



Policies and Procedures

Operations Department

Student Complaints Policy and Procedure

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Policy Reviewer	Rosanne Galea	Designation	Managing Director
Policy Approver	QAC	Revised Date	26/07/2024

Student Complaints Policy and Procedure

1. Introduction

This procedure provides a protocol for the addressing of concerns raised by students, expediently, fairly and effectively, so that Future Focus can achieve the highest quality in its education as a course provider.

2. Guiding Principles

Future Focus aims to minimize student complaints by facilitating active student participation in formal decision-making processes through mechanisms like Student Panels or similar forums, thereby encouraging regular feedback.

In the event that you are dissatisfied with Future Focus, the institution will seek to:

- (a) resolve the issue as expedient as possible,
- (b) conduct fair and thorough investigations,
- (c) ensure the process is unbiased.

The aim of the procedure is that complaints are resolved as quickly and at as early a stage as possible, so as to avoid any more dissatisfactions.

In order to achieve this, Future Focus asks that you alert them as soon as the problem arises, so as to be able to tackle it at an early stage.

Future Focus binds itself to keep confidential all details of your complaint.

Future Focus expects that all parties respect the complaint procedure. In doing so you are required to ensure that details of your complaint remain confidential.

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Failure to do this could be considered an attempt to influence the outcome of your complaint, and thus may result in the withdrawal of this procedure. Nevertheless, in light of this, you have the right to seek advice/support as appropriate from relevant support services, e.g. admin@futurefocus.com.mt, who deals with student welfare.

In the interest of fairness, all parties directly involved in a complaint are entitled to access and present evidence.

The burden of proof lies with the complainant. The standard of proof is based on the balance of probability.

If there are allegations of a criminal nature, Future Focus may refer the matter to the police, and await their outcome.

Making a complaint will not result in any form of disadvantage. However, frivolous, malicious, or vexatious complaints may be subject to disciplinary action. Frivolous, malicious and/or vexatious complaints are defined as:

- Complaints which are harassing, obsessive, or repetitive,
- Insistence on pursuing non-meritorious complaints and/or unrealistic, unreasonable outcomes,
- Insistence on pursuing what may be meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner,
- Complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance,
- Demands for redress which lack any serious purpose or value,
- Complaints or demands which could be avoided if the student reads the student agreement.

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Future Focus is committed to ensuring a safe and respectful working environment for its staff. Therefore, students, representatives, and staff are expected to treat each other fairly and respectfully throughout the process. Unreasonable, aggressive, or abusive behaviour, whether verbal or written, will not be tolerated and may result in restricted access to the complaints procedure or staff involved. The decision to limit or withdraw access is not taken lightly. In the event that this decision is taken we will provide this in writing, including the reason(s) why this decision has been taken.

Any decision to limit or withdraw access will be communicated in writing, along with the rationale behind it. Appeals against such decisions can be made in writing to the Director, Ms. Rosanne Galea, at r.galea@futurefocus.com.mt.

Appeals against access withdrawal must be submitted within 7 calendar days of notification.

Appeals are normally resolved within 3 weeks of receipt of the appeal. In the case of delay, you will be notified accordingly.

For your appeal to be accepted you will need to provide the below:

- (a) Evidence of procedural irregularities
- (b) Evidence of bias
- (c) Decision reached is one that no reasonable body (properly directing itself and taking into account all relevant factors) could have arrived at.

3. Who may use this procedure and in what circumstances

This procedure can only be used if you are a registered student at Future Focus at the time you make your complaint.

Moreover, this procedure, is in place to address any grievances you may have regarding your experience at Future Focus. This includes issues pertaining to teaching, supervision, support services, payment and finance, or any other related matters.

Primarily, the complaints procedure is intended for individual students. However, if multiple students share a common concern, they have the option to raise it collectively as a group. In such cases, they must designate one member as a spokesperson to represent the group. This approach minimizes the influx of multiple emails and complaints in the institution's email system. The spokesperson will speak on behalf of the group and typically be the sole representative attending meetings.

Where a complaint concerns more than one area/service of Future Focus, the Head of Institution or the Director, Ms. Rosanne Galea shall deal with both or more, of these matters.

4. Complaints made against other students

In the case where complaints are made against other students, the complainant would need to inform the relevant lecturer of the course/lecture, admin@futurefocus.com.mt and support@futurefocus.com.mt, so that they will be in a position to investigate. If the situation worsens, one of the latter has the right to supervise the appropriate lecturer, and even speak to the student causing problems.

5. Before you complain

Before initiating a complaint, you may wish to take advice. Amongst those who may be able to help are the following:

- Contact us on support@futurefocus.com, to seek advice.

6. How to complain

This process contains three stages which are referred as the following: Level 1 Complaint, Level 2 Complaint, and Level 3 Complaint:

Level 1 Complaint

At this stage, you should inform the persons who are responsible for the area under which the complaint falls. For instance, if there is an issue about student welfare, such as complaints about lectures, lecturers, schedules, placement, and everything related, one is to inform admin@futurefocus.com.mt, by sending an email explaining what the complaint is. If you prefer calling, it is not a problem, however it is always advised that you send an email. If the issue deals mainly with applications or a change of course, one is to inform office@futurefocus.com.mt, whilst if deals with portal, the student is to send an email on support@futurefocus.com.mt. Moreover, if the issue is related to finances, such as payments and refunds, you are to contact us via accounts@futurefocus.com.mt. Furthermore, if the issue deals with a course which forms part of the OTHM course, one is to contact the Head of Institute, whose email shall be provided upon request. In this case, a complaint is usually resolved within 10 working days, or more in the case of staff absenteeism from the office.

Level 2 Complaint

If the complaint is not resolved by the previous stage, the person who has been taking care of the Level 1 Complaint would advise you to write an email and subject to your preference schedule a meeting with the Head of Institution. At this stage, you are to provide them with all the evidence of the complaint, as well as other pertinent information which is to be disclosed in the Level 2 Complaint Form (Next page). If the complaint allows to be resolved at this level, it is usually resolved within 15 working days. In the event that it would be impossible to get this complaint resolved by the stipulated time frame, you will be duly informed.

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Level 2 Complaint Form

This form is intended for those complaints which are not resolved by the Level 1 complaint procedure and would need to go to the Head of Institution. Therefore, you are required to fill-out this form, and attach it to an email addressed to them on the email which shall be provided upon request, or send it by post to our premises; 8, Triq l-Imħażen, Floriana, FRN1119

You are requested to complete all sections of the form so that it may be duly processed. If you need help filling out this form, you are free to contact any member of staff.

Kindly note that failure to provide the correct information both intentionally or unintentional can lead to your complaint being disregarded or referred back to you.

You are also required to keep a copy of this form for your records, as well as any material you submit.

ABOUT YOU

Name and Surname (in full)	
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ID Card	
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Course and Group number	
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Date of Commencement of Course	
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Your Mobile Number	
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Address	
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E-mail address	
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THE COMPLAINT TILL NOW

Please confirm the date and name of who you raised the Level 1 Complaint with:

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<p><u>Date</u> -</p> <p><u>Name</u> -</p>
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<p>Please confirm the date and name of the person you had your last meeting with in relation to the Level 1 Complaint (if applicable):</p> <p><u>Date</u> -</p> <p><u>Name</u> -</p>
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<p>Please confirm the date, and with whom, you had your last correspondence from the person who was dealing with this Level 1 Complaint (<i>if applicable</i>):</p> <p><u>Date</u> -</p> <p><u>Name</u> -</p>

Please attach written confirmation that this was initially a Level 1 Complaint.

ABOUT YOUR FORMAL COMPLAINT

<p>Please explain why you remain dissatisfied with the Level 1 Complaint Procedure.</p>

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(Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

DESIRED OUTCOME

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Please describe the action you would like to see taken in order to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction.

EVIDENCE

Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures

Please list any documentary evidence attached and make sure you keep a copy:
(e.g. any correspondence, timeline, or other documentation related to your complaint)
You should ensure that all relevant evidence which you wish to be considered is submitted with your application.

SUPPORT

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Please give the name of the student or other representative who is helping you.
(if applicable)

DECLARATION

I believe that the above information is true. I consent that details of this complaint can be shared with relevant staff (if applicable) so that my complaint may be resolved.

Signature of Student: _____

Signature of Head of Institution: _____

Date: _____

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Level 3 Complaint

Nevertheless, if the complaint is not yet resolved through the previous procedure, the Head of Institution will direct your complaint to the board of directors. Furthermore, you are to furnish the board with all evidence, email threads and explain the issue, as well as the Level 3 Complaint Form (Next Page). In turn, a meeting will be set up within 5 working days to discuss the complaint. Depending on the issue, the involved lecturers/ assessors and other involved persons may also be present in this meeting. Moreover, the meeting can also be done online or physical subject to the parties' preferences.

Furthermore, if the complaint deals with harassment, bullying or other offences which are of criminal nature, the complaint shall be dealt with according to this procedure and will not merit from the procedures Level 1 Complaint and Level 2 Complaint. If the complaint involves a criminal offence, the case shall be directed to the police for further review and investigation.

Moreover, and as stipulated above, if a complaint concerns more than one area or service of Future Focus, it shall be treated as a Level 3 Complaint.

When it comes to the Level 3 Complaint, it takes approximately 20 working days to resolve, unless complications arise, in which case, you will be duly informed.



Level 3 Complaint Form

This form is intended for those complaints which are not resolved by the Level 2 complaint procedure or for those complaints which deal with harassment, bullying or other offences which are of criminal nature or a complaints which relate to more than one area/service of Future Focus. In this case, this form would need to go to the Director of the Institution, Ms. Rosanne Galea. Therefore, you are required to fill-out this form, and attach to an email addressed to Ms. Rosanne Galea, on r.galea@futurefocus.com.mt, or send it by post to our premises; 8, Triq l-Imħazen, Floriana, FRN1119

You are requested to complete all sections of the form so that it may be duly processed. If you need help filling out this form, you are free to contact any member of staff.

Kindly note that failure to provide the correct information both intentionally or unintentional can lead to your complaint being disregarded or referred back to you.

You are also required to keep a copy of this form for your records, as well as any material you submit.

ABOUT YOU

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Name and Surname (in full)	
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ID Card	
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Course and Group number	
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Date of Commencement of Course	
--------------------------------------	--

Your Mobile Number	
-----------------------	--

Address	
---------	--

E-mail address	
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THE COMPLAINT TILL NOW

Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures

Please confirm the date and name of who you raised the Level 2 Complaints with:

Date -

Name -

Please confirm the date and name of the person you had your **last meeting with** in relation to the Level 2 Complaint (if applicable):

Date -

Name -

Please confirm the date, and with whom, you had your **last correspondence** from the person who was dealing with this Level 2 Complaint (*if applicable*):

Date -

Name -

Please attach written confirmation that this was initially a Level 2 Complaint.

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ABOUT YOUR FORMAL COMPLAINT

Please explain why you remain dissatisfied with the Level 2 Complaint Procedure.

(Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

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DESIRED OUTCOME

Please describe the action you would like to see taken in order to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction.

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Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures

EVIDENCE

Please list any documentary evidence attached and make sure you keep a copy:
(e.g. any correspondence, timeline, or other documentation related to your complaint)
You should ensure that all relevant evidence which you wish to be considered is submitted with your application.

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SUPPORT

Please give the name of the student or other representative who is helping you.
(if applicable)

DECLARATION

I believe that the above information is true. I consent that details of this complaint can be shared with relevant staff (if applicable) so that my complaint may be resolved.

Signature of Student: _____

Signature of Director of Institution: _____

Date: _____

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The above procedures are applicable also to group complaints or when there is a spokesperson.

7. Review Stage

This process refers to when the evidence and complaint are reviewed. In all of the above levels, the complaints are either discussed internally, or if the case may be, discussed with an external consultant. After the review stage, the student shall be notified via an email of the outcome.

8. Withdrawal of a complaint

Those students who decide to withdraw a complaint shall write an email to the respective person who would have been dealing with the complaint.