



FAQ TO STUDENT APPEALS & COMPLAINTS

**AOU QUALITY ASSURANCE &
ACCREDITATION DEPARTMENT
HQ - KUWAIT**

What are Appeals and Complaints? Is there a difference or are they one at the same?

Appeals and Complaints are your requests against any dissatisfaction you experience in your learning environment as a student of AOU. Appeals and Complaints are not the same, so when requesting for a review you need to be clear about the difference.

What are appeals?

Appeals refer to your formal request for review of grades scored in the continuous assessment (MTA and TMA) and the final exam. You may appeal against the grades awarded to you in your assignment as per the formal procedures of appeal set by the university.

What are complaints?

Complaint constitutes any expression of dissatisfaction about the quality or adequacy of the university provision and its related services. You may complain against:

1. Poor teaching quality or tutorial services
2. Misleading or withholding of information by tutor or administrative staff
3. Inadequate services and facilities
4. Misconduct by any University staff – administrative or academic
5. Misconduct by any student within University premises
6. Offensive or racist remark by staff or student within the University premises.

When can I appeal?

Appeals must be made within **seven days** of having received your grades and should be adequately supported by evidence.

When can I complain?

The sooner you complain the better. Complaints may be raised as soon as an incident takes place and within 14 calendar days. Complaints that are lodged after a long gap (after one whole academic year) may be difficult to resolve unless backed by strong supportive evidence.

Whom do I appeal and complain to?

For your convenience, the University has set up an online appeals and complaints system that can be accessed through your LMS account. It is the most effective and officially accepted channel that you are encouraged to use. You need to complete the available form with all details duly filled in. Your completed form will be directed to the concerned authority.

What is the information required from me to appeal and complain?

You will be required to fill up an online form and provide all details about the issue that you are appealing or complaining against. You will also be required to provide your student identification details including your name, and contacts, and names and details of any other entity involved in the matter.

How does the appeals process work once I have appealed?

The appeals process is a systemic, well-structured objective process addressed by relevant experts. Once you have appealed against the grade awarded to you, your appeal will be sent to the Branch Appeal Committee (BAC) of the respective academic programme. The Branch Appeal Committee (BAC) will look into the appeal and forward their recommendations to the Branch Rector/Director along with a copy of your assessment script or any other relevant documents. The BAC will look into your assessment or examination script to ensure that all answers are marked and that compilation of marks is conducted properly. Based on the outcome, the BAC will take a decision. The decision is either to uphold the appeal (recommendation for change of marks) or to reject the appeal (no grounds for appeal).

If your appeal is valid, a copy of the BAC recommendation will be sent to the Branch Rector/Director and copies will be sent to the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Scientific Research (VPAA&SR)-HQ, and, Registration and Examination Department-HQ (ARE). The VPAA&SR will submit the appeals lists to the Central Examination Committee (CEC) for approval. The student will be notified with the decision through the online appeals and complaints system.

What can I do if I am not satisfied with the decision of the committee? Can I appeal again?

If your appeal has been rejected the first time and you are dissatisfied with the decision of BAC, you have a chance to re-appeal to the Branch Re-Appeal Committee (BRC) through the Branch Rector within seven (7) calendar days of having received the decision. The BRC will review your appeal and communicate its decision to the Branch Rector and copies will be sent to the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Scientific Research (VPAA&SR), Registration and Examination Department (RE) and Programme Deanship at the headquarter (HQ). If the appeal is accepted, the VPAA&SR will submit the recommendations that the appeals are upheld to the CEC for approval. The student will be informed through the Branch Rector's/Directors office. If you are still not satisfied with the BRC decision, you may appeal to the President of the University.

How does the complaint process work?

You may lodge a complaint any time within the stipulated period during the academic year. You may do so by completing the University student complaints online form. You must state the grounds for the complaint giving detailed reasons to support his/her case. The student affairs department will process the complaint and forward it to the concerned department(s) for consideration. The concerned department will examine the complaint and it may consult other members of University staff or departments if it is deemed appropriate in particular cases. The concerned department may find grounds for complaint and produce a report on the case setting out decision on the case and the documentations considered. The report will be sent to the Assistant Director for Administration and Finance or Assistant Director for Academic Affairs based on the nature and subject of the complaints for approval. Upon approval, the Student Affairs Office will notify the outcome of the complaint to the student.

What is the expected response time for my appeal and complaint?

Appeals and Complaints will be responded to within a reasonable period not exceeding 28 days from receiving the complaint.

Is my physical presence in the campus required?

No. All your complaints and appeals may be recorded electronically on the complaints and appeals available on the Student Support System (SSS). Unless otherwise required before the complaints and appeals committee your physical presence will not be required.

Is it alright for me to appeal or complain against a tutor or staff?

Yes, at no point of time will you be at a disadvantage for having made a complaint. Your dissatisfaction with academic or administrative services is of serious concern to us and we need to hear from you so as to improve matters and assure the quality of services in creating an enabling learning environment.

Will my information be kept confidential?

Yes, complete confidentiality will be maintained regarding your request and no information whatsoever will be revealed to anyone without your permission other than those handling the case.

Can I withdraw my complaint at any time?

Yes, just as you have the right to appeal and complain, you also have the right to withdraw your appeal or complaint at any time.

What do I do if I am dissatisfied with the AOU's handling of my complaint?

If you are registered for an Open University Validated Award Programme and still dissatisfied with the decision of handling your appeal / complaint, you may complain to the Open University.

You will find more information on this process in the Student guide to studying on a programme validated by The Open University.



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