

CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bangalore

Regulation for Redress of Grievances of Students 2023

Policy

CHRIST (Deemed to be University) recognises the need for reasonably considering all types of grievances of its students and for their speedy redressal. The mechanism for Grievance Redressal will depend on the nature of the Grievance. All Grievances will be considered on their merits and will be enquired into by the Department and or the Official concerned who will take necessary steps to resolve the issues within a reasonable time frame. If the matter is not resolved at the initial reference level it may be referred to the Appellate Authority (Ombudsperson) specifically constituted for the purpose whose finding and report shall be the final resolution to the grievance. The Appellate Authority shall forward its report along with recommendations to the Director of Student Services for further action. Although the Policy is being already implemented effectively by the CHRIST (Deemed to be University) Regulation for Grievance Management–Students 2019 the same is replaced by this Regulation in view of the amended provisions duly guided and contained in the University Grants Commission (UGC) (Redressal of Grievances of Students) Regulations, 2023 to the extent of its applicability to CHRIST (Deemed to be University) as a unitary Institution. The Regulation has been evolved exhaustively and independently to ensure effective Grievance Redressal of students enrolled, and persons/students applied for admission but not enrolled.

CHRIST (Deemed to be University) for the purpose of this Regulation has been referred to as 'Institution' or as 'University'.

Grievances relating to Gender (including sexual harassment) as covered by relevant Guidelines of the UGC including the SAKSHAM Report and the Ragging grievances (of students) within the meaning of the Anti-Ragging Regulation of the University (framed as per applicable UGC Guidelines) will be resolved by the Committee/s under the respective Regulations and will not be covered under this Regulation.

Regulation for Redress of Grievances of Students 2023

A. Grievance Redressal–Students 2023

These provisions of the Regulation shall be applicable to all the students enrolled for Programmes in any Campus/Off-Campus of the Institution, in respect of Grievances specified herein and shall be effective from 01 July 2023.

Student Grievances may be personal or in common and may relate to Academic Issues, Staff-Related Issues or Organisational Issues etc.,

1. Personal Grievances of Students Enrolled:

“Personal Grievance” means, and includes, complaint(s) made by an aggrieved student in respect of the following, namely:

- a. Withholding of, or refusal to return, any document in the form of certificates of degree, diploma or any other award or other document deposited by a student for the purpose of seeking admission in the Institution, with a view to induce or compel such student to pay any fee or fees in respect of any course or programme of study which such student does not intend to pursue;
- b. Demand of money in excess of that specified to be charged in the declared admission policy of the Institution;
- c. Violation, by the Institution, of any law for the time being in force with regard to reservation of seats in admission to different category of students, (if applicable);

- d. Non-Payment or delay in payment of scholarships or financial aid admissible to any student under the declared admission policy of the Institution, or under the conditions, if any, prescribed by the UGC;
- e. Delay by the Institution in the conduct of examinations, or declaration of results, beyond the schedule specified in the academic calendar of the Institution, or in such calendar prescribed by the UGC, unless such delay is caused due to factors beyond the control of the University.
- f. Failure by the Institution to provide student amenities as set out in the prospectus, or is required to be extended by the Institution under any provisions of law for the time being in force;
- g. Grievances relating to evaluation of answer scripts (other than the rectification of casting errors and omissions in evaluation) in respect of Mid Semester / End Semester Examinations.
- h. Publication by the Institution of any information in the prospectus, which is false or misleading, and not based on facts;
- i. Delay in, or denial of, the refund of fees due to a student who withdraws admission within the time mentioned in the prospectus, or as may be notified by the UGC;
- j. Complaints of alleged discrimination of students from the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Women, Minorities or persons with disabilities categories, if and as may be applicable to the Institution;
- k. Denial of quality education as promised at the time of admission or required to be provided;
- l. Harassment or victimization of a student, other than cases of harassment, which are to be proceeded against under the penal provisions of any law for the time being in force.
- m. Any action initiated/taken contrary to the statutes, ordinances, rules, regulations, or guidelines of the institution; and
- n. Any action initiated/taken contrary to the regulations and/or guidelines made/issued by the UGC and/or the regulatory body concerned, namely, the Bar Council of India, the All India Council for Technical Education, the Council of Architecture, and the National Council for Teacher Education.

B. Grievance Redressal–Non-Students

These provisions of the Regulation shall be applicable to persons who apply and seek to be enrolled for Programmes in any Campus of the Institution but was not enrolled, in respect of Grievances specified herein and shall be effective from 01 July 2023.

1. Personal Grievances of persons not Enrolled (Non-Students):

“Grievance” with reference to Non-Students means, and includes, complaint(s) made by an aggrieved person in respect of the following, namely:

- i. Admission contrary to merit determined in accordance with the declared admission policy of the Institution;
- ii. Non-transparent or unfair practices adopted by the Institution for the evaluation of students;
- iii. Irregularity in the process under the declared admission policy of the Institution.
- iv. Refusal to admit in accordance with the declared admission policy of the Institution.
- v. Non-publication of a prospectus by the Institution, in accordance with the provisions of applicable UGC Regulations;
- vi. Publication by the Institution of any information in the prospectus, which is false or misleading, and not based on facts;

C. Authorities for Redressal of Personal Grievances of Students enrolled and non-students

The Process of Personal as well as other Grievances Redressal of Students enrolled in the University and non-students shall have the following authorities:

1. The Departmental Student Grievance Redressal Committee (DSGRC)-For students enrolled in the University as per Section A of this Regulation.
2. University Grievance Redressal Committee (UGRC)-For students not enrolled in the University, as per Section B of this Regulation.
3. The Ombudsperson which shall be the final Appellate Authority for both DSGRC and UGRC

1. Departmental Student Grievance Redressal Committee (DSGRC):

1. The Departmental Student Grievance Redressal Committee (DSGRC) shall consist of the following Members:
 - i. Dean/Associate Dean of the School of the Department/Campus – Chairperson
 - ii. Head of the Department (Member Secretary)
 - iii. Two Senior Teachers (Professor/Associate Professor) from or outside the Department (as may be decided and nominated with the approval of the Vice Chancellor on the recommendation of the Chairperson)
 - iv. One senior faculty member conversant with Grievance Redressal Mechanism nominated by the Chairperson.
 - v. One Programme/Academic Coordinator of the Department nominated by the Chairperson.
 - vi. Class Teacher of the student concerned with the grievance-Non-member Special Invitee
 - vii. The departmental representative/staff concerned with or related to the Grievance, as may be decided by the DSGRC, depending on the nature of the Grievance. (Example: Course Validation, Attendance, CIA, Mandatory Certificate Courses/open electives, IPM, Examination, Admission, Accounts, Library, Canteen, Student Welfare etc.). The representative/staff will be a non-member Special Invitee.
 - viii. A School/Campus level Student Council member of the Department as a non-member Special Invitee
2. At least one member or Chairperson shall be a woman and at least one member or the Chairperson shall be from SC/ST/OBC Category. In case no Professor/Associate Professor is available in SC/ST/OBC Category, or in case the term so the existing Professor/Associate Professor in the category is completed, an Assistant Professor in the category may be appointed.
3. The term of the Chairperson and members shall be for a period of two years.
4. The term of the School/Campus level Student Council member shall be one year.
5. The quorum for the meeting including the Chairperson, but excluding the special invitee, shall be three.
6. In case of absence of the secretary in a meeting, the Chairperson can appoint one of the members as the secretary.
7. In case of the absence of the Chairperson the Member Secretary will Chair the meeting and will appoint one of the members present as the Secretary.
8. In specific circumstances, the Chairperson can appoint a Special Committee of not less than three faculty members of the department to which the complainant belongs to or external to it to redress the grievance. On approval of the report of the Special Committee by the DSGRC concerned, the grievance will be considered redressed.
9. The Chairperson shall call for a meeting of the DSGRC as and when required, however, the Committee shall meet at least once a year and accordingly submit the annual report of grievances received from the students and resolution thereafter to the Director of Student Services for the official record.
10. In considering the grievances before it, the DSGRC shall follow principles of natural justice and procedures as mentioned below:
 - i DSGRC shall be the first point of reference for dealing with all types of student grievances except for grievances relating to evaluations which shall be governed by the Guidelines under the Examinations Regulations of the University as amended from time to time.

- ii All personal and other grievances as the case may be shall be filed by the affected student online in the student portal of the University-Knowledge Pro (KP) or in writing to the Chairperson of DSGRC as soon as possible but not later than five working days from the occurrence of such grievance.
- iii The grievances/complaints received on the University will be referred by the University to the appropriate DSGRC, along with comments, if any, within seven (7) days of receipt of the complaint on the online portal.
- iv Depending on the nature of the grievance received, the DSGRC may either decide the grievance directly by passing an order or Chairperson may forward the grievance received to the counsellor of the class concerned to give a personal hearing to the student and to record his/her observations, comments and conclusions with date and time, in the Grievance Form/Letter duly signed by the Counsellor and countersigned by the student. The Counsellor shall submit a report of resolution of any such grievance being resolved to the Chairperson of the DSGRC.
Provided further that if the Counsellor is not able to resolve the matter by such hearing, he/she shall forward the documented grievance letter (retaining a copy thereof for the record) to the DGSRC within five working days from the first receipt of the Grievance. However, if the counsellor submits the documented grievance details after the above period of five working days, he/she shall record the reason for such delay in submission.
- v The DSGRC will enquire into the grievance duly considering relevant documents and shall make its decision / recommendation in an equitable and just manner and communicate the same to the Student and to the Director of Student Services within 15 working days of receipt of the written complaint by the DSGRC.
- vi It shall be the duty of the HOD and the Dean to ensure that no student is penalised or subjected to any bias for the reason of preferring a personal grievance.
- vii If the grievance is against any particular member of the Committee, such member shall not participate in the related proceedings of the Committee.
- viii If a student is not satisfied with the decision of DSGRC he/she may prefer an appeal to the Ombudsperson appointed by the Institution for the purpose of hearing appeals related to decisions/orders passed by the DSGRC, within seven working days of intimation of the decision by the DSGRC. The appeal may be made on the online portal of the University or to the Ombudsperson email id as displayed on the website.

2. University Grievance Redressal Committee (UGRC)

1. The University Grievance Redressal Committee (UGRC) shall consist of the following Members:
 - i. The Director, Admissions-Chairperson
 - ii. A Faculty working with the Office of Admissions or who is familiar with the admission process of the University-Member Secretary, nominated by the Vice Chancellor
 - iii. Two Senior Teachers (Professor/Associate Professor) of the University nominated with the approval of the Vice Chancellor
 - iv. Chief Finance Officer or his nominee.
 - v. A Student nominated from and by the University/School/Campus Student Council (Special Invitee)
2. The Vice Chancellor may constitute separate UGRCs at each of the campus locations/Off-Campuses. In such cases the Campus Director or Campus Dean will be Chairperson of the Committee.
3. At least one member or Chairperson shall be a woman and at least one member or the Chairperson shall be from SC/ST/OBC Category.
4. The Committee shall meet as and when needed, with a quorum of three Members including the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall have a Casting Vote in case of equality of votes - by voice/show of hands/ballot.
5. The nominated members of the Committee will have a tenure of two years and shall be eligible for re-nomination.

6. The term of the University/School/Campus level Student Council member shall be one year.
7. Any grievance to be considered by this Committee must be filed within 30 days of closure of admissions for any academic year in respect of any particular programme.
8. UGRC will consider and examine the grievance in a judicious and equitable manner and will deliver its decision to the complainant within 30 working days from the date of receipt of the complaint, with a copy to the Registrar of the University.
9. Annual report on the Student's Grievances received by the UGRC and resolution thereafter to be submitted by the UGRC to the Registrar of the University.

3. Ombudsperson

1. The Ombudsperson appointed by the University shall hear and decide on the appeals related to the decisions/orders passed by the DSGRCs. Where necessary the University may appoint more than one part-time functionary designated as Ombudspersons to hear, and decide on, appeals preferred against the decisions of the DSGRCs at each of its campus locations including the Off-Campuses. The Ombudsperson shall be a retired Vice Chancellor or a retired Professor, who has preferably worked as Dean/HOD, with 10 years of experience as a Professor at State/Central Universities/Institutions of National Importance/Deemed to be Universities or a former District Judge.
2. The contact details of the Ombudsperson shall be displayed on the Institutional website.
3. The Ombudsperson shall not, at the time of appointment, during one year before the appointment, or in the course of his/her tenure as Ombudsperson, be in conflict of interest with the Institution where his/her personal relationship, professional affiliations or financial interest may compromise or reasonably appear to compromise, the independence of judgment towards the Institution.
4. The Ombudsperson shall be appointed initially for a period of one year and which is extendable for two more years or until he/she attains the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier, from the date of assuming office, and shall be eligible for reappointment for another one term, not exceeding the age of 70 years.
5. The University may remove the Ombudsperson from office, on charges of proven misconduct or misbehaviour.
6. No order of removal of Ombudsperson shall be made except after an inquiry made in this regard by a person, not below the rank of a retired judge of the High Court in which a reasonable opportunity of being heard is given to the Ombudsperson.
7. The Ombudsperson shall have the following functions:
 - i. The Ombudsperson shall hear appeals from an aggrieved student, only after the student has availed all other remedies provided under these regulations.
 - ii. While issues of malpractices in the conduct of the examination or in the process of evaluation may be referred to the Ombudsperson, no appeal or application for revaluation or re-totalling of answer sheets from an examination shall be entertained by the Ombudsperson, unless specific irregularity materially affecting the outcome or specific instance of discrimination is indicated.
 - iii. The Ombudsperson may avail the assistance of any person, as amicus curiae, for hearing complaints of alleged discrimination.
 - iv. The Ombudsperson shall make all efforts to resolve the grievances within a period of 30 days of receiving the appeal from the aggrieved student(s).
 - v. The Ombudsperson shall, after giving reasonable opportunities of being heard to the parties concerned, on the conclusion of proceedings, pass such order, with reasons thereof, as may be deemed fit to redress the grievance and provide such relief as may be appropriate to the aggrieved student.

- vi. The Ombudsperson shall provide with a copy of the duly signed order to the aggrieved student as well as the Chairperson of DSGRC/UGRC and the Director of Students Services for necessary compliances.
- vii. The Ombudsperson may also recommend appropriate action against the complainant, where a complaint is found to be false or frivolous.

D. Grievances in Common of Students Enrolled:

- A. Grievances in common may relate to Academic Issues, Staff-Related Issues or Organisational Issues etc.,
 - i. Students having common grievances may raise the same with the Student Representative concerned of the respective School/Campus Student Council or the University Student Council as the case may be.
 - ii. The Student representative, in consultation with and in concurrence of the Staff Coordinator of the Council, will forward the same to the School/Campus /University Student Council for its consideration.
 - iii. The decision of the School/Campus/University Student Council shall be final and binding unless it refers the matter to the Director of Student Services.
 - iv. Where the matter is referred by the Council concerned to the Director of Student Services, the decision taken by the Director will be final and binding.

E. Procedure for Redressal of Grievances by Ombudspersons and Student Grievance Redressal Committees:

1. The University shall furnish, prominently, on its website and in its prospectus, all relevant information in respect of the DSGRCs, UGRC and the Ombudsperson.
2. The University shall have an online portal where any aggrieved student may submit an application seeking redressal of grievance (other than appeals and grievances relating to evaluations) in accordance with this Regulation.
3. On receipt of an online complaint, the appropriate Student Grievance Redressal Committee shall fix a date for hearing within 15 days of receipt of the complaint which shall be communicated to the aggrieved student (Complainant).
4. An aggrieved student shall be required to appear in person although with prior approval may bring in a person (other than an Advocate) to assist him/her in presenting the case.
5. The aggrieved student can indicate in the complaint if he/she wishes that the DSGRC/UGRC can pass order based on the explanation/evidence provided in the complaint and in such cases the DSGRC/UGRC can decide on passing the order with or without an in-person appearance.
6. The Institution shall extend cooperation to the Ombudsperson in the early redressal of grievances; and failure to do so may be reported by the Ombudsperson to the UGC, which shall take action in accordance with the provisions of the UGC (Redressal of Grievances of Students) Regulations, 2023.
7. The Ombudsperson shall, after giving reasonable opportunities of being heard to both parties, on the conclusion of proceedings, pass such order, with reasons thereof, as may be deemed fit to redress the grievance and provide such relief as may be appropriate to the aggrieved student.
8. The Institution, as well as the aggrieved student, shall be provided with copies of the order under the signature of the Ombudsperson, and the Institution shall place it for general information on its website.
9. The Institution shall comply with the recommendations of the Ombudsperson; and the Ombudsperson shall report to the UGC any failure on the part of the Institution to comply with the recommendations.
10. The Ombudsperson may recommend appropriate action against the complainant, where a complaint is found to be false or frivolous.

Date: 30 June 2023

Registrar