

## Policies and Procedures

Policy Title	AUBH Employee Grievance and Complaint Policy	Policy Number	301
Section	People and Culture	Approval Date	30 May 2024
Subsection	General Personal Policies	Authorizing Entity	BoD
Responsible Office	HR Department	Effective Date	15 June 2024
Distributed To	All Employees & Contractors	Next Review Date	30 May 2026

### 1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The American University of Bahrain is dedicated to fostering a harmonious and respectful working environment where every member of our administrative and faculty staff can thrive. This policy serves as a cornerstone of this commitment by providing a structured framework to address concerns, disputes, and grievances of AUBH employees and contractors promptly, fairly, and constructively.

### 2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 **Grievance:** A formal expression of dissatisfaction with a work-related matter or decision (i.e., violation of rights or unfair treatment within the workplace).

2.2 **Grievant:** An administrative or faculty staff member and contractors initiating the complaint or grievance.

2.3 **Respondent:** The individual or department against whom the conflict or grievance is raised.

2.4 **Conflict Resolution:** The process of addressing and resolving minor disagreements or disputes that may arise among employees in a workplace.

2.5 **Complaint:** A formal expression of dissatisfaction or concern raised by an employee regarding a specific workplace conflict or condition (i.e., behavior of colleagues, or general working conditions).

2.6 **Mediator:** A neutral third party who assists in facilitating communication and negotiation between the grievant and respondent to help them reach a mutually acceptable resolution.

2.7 **Grievance Committee:** A group of impartial individuals established to investigate and make recommendations regarding formal grievances or complaints.

2.8 **NRGC:** Nomination, Remuneration, & Governance Committee.

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### 3.0 POLICY

3.1 If a grievance or complaint submitted under this policy is suspected to involve actions or circumstances that may be in violation of applicable laws or regulations, AUBH reserves the right to report such matters to the appropriate legal or regulatory authorities for further investigation and action as necessary. This reporting will be carried out in compliance with all relevant legal obligations and responsibilities.

3.2 If the grievance or complaint involves one student or more, the matter will be transferred to the Grievance and Disciplinary Action Procedure.

#### **Grievances**

3.3 Upon receipt of a written Grievance, the President will establish an ad-hoc Grievance Committee. The committee will include representation from relevant departments and may include relevant external members when necessary.

3.4 The established Grievance Committee will conduct a thorough investigation, including interviews with the grievant, respondent, and any other relevant parties. The committee may also review relevant documents and evidence related to the grievance.

3.5 Based on the findings of the investigation, the Grievance Committee will provide a written recommendation to the President. The recommendation will state affirmation or overruling of the decision under consideration and may include suggested actions or resolutions.

3.6 The Grievance Committee will be comprised of three (3) members holding the same or higher position/rank of the Grievant. All members shall be independent of the Grievant and subject of the Grievance and shall not be involved in the decision under review. The direct line manager of the Grievant will also be excluded from membership.

3.7 All parties involved in the grievance process, including the Grievance Committee members, shall make best endeavors to maintain the confidentiality of the Grievant, the Grievance, and the proceedings whenever possible.

3.8 AUBH prohibits retaliation against any administrative and faculty staff member involved in the grievance process. Any acts of retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action.

3.9 All Grievances will be accepted within a maximum of 10 working days of its occurrence. Any submissions beyond 10 working days will not be accepted.

3.10 The Grievance Committee shall have 15 working days from the establishment date to conduct its investigation and submit the recommendation to the President.

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3.11 The President will make a final decision taking into consideration the Grievance Committee's recommendation. The decision will be communicated in writing to both the Grievant and the respondent within 5 working days of receiving the recommendation.

3.12 Should the Grievant be unsatisfied with the outcome, they may request to escalate the Grievance to the NRG. C.

3.13 Grievance records will be maintained by the Human Resources Department for a period of 5 years.

### **Complaints / Conflict Resolution**

3.14 If a submitted complaint involves serious issues such as but not limited to harassment, discrimination, ethical violations, or breaches of AUBH policy, or if it is found to have significant impact on the working environment, employee morale, or productivity, it will be treated as a formal Complaint.

3.15 All formal Complaints will follow the process described in this policy by points 3.3 through 3.13.

3.16 If the Complaint can be resolved through direct communication or mediation without the need for an in-depth investigation, it might be treated as a minor conflict resolution case.

3.17 Mediators may be assigned to conflict resolution cases to assist in the communication process, ensuring that each party has an opportunity to express their views and concerns. They will help to clarify misunderstandings, identify issues, and explore potential solutions.

3.18 Time limits set in this policy in points 3.3 through 3.13 may be waived on sensitive Complaint cases by the President at his discretion.

3.19 Complaint records will be maintained by the Human Resources Department for a period of 5 years.

## 4.0 PROCEDURES

4.1 All Grievances or Complaints shall be submitted in writing to the President or the Human Resources Department within the specified period in point 3.9 above.

4.2 If a formal Grievance under this policy is not required, a resolution can be obtained within the department or through consultation with HR.

4.3 The raised Grievance or Complaint should include essential information to help facilitate a thorough and fair investigation.

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4.4 The following elements should be included in a grievance or complaint submission:

- A. Grievant Information
- B. Date and Time of Incident
- C. Details of the Incident or Decision
- D. Supporting Documents (when applicable/available)
- E. Policy or Procedure Violation (when applicable)
- F. Impact on the Grievant
- G. Desired Remedy or Resolution
- H. Signature and Date

4.5 The result of the Grievance or Complaint will be communicated by the Human Resources Department.

4.5 Management will report all Grievance and Complaints received and outcomes to the NRGCC committee periodically on a bi-annual basis.

4.6 In any of the below cases, management will report the Grievance or Complaint to the NRGCC committee immediately and/or within a maximum of 3 working days:

- A. If the Grievance or Complaint involves a senior member of the management team, defined as the President or up to two levels below in the organizational hierarchy.
- B. If the issue could potentially pose a significant reputational risk to AUBH.
- C. If the matter could result in substantial financial risk to AUBH.

### 5.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

5.1 Human Resources Policy

5.2 Grievance and Disciplinary Action Procedure (Student policy)

POLICY HISTORY			
Date of Last Action	Action Taken/Changes	Authorizing Entity	Effective Date