

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE: CERI GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISIM

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1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of the Accelerating Genomics-based Surveillance for COVID-19 Response in South Africa and the African Continent Project¹ is to improve genomic surveillance capacity of SARS-CoV-2 of South Africa and the African region. In addition to direct employment of staff or sponsorship of fellowships, the project will involve the engagement of several stakeholders, the general public or the community. The nature of the Project makes it highly unlikely that complaints will be received from the stakeholders, the general public or the community about the project. However, a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) has been established to deal with any complaints received.

2. PURPOSE

The GRM provides a platform for any stakeholder who has a grievance or problem that has arisen from their involvement with the project the right and the opportunity to lodge their grievance and discuss it with an eye to resolving it, if possible, to mutual satisfaction. The purpose of standard operating procedure (SOP) is to outline the procedures to be followed in addressing any grievance.

3. SCOPE

Established mechanisms at Stellenbosch University will be used to address any grievances of **individuals working on the project**. A [Grievance Procedure policy \(Appendix 1\)](#) is already in place and will be maintained throughout Project implementation. In addition, staff and students of Stellenbosch University can also report any incidences of unfair discrimination, harassment, GBV, bullying, and victimisation to unfair@sun.ac.za or can report incidents of directly on the online platform at <https://ciims.sun.ac.za/ReportingPage/>.

This SOP outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Centre for Epidemic Response and Innovation (CERI) members and the procedures to be followed by CERI personnel in implementing the GRM for complaints received from stakeholders. The GRM for the Project involves a formal process for receiving, evaluating and redressing program-related grievances from affected stakeholders, communities and the public.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

To ensure effectiveness and efficiency of the Project's GRM, the procedures for handling grievance will be administered by CERI. CERI shall maintain records where grievances and complaints, including minutes of discussions, recommendations and resolutions made, will be recorded.

5. REFERENCES

Stellenbosch University Grievance Procedures (IR0153)

6. ACRONYMS

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

CERI: Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa

GRM: Grievance Redress Mechanism

¹ Please check the project paper for details:

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099740004112228907/P1774390da8296080b4e204d071af4acf6>

7. PROCEDURES

Information on the grievance mechanism is retrievable from CERI's website www.ceri.org.za

Stakeholders, the general public and the community can submit their complaints, grievances, or inquiries via telephone or email as summaries in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Contact details for complaints, grievances, or inquiries and further feedback

Description	Contact details
Implementing agency:	Stellenbosch University
Main contact:	Professor Tulio de Oliveira
Address:	Tygerberg Medical School, Stellenbosch University, Francie van Zijl Drive, Tygerberg, 7505, Cape Town, South Africa
E-mail:	ceri@sun.ac.za
Website:	https://ceri.org.za/contacts-3/
Telephone:	+27 (0)82 962 4219

The key steps of the grievance redress procedure are summarized below:

Step	Description of process	Timeframe*	Responsibility
1. Grievance uptake	Grievances can be submitted via the e mail or phone		Complainant
2. Sorting, processing	Any complaint received is forwarded to Cheryl Baxter and logged in a database.	Upon receipt of complaint	Cheryl Baxter or designee
3. Acknowledgement and follow-up	Receipt of the grievance is acknowledged to the complainant by Prof de Oliveira (or designee)	Within 2 days of receipt	Prof Tulio de Oliveira or designee
4. Verification, investigation, action	Investigation of the complaint is led by the Complaint Committee and a proposed resolution is formulated by the Committee and communicated to the complainant by Prof Tulio de Oliveira (or designee). If required, a meeting with the complaint will be held to better understand the complaint.	Within 10 working days	Complaint Committee composed of CERI management and, if external representation required, Prof Carolyn Williamson
5. Monitoring and evaluation	Data on complaints are collected in a database and reported to the World Bank every 6 months	6-monthly	Prof Tulio de Oliveira
6. Provision of feedback	Feedback from complainants regarding their satisfaction with complaint resolution will be filed in the project files	Upon receipt	Prof Tulio de Oliveira

**All periods indicated are the maximum time allowed for the relevant step in the procedure for resolving grievances, unless a different arrangement has been made with the complainant.*

Step 1: Grievance uptake

The communication channels for stakeholders and the community to submit their grievances includes an email address, face-to-face communication (either in-person or virtually) or telephonically. Stakeholders can

submit their grievances via the e mail (ceri@sun.ac.za) or phone (+27 (0)82 962 4219). The e mail address is monitored daily. Any stakeholder who lodges a grievance will be asked to complete the **Grievance Form** to formally lodge the complaint in writing.

Step 2: Sorting and processing

Any complaint received will immediately be brought to the attention of Director and the grievance will be recorded in the Project Grievance database by the Head of Scientific Support.

Step 3: Acknowledgement and follow-up

The complainant will be sent a notification to acknowledge receipt of the grievance within 2 business days.

Step 4: Verification, investigation, action

The Complaint Committee, comprised of the CERI Management, will investigate the complaint. If the complaint is about one of the members of the Complaint Committee, then other team members will be asked to investigate the complaint. A meeting will be held, either in-person or virtually, within 7 business days from grievance receipt to discuss the grievance and proposed resolution. The minutes of the meeting and a proposed resolution formulated by the Complaints Committee will be recorded on the Minutes of Complaints Committee Form. Should it be necessary, a meeting will be held with the Complainant to better understand the grievance. The outcome of the meeting and proposed resolution will be communicated to the Complainant by Prof Tulio de Oliveira (or designee) within 10 working days. Both parties will sign the minutes. If the process fails to produce a resolution, the complaint will be referred for arbitration to an impartial senior executive member from each respective organization who is not involved in the project.

Step 5. Monitoring and evaluation

A summary of the complaints received will be collected in the Project Grievance database and reported to the World Bank every 6 months. The following information will be provided:

- Status of GRM formation (procedures, staffing, awareness raising, etc.);
- Number of complaints received and their status – whether resolved, pending or otherwise;
- Types of complaint and resolutions given, unresolved problems and reasons;
- The time needed to resolve complaints;
- Any special problems solved by procedures/staffing;
- Factors that can influence the use of the GRM / beneficiary feedback system; and
- All corrective actions used.

Step 6: Provision of feedback

Any feedback from complainants regarding their satisfaction with complaint resolution will be filed in the project files.

Other mechanisms to submit complaints

Communities and individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a project supported by the World Bank may also send complaints directly to the Bank through the Bank's Grievance Redress Service (GRS). A complaint can be submitted to the Bank GRS through the following channels:

Email: grievances@worldbank.org

Fax: +1.202.614.7313

Mail: The World Bank, Grievance Redress Service, MSN MC10-1018, 1818 H Street, Northwest, Washington, DC 20433, USA.

Complaints should be supported by available documentation and correspondence to the extent possible. The complainant may also indicate the desired outcome of the complaint. Finally, the complaint should identify the complainant(s) or assigned representative/s and provide contact details. Complaints submitted via the GRS are promptly reviewed to allow quick attention to project-related concerns.

In addition, project-affected communities and individuals may submit complaints to the World Bank's independent Inspection Panel, which will then determine whether harm occurred, or could occur, as a result of the World Bank's non-compliance with its policies and procedures. Complaints may be submitted to the Inspection Panel at any time after concerns have been brought directly to the World Bank's attention, and after Bank Management has been given an opportunity to respond. Information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank Inspection Panel may be found at www.inspectionpanel.org.

8. FORMS AND TEMPLATES

- Grievance Form (Sept 2022)
- Minutes of Complaints Committee Form (Sept 2022)

GRIEVANCE FORM

Personal particulars of aggrieved person(s)

Name and surname: _____

Company / organization: _____

Short description or summary of the reason for the grievance

Desired outcome:

Recommendation or agreement according to which the grievance was handled or resolved

OR:

Brief summary of the reasons why the grievance could not be handled or resolved at this level (if applicable):

If not resolved, was the grievance referred to an impartial arbitration Yes No

Signature(s) of complainant person(s)

Date

1. _____

2. _____

Signature of Director or mediator

Date



Grievance Procedure

Reference number of this document	IR0153
HEMIS classification	
Aim	To grant any employee who has a grievance or problem that has arisen from their employment at Stellenbosch University (SU) the right and the opportunity to lodge their grievance and discuss it with an eye to resolving it, if possible, to mutual satisfaction
Type of document	Procedure
Accessibility	General (external and internal)
Implementation date	February 2012
Review date/frequency	As the need for amendments arises
Previous reviews	
Owner of this procedure	Vice-Rector: Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel
Institutional functionary (curator) responsible for this procedure	Chief Director: Strategic Initiatives and Human Resources
Date of approval	
Approved by	SU Council
Keywords	policy, procedure, provisions

The core of the procedure

A grievance is regarded as any feeling of dissatisfaction that an employee may experience concerning their employer, workplace, colleagues or any other aspect of their employment.

No matter that can be dealt with by means of collective bargaining or consultation (or a combination of the two), no matter related to the outcome of collective bargaining or consultation (or a combination of the two) and no appeal against disciplinary measures or termination of employment **is to be considered a grievance for the purposes of this procedure** and therefore will not be handled with reference to this procedure.

This procedure also does not apply to grievances that have arisen from sexual harassment; Stellenbosch University (SU) handles such grievances with reference to the document **Sexual Harassment: Policy and Procedure for Staff**, which was drafted specifically for that purpose.

1. Introduction

SU accepts that employees who are aggrieved by any aspect of their employment are experiencing a problem, since such grievances directly affect people's job security, job satisfaction and relationships at work.

2. Basic principles of the procedure

- 2.1 All staff members, whatever their post level, are granted **the right and the opportunity** to air their grievances without fear of victimisation.
- 2.2 SU acknowledges that all staff members have the need for grievances to be dealt with and, if possible, resolved by means of the following:
 - 2.2.1 opportunities for staff members to turn to a higher authority should they feel that their grievances were not considered with the required insight or empathy;
 - 2.2.2 free access for staff members to staff meetings for the purposes of advice and support regarding the resolution of grievances;
 - 2.2.3 this procedure being available to all staff members;
 - 2.2.4 grievances being dealt with consistently, equitably and speedily; and
 - 2.2.5 allowing groups who feel aggrieved to lodge their grievances by means of one or two representatives.

3. Aim of the procedure

The aim of this procedure is to offer all staff members the following:

- 3.1 a formal channel for bringing their grievances to the attention of their immediate superiors or, if necessary, a higher authority;
- 3.2 a procedure for handling and resolving grievances at the earliest opportunity possible; and
- 3.3 a procedure for resolving grievances as equitably as possible in the circumstances.

4. Procedural steps

All periods indicated below are the maximum time allowed for the relevant step in the procedure for resolving grievances, unless a different arrangement has been made with the employee concerned.

If the grievance is resolved at some point in the process, this must be recorded in the minutes and signed by both parties. If the process fails to produce a resolution, the minutes just need to state this. Both parties must receive a copy of the minutes. Annexure 1 contains documentation in this regard.

Step 1

SU staff members who have a grievance must lodge it firstly by completing paragraphs 1 to 3 of Annexure 1 and submit it with their **immediate superior** (or with the person designated by the superior to handle grievances in his or her absence). However, if the grievance is about the immediate superior concerned or their delegate, or about a person at a higher level of seniority than the immediate superior concerned or their delegate, the aggrieved person must lodge the grievance at such higher level. The person with whom the grievance was lodged must perform the following tasks during the grievance interview to the best of their abilities but within their delegated powers:

- a. Listen in private to the staff member's case.
- b. Encourage the staff member to put their case openly and honestly.
- c. Obtain all facts about the grievance and differentiate between facts and opinions.

The person with whom the grievance was lodged must try to resolve it as speedily as possible, but at least within five working days after the grievance has been lodged in writing, unless a different arrangement has been made with the employee concerned.

The person with whom the grievance was lodged must complete and sign the applicable section of Annexure 1 and have the aggrieved person sign it, too.

The aggrieved person may be assisted or accompanied by a fellow staff member of their choice.

Step 2

If the **immediate superior** (or their delegate, in their absence) fails to resolve the grievance or if the grievance concerned was about the staff member's immediate superior or their delegate, or about a person at the same or a higher level of seniority than the immediate superior concerned or their delegate, the staff member may refer the matter in writing to the next **higher managerial level** with notification to their immediate superior or their delegate.

The higher-level manager must try to resolve the grievance as speedily as possible, but no longer than five working days after the grievance has been referred in writing, unless a different arrangement has been made with the employee concerned. The outcome of step 2 must also be documented in Annexure 1 and signed.

The aggrieved person may be assisted or accompanied by a fellow staff member of their choice.

Step 3

If no agreement has been reached by this stage, or if the grievance is about a person at a higher level of seniority than the staff member's immediate superior or their delegate, the grievance must be referred to the **third managerial level**.

The third-level manager must try to settle the grievance within five working days after it has been referred, unless a different arrangement has been made with the employee concerned. The outcome of step 3 must also be documented in Annexure 1 and signed.

The aggrieved person may be assisted or accompanied by a fellow staff member of their choice.

At this point the third-level manager or the aggrieved person may appeal to the Division of Human Resources (HR) for assistance in the form of mediation.

Step 4

If the grievance cannot be resolved at third-level management to the aggrieved person's satisfaction, or if the grievance is about a person at third-level management, the manager or the employee must refer it in writing for resolution to the vice-rector who oversees the division concerned. In the case of a division that reports directly to the Rector, grievances must be referred for resolution to the person that the Rector has designated for this purpose.

The vice-rector concerned or the person that the Rector has designated must try to resolve the grievance as speedily as possible, but no longer than ten working days after the grievance has been referred in writing, unless a different arrangement has been made with the employee concerned. The outcome of step 4 must also be documented in Annexure 1 and signed.

The aggrieved person may be assisted or accompanied by a fellow staff member of their choice. At this point the internal procedure is concluded.

SU requires grievances to be recorded as grievances at the University. In this regard SU requires both the aggrieved person and the line manager concerned to report the grievance to HR by sending a copy of the document(s) used to lodge the grievance to the Director: Employee Relations.

5. Supporting documents

Item no.	Name of document	Status <i>(e.g. identified, in process or approved)</i>
	None	

6. Related documents

Item no.	Name of document	Status <i>(e.g. identified, in process or approved)</i>
	Annexures 1, 2 and 3	Identified

1. Level at which the grievance was lodged initially: Step 1

2. Level at which the grievance was resolved: Step 2

3. Recommendation or agreement according to which the grievance was handled or resolved

OR:

Brief summary of the reasons why the grievance could not be handled or resolved at this level (if applicable):

The grievance was referred for the next step in the procedure.

Signature(s) of aggrieved person(s)

Date

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Signature of line manager or mediator

Date

The grievance was referred for the next step in the procedure.

Signature(s) of aggrieved person(s)

Date

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Signature of line manager or mediator

Date

If the grievance could not be resolved at this level, the internal process is regarded as concluded, leaving the aggrieved person(s) free to take the matter further outside the University.

Annexure 3

	Date lodged or referred	Date resolved or referred for the next step	Signature of aggrieved person	Job title, name and surname of the person who has handled the grievance	Name of the person against whom the grievance was lodged	Signature of the person handling the grievance
Step 1						
Step 2						
Step 3						
Step 4						