

**University of West Attica**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY**

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PUBLIC HEALTH**

**REGULATION OF OPERATION OF COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT MECHANISM AND STUDENT OBJECTIONS**

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**REGULATION OF OPERATION OF COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT MECHANISM AND**

**OBJECTIONS OF ALUMNI OF THE "PUBLIC HEALTH" PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY DEPARTMENT**

# Introduction

The MSc "Public Health" within the framework of the principles of transparency and accountability is putting into operation from the academic year 2020-22, the procedure for submitting and managing complaints of students of the MSc.

A complaint is defined as "the expression of dissatisfaction on the part of the Alumni MSc, due to the denial of his expectations regarding the quality of the services provided".

The specific procedure concerns all complaints related to the quality of educational and administrative services provided by the MSc.

The procedure is established in the context of the existing legislation on alumni advocacy (Article 130, Law 4957/2022) and Article 63 of the Internal Regulation of the University of West Attica (Government Gazette 4621/ 21-20-2020) and the University of West Attica, has already established the Alumni Advocate (<https://advedu.uniwa.gr>).

# Aim

The aim of the MSc complaints management policy is to resolve grievances, disagreements, problems and other difficulties faced by MSc Alumni regarding matters of study and attendance, inappropriate behavior of MSc members and insufficient guidance of students by MSc members, such as:

1. Disagreement regarding studies and attendance.

2. Misbehavior by a member of academic or administrative staff.

3. Insufficient guidance of students by a member of academic or administrative staff

3. Scope

The students of the MSc may submit their oral and/or written complaint when an action or decision of a member of the MSc is inconsistent with:

* Study and attendance regulations
* The code of ethics and/or other prescribed procedures concerning:

1. Academic teaching and research

2. The correct use of facilities and infrastructure

3. The protection of intellectual property and copyright

4. Appropriate work behavior

5. Equality and the fight against abusive behavior and sexual harassment.

4. Complaints handling process

During the provision of the educational, administrative and other services provided by the "Public Health" MSc, complaints may arise from the alumni. Well-natured discussion and willingness to resolve a problem interpersonally is a key academic strategy and must be chosen before the problem acquires the potential rigidity of a complaint.

The students and their Academic Advisers (AS) have the right and responsibility for the implementation of this procedure, while the educational and administrative staff of MSc are obliged to report to the alumni's Academic Adviser any complaint submitted to their perception either through questionnaires or through discussions with the alumni.

The alumni should submit his/her complaint within 30 days from the day the problem occurred.

In order to register complaints, the MSc "COMPLAINTS SUBMISSION FORM" is available, in electronic form on the MSc website and also in paper form at the MSc Secretariat. The alumni fill in the form, in which he/she briefly and clearly records the problem-complaint he/she has and submits it to his/her Academic Advisor electronically or in hard copy.

As far as the complaint’s procedure is concerned, the following steps are followed:

**1st Step - Resolution of the alumni's complaint-objection by a member of the** **MSc:**

The alumni report his/her complaint-problem to a member of the Faculty/EDIP/ETEP or administrative staff (to the Head of the Secretariat) of the MSc, depending on the nature of the complaint. The member of the PMS or the Head of the Secretariat examines the complaint-problem in cooperation with the student and proposes a solution.

**2nd Step: Examination of the complaint-objection by the Academic Advisor (AD):**

If the alumni consider that their complaint-objection have not been resolved, they can submit the complaint to the AS staff via e-mail and request a hearing on the designated days and hours of student reception.

The AS examines the complaint- objection in collaboration with the alumni and proposes a solution. If necessary, the DP can contact other members of the MSc to ask for their assistance in solving the problem.

The Academic Advisors are appointed by the Coordinating Committee after a proposal by the director of the MSc. At the beginning of each academic year, an AS is appointed for each alumnus by the faculty members of the MSc. The AS follows the alumni's course, provides him with specific information about the program and the correlation of his studies in the Department of Public Health Policy with his scientific background and professional prospects, discusses with the alumnus his future plans for his professional and scientific career advancement, advises him on improving his work in relation to the requirements of his studies, on the use of the resources and infrastructure of the Department and in general on organizational or administrative matters and may suggest matters concerning him to the director of MSc. Alumni are strongly encouraged to communicate regularly with their advisors.

**3rd Step-Examination of the complaint-objection by the MSc Coordinating Committee:**

In case the student considers that his/her issue has not been resolved, then he/she can submit his/her complaint in writing to the Director of the MSc, filling out the COMPLAINT SUBMISSION FORM and reporting all the procedures already carried out. The MSc Director convenes the Coordinating Committee and after they invite the student to a hearing and examine the problem, they propose a solution.

**4th Step- Examination of the complaint-problem by the President of the Department:**

The MSc Coordination Committee, in case the alumni's complaint/problem is complex, may refer it to the President of the Public Policy Department of Health or the alumnus himself can submit his/her complaint-problem in writing to the Chair of the Department using the COMPLAINT SUBMISSION FORM mentioning the previous procedures and attempts to resolve it. The President takes the necessary actions to examine the problem by calling the student to a hearing, if he/she deems it appropriate, and may request the assistance of any member or body of the Department to resolve the problem. The President may also refer the grievance problem to the Departmental Assembly. In this case, the decision of the Department Assembly is final and within a reasonable period of time the student is informed who cannot submit an objection and use the next step of the procedure.

**5th Step - Objection of the student and final review of the complaint-problem**:

In the event that the President of the Department has not referred the complaint-objection to the Department Assembly in the previous step and the student insists on the resolution or the situation is still problematic, they may resubmit the request in writing of using the PROTOCOL SUBMISSION FORM at the Department's Secretariat, mentioning all the resolution procedures that have already taken place. The decision to be taken by the Assembly of the Department is final.

3. Other ways and procedures for submitting complaints that operate at the University of Western Attica.

A. Course Evaluation Questionnaires and in general the performances of the MSc and its executives and to express their complaints about the services provided. Students also have the possibility, through the use of Questionnaires for the Evaluation of the educational process at course level, and in accordance with the provisions of the National Authority for Higher Education (ETHAAE), on the one hand, to evaluate the performance of the Department and its executives and, on the other hand, to express their dissatisfaction, for accidental failures in the provision of services.

B. The Alumni Advocate that has been established and operates at the University of West Attica (article 130 of Law 4957/2022), has as its mission the mediation between students and professors or administrative services of the institution, the observance of legality in the context of academic freedom, dealing with maladministration phenomena and safeguarding the orderly operation of the institution. The Alumni Advocate has no authority in matters of exams and alumni' grades.

The Alumni Advocate, as part of his responsibilities, investigates cases ex officio or following a student's report and mediates with the competent bodies for their resolution. It can request from the services of the Foundation any information, document or other evidence on the case, examine persons, perform an autopsy and order an expert opinion. If he finds that in a specific case the legality is not observed, that there are phenomena of maladministration or that the proper functioning of the Institution is disturbed, he draws up a conclusion, which he notifies the professor concerned or the competent administrative department and the student who submitted the petition, and mediates with any convenient way to solve the complaint/ objection. The Alumni's Advocate can by his act put on file or a report that is considered clearly vague, unfounded or unsupported, while, in the event that it considers that there are indications of a disciplinary offence, it forwards the case to the competent disciplinary body.

C. Gender Equality and Anti-Discrimination Committee of the University of West Attica. According to article 218 of Law 4957/2022, this Committee has the following responsibilities:

a) prepares action plans to promote and ensure substantive equality and combat discrimination in the institution's educational, research and administrative procedures and prepares an annual report, which it submits to the Senate and the Board of Directors.

b) recommends to the competent bodies measures to promote equality and combat discrimination, to deal with sexual harassment and any type of harassing behavior.

c) monitors and evaluates the course of implementation of the above measures and their results and recommends their modification, revision or addition.

d) provides information and training to the members of the academic community on issues related to gender equality, LGBTI people and the fight against any kind of discrimination, dealing with sexual harassment and any kind of harassing behavior.

e) promotes the development of study programs and the implementation of seminars and lectures that focus on the study of gender, LGBTI persons, the fight against discrimination and the treatment of sexual harassment and any type of harassing behavior

f) promotes the preparation of studies and research on issues related to its field of competence

g) records reports and complaints about incidents of discrimination and sexual or gender-based harassment and forwards them to the competent bodies

h) provides assistance to victims of discrimination, sexual harassment and harassing behavior when they report discrimination or harassment.

D. Ethics Committee that operates at the University in accordance with its Internal Operating Regulations (article 23) and the provisions of article 217 of Law 4957/2022.

The Ethics Committee has the following responsibilities (Article 217 of Law 4957/2022):

a) Draws up a "Code of ethics and good practice" for academic, administrative and research matters, which is approved by the Senate and incorporated into the Institution's Internal Regulations.

b) ensures the observance and application of the rules of ethics by all members of the Foundation and identifies violations of the rules of ethics. c) draws up an annual report on the observance and application or the need to revise the rules of ethics, which is submitted to the Rector and notified to the Senate of the institution concerned at the beginning of each academic year.

d) examines, ex officio or after a written report - complaint of alumni, members of D.E.P., members of E.E.P., E.D.I.P. and ETEP, researchers, visiting professors and administrative staff in matters of its competence, in order to establish the violation of the rules of ethics or investigates relevant incidents following an order from the Rector. If a violation of the rules of ethics is found or during the investigation it is found that a disciplinary offense has been committed, it sends the relevant finding to the Rector, in order for him to evaluate the incident and carry out the legal actions.