



HOLMES UNIVERSITY FLORIDA

Student Complaints and Grievance Procedure

Student Complaints

HUF strives to achieve the highest standards in the provision of services to students but recognizes that complaints may arise nonetheless. We have therefore developed a process to deal with complaints from students. This procedure is intended to enable students to bring matters of concern about Holmes services to its attention and to enable those matters to be investigated and discussed with the aim of reaching a satisfactory resolution, within a reasonable timescale and having due regard to the requirements of natural justice.

We have developed a number of feedback mechanisms for students to raise any concerns with a view to us seeking to respond quickly to resolve most issues. In addition, we would encourage, where possible, to raise issues informally with the Program Team first before the submission of a formal complaint.

Holmes treats all complaints very seriously. Students will not suffer any disadvantage as a result of making a complaint in good faith. However, making a complaint that is frivolous, vexatious or malicious is likely to be a breach of a student's obligations to HUF and may result in disciplinary action being taken against that student under the Student Disciplinary Policy.

Scope of the Student Complaints Policy

This section refers to all complaints and grievances relating to the learner's period of registration with HUF. These procedures apply to complaints and formal grievances including issues regarding level of service, resources or issues involving staff or peers.

Complaints relating to the assessment process, or appeals against decisions relating to academic issues are considered under the Academic Appeals Policy.

Complaints from the public will be dealt with by the President in consultation with the Board of Directors as appropriate.

Summary of the Procedure

There are three internal stages which a student must follow when bringing a complaint. Unless they have a good reason for not doing so, the student should start at Stage One and follow the stages in accordance with the sequence set out below:

- Stage One: Informal resolution and reconciliation
- Stage Two: Formal consideration
- Stage Three: Appeal

Stage One: Informal Resolution and Reconciliation

Stage 1 is an informal stage to facilitate resolution and reconciliation.

- In the first instance, the learner should discuss the issue with the relevant Academic Program Director, academic administrator or other HUF staff as appropriate.
- The Academic Program Director will explain the complaints and grievance policy and procedure to the learner.
- The Academic Program Director may consult with other relevant staff members in this stage of resolution if necessary. Where possible the issue should be resolved informally between the individuals concerned.
- A note is made on the learner's file summarizing the issue and the outcome.

The dignity of those involved in the process is paramount and discretion will be assured.

Where there is a conflict of interest (real or perceived) with the Academic Program Director, that persons' role in the process will be undertaken by another manager as determined by the Senior Management Group.

If the learner's complaint is not resolved at this level, then Stage 2 of the procedure should be followed.

Stage Two: Formal Consideration

Stage 2 is initiated if the complaint was not resolved to the learner's satisfaction at Stage 1 or if the Program Director or other appropriate staff consider the complaint serious enough to progress directly to Stage 2 and that a more formal approach is necessary.

Where an informal process has been attempted the learner should commence the formal process within 15 business days of the completion of Stage 1.

- The learner should make their complaint in writing on a Complaints Form available from the Administration Office and on the University website. The learner should include all relevant detail and include any supporting documentation. The learner should also describe any previous efforts to resolve the matter and why these were unsatisfactory. As a (non-exhaustive) guide, students may wish to include the following points in their Complaints Form:
 - A description of what has happened to give rise to the complaint, including dates, times and all other relevant details
 - Details of how the student has suffered as a result
 - The names of any witnesses who can corroborate the complaint if appropriate
 - Copies (not originals) of any documentary evidence the student wishes to be taken into consideration
 - Details of the steps which have been taken so far to resolve the complaint
 - An explanation as to why the student is dissatisfied with the previous attempts to resolve the complaint
 - An outline of what action the student would like to be taken, or what remedy he or she is seeking
- The Registrar collates the learner's report, the accompanying evidence, and a report from the Academic Program Director or other staff involved in Stage 1. The University will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 business days.

- Once complete, the Registrar forwards the complaint the accompanying information to the Senior Management Group (SMG) for their consideration. For the purposes of considering a complaint or grievance the SMG will co-opt at least one academic member of staff not directly related to the learner's program of study. The President will not be involved in any proceedings in Stage 1 or Stage 2. The SMG will examine the complaint and may seek further information or clarification from the learner at this stage.
- The learner will be kept informed of the progress of the complaint and notified if any delays are anticipated.
- The SMG will reach an outcome, and recommendations may issue from the process. HUF aims to complete this stage of the complaints and grievance procedure within 21 business days.
- The Registrar will notify the learner in writing of the decision reached by the SMG and the reasons for it, together with any recommended consequent action, within the 21 business-day timeframe.
- The SMG may:
 - Dismiss the complaint and provide reasons for doing so; or
 - Partially uphold the complaint and propose a resolution; or
 - Fully uphold the complaint and propose a resolution
- A complaint may be deemed invalid because it is considered to be malicious or vexatious, or false information may have been submitted – in these cases the complainant may be referred to Student Disciplinary

Stage Three: Appeal

A learner may appeal the outcome of the complaints process on the following grounds:

- Where there was substantive irregularity in how the process was conducted; or
- Where relevant information emerges or was not considered that would have changed the outcome of the process.

The appeal must be made in writing, for the attention of the President, within 10 business days of receipt of the outcome of Stage 2.

The President will investigate the grounds for the appeal and will decide on an outcome:

- Appeal upheld, with a determination on resolution passed back to the Senior Management Group
- Appeal upheld, with a resolution proposed by the President
- Appeal dismissed, along with the reasons for this decision

Source: Holmes University Florida Academic Catalog 2026/27, "Student Complaints", p. 49; "Student Complaints Policy", pp. 130–133. Where there is any inconsistency between a policy and the Academic Catalog, the Academic Catalog prevails.