

Grievances and Appeals

Policy and Procedure



Document Overview

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V1	Sept24	Initial document creation

Continuous Improvement

Policies, procedures and processes are meant to be 'living' documents that need to be followed, implemented and maintained. If the procedure does not reflect the current, correct work practice please contact us on quality@cmbs.edu.mt

Ensure you are reading the latest version available on the CMBS LMS.

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1. Grievances and Appeals Policy

1.1 Scope and Applicability

At Central Mediterranean Business School (CMBS), we embrace an open-door policy and provide a clear framework for addressing any concerns our community might have. This Grievances and Appeals Procedure is here for students, staff members, and faculty members.

This procedure is for all Central Mediterranean Business School (CMBS) students, staff, and faculty. It is here to help address any academic or non-academic issues that might be encountered. Whether it is about the outcome of an assessment, a decision regarding certification, or the quality of our educational services, this procedure outlines how one can raise and resolve their concerns. It's designed to ensure everyone in the CMBS community knows how to voice their grievances or appeal decisions made within the school.

CMBS also considers the role of external stakeholders, such as quality assurers and awarding bodies, in certain situations defined by this procedure. Our goal is to make sure one has a formal and structured way to address their concerns, ensuring their experience at CMBS is as positive and fulfilling as possible.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Grievances and Appeals Procedure is twofold: to affirm our commitment to transparency and fairness and to ensure every member of our community feels heard and valued. We understand that part of providing a high-quality educational experience involves addressing concerns and resolving issues promptly and effectively.

This procedure serves as a guide for navigating through the process of lodging a grievance or an appeal. It is designed with the intention to:

- **Empower:** We want all students, staff, and faculty to feel empowered to speak up when something doesn't seem right, knowing there's a clear path to seek resolution.

- **Clarify:** By outlining specific steps, we aim to clarify how grievances and appeals are handled, removing any uncertainty about what to do or whom to approach.
- **Resolve:** Our ultimate goal is to resolve issues in a manner that is fair and just for everyone involved, ensuring that decisions are made based on a thorough understanding of the situation.
- **Improve:** Feedback and concerns raised through this process are invaluable for us. They help us identify areas for improvement, enhancing the quality of education and the overall CMBS experience for current and future members of our community.

Through this procedure, CMBS reaffirms its dedication to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment.

1.3 Principles

The Grievances and Appeals Procedure is founded on several key principles to ensure fairness, transparency, and respect throughout the process. These principles guide how grievances and appeals are addressed and resolved, ensuring that all members of our community are treated with dignity and their concerns are taken seriously.

Our key principles:

- **Fairness:** Every grievance and appeal is approached with an unbiased mindset, ensuring that all parties receive a fair evaluation based on the merits of their case. Decisions are made after a comprehensive review of all relevant information.
- **Confidentiality:** We understand the sensitivity of grievances and appeals. Thus, we handle all cases with the utmost confidentiality, protecting the privacy and dignity of everyone involved. Information is shared only with those directly involved in resolving the case.
- **Accessibility:** Our procedure is designed to be straightforward and accessible to everyone within the CMBS community. We strive to eliminate barriers that might deter individuals from voicing their concerns or seeking justice.
- **Transparency:** We believe in being transparent about how grievances and appeals are handled. While maintaining confidentiality, we keep all parties informed about the process, timelines, and decisions.

- **Responsiveness:** Timeliness is critical in addressing concerns and resolving issues. We commit to responding promptly at each stage of the procedure, ensuring that resolutions are reached in a timely manner.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Feedback from the grievances and appeals process is a valuable tool for institutional improvement. We use insights gained to enhance our policies, procedures, and practices, aiming for continuous improvement in the academic environment and community experience.

2. Definitions

Appeal	A request for the review of a decision made by an academic or administrative body within CMBS. Appeals are typically related to academic assessments, certification outcomes, or disciplinary actions, where the individual seeks a reconsideration based on procedural errors, new evidence, unfair treatment, or misapplication of policy.
Complaint	An informal or formal expression of dissatisfaction concerning the quality of education, support services, or behaviour of individuals within the CMBS community. Complaints usually seek immediate resolution and may not always require the formalities of the grievance process.
Grievance	A formal expression of dissatisfaction from a member of the CMBS community regarding any aspect of the institution's operations, environment, or interactions that affects the academic or non-academic experience. This could include issues related to course delivery, access to resources, or interpersonal conflicts that do not directly involve assessment decisions.

3. Types of Complaints and Grievances

3.1 Academic

Concerns related to the academic aspects of the institution, including but not limited to, course content and delivery, assessment methods and outcomes, access to learning materials, and the conduct of exams. Academic grievances also cover issues related to academic advising, enrolment, and progression within programmes.

3.2 Non-Academic

Issues that arise outside the academic curriculum but significantly impact the student experience at CMBS. This category includes concerns about campus facilities, student support services, and activities. It also covers grievances related to administrative procedures and decisions, such as registration and financial aid.

3.3 Interpersonal

Disputes or conflicts between members of the CMBS community, including students, faculty, and staff. These grievances may involve allegations of discrimination, harassment, bullying, or any other behaviour that undermines the institution's values of respect and inclusion.

3.4 Service-Related

Complaints regarding the quality, availability, or accessibility of the various services provided by CMBS, including library services, IT support, and career guidance. This category also encompasses grievances related to the physical campus environment, such as maintenance issues, safety concerns, and accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

3.5 Business School's Regulations

Concerns related to the perceived unfair application or interpretation of CMBS policies and procedures. This includes grievances regarding the business school's rules and regulations, decision-making processes, and the transparency and fairness of institutional governance.

4. Procedure for Filing a Complaint or Grievance

4.1 General Information

At CMBS, both informal and formal complaints, or grievances, can be initiated by students, tutors, staff members, or a group of students, provided there is a designated main point of contact, such as a Student Representative. In cases where a group is represented, written permission must be obtained from all students who wish to be named in the grievance by the nominated spokesperson. This ensures transparency and consent in the representation and handling of the complaint or grievance.

4.2 Informal Complaints or Grievances

We at CMBS encourage our community members to first seek resolution through informal channels. This can involve discussing the issue directly with the involved party, such as a tutor or staff member, or seeking assistance from the Student Affairs and Admissions Team or School Principal. We believe that many concerns can be resolved swiftly and satisfactorily in an informal setting, fostering a positive and supportive community environment.

We ask that you initiate these informal discussions within 5 days of the incident's occurrence to ensure timely and effective resolution. If the outcome of the informal process does not meet your expectations or satisfactorily resolve the issue, you are encouraged to proceed with filing a complaint or grievance.

4.3 Formal Complaints or Grievances

In instances where an informal attempt at resolution does not lead to a satisfactory outcome, or if the nature of the issue warrants formal intervention from the onset, a formal complaint or grievance should be submitted.

Step 1: To file a formal complaint or grievance, please complete the **Complaints or Grievances Form** (See [appendix 1](#)) and send your official complaint/grievance via email to studentsupport@cmbs.edu.mt (Students), academicsupport@cmbs.edu.mt (Faculty) or to quality@cmbs.edu.mt (CMBS Staff). The submission should clearly articulate the nature of the appeal, the parties involved and any supporting evidence (if applicable).

Step 2: The Academic Affairs Team (Faculty) or the Admission and Student Affairs Team (Students) will review the complaint/grievance and if deemed necessary, summon the complainant for a meeting to discuss further. The complaint/grievance and suggested outcome will be escalated to the School Principal for review.

Step 3: The School Principal or the Quality Committee (where applicable) will evaluate the complaint/grievance and submit an official letter with the outcome to the Admissions and Student Affairs team (in cases of student complaints/grievances or the Academic Affairs Team (in cases of complaints/grievances from faculty)).

4.3.1 Responsibilities:

The responsibilities of the Admissions and Student Affairs team (students) and the Academic Affairs team (Faculty) are to:

- Communicate the outcome to the complainant;
- Save the formal complaints/grievances form and the official outcome letter to be in the students/faculty folder on SharePoint;
- Log the grievance/complaint in the **Feedback, grievances and appeals log**.

4.4 Appeal Procedure (General)

This process applies for any type of appeal with the exception of appealing a grade (see 4.5).

Step 1: For students to file a formal appeal, they complete the **Appeals Form** (See appendix 2) and send their official appeal via email to studentsupport@cmbs.edu.mt. For faculty members, they can send their official appeal to academicsupport@cmbs.edu.mt. Submission should clearly articulate the nature of the appeal, the parties involved and any supporting evidence (if applicable). The Academic Affairs team will escalate the appeal to the School Principal.

Step 2: The School Principal may summon the Quality Committee and/or an external expert/evaluator (depending on the nature of the appeal) for a meeting to review the appeal and supporting documentation and determine the outcome.

Step 3: The School Principal will send an official letter with the outcome of the appeal and inform the Academic Affairs Team accordingly.

4.4.1 Responsibilities:

The **Academic Affairs Team** is responsible to:

- Save the appeals form and the official outcome letter in the students/faculty folder on SharePoint.
- Log appeal and respective outcome in the **Feedback, grievances and appeals log**.

4.5 Appeal for awarded Grades

This process applies for appeals related to the awarding of grades.

- Step 1:** To file a formal appeal for awarded grades, please complete the **Grade Appeals Form** (See appendix 3) or **Dissertation Grade Appeals Form** (See appendix 4) and send via email to academicsupport@cmb.edu.mt.
- Step 2:** The Academic Affairs Team will review the submission, tutor feedback and Internal Verifier's feedback (if applicable) and assign an External Verifier to conduct a second grading.
- Step 3:** The External Verifier will have a further 5 working days to review said submission. It is important to note that at this stage grades may be increased as well as decreased.
- Step 4:** The Academic Affairs Team, via an official letter, will communicate the outcome of the external verifier's review within 5 working days from the said External Verifier's report.

4.5.1 Responsibilities:

The **Academic Affairs Team** is responsible to:

- Save the grade appeals form and the official outcome letter in the students' folder on SharePoint.
- Log the appeal and respective outcome in the **feedback, grievances and appeals log**.

4.6 Additional Provisions for External Qualifications

4.6.1 ACCA

Initially, students are encouraged to address their complaints directly to CMBS. If the resolution provided is unsatisfactory, or if the student wishes to challenge the decision further, they have the option to escalate their complaint to the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) here <https://forms.accaglobal.com/contact-us> or by sending an email to complaints@accaglobal.com

Should the student find the responses from both CMBS and ACCA inadequate, they retain the right to present their complaint to the relevant regulatory authority. Guidance on how to proceed with such an escalation, including contact details, can be accessed via the ACCA website at this link: <https://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/footertoolbar/contact-us/connect/unhappy.html>

Address and Contact information:

ACCA Connect

110 Queen Street

Glasgow

G1 3BX

United Kingdom

T: +44 (0)141 582 2000

www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student.html

4.6.2 Coventry University

Students following programmes of study that have been validated by Coventry University will nonetheless have all the assessments corrected and verified by internal CMBS tutors. The role of Coventry University academic colleagues is to ensure that the CMBS faculty is following the required rigour when correcting said assessments. No marks will be issued directly by Coventry University. Any Grievance or Complaint must be addressed solely to CMBS.

4.7 Timelines

Formal complaints/grievances/appeals must be made in writing within 5 days following the incident occurrence, upon receiving the grade or upon completion of the programme.

CMBS aims to acknowledge receipt of submission within 2 working days and provide a preliminary response or request for further information within 5 working days. The aim will be to communicate the final outcome within 15 working days from initial submission.

CMBS is dedicated to ensuring that any complaints, grievances and appeals are addressed with the utmost seriousness, fairness, and confidentiality. Our goal is to resolve issues in a manner that upholds the integrity of our academic and community standards, fostering an environment of trust and respect.

5. Associated Policies

- CMBS Ethos
- Admissions and Enrolment Policy and Procedure
- Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedure
- Assessment and Internal Verification Policy and Procedure
- Assessment of Dissertations Policy and Procedure
- Programme and Academic Regulations Policy and Procedures
- Student Rights, Responsibilities and Code of Conduct Policy
- Data Privacy and Information Management Policy
- Student Life Cycle Policy and Procedures

Appendix 1 - Complaints and Grievances Form

Date:	
Name and Surname:	
Designation: Applicant, Student, Faculty member	
Email:	
Nature of Complaint / Grievance:	
Parties involved:	
Additional information:	
Signature:	

FOR OFFICE USE:

Actions taken:		
Outcome:		
Date:		
CMBS Representative Designation: Signature:		

Appendix 2 - Appeal Request Form

Date:	
Name Surname:	
Designation: Applicant, Student, Faculty	
Email:	
Nature and Reason/s for Appeal:	
Parties involved:	
Signature:	

FOR OFFICE USE:

The request for appeal was accepted / not accepted for the below reasons:

Approved		
Not Approved		
Interview Date (in case of approval)		
CMBS Representative Designation: Signature:		

Appendix 3 - Grade/s Appeal Request Form

Student Name:	
Qualification title and intake:	
Module title:	
Grade Assigned by CMBS Assessor/s:	
Reasons for Appealing Assigned Grade:	
Students Signature:	

FOR OFFICE USE:

The students request for appeal was accepted / not accepted for the below reasons:

Approved		
Not Approved		
Interview Date (in case of approval)		
CMBS Representative Designation: Signature:		

Appendix 4 - Dissertation Grade Appeal Request Form

Date:	
Researcher's Name:	
Email address:	
Qualification title and Intake:	
Research Title:	
Grade Assigned by CMBS Assessor/s:	
Reasons for Appealing Assigned Grade:	
Researcher's Signature:	
Dissertation Supervisor Signature:	

FOR OFFICE USE:

The researcher's request for appeal was accepted / not accepted for the below reasons:

Approved		
Not Approved		
Interview Date (in case of approval)		
CMBS Representative Signature		