

## **SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

### **Department of Midwifery**

## **New Postgraduate Program**

### **“Reproductive Health – Childbirth – Parenting – Breastfeeding”**

## **REGULATIONS ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE COMPLAINTS & APPEALS HANDLING MECHANISM FOR STUDENTS**

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## **1. Introduction**

To improve the operation of the Department of Midwifery within the framework of enhancing the student-centered educational process and accountability, a procedure for the submission and management of complaints by the students of the Department is established. This aims to ensure their satisfaction and to safeguard the reputation of the Department.

A *complaint* is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction by a student regarding unmet expectations related to the quality of services provided. This process applies to all complaints concerning the quality of academic and administrative services delivered by the Department of Midwifery.

## **2. Purpose**

The complaint management policy is addressed to all active students of the Department of Midwifery, across all levels of study (undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral). Its purpose is to provide a structured means for resolving disputes or issues, such as:

1. Disagreements regarding academic matters or study conditions.
2. Inappropriate behavior by academic or administrative staff.
3. Inadequate academic or administrative guidance.

This Regulation is approved and may be amended by decisions of the Departmental Assembly.

## **3. Scope of Application**

All undergraduate and postgraduate students of the Department are expected to be familiar with the Study Regulations and the University's operational rules, including the Codes of Conduct and relevant institutional policies, to fully understand their rights and responsibilities during their studies.

Students are encouraged to contact their Academic Advisor for guidance and support on issues affecting their academic progress. Academic Advisors are expected to respond promptly to student concerns.

In all cases, students (undergraduate or postgraduate) may submit an oral and/or written complaint if an action or decision by a staff member or departmental body conflicts with:

- Study and Attendance Regulations.

- Any other applicable policy/regulation/rule or official directive concerning academic or administrative operations of the Department.
- The University's Codes of Conduct or Policies concerning:
  - Academic Teaching and Research Ethics
  - Acceptable Use of Information and Communication Systems
  - Proper Use of Facilities and Infrastructure
  - Intellectual Property and Copyright Protection
  - Protection of Personal Data
  - Professional and Ethical Behavior in the Workplace
  - Equality and Non-Discrimination
  - Prevention of Harassment and Sexual Harassment

#### **4. Complaint Management**

Constructive dialogue and interpersonal resolution are considered fundamental academic strategies and are strongly encouraged before a concern evolves into a formal complaint. However, students must submit their complaint within **30 days** from the occurrence of the issue.

#### **5. Complaint Submission Procedure**

##### **Stage 1: Direct Resolution**

The student reports the issue or complaint to a faculty member (Professor, Course Instructor, EEDIP/ETEP staff) or administrative staff member (e.g., the Head of the Secretariat), depending on the nature of the matter. The member of the Department discusses the issue directly with the student and proposes a resolution.

##### **Stage 2: Mediation**

If the student is not satisfied with the proposed resolution or if the issue persists after Stage 1, they may contact their Academic Advisor via email or request a meeting during office hours. The Academic Advisor will review the issue in collaboration with the student and suggest a solution. The Advisor may, at their discretion, consult with other faculty or staff members to resolve the problem. It is clarified that a complaint may also be submitted via student representatives.

##### **Stage 3: Administrative Review**

If the issue remains unresolved, the student may submit a written complaint to the Department Secretariat either in print or electronically, clearly outlining the issue. (See Appendix: Complaint Submission Form)

The Secretariat forwards the complaint to the Department Chair (for undergraduate students) or to the Postgraduate Programme's Coordinating Committee (for postgraduate students), which convenes to examine and address the issue. If the Committee is unable to resolve the issue due to its complexity, the matter is referred to the Department Chair, who initiates the necessary investigation. Depending on the nature of the case, the Chair may invite the student for a hearing, consult any relevant staff or body of the Department, or forward the matter to the Department Assembly.

The student is informed of the outcome within a reasonable timeframe, depending on the urgency and nature of the issue.

**Anonymity is strictly maintained** throughout the process.

#### **Stage 4: Appeal and Final Review of the Complaint**

If the student remains dissatisfied following administrative review (Stage 3), they may submit a written **appeal** to the Department Assembly via the Department Protocol Office, using the same **Complaint Submission Form** (see Appendix). The appeal must include a summary of previous mediation and administrative steps undertaken.

If the Department Chair has already referred to the Department Assembly during Stage 3, this stage cannot be initiated again. However, the student may submit a written request for further investigation to the **Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs**. The decision made during this review is considered **final**.

### **Regulatory Framework**

This complaint and appeal mechanism operates under the framework of the **Internal Operating Regulation of the International Hellenic University (IHU)** (Government Gazette 4889/B'/06.11.2020).

Relevant articles are:

#### **Article 49 – Academic Advisors**

1. The Academic Advisor provides guidance and support to students throughout their studies.
2. By decision of the Department Assembly, academic advising responsibilities are assigned on a rotating basis to permanent faculty members (DEP) of the Department, for a one-year term starting on September 1st of each academic year. This term may be renewed with the advisor's consent. Assignment may be made per student by matching new student lists with the faculty roster.

3. Advisors support first-year students during their transition from secondary to higher education and offer ongoing advice regarding academic progress and successful degree completion.
4. Faculty, laboratory directors, administrative personnel, and all academic units are expected to collaborate with Academic Advisors, respond to their concerns, and act on their recommendations regarding observed gaps or difficulties that may affect students' academic progress.

## **Article 52 – Student Ombudsperson**

1. The "Student Ombudsperson" office mediates between students and faculty or administrative services to uphold legality, ensure academic freedom, address mismanagement, and support the proper functioning of the institution.  
The Ombudsperson is not authorized to intervene in grading or exam-related issues.  
They may be a lawyer or faculty member and are appointed by the University Senate for a one-year term (renewable once). If the Ombudsperson is a faculty member, they may be partially or fully exempt from teaching duties for the duration of their term.
2. The Ombudsperson may investigate cases ex officio or upon student request, mediate between parties, and request relevant documents or evidence. If violations of legality or academic mismanagement are identified, a report is submitted to both the concerned party and the student involved.  
Unfounded or vague complaints may be dismissed. If disciplinary violations are suspected, the case is referred to the appropriate disciplinary body.

The Ombudsperson's office is supported by an appointed administrative staff member

## APPENDIX 1

### COMPLAINT SUBMISSION FORM

To: Chair of the Department of Midwifery / Head of Service

Ref. No.: .....

**Note:** The Department of Midwifery, in its continuous effort to improve the quality of the services it provides, offers students the opportunity to submit complaints, comments, or observations related to the quality of educational and administrative services.

**Full Name:** .....

**Father's Name:** .....

**ID Number:** .....

**Student Registration Number:** .....

**Title of Degree Programme Enrolled In:** .....

**Current Semester of Study:** .....

**Telephone / Mobile Number:** .....

**Email Address (required):** .....

### Subject of Complaint:

.....  
Please briefly and clearly describe the issue you have encountered or your complaint regarding the services provided (educational, administrative, etc.):  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

☐ I hereby expressly and unconditionally consent to the processing of my personal data for the purpose of managing this complaint.

☐ Additional relevant documents are attached.

**Signature of Applicant:** .....

**Date:** .....

*Note: If, during the investigation process, it is found that the facts presented are false, the complaint will be deemed inadmissible and will not be further examined.*

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **DECISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL HELLENIC UNIVERSITY CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STUDENT OMBUDSPERSON**

&

**Internal Operating Regulations of the IHU**  
Government Gazette 4889 B' / 6 November 2020