

# COMPLAINTS

CODE: P004

Section: Administration/Academia

Policy Owner: BOG

Procedure Owner: CEO

## POLICY

### 1.0 Definition of 'Complaint'

A complaint within the context of this policy document may be defined as any expression of dissatisfaction about the Institute of Tourism Studies' action or lack of action, or the standard of service provided by the institute or on its behalf. Appeals against applications and/or implementation of the rules and regulations, or decisions regarding progression and refund requests are also treated as complaints.

### 2.0 The Complainants

Anyone who feels aggrieved or dissatisfied by the Institute of Tourism Studies' decisions or standard of service provided (whether educational or operational) can file a complaint.

### 3.0 Nature of Complaints

Third parties can file a complaint based on the following:

- The quality and standard of any service which the Institute of Tourism Studies provide
- The Institute of Tourism Studies' failure to provide a service
- The Institute of Tourism Studies' failure to follow appropriate administrative process
- An application and implementation of the rules and regulations
- The quality of the learning experience provided by The Institute of Tourism Studies
- Unfair treatment
- Inappropriate behaviour by a student or staff member
- Harassment, in line with the the Institute of Tourism Studies' rules and regulation
- Dissatisfaction with the Institute of Tourism Studies' policies and procedures.
- For complaints related to the Training Restaurant, complainants should refer directly to the policy entitled 'Restaurant Complaints'.

### 4.0 Timing of Complaint

Complaints must be filed within four weeks of when the issue arises or when the individual finds out that he/she has a reason for filing a complaint based on the criteria set in clause 3.0 of this policy document. In exceptional circumstances, the Institute of Tourism Studies may accept a complaint after the four-week timeframe.

## 5.0 Recipients of the Complaints

The complainant may use different channels to file a complaint, these may include but are not limited to: Academic Staff; Administrative Staff; Academic Management; Administrative Management; and The Internal Quality Assurance Committee. In addition to a verbal or written complaint filed with one of the aforementioned parties, the complainant must send a copy of the complaints to [complaints@its.edu.mt](mailto:complaints@its.edu.mt). Further information is listed in the complaints procedure below.

## PROCEDURE

### 5.0 The process following acknowledgement of the Complaint

The procedure for the complaints follows three important stages:

#### 5.1 Stage One – Informal/Formal Resolution

The Institute of Tourism Studies aim at resolving complaints in the most efficient and effective way by encouraging early resolution within the section or department that provides the service. Informal or Formal resolution may vary from a formal apology, particularly if the issue stemmed from an unforeseen circumstance which the Institute of Tourism Studies had no control on. In specific cases, The ITS management would require to refer with its employees (academic, administration and support staff) to clarify and identify the nature of the complaint in order to provide the complainant with a detailed justification.

In case the complainant is not satisfied with the justification at this first stage, the ITS management will guide the complainant to the second stage.

#### 5.2 Stage Two – Formal Investigation

This stage deals with complaints which have not been resolved in the first stage. In addition, this stage aims at addressing more complex complaints which often require formal investigation by the ITS executive management and the Chief Executive Officer. Individuals who would like to make a formal complaint under this section should send a formal email to [complaints@its.edu.mt](mailto:complaints@its.edu.mt) (the recipients of this email are the COO- Academia and the IQAC). The individual filing the complaint must provide all supporting evidence, this include but are not limited to: documents, emails, photos etc. The submission of complaints at this stage are treated as confidential.

5.2.1 Following submission of the complaint email, the Institute of Tourism Studies will acknowledge receipt within three working days and inform the complainant of who is dealing with the case – this may be either an administrative or academic manager. In specific cases the Chief Operating Officer – Academia and/or the Chief Operating Office – Corporate Service may deal directly with the complaint – this depends on the nature of the complaint.

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5.2.2 The Institute of Tourism Studies will provide the complainant with the outcome of the investigation as soon as possible and within twenty working days. In case the investigation will take longer than this timeframe, then the management will let you know before the expiration of the twenty working days.

### 5.3 Stage Three - Complaints Resolution ad hoc Committee

This stage looks at those complaints which have not been resolved at Stage two. In such case, the ITS management will set up an ad hoc committee to address the issues and inform the complainant accordingly.

#### 5.3.1 The Complaints Resolution Committee composition

5.3.1.1 This committee shall be composed of a Chair a secretary and a member of staff within the Institute of Tourism Studies all of who to be appointed by the Chief Executive Officer or one of the Chief Operation Officer;

5.3.1.2 The Committee should meet within twenty working days of its constitution

5.3.1.3 The Committee should provide a definite response to the complainant within ten working days of the committee meeting. In case the committee take longer than expected to come to a decision due to unforeseen circumstances, then the secretary of the committee will inform the complainant before the expiration of the tenth day.

### 5.4 Stage Four - Unsuccessful Complaints Resolution

If the complainant feels that the outcome of the complaint resolution by the Institute of Tourism Studies was unsuccessful, he/she may turn to the national laws and file submit a complaint accordingly.