Medical University - Plovdiv

PROCEDURE

FOR FILING AND REVIEWING OF COMPLAINTS FROM STUDENTS/PHD STUDENTS AT MU-PLOVDIV

Adopted at the Academic Council by Protocol № 9 of 26.11.2015.

The medical university of Plovdiv /MU – Plovdiv strives to provide high quality training and to promote the activity of the students concerned with feedback in case of difficulties or suggestions for improvements. The management of the university and the academic community value the opinion of students and postgraduates, which can lead to improved quality of the administrative, organizational and educational activities.

The leading principles in reviewing the complains are:

- timely consideration and effective solution.
- fairness and transparency of procedures performed.
- adequate feedback.
- confidentiality.

Under this procedure MU - Plovdiv seeks to review and close cases with decisions on submitted complaints / appeals and / or protests / in the following terms: Within two weeks of receiving the complaint filed by an individual, and within a month when collective, the body competent to consider the complaint or protest shall make a decision, and when this is impossible because of the complexity of the same, persons concerned shall be informed on the ongoing progress of the procedure with regard to honesty and awareness.

The procedure applies to written complaints received from students and postgraduates on the occasion of dissatisfaction or inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and administrative and organizational activities at MU - Plovdiv.

Anonymous complaints and complaints made on behalf of others, will not be considered unless they are given power of attorney.

The grounds for complaints that are dealt with under this procedure include dissatisfaction with:

- the conditions and manner of conducting lessons and exams.
- attitude or unacceptable behavior of teachers and administrative staff.
- administrative services and living conditions.
- discrepancy between the announced curricula, conditions and requirements and the actual.
- conducting of classes and exams.

This procedure does not address issues for which there are other provisions and procedures, such as:

- complaints from students, post-graduate students and doctoral candidates against other students, postgraduates or doctoral candidates.
- breaches of trust or contractual obligations by students, doctoral candidates or postgraduates
- defined under the Higher Education Act or other regulations, Regulations of Organisation and Operation of the Medical University Plovdiv and / or contracts they concluded with the university.
- changes in student status to PhD or post-graduate respectively, make up for classes, absence excuses, challenging marks and exam results (except for cases where the academic standards adopted by MU – Plovdiv are not met, Decision of the AC Protocol № 9 / 26.11.2015).

General principles:

- it is essential that before submitting a formal complaint under this procedure students and postgraduates are aware of the procedure, its scope and possible results.
- only complaints received under the terms of this procedure are addressed.
- the consideration of complaints is done under ethical norms and confidentiality.
- students, doctoral or graduate students shall not be penalized for complaint, except in cases where false information is provided, complaints are unsubstantiated or aim to deliberately discredit the University or its employees, which is done under the Higher Education Act, other laws and regulations, rules and regulations of the MU - Plovdiv and obligations set out in the contracts they conclude with the university;
- the aim of the procedure is to ensure transparency and fairness to all concerned, and opportunities for mediation and informal solutions at every stage of consideration of the complaints received.
- all complaints are dealt with as soon as possible, but with more affected people, or when circumstances require longer time for clarification the affected parties are expected to show understanding, patience and cooperation.

When considering the complaints made, the following principles are follows:

- with arguments present, there are always different parties involved (at least two), who are given equal opportunities to present their views, arguments and evidence,
- when considering complaints, the parties concerned are given the possibility to get acquainted with the information provided by the other party except when it violates legal norms and it is possible to reach a decision without full disclosure
- the parties concerned can seek assistance from other individuals, units and departments at MU - Plovdiv at every stage of the consideration of complaints received,
- obligation of the parties involved in the proceedings, is to provide complete and accurate /truthful / information and cooperate conscientiously and good faith to reach a settlement.

Students, graduate students or doctoral students who file complaints under this procedure should fulfill their duties and responsibilities defined in the Higher Education Act, the Rules and regulations of MU - Plovdiv and other laws or regulations.

Regardless of the decisions made during the complaint consideration it is forbidden that the latter has a subsequent (positive or negative) impact on the attitude towards students, doctoral or graduate students who filed the complaints.

Access to confidential information is only granted to employees directly involved in the procedure and decisions concerning the complaints.

Stages of complaint handling:

1. **Informal solving** in the unit whose activities are affected by the complaint:
   - In case of complaint issue students, doctoral students or graduate students must initially turn directly to the competent officials and more - specifically to the Head of Unit, whose activity is related to the complaint (by seeking a meeting or in writing - on paper or electronically).
   - Complaints should be made not later than 14 days from the occurrence of the event / cause.
   - Employees who were initially aware of the complaint are to undertake actions to deal with the complaint or should seek assistance from other officials; they should also inform students, doctoral or graduate students on any undertaken actions and/or any decisions made.
   - Students, doctoral students or graduate students must keep documents in store in case of a written notification, respectively written response on the actions taken and information obtained in the event of a need for further presentation of the same.
   - In cases where students, doctoral students or graduate students do not receive a reply on a complaint within 14 days from the date of filing of the complaint to the head of the department or a solution is not reached, they can make a formal request to the UQC (Stage 2 of the procedure) chaired by the Vice Rector of Quality and accreditation at MU - Plovdiv.

2. **Formal Complaints:**

In cases where no solution has been reached on the first level or students, doctoral students or graduate students have real / actual / grounds to be dissatisfied, they can file a formal complaint with the following official through the registry of the rector of the university, which keeps a register of incoming students' complaints in conjunction with these procedures, namely:

- Vice Rector of Quality and accreditation at MU - Plovdiv.

The Vice Rector of Quality and Accreditation has the right to distribute the received complaints and to require copies of documents, materials, organize work / or other meetings in

the performance of their duties in connection with these procedures. The University Quality Committee /UQC / which is a permanent body and aims to support him in the decision-making and disclosure of the latter, acts in cooperation.

Formal complaints can be made not later than 7 days after the previous solution or lack of such respectively.

In cases where students, graduate students or doctoral students are not willing to seek a solution in the unit, whose activities are affected by the complaint (first stage), they can submit a formal complaint within 14 days of the occurrence of the event (particular cause).

When the complaint is not filed within the specified deadlines and without a legitimate reason, it is possible that it will not be reviewed.

When filing a formal complaint (stage 2) it is obligatory that Form 1 (Appendix 1) is filled in to which relevant proof or evidence is attached (e.g. opinions from other parties supporting the complaint, written correspondence, etc.).

In the absence of sufficient materials confirming the grounds of the complaint or failure to establish the circumstances connected with it, it should be left without consideration.

Up to 14 days from the filing of the formal complaint students, graduate students or doctoral students must be informed about the procedure. Possible actions which are to be taken when starting a procedure for dealing with complaints filed within Stage 2 are:

- A meeting between an official and students, graduate students and doctoral students to further clarify the circumstances
- Forwarding of the complaint to another official for detailed consideration and decision.
- Hearing, mediation and reaching of a solution between the parties concerned.

Students, graduate students or doctoral students are informed on the decision made by the vice Rector of quality and accreditation, the UQC or an appropriate authority which is final for the ongoing procedure.

Regarding suggestions and signals

Suggestions and signals may be written or oral, submitted in person or through an authorized representative by telephone, telegraph, telex, fax or email. Submitted in the above order proposals and signals are recorded in the registry of the rector. Proceedings on anonymous signals as well as signals relating to offenses committed more than two years ago will not be initiated.

Terms:

Decisions on suggestions are made not later than 2 months after the introduction and are announced in a 7-day period.

When a more thorough and continuous investigation is necessary the period for decision may be extended to up to 6 months.

Decisions made on suggestions are not subject to appeal.

A decision on a signal is made in a two-month period after introduction. When reasons of particular importance imposes it the period may be extended by the superior authority, but with no more than a month, the complainant will be notified.

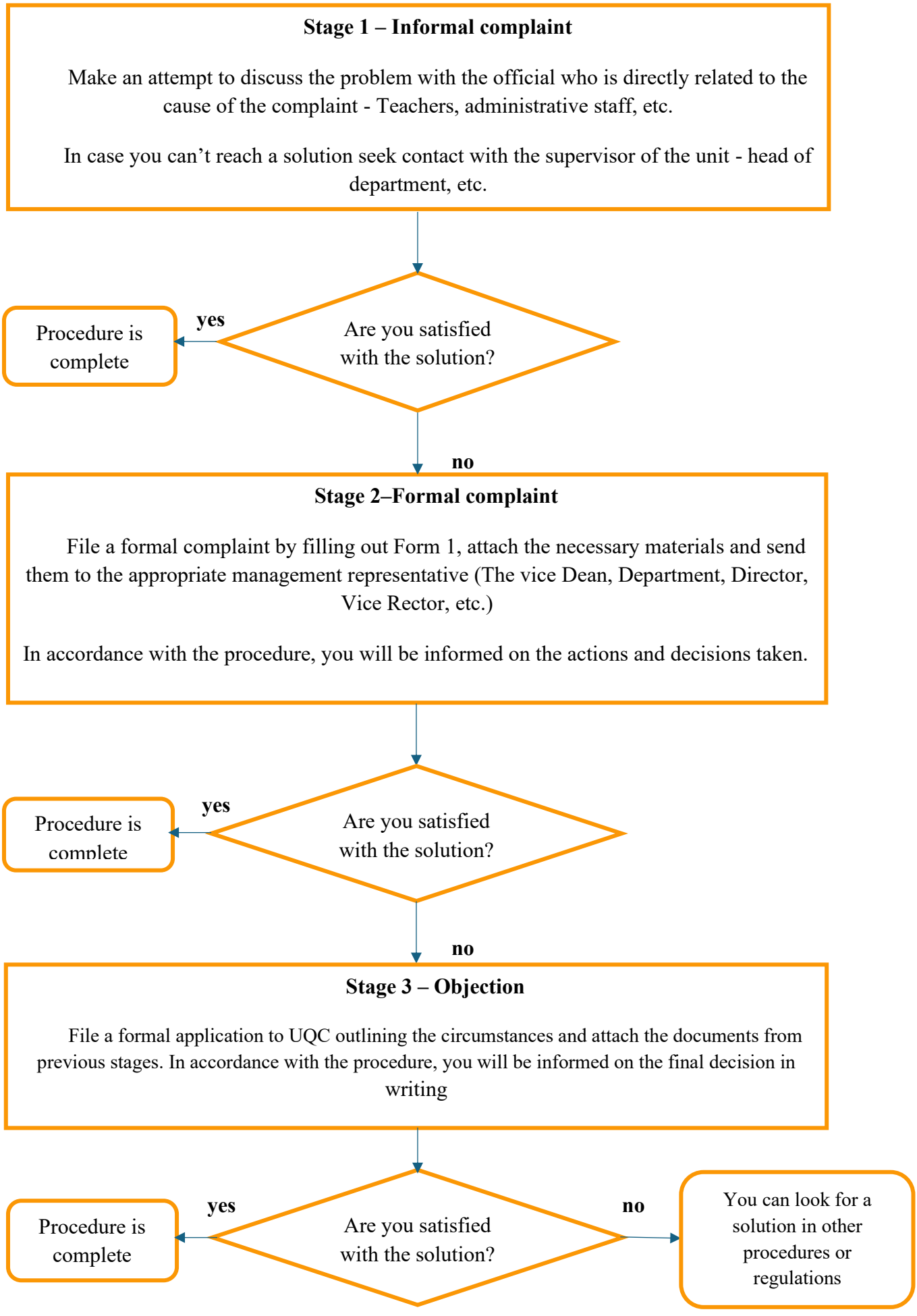
UCQ works in cooperation with the Student Council and the units of MU – Plovdiv, provides clarifications on the procedures for complaints, assists in the implementation of Stage 1 and periodically monitors the implementation of decisions on Stage 2.

A copy of the procedure and a model form for complaints are published on the MU -Plovdiv website.

This procedure is approved by AC - Protocol № 9 / 26.11.2015. Annex №1 is inextricably linked to this procedure.

Amendments and supplements to this procedure shall follow the order of its adoption.

Complaint procedure



Medical University - Plovdiv

Complaint Form

In the event that you want to file a **formal** complaint on the conducting or quality of administrative or curricular activities or other aspects of the University you must complete this form, outlining your position.
Before filling out the form you must be familiar with the complaint review procedure of MU – Plovdiv and should have taken action to find a solution informally in the unit the activity of which is concerned.

Keep a copy of this form for your personal archive/record.

TO: .....

Information about the person filing the complaint

Name, Surname, Family name.....

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Address for correspondence relating to the complaint

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Email.....Phone number.....

Specialty .....

Faculty № .....

General description of the case

Please describe briefly and clearly what the complaint is

If necessary, use an additional sheet of paper.

General description of the actions taken to date to solve the case

Please describe briefly and clearly what actions you have taken so far I order to find an informal solution regarding the complaint:

Who have you addressed? (Specify the name, position of the person and the date of the meeting) .....

In the event that there are other people (students, teachers, administration) that are involved, please specify details.

Please describe briefly and clearly what the results of the actions to reach a solution are so far and why you think they are not satisfying.

Section 4 - Expected outcome

Please specify what action you would like be taken in connection with the complaint and what outcome would you be satisfied with.

Section 5 - Declaration

I confirm that the information provided is true / I declare that I am aware of / the contents of Art. 313 of the Criminal Code / CC / and the criminal liability that lies with providing false information /.

signature: ..... date: .....

In case that there are documents or other materials attached, please describe them:
(Eg. Correspondence or documents relating to the complaint)

Service information:
Confirmation sent .....
Reply sent .....

Complaint forwarded to .....

Reply received .....

What further action(s) (if necessary) are required?
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