



Endorsed by the Board of Trustees in May, 2018

**The Academic and Administrative Staff Complaints Bylaws
at the Arab Open University**

Approved by University Council No. 63

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Article 1: Title

This document shall be called: “The Academic and Administrative Staff Complaints Bylaws at the Arab Open University.”

Article 2: Definitions

Unless the context indicates otherwise, the following words and expressions shall have the meanings specified hereunder:

The University	The Arab Open University
The President	The Arab Open University President
The Director	The Director of an Arab Open University branch or campus
The Branch	An Arab Open University branch or campus
Immediate Superior	The concerned Deputy Rector/Programme Dean/Administrative Director
The Committee	The committee formed to consider/discuss the complaint

Article 3: Definition of Complaint

A complaint is a written request submitted by a University staff member, who considers himself/herself damaged by or dissatisfied with a certain behaviour or action of another person or party at the University, in which the appellant assumes the role of a personal claim to the relevant party.

Article 4: Evidence for the Claim

The complainant shall be responsible for submitting evidence to substantiate his/her claim.

Article 5: Submitting Complaints

- A) The complainant may submit the complaint to his/her immediate superior. It is also permissible, in some justified cases, to submit the complaint directly to the University President or to the Rector.
- A) The submitted complaint shall have the following information attached:
- The complainant's name and job title.
 - The date of the incident in question, subject of the complaint and the date the complainant informed.
 - The subject of the complaint and the reasons on which it is based. He/she must attach all relevant documents.
- B) The complaint shall not be considered in the case of anonymity or a lack of required information.
- C) All University employees have the right to file a complaint; or report any violation of University laws, or the AOU charter rules of professional conduct, without fear of being subjected to retaliation or the threat of retaliation by any office or member of the University community. If it is confirmed that any individual or entity has committed such acts or threats, he/she will be subject to punishment by the University administration according to the regulations and bylaws applicable in AOU.

Article 6: Steps to Accept the Complaint

- When a complaint is accepted, it shall be presented by the person to whom the complaint was submitted, to the side addressed by the complaint, within a maximum period of 15 days after the submission date.
- The entity/person to whom the complaint was addressed must decide on the complaint within a maximum period of one week following the day the complaint was presented to him/her.
- The petitioner has the right to file the complaint directly to the University President if he/she does not receive a response within a period of three weeks following the date of complaint submission.

Article 7: Complaints Committee Formation

- A) Based on the nature of the complaint, the direct superior shall form a committee to examine the complaint. This committee should be composed of at least three members who should not have an academic or administrative rank lower than that of the appellant.
- B) The committee shall be headed by the bearer of the highest academic or administrative rank.
- C) If the complaint is made by the immediate superior, then the committee ought to be formed by a person occupying a higher rank.
- D) A committee member may apologize to its chair for participating if his/her personal interests conflict with those of the appellant, or for any other acceptable reason.
- E) The committee attendance quorum is done if more than half of its members are present, and decisions are taken by a vote majority of the present members.
- F) All committee procedures are confidential, and non-members are not allowed to view them.
- G) The complainant has the right to appeal against the committee formed to consider the complaint. In the appeal, he/she must demonstrate the reasons on which his appeal rests.

Article 8: Complaint Investigation

- 1) The complaints committee shall consider the complaint within 15 days from the date of its referral.
- 1) The complaints committee may summon the complainant, or the person against whom the complaint is made, or both of them, or whoever they designate, to express their views and hear their defences.
- 2) The committee has the right to review all documents related to the subject, and whatever helps its members to find the truth.

Article 9: Final Report

- Based on the results of the investigation, the committee shall submit a report of its final decision to the immediate superior accompanied by the necessary justification(s), and inform the complainant and person against whom the complaint was made by providing them with a copy of this report which should include their decision on the complaint and the committee's recommendation(s) in this regard.
- The aforementioned periods are considered regulatory, and in all cases, the committee must issue its final recommendation, which must be approved by the immediate superior in a period not exceeding 4 weeks from the date of the complaint submission. The summer vacation is not counted within this period. Extending this period is allowed if the investigation requires such an extension.
- If the complainant objects to the committee's decision, he/she has the right to appeal to the University President or Rector.

Article 10: Drop of the Complaint

Complaints will be disregarded at any stage in the following cases:

- If the complainant withdraws his complaint in writing.
- If either party recourse to a court of law.
- If it is proven that, the complaint is malicious or not credible.

Article 11: General Provisions

- A) This bylaw shall take effect from the date of its approval by the AOU Board of Trustees.
- B) AOU Directors/Rectors and all concerned individuals/bodies are responsible for implementing the provisions issued under these regulations.