



SABARAGAMUWA UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) – GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL - SUSL

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| SOP Name /Title | Standard Operating Procedure for Internal Student Grievance Redressal |
| SOP Reference Number | CQA/SOP/Stu Sup/01/2021 |
| Senate Approval | 14.12.2021 |
| Council Approval | 24.01.2022 |
| Effective Date | 24.01.2022 |
| Last revised date | NA |
| Originator | CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE |

1. Standard Operating Procedure for Internal Student Grievance Redressal

- i. Grievance handling should start at the level of the mentor, initially not with formal documentation. In case if the student is not willing to start the process with his/her mentor, the matter can be discussed with the Head of the Department/Dean/Deputy Senior Student Counsellor of the Faculty, in which case a senior academic staff member will be allocated to handle the case (in such cases the allocated staff member is referred by the term 'mentor' hereafter).
- ii. If the student or the mentor believes the issue is not sorted to the satisfaction of the student, a formal grievance complaint/appeal should be submitted in the form of a confidential hard document or a password protected attachment to an email to the Dean/Deputy Senior Student Counsellor of the Faculty, through a standard format

(Annexure I: standard format for formal grievance complaint/appeal). This can even be submitted by the complainant and the mentor together or individually by a single party without informing the other party.

- iii. Such receipt of a formal grievance complaint/appeal should be accepted and acknowledged by the Dean/Deputy Senior Student Counsellor within five working days.
- iv. The Dean and the Deputy Senior Student Counsellor should assess the grievance with immediate effect and decide on the path to follow, with a formal documentation at the Dean's office.
- v. Upon the receipt of a formal grievance complaint/appeal, a committee of five senior staff members including at least one student counsellor from the relevant Department (who will be the convener of the committee, and report to the Deputy Senior Student Counsellor) the relevant Head of the Department, Faculty Coordinator for the '*Sith Arana*' Psychological Counselling Unit and two independent members (one representing another department, and one may represent the Gender Equity and Equality Cell of the Faculty where relevant) will be appointed by the Dean/Deputy Senior Student Counsellor, to conduct a formal inquiry of the issue (hereafter referred to as 'Committee'). Any individual mentioned in the formal grievance complaint/appeal or related to the complaint/appeal will not be a member of the Committee.
- vi. In case of an academic issue the Committee is responsible to resolve the grievance within the faculty as soon as possible and recommend the Dean/ Deputy Senior Student Counsellor on the best way to resolve the grievance.
- vii. In case of a personal issue, the Deputy Senior Student Counsellor is responsible for acquiring the relevant involvements of the Proctor and the Legal Officer of the University (as invitees to the Committee), when necessary. Any complaint/appeal regarding any form of harassment by any other student or a group of students, or an academic, non-academic or an administrative staff member are also considered under this section of personal issues.
- viii. In case of an or a financial and/or a welfare issue the Committee will immediately direct the student to the student support services and Welfare Director of the Academic and

Student Services Division of the University under the guidance and support of his/her mentor and a representative of the Committee.

- ix. During financial issues, especially when the student is not receiving student bursary or Mahapola scholarship, the Committee may seek avenues of financial support with the help from the Faculty Welfare Society, University Welfare Society, University Teachers' Association, Alumni and the Faculty Student's Union when necessary. It is recommended to generate a Faculty Fund for needy students and to offer a scholarship scheme and a loan scheme.
- x. In case of a psychological issue the Committee will immediately direct the student to the '*Sith Arana*' Psychological Counselling Unit under the guidance and support of his/her mentor and the Faculty coordinator for the '*Sith Arana*' Psychological Counselling Unit (or a representative of the Committee, in place of one of the above, when needed), ensuring that at least one staff member is of the same gender as the student.
- xi. In each of the above paths a system should be placed to open a confidential file on the issue that would only be kept at the Dean's office and maintained by the Secretary to the Deputy Senior Student Counsellor for the Faculty.
- xii. In case of common/collective grievances related to academic matters, the student representatives can voice the issues in the Faculty Board meeting of each faculty under general matters.
- xiii. In case of common/collective grievances related to welfare matters, the student representatives can refer the matters at the Welfare Meeting of the Faculty.
- xiv. At each level it is essential to listen well and understand the grievances carefully, while treating all relevant parties without any subjectivity. The student who make the complaint/appeal will be given the maximum freedom to express him/herself confidentially, with facilitation from his/her mentor if and when needed.
- xv. The most appropriate and quickest solutions should be reached at the earliest possibility, not more than six weeks from the date of the complaint/appeal, and should be documented.

- xvi. Periodic follow-up meetings and close monitoring is essential upon reaching a resolution for an examined issue and should be administered by the relevant student counsellor (with the help of the relevant mentor), in the presence of the Dean/Deputy Senior Student Counsellor.
- xvii. A secretary assigned by the Dean's office for the Deputy Senior Student Counsellor is responsible to maintain the files at the Dean's office.
- xviii. Any student can oppose to have his/her mentor and/or any faculty member to be in the five-person team handling his/her issue. Then the Dean and Deputy Senior Student Counsellor will make the decision on replacing him/her by an alternative member.
- xix. All communications after entering the formal track should happen via a written document with signatures or emails with email signatures.

This document is prepared by a committee suggested by the Senate Standing on Quality Assurance, SUSL (32nd SSC-QA meeting, held in August 2021). Senate approval for the committee was at its 255th meeting held in 14.09.2021.

Composition of the committee

Dr. M. Sandun J. Perera (chair)

Dr. H.P. Rasika Priyankara (Member)

Prof. H.A.D. Ruwandeepika (Member)

Mr. Saman Uyangoda (Member)

Ms. P. Gayani Imanthika Dias (Secretary)

*****Remarks: Initial version of this document was developed as the student grievance handling and resolution mechanism of the Faculty of Applied Sciences by Dr. M. Sandun J. Perera in consultation of the academic staff members of the Faculty.***

******This has been approved at the 258th Senate held on 14.12.2021 and at the 280th Council held on 24.01.2022***

Centre for Quality Assurance

November 2021.

Annexure I



**General format for a student grievance complaint/appeal to the Dean/Deputy Senior Student
Counsellor of the Faculty**

(To be made available in both Sinhala and Tamil languages)

**This can be submitted by the complainant and the mentor together or individually by a single party, while it is not necessary to inform the other party.

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| Name of the complainant: | |
| The student (victim) [] / The mentor [] | (tick which is appropriate) |
| Details of the complainant: | |
| Student registration number (when applicable): | |
| National Identity card number: | |
| Temporary/permanent residence of the complainant at the time of the incident complained: | |
| Temporary/permanent residence of the victim at the time of the incident complained <i>(please disregard if the complainant is the victim):</i> | |
| Complainant: <i>***Provide a detailed complaint including necessary details on the dates and times and places where necessary. In case where details cannot be disclosed at the time of the initial complaint/appeal, the complainant can provide a simple statement in this form, to initiate the process of grievance handling.</i> | |
| List of supporting evidence/documents: | |
| Signature and the date of the complainant: | |