution of the Student Advocate was established by Law 4009/2011, article 55 and updated by Law 4957/22, article 130. The mission of the Student Advocate is to avert conflicts, protect academic dignity and support students throughout their academic life. The Advocate has no jurisdiction in matters of student examinations and grades. For the current academic year, by decision of the Senate of the University of Peloponnese, the Student Advocate has been appointed Professor of the Department of Business Administration and Organizations of the Faculty of Management, Mr. Konstantinos Mavreas. The Student Advocate exercises the following responsibilities:

a) Investigate cases, ex officio or following a student's report, and mediate in the competent bodies of the Institution for their resolution. In order to achieve his/her task, he/she may request from the services of the institution any information, document or other evidence concerning the case, examine persons, conduct an autopsy and order expert opinions. If it finds that in a particular case the law is not being observed, that there is evidence of maladministration or that the proper functioning of the institution is being disturbed, it shall draw up a report which it shall communicate to the professor concerned or to the competent administrative department and to the student who submitted the

report, and shall take all appropriate steps to resolve the problem. The Student Advocate may, by an act of the Student Advocate, place on file a report which is considered manifestly vague, unfounded or unsubstantiated. If he/she considers that there are indications that disciplinary misconduct has been committed, he/she shall forward the case to the competent disciplinary body.

b) Provide information to the staff and students of the Institution on the function, responsibilities and mission of the Student Advocate.

c) Plans and coordinates training activities for students and staff of the Institution, in cooperation with other units of the Institution, as well as with external bodies, in particular with the Ombudsman and the Student Advocates of other higher education institutions in Greece and abroad.

d) Participate in the formulation of internal policies and the development of tools to enhance integrity and transparency and cooperate with the competent bodies of the University Code of Conduct, the Conflict of Interest Management Regulations and protocols for dealing with incidents of fraud and corruption.

e) Inform and collaborate with the institution's governing bodies, the Ethics Committee, the Internal Audit Unit, the institution's Integrity Advisor and the organizational unit responsible for administrative support and human resources issues, for the development and implementation of integrity policies and standards within the institution.

f) Prepares an annual report, which is submitted to the Rector, the Board of Governors and the Senate of the University on the work performed and the progress of the cases handled, as well as proposals for improving the efficiency of the institution's services. The findings of the Student Advocate, as well as his annual report are published on the institution's website, without prejudice to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation, OJ L 119) and Law No. 4624/2019 (A' 137).

Gender Equality Committee

The Committee was established in accordance with the provision of article 33 of Law 4589/2019 (Government Gazette 13/τ.Α'/29-1-2019) and by decision of the Senate of the University of Peloponnese (Meeting No. 34, 16-10-2020). It acts as an advisory body to the Senate and the Administrations of the Faculties and Departments for the promotion of equality at all levels of operation and in all processes of academic life.

The Committee has the following responsibilities:

(a) provide assistance to victims of discrimination when discrimination is alleged,

(b) draw up action plans to promote and ensure substantive equality in the educational, research and administrative processes of the institution and prepare an annual report, which it submits to the Senate,

(c) recommend to the competent bodies measures to promote equality and combat sexism,

(d) provide information and training to members of the academic community on gender and equality issues,

(e) provide mediation services in cases of complaints of discrimination or harassment.

(f) promote the development of MSc courses and the holding of seminars and lectures focusing on gender studies,

(g) promote the preparation of studies and research on issues related to its areas of competence.

The Internal Regulations shall regulate all other matters relating to the constitution and operation of the Ethics Committee.

Ethics Committee

The Ethics Committee was established by decision of the Administrative Council, based on article 217 of Law 4957/21-7-2022, and is composed of four (4) members of the Teaching and Research Staff of the University, coming from different faculties and the competent Vice Rector as Chairman. The term of office of the Committee is two years.

The Ethics Committee has in particular the following responsibilities:

(a) to draw up a "Code of Ethics and Good Practice" for academic, administrative and research matters, which is approved by the Senate and incorporated into the Internal Regulations of the Foundation,

(b) ensure that all members of the Foundation observe and apply the rules of ethics and establish violations of the rules of ethics,

(c) draw up an annual report on the observance and application or the need to revise the rules of conduct, which is submitted to the Rector and communicated to the Senate at the beginning of each academic year,

d) examines, on its own initiative or following a written report - complaint by students, members of the teaching staff, members of the teaching staff, members of the Teaching and Research Staff, Special Education Staff and Specialized and Laboratory Teaching Staff, visiting lecturers and administrative staff on matters within its competence, in order to establish the violation of the rules of ethics or investigates relevant incidents at the request of the Rector.

If a breach of ethical rules is found or if the investigation reveals the commission of disciplinary offences, it sends the relevant findings to the Rector, so that he or she can assess the incident and take the necessary legal action.

The Internal Regulations regulate any other issue related to the establishment and operation of the Ethics Committee.

Committee on Ethics and Integrity in Research (CEIHR)

This Committee was established in accordance with the provisions of articles 277 to 282 of Law 4957/2022 (A141), in order to provide a moral and ethical guarantee of the reliability of research projects conducted at the University of Peloponnese. It checks whether a research project is carried out with respect to the value of human beings, the autonomy of the persons involved, their privacy and personal data, as well as the natural and cultural environment, as well as compliance with the generally accepted principles of research integrity and the criteria of good scientific practice.

ARTICLE 7. MAINTENANCE, SUPPLEMENTATION AND REVISION OF THESE RULES

The present Regulations were approved by the Assembly of the Department of Sports Organization and Management, following the recommendation of the Board of the Master of Science in "Contemporary Sports Communication, Journalism and Photojournalism" and may be supplemented, modified or revised by decision of the Assembly of the Department.

