No.F.7-09/2021/Protocol/4962

केंद्रीय मुक्त विद्यालयी शिक्षा एवं परीक्षा बोर्ड

Central Board of Open Schooling and Examination

प्रशासनिक भवनः चतुर्थ तल, प्राइम प्लाजा, इन्दिरा नगर, लखनऊ 226016

Website/वेबसाइट: www.cbose.com **Contact No./संपर्क सूत्रः** 9557361231

Date / दिनांकः 12/04/2021

Grievance Redressal Policy

Important Note: This Grievance Redressal Policy shall be read, interpreted, implemented, and enforced in consonance with all applicable laws, statutory provisions, subordinate legislation, rules, regulations, executive instructions, office memoranda, circulars, notifications, government orders, and policy directions issued from time to time by the competent authorities of the Government of India and the concerned administrative Ministry or Department under whose jurisdiction the Board or Organisation operates.

Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the provisions contained herein shall remain specifically subject to the regulatory framework, quality benchmarks, compliance norms, advisories, standards, and guidelines prescribed by the concerned regulatory or oversight authority, as well as any instructions, clarifications, approvals, observations, conditions, or directions that may be communicated by the competent governmental authority having jurisdiction over the affairs, operations, and governance of the Board or Organisation from time to time.

The Board or Organisation shall also retain the authority to issue supplementary instructions, standard operating procedures, administrative clarifications, prescribed formats, and implementation guidelines as may be necessary for the effective operationalization of this policy, provided that such supplementary measures remain duly aligned with the applicable regulatory, statutory, and administrative framework in force. No provision of this policy shall be construed as limiting, curtailing, restricting, or overriding the powers, jurisdiction, or authority of any competent governmental authority, or any lawful direction issued thereunder. This policy shall accordingly be treated as an enabling institutional framework for grievance handling, to be implemented in a fair, transparent, and time-bound manner, while remaining fully subordinate to the applicable legal, regulatory, and administrative regime as amended and in force from time to time. All Government Departments, Boards, Statutory Bodies, Autonomous Institutions, and other Public Authorities may adopt this policy, adapting its provisions as necessary to suit their specific mandates, organisational structures, and applicable service rules, without altering its core principles of fairness, accessibility, accountability, and timely redressal.

नोट: उपरोक्त पॉलिसी को सभी केंद्रों तथा दिशा-निर्देशों को ई-मेल के माध्यम से भेजना अपेक्षित है साथ ही वेबसाइट पर अपलोड करने हेतु एक कॉपी आई-टी सेल को भी भेजना अपेक्षित है

Shukhanji

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1. Introduction

The **Central Board of Open Schooling and Examination (hereinafter referred to as "the Board")** is a statutory body established with the primary mandate of providing high-quality, accessible, and inclusive education and skill development opportunities to all categories of learners across the country. The Board is deeply and unequivocally committed to upholding the highest standards of institutional integrity, administrative transparency, operational accountability, and learner-centric service delivery in every aspect of its functioning.

In recognition of the fundamental right of every stakeholder to have their concerns heard and addressed in a fair, impartial, and time-bound manner, the Board has formulated this **"Grievance Redressal Policy"** as a comprehensive and structured institutional mechanism. This policy seeks to establish a clearly defined, multi-tiered, and accessible grievance redressal framework that ensures swift, equitable, and transparent resolution of complaints, representations, and concerns raised by candidates, students, trainees, affiliated study and training centres, institutional partners, and any other stakeholders who interact with the Board in any official capacity.

The underlying philosophy of this policy is rooted in the belief that a responsive and accountable institution must provide its stakeholders with a reliable channel to voice their grievances, without fear of prejudice, discrimination, or procedural delay. Every grievance, however minor, shall be treated as an opportunity for institutional introspection and continuous improvement.

This policy has been framed in consonance with the applicable laws, government orders, service rules, and the broader regulatory and administrative directions issued by the competent Ministry and other relevant statutory authorities. The provisions herein reflect the Board's firm resolve to cultivate a culture of good governance, stakeholder trust, and procedural fairness, consistent with the principles enshrined in the Right to Public Services Acts and the citizen-centric governance framework promoted by the Government of India.

2. Objectives

a. To establish a standardized, transparent, accessible, and institutionally robust grievance redressal mechanism covering every stage of the grievance lifecycle, beginning from receipt, registration, acknowledgment, scrutiny, examination, and resolution, and extending up to appeal, closure, and record maintenance, so as to ensure procedural consistency, administrative accountability, and fairness in decision-making.

b. To ensure that every grievance received by the Board is examined, processed, and disposed of within clearly defined and reasonable timelines, through a time-bound system that promotes efficiency, minimizes avoidable delay, and provides complainants with timely communication regarding the status and outcome of their grievance.

c. To utilize grievances, representations, and stakeholder feedback as an important source of institutional learning, service improvement, corrective action, and policy

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refinement, thereby enabling the Board to strengthen good governance, improve service delivery standards, and reduce the recurrence of similar issues in future.

3. Applicability / Scope

This policy shall extend to all categories of stakeholders who are directly or indirectly associated with the functioning, administration, service delivery systems, academic processes, examination mechanisms, training activities, institutional operations, and public interface of the Board. It is intended to provide a uniform and accessible grievance redressal framework for persons, institutions, and entities whose rights, interests, expectations, or legitimate concerns may be affected by any act, omission, delay, decision, deficiency, or administrative action connected with the Board or its authorised units.

- All enrolled candidates, students, learners, and trainees registered with or otherwise receiving services from the Board.
- All affiliated, recognised, empanelled, or authorised study centres, training centres, examination centres, partner institutions, and similar entities functioning under the administrative, academic, or regulatory purview of the Board.
- All officers, employees, faculty members, contractual personnel, consultants, support staff, and other operational stakeholders associated with the Board in any official or service-related capacity.

For the removal of doubt, this policy shall also apply, wherever relevant, to grievances arising from service delivery gaps, administrative delays, examination-related matters, institutional coordination issues, and any other matter falling within the jurisdiction, control, or supervisory domain of the Board, subject to applicable laws, service rules, and competent authority orders.

4. Definition

For the purposes of this policy, and unless the context otherwise requires, the following terms shall have the meanings assigned to them hereunder. These definitions are intended to provide clarity, ensure uniform interpretation, and facilitate consistent implementation of the grievance redressal framework across all units, offices, centres, and stakeholders connected with the Board.

- Board: Refers to the Central Board of Open Schooling and Examination, including its Headquarters, regional offices, affiliated units, authorised centres, administrative divisions, and any officer or functionary acting on its behalf within the scope of official duties.
- Grievance: Means any written or formally communicated complaint, representation, concern, allegation, claim, or expression of dissatisfaction arising out of any act, omission, delay, deficiency, discrimination, procedural irregularity,

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administrative action, service-related issue, examination matter, admission-related decision, affiliation matter, or any other issue falling within the jurisdiction or operational domain of the Board.

- Complainant: Means any individual, candidate, student, trainee, employee, staff member, institution, affiliated centre, service provider, or other stakeholder who submits a grievance under this policy, either in an individual capacity or, where permissible, through an authorised representative.

- Authority: Means the competent governmental, administrative, regulatory, supervisory, or statutory authority, including the concerned Ministry, Department, or any other body having lawful jurisdiction, oversight, or control over the affairs of the Board.

- Competent Authority: Means the authority, officer, committee, or functionary duly empowered under the rules of the Board or by lawful order to examine, decide, approve, review, or dispose of grievances and related matters under this policy.

- Grievance Redressal Mechanism: Means the institutional process, including receipt, acknowledgment, registration, scrutiny, examination, resolution, appeal, closure, and record maintenance, established under this policy for the handling of grievances in a fair, transparent, and time-bound manner.

5. Guiding principes

The formulation, administration, and implementation of this policy shall, at all times, be guided, governed, and informed by the following core principles of good governance and public service. These principles are intended to serve as the foundational pillars upon which the grievance redressal framework of the Board is constructed, and every officer, functionary, and authority involved in the implementation of this policy shall be bound to uphold and promote these principles in letter and spirit.

Fairness and Impartiality: Every grievance shall be examined and decided objectively, without bias, prejudice, or favour towards any party. The process shall be free from any undue influence, and all stakeholders shall be afforded equal treatment and equal opportunity to present their case, irrespective of their position, status, or association with the Board.

- **Transparency:** The grievance redressal process shall be open, clear, and comprehensible to all stakeholders. Information regarding the procedure, applicable timelines, responsible authorities, and the status of pending grievances shall be readily accessible, and all decisions shall be communicated with appropriate reasoning to the extent permissible.

- **Accessibility:** The grievance mechanism shall be simple, user-friendly, and accessible to all categories of stakeholders, including those in remote or geographically disadvantaged areas. Multiple modes of submission, including offline and online

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channels, shall be made available to ensure that no stakeholder is denied access on account of procedural complexity, digital barriers, or resource constraints.

- **Accountability:** Every officer, committee, and authority entrusted with the handling of grievances shall be responsible and answerable for the timely, proper, and fair disposal of the matters assigned to them. Failure to act within prescribed timelines or in accordance with this policy shall attract appropriate administrative action as per the applicable rules.

- **Confidentiality:** All grievances, supporting documents, personal information, and proceedings related thereto shall be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Access to grievance records shall be restricted strictly on a need-to-know basis, and no information relating to the identity of the complainant or the contents of the grievance shall be disclosed to any unauthorised person or party.

- **Sensitivity and Responsiveness:** All grievances shall be acknowledged and addressed in a sensitive, empathetic, and responsive manner, recognising that complainants may be students, trainees, or other individuals who are dependent upon the Board's services for their educational or professional advancement.

- **Protection Against Retaliation:** The Board expressly prohibits and shall actively prevent any form of discrimination, victimisation, harassment, or retaliatory action against any complainant who has, in good faith, lodged a grievance under this policy. Any officer found to have engaged in or facilitated retaliation against a complainant shall be liable for disciplinary action as per the applicable service rules.

6. Categories of Grievances

For the purposes of systematic processing, tracking, prioritisation, and resolution, all grievances received by the Board shall be classified into the following categories. This classification is indicative in nature and shall not restrict the Board from addressing any grievance that falls within its jurisdiction, even if it does not squarely fit into any one of the categories enumerated below. The Nodal Officer or the competent authority may, where appropriate, assign a grievance to more than one category or create a sub-category for administrative purposes.

- **Academic Grievances:** Grievances arising from or relating to the academic functioning of the Board, including but not limited to matters pertaining to admission and enrolment processes, issuance or non-issuance of study materials, curriculum design and delivery, course content, contact classes, assignment schedules, academic evaluation, instructional quality at affiliated centres, and any other academic service or entitlement forming part of the Board's educational mandate.

- **Examination-Related Grievances:** Grievances pertaining to any aspect of the examination process, including discrepancies or delays in the issuance of admit cards, examination scheduling, irregularities in examination conduct, non-declaration or delayed declaration of results, errors in mark sheets or grade cards, requests for re-evaluation, re-checking, or scrutiny of answer scripts, issuance of duplicate or corrected

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certificates, migration certificates, and any other matter directly or incidentally connected with the examination system administered by the Board.

- **Administrative and Financial Grievances:** Grievances arising from administrative or financial actions or inactions of the Board, including matters relating to fee refunds, excess or erroneous fee collection, late fee imposition, delays in processing of financial claims, issuance of official documents such as duplicate marksheets, provisional certificates, migration certificates, no-objection certificates, transfer of records, correction of personal data, delays in responding to official communications, and general administrative inefficiencies adversely affecting the stakeholder.

- **Affiliation and Recognition Grievances:** Grievances relating to the grant, renewal, suspension, or withdrawal of affiliation or recognition, inspection and verification of study centres, examination centres, or training centres, non-compliance by affiliated institutions with the standards and conditions prescribed by the Board, delays in processing affiliation applications, and any other regulatory or compliance-related matter affecting the functioning of affiliated and recognised entities.

- **Service and Staff Grievances:** Grievances raised by employees, officers, contractual staff, or consultants of the Board pertaining to service conditions, pay and allowances, promotion, seniority, transfers, departmental proceedings, leave entitlements, pension and retirement benefits, and any other matter relating to the service rights and entitlements of the Board's personnel, as governed by applicable service rules and regulations.

- **Miscellaneous Grievances:** Any other grievance that does not fall squarely within the above categories but relates to a deficiency, irregularity, delay, or failure on the part of the Board or its authorised units, officers, or affiliates in providing any service, fulfilling any statutory obligation, or adhering to any applicable rule, order, or policy direction, and which requires redressal in the interest of fairness and public service accountability.

7. Modes of Submission of Grievances

- In order to ensure ease of access, procedural flexibility, and wider stakeholder outreach, grievances may be submitted through any of the official modes prescribed by the Board from time to time. The availability of multiple channels is intended to ensure that no complainant is deprived of an opportunity to seek redressal on account of geographical distance, lack of digital access, physical constraints, or administrative inconvenience. A grievance submitted through any recognised mode shall be treated as valid for the purpose of registration and further processing, subject to verification of the identity of the complainant and the completeness of the information furnished.

- Unless otherwise notified, the following shall constitute the recognised modes of submission of grievances:

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• Online Portal: By filing the grievance through the designated Grievance Redressal Portal hosted on the official website of the Board or Organisation. Grievances submitted through the online portal shall, wherever feasible, be assigned a unique registration number for tracking, monitoring, and future reference.

• Email Submission: By sending a formal grievance through electronic mail to the notified grievance email address, namely [Official Email], together with all relevant particulars, supporting documents, and contact information necessary for examination of the matter.

• Written Application: By submitting a signed written representation, either through registered post, speed post, official dak, courier, or by personal delivery at the Headquarters of the Board or at the designated Regional / Field Offices located at [Address].

• Submission Through Authorised Facilitation Desk / Single Window System: Where established by the Board or Organisation, grievances may also be lodged through an authorised facilitation centre, grievance help desk, public facilitation counter, or single window system created for receipt of complaints and public representations.

• Any Other Mode Notified by the Competent Authority: The Board or Organisation may, in the public interest, notify additional modes of submission, including mobile applications, helpline-assisted digital entry, or other technology-enabled systems, and any grievance submitted through such notified mode shall be treated as valid in accordance with this policy.

• Every grievance should, as far as practicable, contain the name and contact details of the complainant, the nature of the grievance, relevant facts, dates, supporting documents, and the relief sought. Anonymous or vague complaints may be dealt with in accordance with the applicable rules or administrative instructions of the Board.

8. Institutional Framework for Grievance Redressal

• For the effective, accountable, and time-bound implementation of this policy, the Board shall establish a clearly defined institutional framework comprising designated officers, committees, and authorities at the appropriate administrative levels. The framework is intended to ensure that grievances are received, acknowledged, examined, escalated where necessary, and disposed of in a structured manner with due application of mind, administrative responsibility, and supervisory oversight.

• The grievance redressal structure under this policy shall ordinarily consist of the following levels, without prejudice to the power of the competent authority to create additional committees, designate special officers, or prescribe subject-specific mechanisms for particular categories of grievances:

• Level I – Nodal Officer / Grievance Receiving Officer: A designated officer at the district, regional, unit, institutional, or headquarters level, as the case may be, who

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shall be responsible for the initial receipt, registration, acknowledgment, preliminary scrutiny, classification, and forwarding of grievances to the concerned section, division, or authority for necessary examination and action. The Nodal Officer shall also maintain basic records, monitor pendency at the first stage, and serve as the primary point of contact for complainants.

• Level II – Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC): A duly constituted committee at the appropriate level of administration, comprising senior officers and such subject-matter representatives as may be considered necessary, which shall examine grievances of a complex, disputed, sensitive, multi-departmental, or unresolved nature. The Committee may call for records, seek reports, provide an opportunity of hearing wherever required, and recommend or decide suitable remedial, corrective, or administrative measures within the scope of its delegated authority.

• Level III – Appellate Authority: The Head of the Organisation, Chairman, Secretary, Director, or any other senior officer specifically nominated by the competent authority, who shall function as the final internal appellate authority under this policy. The Appellate Authority shall consider appeals preferred against decisions of the lower levels, review the material on record, and pass a reasoned order in accordance with the applicable rules, principles of natural justice, and the circumstances of the case.

• The Board may, wherever necessary, establish separate or specialised grievance handling arrangements for examination-related matters, service matters, disciplinary matters, student welfare matters, or grievances concerning affiliated institutions, so as to ensure subject-specific expertise and efficient disposal. The existence of such specialised arrangements shall be read harmoniously with this policy and not in derogation of its core grievance redressal principles.

9. Step-wise Grievance Redressal Procedure

In order to ensure procedural uniformity, administrative accountability, and fair consideration of every matter, all grievances received under this policy shall ordinarily be processed in accordance with the following step-wise procedure. The competent authority may, for reasons to be recorded, adopt an accelerated, combined, or specialised procedure in exceptional cases involving urgency, public interest, examination deadlines, service emergencies, or any matter requiring immediate intervention.

a. **Receipt and Registration:** Upon receipt of a grievance through any recognised mode, the same shall be entered in the prescribed register or digital grievance management system, and a unique Grievance Registration Number / Grievance ID shall be generated or assigned for identification, tracking, and future correspondence.

b. **Preliminary Scrutiny and Acknowledgment:** The receiving authority or Nodal Officer shall conduct a preliminary scrutiny to ascertain whether the grievance falls within the jurisdiction of the Board, whether the complaint is complete in material particulars, and whether any supporting documents or clarifications are required.

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Thereafter, a formal acknowledgment shall be issued to the complainant, indicating the registration number, date of receipt, and, as far as practicable, the expected timeline for disposal.

c. **Classification and Forwarding to the Concerned Authority:** After preliminary scrutiny, the grievance shall be classified according to its subject matter and forwarded to the concerned section, branch, officer, committee, or specialised authority competent to examine the matter. In cases involving multiple issues or more than one branch, coordinated examination may be undertaken.

d. **Review, Examination, and Investigation:** The concerned authority shall examine the grievance on the basis of the available records, supporting documents, applicable rules, and factual circumstances. Where necessary, comments or reports may be called for from the concerned unit, additional documents may be sought from the complainant, and an opportunity of clarification or hearing may be provided wherever the nature of the matter so warrants.

e. **Decision and Resolution:** Upon completion of examination, a reasoned decision shall be taken by the competent authority and appropriate remedial, corrective, administrative, or procedural action shall be initiated, wherever admissible and necessary. If the grievance is found to be untenable, the same shall be closed by a speaking order or recorded reasons in accordance with applicable norms.

f. **Communication of Outcome:** The final outcome of the grievance, including the action taken, reasons recorded, or relief granted, shall be communicated to the complainant through an appropriate mode of communication. Where full relief is not possible, the communication shall, to the extent feasible, indicate the reasons for such limitation.

g. **Closure, Record Maintenance, and Right of Appeal:** After communication of the decision, the grievance shall be marked as disposed of or closed in the record system. Relevant records shall be preserved in the prescribed manner for review, audit, monitoring, and future reference. Where provided under this policy, the complainant shall also be informed of the right to prefer an appeal before the Appellate Authority within the prescribed period.

10. Prescribed Timelines for Grievance Redressal

In order to promote time-bound governance and ensure that no grievance remains unaddressed beyond a reasonable period, the following maximum timelines are hereby prescribed for each stage of the grievance redressal process. These timelines shall be adhered to strictly by all concerned officers, authorities, and committees. Any deviation from the prescribed timelines shall be recorded with reasons, brought to the notice of the supervisory authority, and shall be subject to appropriate administrative review.

All timelines specified hereunder shall be computed in terms of working days from the date of receipt of the grievance or the concerned communication, as the case

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may be, and shall exclude public holidays, gazetted holidays, and the period during which the matter was adjourned at the request of or on account of the complainant. In exceptional cases involving document verification, third-party inputs, legal advice, or inter- departmental coordination, the competent authority may extend the timeline by a period not exceeding fifteen (15) additional working days, provided that reasons for such extension are recorded in writing and the complainant is duly intimated.

S. No.	Stage of Grievance Redressal Process	Responsible Authority	Maximum Prescribed Timeline
1.	Receipt, Registration, and Formal Acknowledgment of Grievance	Nodal Officer / Grievance Receiving Officer	**02 Working Days**
2.	Preliminary Scrutiny, Classification, and Forwarding to the Concerned Section / Authority	Nodal Officer	**05 Working Days**
3.	Examination, Review, and Internal Investigation of the Grievance	Concerned Section / Grievance Redressal Committee	**10 Working Days**
4.	Final Decision, Resolution, and Communication of Outcome to the Complainant	Competent Authority / GRC	**15 Working Days**
5.	Filing of Appeal by the Complainant (if dissatisfied with the resolution)	Complainant	**Within 15 days from receipt of resolution**
6.	Acknowledgment and Preliminary Examination of Appeal	Appellate Authority	**03 Working Days**
7.	Final Disposal of Appeal and Communication of Appellate Decision	Appellate Authority	**21 Working Days from receipt of appeal**
8.	Closure of Grievance Record and Updating of Grievance Management System	Nodal Officer	**03 Working Days from final disposal**

Note: The timelines prescribed above represent the maximum permissible period for each stage. All officers and authorities concerned are encouraged to ensure disposal at the earliest practicable date, and efforts shall be made to resolve grievances in a shorter period wherever the nature of the matter so permits. Non-adherence to prescribed timelines without recorded justification shall be treated as an administrative lapse for the purpose of performance review.

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11. Appeal Mechanism

This policy expressly recognises and affirms the right of every complainant to seek a review of any decision, order, finding, communication, or action arising out of the grievance redressal process which the complainant may reasonably consider to be unsatisfactory, inadequate, procedurally deficient, delayed, unreasonable, erroneous, inconsistent with the material on record, or otherwise contrary to the applicable rules, administrative instructions, and principles of natural justice. The availability of an appeal is intended to ensure that the grievance redressal framework does not end at the first stage of decision-making, but remains subject to an additional layer of institutional scrutiny, fairness, and corrective oversight.

The appeal mechanism shall accordingly operate as an integral and substantive safeguard within the overall grievance redressal architecture of the Board. It shall serve the dual purpose of protecting the rights and interests of complainants on the one hand, and strengthening administrative accountability, consistency, transparency, and reasoned decision-making on the other. All appeals shall be dealt with objectively, impartially, independently, and within the prescribed timelines, so as to inspire confidence in the internal system of review and to ensure that no genuine grievance remains unresolved merely on account of procedural error, oversight, misappreciation of facts, or inadequate consideration at the initial stage

11.1 Right to Prefer an Appeal

Any complainant who is aggrieved by the decision, resolution, or order passed at Level I or Level II, or who has not received a response within the prescribed timeline, shall have the right to prefer an appeal before the designated Appellate Authority. The right to appeal shall be available irrespective of whether the grievance was fully rejected, partially accepted, or disposed of with conditions or qualifications that are not acceptable to the complainant.

11.2 Period and Mode of Filing an Appeal

An appeal shall be filed within fifteen (15) working days from the date of receipt of the resolution communication, or within fifteen (15) working days from the expiry of the prescribed timeline in cases where no response has been received. The appeal may be filed in writing through any of the recognised modes of submission prescribed under this policy, and shall clearly state the grounds of appeal, the facts of the matter, the decision being challenged, and the relief sought. A copy of the original grievance and the impugned resolution, wherever available, shall be annexed to the appeal.

11.3 Condonation of Delay

The Appellate Authority may, at its discretion, condone a delay in filing the appeal if the appellant demonstrates sufficient cause for the delay and satisfies the Appellate Authority that the delay was not attributable to any wilful act, neglect, or negligence on the part of the appellant. The decision on condonation shall be recorded in writing.

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11.4 Examination and Disposal of Appeal

Upon receipt of the appeal, the Appellate Authority shall acknowledge the same within three (3) working days and shall proceed to examine the matter afresh on the basis of the available records, the impugned decision, the grounds of appeal, and any additional material that the Appellate Authority may consider necessary for a complete and fair examination of the matter. The Appellate Authority may, wherever appropriate and the nature of the matter warrants, afford the appellant a reasonable opportunity of being heard, either in person or through written submissions, before passing the appellate order. The appeal shall be disposed of within twenty-one (21) working days from the date of receipt of the complete appeal, and the reasoned decision of the Appellate Authority shall be duly communicated to the appellant through an appropriate official mode.

11.5 Nature and Finality of Appellate Decision

The Appellate Authority may, upon examination of the appeal, confirm, modify, reverse, or remand the impugned decision, or pass such other appropriate order as may be justified in the facts and circumstances of the case. The decision of the Appellate Authority shall be treated as the final order at the internal administrative level of the Board and shall be binding on all parties concerned. Nothing in this section shall, however, be construed as limiting the right of any person to seek redressal before an appropriate statutory forum, tribunal, or court of competent jurisdiction, as may be available under the applicable laws.

12. Confidentiality and Protection Against Retaliation

The Board shall ensure that every grievance received under this policy is handled with the highest degree of confidentiality, discretion, and procedural sensitivity. All records, documents, statements, supporting materials, internal notes, comments, and proceedings connected with a grievance shall be treated as confidential in nature and shall be accessed, processed, preserved, and disclosed only to the extent necessary for the proper examination, redressal, monitoring, audit, or lawful review of the matter. The confidentiality obligation shall apply to all officers, committee members, functionaries, consultants, and any other persons associated with the grievance redressal process.

Access to grievance records shall be strictly regulated on a need-to-know basis and shall ordinarily be limited to the Nodal Officer, the concerned examining authority, the Grievance Redressal Committee, the Appellate Authority, or such other competent authority as may be lawfully authorised. No grievance-related information, including the identity of the complainant, the allegations made, supporting documentation, or the outcome of proceedings, shall be disclosed to any unauthorised person, office, institution, or third party except where such disclosure is required by law, by order of a competent authority, for the purposes of investigation or adjudication, or with the informed consent of the complainant, wherever applicable.

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The Board shall also provide strict protection against retaliation, victimisation, intimidation, coercion, harassment, discrimination, punitive treatment, adverse administrative action, or any other form of prejudice against any complainant, witness, representative, student, trainee, employee, officer, staff member, or other stakeholder who, in good faith, files a grievance, provides information, submits evidence, participates in an inquiry, or otherwise assists in the grievance redressal process. Any attempt, direct or indirect, to threaten, influence, penalise, isolate, or disadvantage such person on account of their participation in the grievance process shall be viewed seriously and may invite appropriate disciplinary, administrative, or legal action under the applicable rules.

At the same time, the protection contemplated under this section shall extend only to bona fide participation in the grievance process and shall not preclude the Board from taking action, in accordance with law and due process, where any complaint is found to be knowingly false, malicious, fabricated, or motivated by extraneous considerations. The objective of this section is to preserve trust in the grievance mechanism by ensuring that all genuine complaints may be raised freely, safely, and responsibly, without fear of reprisal or unauthorised disclosure.

13. Record Maintenance, Reporting and Monitoring

Systematic and accurate maintenance of grievance records is an essential component of transparent and accountable governance. The Board shall ensure that all grievances received, processed, pending, resolved, appealed, or closed under this policy are duly documented, tracked, and preserved in a structured and auditable manner. The record maintenance framework shall be designed to support periodic reporting, systemic analysis, policy review, and compliance monitoring by the competent authority.

13.1 Grievance Register and Digital Management System

The Nodal Officer, in coordination with the concerned divisions, shall maintain a comprehensive and up-to-date grievance register, either in physical form, digital form, or both, as may be prescribed by the competent authority. Wherever a dedicated IT-enabled Grievance Management System or portal is in operation, all relevant information shall be updated in real time. The register or system shall, as a minimum, record the following particulars for each grievance:

Unique Grievance Registration Number / Grievance ID;

Date and mode of receipt of the grievance;

Name, contact details, and category of the complainant;

Subject matter and category of the grievance;

Authority to whom the grievance was forwarded and the date of forwarding;

Status of the grievance at each stage of processing;

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Final decision or resolution and the date of communication to the complainant;

Whether an appeal was preferred, and if so, the outcome and date of disposal of the appeal; and

Date of final closure and archival of the grievance record.

13.2 Retention and Preservation of Records

All grievance records, including the original complaint, supporting documents, internal notes, forwarding communications, orders, decisions, and appellate proceedings, shall be preserved for a minimum period as may be prescribed under the applicable record retention rules of the Board, and in any case, for a period not less than five (5) years from the date of final closure of the grievance, unless a longer period is required by any law, audit requirement, or direction of the competent authority. Digital records shall be backed up periodically and secured against unauthorised access, loss, alteration, or destruction.

13.3 Periodic Reporting to the Competent Authority

The Nodal Officer or the designated authority shall prepare periodic compliance and status reports summarising grievance data, pendency, disposal rates, category-wise analysis, and systemic observations, and submit the same to the competent supervisory authority. Such reports shall be prepared on a monthly and quarterly basis, or at such other interval as may be directed by the competent Ministry, Department, or regulatory authority, so as to enable informed oversight, accountability review, and policy-level intervention wherever required.

13.4 Monitoring and Supervisory Oversight

The Head of the Organisation or such other authority as may be designated shall periodically review the functioning of the grievance redressal mechanism, including pendency levels, timelines, quality of redressal, and systemic deficiencies, with a view to ensuring continuous improvement and institutional accountability. Grievance data and trends shall also be used as an input for administrative reforms, training priorities, process improvements, and policy refinements, in accordance with the principles of data-driven governance and responsive public administration.

14. Provision Regarding False / Malicious Complaints

The grievance redressal mechanism established under this policy is intended to provide a fair, accessible, and credible forum for the redressal of genuine complaints, concerns, and representations raised in good faith. While the Board encourages stakeholders to report legitimate grievances without fear or hesitation, it is equally necessary to protect the integrity of the grievance process from abuse, misuse, or deliberate manipulation. Accordingly, any complaint which, upon due examination or investigation, is found to be knowingly false, deliberately fabricated, frivolous in substance, vexatious in character, or motivated by malice, personal vendetta,

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harassment, or any extraneous consideration, shall be dealt with in accordance with the applicable rules, regulations, and disciplinary framework.

Before any adverse action is taken under this section, the competent authority shall ensure that the matter has been examined with due care and that the conclusion regarding falsity, mala fides, or malicious intent is based on objective material, recorded reasons, and principles of natural justice. Mere inability to substantiate a grievance, absence of documentary proof, or non-acceptance of the claim by the competent authority shall not, by itself, render a complaint false or malicious. No complainant shall be penalised merely because the grievance could not be established, provided that the grievance was made bona fide and on the basis of facts reasonably believed to be true.

Where a complaint is found to be intentionally false or malicious, the Board may initiate such action as may be permissible under the applicable service rules, conduct rules, administrative instructions, contractual terms, or other relevant provisions, including warning, rejection of the complaint with recorded reasons, withdrawal of privileges, departmental action, or such other measure as may be considered appropriate by the competent authority. In the case of students, trainees, affiliated institutions, vendors, service providers, or other external stakeholders, such action may include appropriate administrative measures in accordance with the governing norms and the circumstances of the case.

This provision is intended solely to deter abuse of the grievance mechanism and shall not be interpreted in a manner that discourages bona fide complaints, whistleblowing in good faith, or the reporting of irregularities, maladministration, or service deficiencies. The Board shall therefore maintain a careful balance between preventing misuse of the process and preserving the confidence of genuine complainants in the fairness, accessibility, and protective character of the grievance redressal framework.

15. Capacity Building, Awareness and IT-enabled Tracking

The effectiveness of any grievance redressal framework depends not only upon the existence of formal procedures, but also upon the institutional capacity of the officers implementing it, the awareness of stakeholders entitled to use it, and the availability of reliable technological systems for registration, tracking, monitoring, and review. The Board shall, therefore, adopt a comprehensive approach to capacity building, stakeholder awareness, and technology-enabled grievance management, so as to ensure that the objectives of this policy are translated into effective administrative practice.

15.1 Capacity Building of Officers and Functionaries

The Board shall organise regular orientation programmes, training sessions, workshops, refresher courses, and sensitisation initiatives for all officers, members of grievance committees, dealing assistants, and other functionaries connected with the

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grievance redressal process. Such programmes shall, inter alia, focus on the legal and procedural framework governing grievance handling, principles of natural justice, time-bound disposal, communication skills, record maintenance, data confidentiality, use of digital grievance systems, and stakeholder- sensitive handling of complaints. The competent authority may also issue manuals, standard operating procedures, checklists, and advisories for guidance and uniformity in implementation.

15.2 Stakeholder Awareness and Outreach

The Board shall take appropriate steps to create awareness among students, trainees, employees, affiliated institutions, service providers, and other stakeholders regarding their rights and responsibilities under this policy, the modes of submission of grievances, the timelines for disposal, and the avenues available for appeal. Such awareness measures may include publication of the policy on the official website, display on notice boards, circulation through office orders and institutional communications, orientation programmes, handbooks, FAQs, awareness drives, and such other public information measures as may be considered necessary.

15.3 IT-enabled Grievance Tracking and Management

The Board shall endeavour to establish and maintain an IT-enabled grievance management and tracking system, portal, dashboard, or other digital platform through which grievances may be registered, acknowledged, assigned, monitored, escalated, and closed in a transparent and time-bound manner. Such system shall, as far as feasible, enable generation of a unique grievance number, real-time status tracking, automated reminders, pendency monitoring, escalation alerts, MIS reports, and data analytics for administrative review. The digital platform shall also be designed with appropriate safeguards relating to data integrity, cybersecurity, access control, and confidentiality.

15.4 Continuous Improvement Through Technology and Feedback

The Board may periodically review the effectiveness of its awareness initiatives, training interventions, and digital systems on the basis of stakeholder feedback, grievance trends, pendency reports, audit findings, and administrative experience. Necessary upgrades, process modifications, and capacity enhancement measures may be introduced from time to time in order to improve responsiveness, reduce delays, and strengthen stakeholder confidence in the grievance redressal mechanism.

16. Review and Amendment

In order to ensure that this policy remains relevant, effective, legally sustainable, and administratively responsive, it shall be subject to periodic review and, where necessary, amendment by the competent authority. The review process shall be undertaken with due regard to practical implementation experience, grievance trends, stakeholder feedback, audit observations, judicial pronouncements, changes in law, administrative requirements, and evolving standards of good governance and public service delivery.

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As a general rule, this policy shall be reviewed at least once every year. However, the competent authority may, at any time, direct an earlier review, partial revision, or urgent amendment if such action is considered necessary in the public interest, on account of operational necessity, in consequence of any change in the applicable legal or regulatory framework, or for the purpose of removing ambiguity, inconsistency, hardship, procedural difficulty, or implementation gaps noticed during the operation of this policy.

Any proposal for amendment may be initiated on the basis of institutional experience, recommendations of the Nodal Officer, observations of the Grievance Redressal Committee, directions of the competent authority, administrative review, audit findings, stakeholder representations, or instructions issued by the concerned Ministry, Department, or other lawful authority exercising jurisdiction or oversight. All amendments, additions, modifications, substitutions, or clarifications to this policy shall take effect only upon approval by the competent authority and shall be communicated through an appropriate order, notification, circular, office memorandum, or other officially recognised mode.

Unless otherwise expressly provided, any amendment made to this policy shall operate prospectively. However, the competent authority may issue clarificatory instructions or transitional arrangements for matters already pending, wherever such action is necessary to ensure fairness, administrative continuity, and smooth implementation. The objective of this section is to ensure that the grievance redressal framework remains dynamic, responsive, accountable, and aligned with the changing needs of stakeholders and the evolving administrative environment.

17. Effectiveness and Interpretation

This policy shall come into force and effect from the date on which it is approved, adopted, notified, or brought into operation by order of the competent authority, unless a different effective date is specifically prescribed in such order. Upon coming into effect, this policy shall govern the receipt, processing, examination, redressal, appeal, closure, and monitoring of grievances falling within its scope, and shall remain in force until amended, superseded, rescinded, or withdrawn in accordance with law and the applicable administrative procedure.

The provisions of this policy shall be read and applied in a manner that promotes fairness, administrative consistency, procedural efficiency, and the broader objective of ensuring accessible and accountable grievance redressal. In the event of any doubt, ambiguity, omission, inconsistency, or dispute regarding the meaning, application, scope, or implementation of any provision of this policy, the matter shall be interpreted in harmony with the applicable laws, statutory provisions, service rules, government orders, administrative instructions, and directions issued by the competent Ministry, Department, or other lawful authority having jurisdiction over the affairs of the Board or Organisation.

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The competent authority shall have the power to issue such clarifications, administrative instructions, interpretative notes, procedural directions, or supplementary orders as may be necessary for the proper and uniform implementation of this policy. Such clarifications or directions shall be binding on all officers, committees, units, and functionaries responsible for grievance handling, unless modified or set aside by a higher lawful authority.

If any provision of this policy is found to be inconsistent with any prevailing law, rule, regulation, judicial direction, or binding governmental instruction, the latter shall prevail to the extent of such inconsistency, and the remaining provisions of this policy shall continue to remain valid and enforceable to the fullest extent permissible. The object of this section is to ensure that the policy remains operationally effective, legally sustainable, and capable of consistent interpretation across all levels of administration.

18. Appendix: Indicative Grievance Form Details

This Appendix sets out the indicative format and the minimum mandatory particulars that a complainant is required to furnish at the time of submitting a grievance under this policy. Incomplete grievances or those lacking essential information may be returned to the complainant with a request for completion, or may be processed on the basis of available information at the discretion of the Nodal Officer, subject to the nature of the matter. Providing accurate, complete, and verifiable particulars shall facilitate timely processing, appropriate classification, and effective redressal of the grievance.

The following details shall ordinarily be provided when filing a grievance:

S. No.	Particulars Required	Remarks
1.	**Full Name of the Complainant**	As per official records / identity proof
2.	**Registration / Enrolment / Affiliation Number**	Applicable to students, trainees, and affiliated centres respectively
3.	**Designation / Capacity of Complainant**	E.g., Student, Trainee, Employee, Affiliated Centre, Service Provider, Other
4.	**Complete Contact Details**	Mailing address, mobile number, email ID; for service by email / post
5.	**Category of Grievance**	Academic / Examination / Administrative & Financial / Affiliation / Service & Staff / Miscellaneous
6.	**Subject / Title of Grievance**	A brief, specific heading summarising the nature of the grievance

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7.	**Detailed Description of the Grievance**	Chronological narration of facts, relevant dates, names of officers / departments involved, nature of deficiency or irregularity, and specific relief or action sought
8.	**Details of Prior Representation, if any**	Whether a prior complaint or representation was made, to whom addressed, date of submission, and outcome received (if any)
9.	**List of Enclosures / Supporting Documents**	Self-attested copies of relevant documents such as admit cards, fee receipts, correspondence, certificates, order copies, etc.
10.	**Relief Sought**	Specific action, correction, redressal, reimbursement, or other relief requested by the complainant
11.	**Declaration by Complainant**	A declaration that the information furnished is true and correct to the best of the complainant's knowledge and belief, and that the grievance is being filed in good faith
12.	**Date and Signature / Digital Authentication**	Date of filing and signature (physical or digital) of the complainant or authorised representative

Note: The above is an indicative format. The Board or Organisation may prescribe a standardised grievance submission form from time to time, which shall be made available on the official website, at facilitation desks, and through other accessible channels. Submission of a grievance in a format other than the prescribed form shall not render the grievance invalid, provided that the essential particulars are discernible from the submission. Where any field is not applicable to the complainant, it may be marked accordingly.

19. Annexure: Indicative Service Delivery Charter and Disposal Timelines

In order to ensure time-bound administrative responsiveness and to strengthen institutional accountability, the Board may adopt the following indicative internal service delivery standards in addition to the grievance redressal framework prescribed in this policy. Best efforts shall be made by the concerned divisions/units to adhere to the timelines mentioned below, subject to completeness of documents, administrative approval, availability of records, and applicable rules/orders.

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A. Personnel, Administration, Legal and Maintenance

S. No.	Service / Matter	Disposal Within
1.	Reply of staff grievances received in Single Window Cell	**14 Days**
2.	Reply of RTI cases / MP / MLA / Commissions / MHRD references	**14 Days**
3.	Compliance of Court orders	**14 Days**
4.	Conduction of DPC & MACP	**Every three months**
5.	Issuance of Seniority List	**On due date (revised every year)**
6.	Increments / Fixations	**On due date**
7.	P.F. withdrawal / payment of arrear, loans, advances, allowance, etc.	**03–07 Days**
8.	Compliance of Transfer Orders	**07 Days**
9.	NOC for higher education, property transaction, deputation, passport, ex-India leave, etc.	**14 Days**
10.	Disposal of D&AR cases and entry in service records	**Major: 3 Months; Minor: 1 Month**
11.	Grievance Disposal Camps	**Every month**
12.	Staff amenities (maintenance of staff quarters/offices, supply/repair of furniture, stationery, dress/uniform, toilet and electrical equipment)	**15 Days**
13.	Providing copy of ACR, service record and leave account	**Once in a year**
14	Approval of proposals received from other units / regional offices, including tender approval and miscellaneous contracts	**14 Days**
15.	Payment of vendors' / advocates' bills including GeM-related bills	**10 Days**
16.	Redressal of complaints related to different AMCs	**03 Days**
17.	Monthly routine payment of bills such as telephone, vehicle, petrol, etc.	**03 Days and before due date**
18.	Proposal for mini and long tour	**Once in a year**

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19.	Proposal for inviting tenders for activities such as printing of answer books, printing of certificates, central purchase, etc.	**14 Days**
20.	Payment of bills of printers and composers, subject to availability of performance report from Academic Unit	**14 Days**
21.	Completion of all formalities and issuance of work order	**07 Days**
22.	Proposal for minor repair / maintenance of various buildings and staff quarters	**07 Days**
23.	Proposal for major repair / new construction	**15 Days**

B. Audit and Finance

S. No.	Service / Matter	Disposal Within
24.	Pre-audit and financial concurrence	07 Days
25.	Disbursement of Pension / Family Pension	Last date of the month
26.	Disbursement of payment to outstation / inside cases	03 Days
27.	Reply of CAG Para (Audit)	15 Days
28.	Scrutiny of reply of audit para	15 Days
29.	Budget & Expenditure Monitoring	20th day of succeeding month
30.	Revised Budget Estimates	30th September
31.	Compilation of Books of Account	30th December
32.	Reconciliation of Cash Book & Bank Book	60 Days
33.	Disbursement of payment of officials on Board duties	03 Days
34.	Compilation of annual books of accounts	31st May
35.	Annual filing of return under Service Tax	30th September
36.	Pre-audit and financial concurrence	07 Days

C. Regional Offices / COEs and Other Units

S. No.	Service / Matter	Disposal Within
37.	Submission of budget by Unit	**31st August**
38.	Revised Budget Estimates by Unit	**15th December**
39.	Submission of annual books of account	**30th April**

Implementation Note: The above timelines are indicative administrative service standards incorporated into this policy document on the basis of the reference charter shared for adoption/adaptation. The Board may, with the approval of the competent *authority, modify the*

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nomenclature, responsible division, or disposal timeline to suit its organizational structure and statutory requirements.

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(Dr. Shubhangi Goswami)
Protocol Cell
Central Board of Open Schooling and Examination

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Copy To

1. The Chairperson / Competent Authority, for kind information.
2. The Secretary / Chief Executive Officer, for information and necessary action.
3. All Heads of Divisions / Departments / Branches, for information and strict compliance.
4. All Regional Offices / Field Units / Affiliated Centres concerned, for information and necessary action.
5. The Nodal Officer, Grievance Redressal Cell, for implementation, monitoring, and record maintenance.
6. The IT Cell / System Administrator, for hosting, digitisation, and online grievance tracking support.
7. Office Copy / Guard File.

कार्यालय सचिव / निदेशक
केंद्रीय मुक्त विद्यालयी शिक्षा एवं परीक्षा बोर्ड
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Central Board of Open Schooling and Examination