



Terms of Reference

Graduate Student (By Research) Grievance Committee

DEFINITION:

A Grievance is defined as a complaint by a postgraduate student concerning a decision or action that is perceived to adversely affect the grievant in completion of his/ her academic program.

PURPOSE:

The Graduate Student Grievance Committee (GSGC) was established as a sub-committee of the Senate Research and Higher Degree Committee (SRHDC) to give the opportunity to the postgraduate students to pursue a justice for what they perceive as an unfair treatment by academics or administrators at the University.

SCOPE:

The GSGC shall consider the individual grievances of students specified in the Graduate Student Grievance Procedure and Guidelines raised individually by the concerned aggrieved student of the University. After receiving any application the Committee will decide on the merit of case regarding scope of further discussion.

EXCLUSIONS:

The GSGC will not consider the plagiarism and disciplinary related matters as the grievances. Those matters will be handled as per the Procedure for Handling Research Integrity Breaches under the RESEARCH AND INNOVATION POLICY and the RAGGING, BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION PREVENTION POLICY established in 2018. The examination matters handled by the Board of Studies will also not be considered as the grievances. The Grievance Committee shall not consider any grievance of general applicability or of collective nature raised collectively by more than one student.

TERMS OF REFERENCE:

The Graduate Student Grievance Committee

- shall consider all written grievances submitted in sealed envelopes by an individual postgraduate student regarding association, conditions of the academic environment and any other alleged unfairness experienced by a student while undertaking his/her study program.
- shall call for at least three members of the committee to proceed with the Grievance.
- shall listen and review all testimony and documentary evidence presented during the hearing to make a decision based on the evidence presented by each party.
- shall make the final settlement of any grievance within two months of filing the formal grievance and the report and the recommendations are submitted to the Vice-Chancellor through the SRHDC.
- may mediate between the complainant and defendant against whom the complaint has been made, if required.
- shall ensure that the process followed is fundamentally fair to all parties and complies with the university procedures.
- shall maintain confidential records for each case.
- shall recommend the SRHDC to take appropriate action against the complainant in case of false and frivolous complaint (if proved) is detected.
- shall maintain an e mail address gsgc@wyb.ac.lk
- shall maintain full transparency among the members unless a member recused from the deliberations regarding a particular grievance.

MEMBERSHIP:

Chair and the members of the committee are to be nominated by the SRHDC for a three year tenure. A representative from each Faculty will be included into the committee. Senior Assistant Registrar (Academic) will support the Committee to handle the documents.

ROLE OF THE MEMBERSHIP:

Members of the Graduate Student Grievance Committee

- are expected to attend the initial orientation meeting and scheduled hearing dates to discuss the cases that have been filed.
- must maintain a neutral status at all times in relation to the parties to the grievance and must be fair impartial decision makers with high level of integrity and trust.

- are responsible for making written findings of facts and recommendations with regard to the grievance and assist the Chair in finalizing the written report including the recommendations.
- must be open minded and act without prejudice that either party to the grievance is right or wrong. They should be able to weigh the credibility of the evidence, make specific findings of fact and determine whether the grievant has established the charges.
- must respect to the confidentiality of the case.
- should not have any connection with the grievance of the aggrieved individual. If any connection is identified the concerned member of the Committee shall recuse from the deliberations regarding that individual's case.
- shall involve in awareness programmes for the graduate students and to maintain its effectiveness.

PERIODICITY AND ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS:

- The Committee will meet as per requirement. However, if necessary, it may meet more frequently at the instance of the Chairman or at the request of the other members to discuss the various issues received.
- At least four members of the Committee shall present in a meeting.

REPORTING:

The Committee shall report to the Vice-Chancellor through the SRHDC at the end of the Grievance procedure.