**Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure**

**Preambulum**

To outline the policy and procedures for all student complaints and appeals, where these have not been able to be resolved informally as grievances.

This policy applies to all students enrolled within courses of study o­ffered by Alfred Nobel University – Alfred Nobel Open Business School Switzerland. This policy is the responsibility of all staff­ dealing with students or prospective persons. It is the responsibility of ANOBS to make this policy public and advise person/s that have a grievance, complaint or appeal of any nature of its existence.

**General Provisions**

All students or potential students can access the process to resolve their grievance, complaint or appeal with ANOBS.

During each stage ANOBS will take all possible steps to ensure that:

a) the complainant and the respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against;

b) the complainant has an opportunity to formally present his/her case and each party to the complaint may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any internal meetings, including an Internal Case Review;

c) detailed written explanations are provided of decisions and actions taken as part of the process;

d) where the internal or external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the complainant, the University immediately implements any decision and/or corrective and preventive action required and advises the complainant of the outcome in writing;

e) where an internal complaint or appeal has been submitted, the complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the complaint or appeal;

f) there is no cost to the complainant for utilising the internal complaints and appeals process; however, there is a specified cost for utilising the external part of the process.

**Step 1: Resolving Grievances**

Students or potential students are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve grievances directly with the person(s) concerned. For example: if the issue concerns an academic matter, the complainant should talk honestly to the trainer about his/her concerns. If the student or potential student has attempted to resolve the issue directly, but is not satisfied with the outcome or does not wish to approach the person(s) concerned directly, then he/she may discuss the issue with any of the following, depending on the nature of the complaint, i.e. academic or non-academic:

a) Head of Department or

b) President.

He/she may be accompanied or assisted by a support person during this process.

The grievance will be dealt with in a reasonable time. Every e­ffort will be made to ensure this is within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the grievance. The complainant and any other person(s) directly concerned will be provided with the outcome of the discussion with second party and any actions that were taken or will be taken to resolve the issue. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, a formal complaint can be lodged by the complainant under this policy.

**Step 2: Lodging a Formal Complaint or Appeal**

To commence the formal complaint or appeal process, the complainant must submit the complaint or appeal in writing or by e-mail to the President.

The following information needs to be provided in writing on or accompanying the document:

a) details of the complaint,

b) supporting information that the complainant wishes to have considered,

c) an explanation of the steps already taken to try to resolve the complaint informally and why the responses received are not considered satisfactory, and

d) what the complainant thinks needs to be done to address his/her concerns.

ANOBS will commence the process of considering the complaint within fourteen (14) days of receiving the written form, and will advise the outcome of the appeal or complaint in writing to the complainant.

He/she will ensure all steps are taken to resolve the complaint as soon as practical.

The complaint will be investigated by the President who may discuss the issues with the person(s) concerned, and may confer with the relevant staff­ involved. If he or she considers that the complaint is upheld, then he/she will immediately notify relevant staff­ to implement the actions required to resolve the complaint. The complainant will be provided with a written outcome of the steps taken to address the complaint within twenty (20) working days of the commencement of the complaint process.

If the complaint is not upheld, then the complainant will be given a written outcome detailing the reasons for that decision. The complainant will also be advised of his/her right to access the internal appeals process if not satisfied with the outcome of the formal written complaint.

The President will retain a written record of the complaint and its outcome and this will be placed in the student’s file.

**Internal Appeal**

If a student is not satisfied with a decision made by ANOBS, he/she has twenty (20) working days from the dated written notification by ANOBS in which to lodge an Internal Appeal to have the case reviewed at no cost to the student. This includes decisions relating to the outcomes of complaints and assessment appeals, as well as notifications of unsatisfactory academic progress, unsatisfactory attendance, student misbehaviour or misconduct, refund refusal notices, refusal to provide a letter of release, and/or pending cancellation of enrolment by ANOBS.

If the appeal is not successful and the original complaint decision remains, then the complainant will be given a written notice of the outcome including the reasons for that decision, and advising of his/her right to access the external appeals process if not satisfied with the outcome of the internal appeal.

**External Appeal**

In the event of the complainant remaining dissatisfied with the result or conduct of ANOBS’s internal procedures for handling of the complaint, he/she has the right to access an external appeals process at minimal cost. This is to occur within twenty (20) working days from the dated written outcome of the Internal Appeal, unless special circumstances apply.

If the External Case Review process supports the complainant, then ANOBS will immediately implement any recommendations, and advise him/her in writing. When appropriate, these recommendations will be incorporated into the ANOBS’s policies and procedures for implementation ensuring the continuous improvement of service and quality education to students.

If the complaint is not upheld, the complainant will be given a detailed written explanation by the external reviewer. It will include the reasons for that decision. The procedures set out in this document do not replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Nothing in this policy and procedure limits the rights of individuals to take action under current laws. Also, these procedures do not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

1. September 2015