

OPERATING REGULATIONS STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT MECHANISM

According to the Decision of the Senate of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki No. 78656/23.06.2023 "Approval of the Regulation of Postgraduate Programs of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH)" (Government Gazette 4084/B-23.06.2023) the following apply:

Postgraduate Students' Complaint Management Mechanism (Article 22 of the Postgraduate Program Regulation of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

Postgraduate students may express any complaint or objection related to their studies and for this reason the complaint management mechanism is applied separately in each Postgraduate Program. The aim is to upgrade the quality of the operation of the Postgraduate Program with full respect for all those involved in the educational and research process, but much more for its recipients to whom it must be accountable. This procedure concerns all complaints/objections related to the quality of educational, research and administrative services provided by the Department.

A **complaint** is defined as the expression of dissatisfaction (oral or written) on the part of the student of the Department, due to the disillusionment of **his/her** expectations regarding the quality level of the services provided.

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 the submitted request.

The complaint management policy is addressed to active postgraduate students and aims to resolve a dispute or problem, such as:

- i. Disagreement on issues of studies and attendance
- ii. Inappropriate behavior by a member of academic or administrative staff
- iii. Incomplete information of students by a member of academic or administrative staff.

Postgraduate students are occupied during their studies by both rights and obligations, as described in the Rules of Procedure of the I.P.P.S. Also, they must

contact their Academic Advisor for guidance and support on issues that concern them and are related to their **studies**. Students may submit an oral or written complaint when an action or decision of a member of the Department or a collegiate body is inconsistent with:

- the regulations of study and attendance,
- the Code of Ethics and/or the prescribed procedures for academic teaching and research,
- the rational use of facilities and infrastructure,
- the protection of intellectual property and copyright,
- appropriate work conduct,
- equal treatment and equality,
- combating harassment and sexual harassment.

Postgraduate students may express any request or objection related to their studies, as follows:

- For academic issues related to studies, postgraduate students can contact the **Academic Advisor of the Program**.
- For issues that require mediation between postgraduate students and professors or administrative services of the Institution, the observance of legality in the context of academic freedom, the confrontation of maladministration phenomena and the safeguarding of the proper functioning of the Institution, students may contact the **Student Ombudsman of the Institution**. The Student Ombudsman ensures the observance of legality and academic ethics and order in the context of academic freedom and addresses maladministration phenomena in order to safeguard the proper functioning of the Institution. The Ombudsman does not intervene in substantive matters of teaching or marking in examinations, but only examines phenomena of arbitrariness or violation of ethical rules during the conduct of examinations (written or oral).
- For violations of ethics and quality of studies, students may contact the **Ethics Committee of the Institution**.
- For issues related to gender discrimination, students can contact the **Gender Equality Committee**.

- For issues related to the protection of personal data, students can contact the **Data Protection Officer (DPO)**.

The complaints/appeals management mechanism may include the following stages:

Stage 1: Direct Resolution

HEARING: examination of the postgraduate student's complaint by a faculty member of the I.P.P.S.P. The postgraduate student reports the complaint to a faculty member/E.D.I.P./E.T.E.P. (to the professor in charge or to the course instructor or to the academic advisor) or to an administrative staff member (to the head of the secretariat), depending on the nature of the complaint. The member of the Department examines the complaint in cooperation with the student and proposes a solution. In cases where after the completion of The student objects to the solution proposal or the situation is still problematic, then he/she may submit within 30 days from the day of occurrence of the problem, his/her complaint in writing to his/her Academic Advisor.

Stage 2: Formal Resolution

MEDIATION: Examination of the postgraduate student's complaint by his/her Academic Advisor. The Academic Advisor examines the complaint in collaboration with the graduate student and proposes a solution. In this direction, the Academic Advisor, at his discretion, communicates with other members of the I.P.P.S.P. in order to request their assistance, as they are obliged by their duties, in solving the problem.

ADMINISTRATIVE EXAMINATION: Examination of the student's complaint by the Director of the I.P.P.S. . In cases where, after the completion of the mediation process of the Academic Advisor, the student objects to the resolution or the situation is still problematic, then he/she may submit his/her complaint in writing to the Secretariat, addressed to the Director of the I.P.P.S.P.S., using the specific ***Complaint & Objections*** Submission Form indicating, inter alia, the hearing and mediation procedure followed. The Director of the I.P.P.S. takes the necessary steps to examine / investigate the problem. He may, depending on the nature of the problem, invite the student to a hearing and request the assistance of any

member or body of the I.P.P.S. or the Institution or refer the complaint to the Curriculum Committee of the I.P.P.S. In cases where the Director refers the complaint to the Curriculum Committee, the decision is final and the student may not submit an objection and make use of the third stage of this procedure. Within a reasonable time and depending on the nature of the problem and the urgency of the matter, the student is duly informed of the outcome of the actions taken and the decisions taken regarding the complaint.

Stage 3: Objection and Final Review of Problem/Complaint

OBJECTION: Examination of an objection by the Curriculum Committee of the I.P.P.S. In cases where, after the completion of the administrative examination procedure of the complaint, the postgraduate student objects to the resolution or the situation is still problematic, then he/she may resubmit his/her complaint in writing to the Program Committee, through a protocol, using the specific ***Complaint & Objections*** Submission Form indicating, inter alia, the hearing, mediation and administrative examination procedure followed.

In cases where the Director of the I.P.P.S. has already requested the assistance of the Curriculum Committee at the stage of the Administrative Examination, the student may not submit an objection and make use of this step of the procedure. The decision to be taken by the Curriculum Committee is final.

"Personal Data

The I.P.P.S.P. archives and manages the information concerning students' personal data in accordance with the applicable legislation. It is noted that all the above procedures must follow the Personal Data Protection Regulation of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and operate in accordance with it in order to fully ensure the protection of postgraduate students."

It is noted that the terms "student", "students", "professor", "professor" refer to all genders.