

Malta Business School

Complaints Procedure for Learners

Revision History			
Version Number	Revision Date	Revised by	Summary of changes
Version 0	06-10-2014	CC	Official procedure set up.
Version 1	06-10-2017	CC	Review of the procedure
Version 2	06-02-2020	CC	Further streamlining of process.
Version 3	09-07-2022	CC	Minor edits.
Version 4	01-10-2025	CC	Review. No edits.

MBS Complaints Procedure for Learners

1 Introduction

1.1 Malta Business School (MBS) is committed to delivering a high-quality service and encourages its learners to tell it where there is cause for concern and a case for improvement. At the same time, it is expected that in raising possible issues of complaint, learners will have observed their obligations as members of MBS, through meeting their course commitments and a level of general behaviour that complies with the School regulations and reasonable consideration for others.

1.2 MBS aims to handle complaints in a way that:

- Is fair and efficient.
- Treats complaints with seriousness, sympathy, and confidentiality.
- Facilitates early resolution.
- Allows the learner, MBS, or the particular course, to benefit from the experience.

2 What to complain about

2.1 This procedure outlines a simple route to be used by a learner depending on the seriousness of the complaint. The following list indicates examples of the type of complaint covered by this procedure:

- Misinformation about your course
- Poor teaching or supervision
- Unfairness in procedures
- Insufficient facilities
- The behaviour of a member of staff or another learner
- A failing in the service of MBS.

2.2 Complaints will not always produce the outcome a learner is looking for. For instance, policy decisions or resourcing beyond MBS' control may affect the level of service provided. However, whatever the decision, MBS undertakes to inform about the result of a complaint and the reasons for it.

2.3 Complaints must be addressed to MBS within two weeks of the event or situation.

2.4 A learner cannot use this complaints procedure to challenge academic judgement. "Academic judgement is a judgment that is made about a matter where only the opinion of an academic expert is sufficient. A decision about assessment, fitness to practise, research methodology of course content/outcomes will normally involve academic judgement. ..." On the other hand, a learner can complain about "... areas [which] do not involve academic judgement [such as]: decisions about the fairness of procedures, whether an opinion has been expressed outside the area of an academic's competence, the way the evidence has been considered, whether there is evidence of bias or maladministration." (Office of the Independent Adjudicator, UK, 2018).

3 The complaints procedure

3.1 Stage one

3.1.1 Complaints of a minor nature should be raised immediately with the Tutor or Administrator responsible with the aim of resolving the problem directly and informally. It is anticipated that the vast majority of complaints will be resolved in this way.

3.1.2 The majority of complaints/issues/problems should be resolved at this Stage within a maximum of 10 working days. Stage 1 will generally be an oral process and any staff involved will be encouraged to share the experience where the effectiveness of the course could benefit. If the learner is still not satisfied with the response to the complaint, Stage 2 (procedure outlined below) should be followed.

3.2 Stage two

3.2.1 MBS appreciates that there may be occasions where the above process is inappropriate and that a more formal approach is necessary.

3.2.2 Where it has not been possible to resolve matters to the learner's satisfaction under Stage 1, or where the complaint is about the Tutor or Administrator, the learner may write to the Head of Programmes or equivalent. This can be via a letter or by using the school's Feedback and Complaints Form.

3.2.3 The complaint must be specific and comprehensively documented. Full details should be presented, including the learner's name and address, course followed, any relevant documentation, dates, locations, and witnesses as appropriate. The learner should also detail any previous unsuccessful attempts at resolution. Finally, reasonable steps to resolve the complaint should be suggested.

3.2.4 The Head of Programmes will then approach the Tutor or Administrator on the learner's behalf to try to facilitate the resolution of the complaint.

3.2.5 Receipt of acknowledgement, from the Head of Programmes of your written complaint, will be available within 10 working days. It is MBS' aim that most complaints under this Stage should be resolved within 28 working days. The learner will be informed if there is likely to be any delay in the process.

3.2.6 The Head of Programmes will notify the learner in writing (usually via email) of the result of the complaint and the reasons for the decision (if relevant). The learner is asked to reply, within 5 working days, if the resolution is not acceptable. If no reply from the learner is received by MBS within 5 working days, it is assumed that the decision of MBS has been accepted and the complaint process stops here.

[If the complaint is about the Head of Programmes themselves, the learner can approach the Dean of the School who will designate another Manager to resolve the issue.]

3.3 Stage three

3.3.1 If the complaint remains unresolved under Stage 2, the learner can write directly to the Dean of the School within 5 working days of receipt of the result of the complaint. Full details should be provided (as per suggestions above in 3.2.3), in a letter which will be acknowledged prior to an investigation. Normally an acknowledgement will be received within 10 working days.

3.3.2 Depending on the issue, a learner can have the option to *appeal* a decision (after reading the MBS Appeals Policy). The learner should submit full details of the issue and also include all the reasons why they disagree with the outcome. Such documentation will be put forward to the relevant Appeals Officer/s who might ask the learner to present themselves for a meeting. Following review of the issue by the relevant Appeals Officer/s, the General Manager (or delegate) will notify the learner in writing (usually via email) of the result of the decision of the Appeals Officer/s within 10 working days of the meeting.

3.4 Stage four

3.4.1 If, despite the best efforts of managers and the Director the learner still remains concerned, there may be a final right of complaint to the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA). This final procedure does not cover other issues for which there are existing procedures.

4 Please also tell us when we do things well!

4.1 Obviously being able to make a complaint is important, but we like to know when we are doing things well too. Receiving a compliment can be very positive in terms of self-morale for the team at MBS. Feedback on how pleased you are with your course is to be welcomed and we would be delighted to hear from you!