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## Complaints Policy

### 1. Context

1.1. CHARM-EU is an alliance of European Universities<sup>1</sup>. Each university is recognized as a higher education institution by the relevant national ministry and quality authorities, providing higher level education. As members of the European Higher Education Area, the

- *European Standards Guidelines for Higher Education in the EHEA*<sup>2</sup> (ESG 2015) provide a common framework for internal quality assurance for all alliance partners;
- *European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programme*<sup>3</sup> (October 2014) provide a framework for an integrated approach to quality for joint programmes.

### 2. Purpose

2.1. This policy aims to guarantee transparent, fair, and prompt investigations of complaints, with the ultimate goal of achieving a clear resolution in accordance with the expectations set forth in the European framework documents mentioned earlier.

### 3. Benefits

3.1. Information on the complaints policy and procedure is available in accessible format in the public domain to students, staff, partners and stakeholders.

### 4. Definitions

4.1. Complaint: A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about a specific action or about the standards of provided services under the remit of a CHARM-EU activity as defined by one of the CHARM-EU Boards (e.g. Academic Council, Executive Board or Strategic Board).

4.2. Student: An individual who has formally applied, admitted and enrolled in the CHARM-EU MSc in Global Challenges for Sustainability.

4.3. Applicant: An individual who has applied for the CHARM-EU MSc in Global Challenges for

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.charm-eu.eu>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG\\_2015.pdf](https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.eqar.eu/assets/uploads/2018/04/02\\_European\\_Approach\\_QA\\_of\\_Joint\\_Programmes\\_v1\\_0.pdf](https://www.eqar.eu/assets/uploads/2018/04/02_European_Approach_QA_of_Joint_Programmes_v1_0.pdf)

Sustainability or has engaged with CHARM-EU staff to that end, but is not formally registered or admitted as a student.

- 4.4. Internal staff: Teachers currently employed (salaried) by one of the alliance's universities that lasts at least a semester. This can be civil servant or not, temporary or permanent contract, and any status.

## 5. Scope

- 5.1. This policy applies to complaints from

- 5.1.1. Registered CHARM-EU students in the MSc in Global Challenges for Sustainability
- 5.1.2. Applicants to the CHARM-EU MSc in Global Challenges for Sustainability
- 5.1.3. CHARM-EU staff within in a CHARM-EU Office, Board or Council.
- 5.1.4. CHARM-EU internal staff involved in a CHARM-EU activity.
- 5.1.5. External stakeholders involved in a CHARM-EU activity.

- 5.2. This policy applies to complaints relating to teaching, academic facilities, student support services, administrative services, and alleged actions or inactions within a CHARM-EU activity.

- 5.3. This policy does not apply to:

- 5.3.1. Complaints related to decisions on admissions, registration, assessments, and the awarding of financial support arising from the Academic Council, Programme Board, Board of Examiners (Refer to Appeals Policy).

- 5.3.2. Complaints of a legal or statutory basis such as bullying, harassment, discrimination on any grounds, by or towards students and/or staff. For these types of complaints see processes in Appendix 2 and guidance below:

- 5.3.2.1. If both parties are from the same CHARM-EU institution, the complaint should be reported following that institution's procedures.

- 5.3.2.2. If the complainant and respondent are from different CHARM-EU institutions, the complaint should be reported to the respondent's institution.

- 5.3.2.3. If the complainant is not affiliated with CHARM-EU, they should direct their

complaint to the CHARM-EU institution where the respondent is affiliated.

5.3.2.4. If the respondent is not affiliated with CHARM-EU, the complainant should report the issue to the relevant national authority in the country where the incident occurred.

5.3.2.5. If the complainant is a CHARM-EU MSc student (registered in all institutions), the complaint should be made to the institution where the respondent is affiliated at that time.

5.3.3. Complaints concerning services offered by external entities, such as providers of internships and placements, or accommodation managed by external parties, fall under the responsibility of those entities.

5.3.4. Activities, teaching or otherwise which are not under the remit of a CHARM-EU activity as defined by one of the CHARM-EU Boards (e.g. Academic Council, Executive Board or Strategic Board).

5.3.5. This policy does not apply to modules included in the CHARM-EU Online Course Catalogue whereby complaints should be made to relevant bodies in the university providing the module.

## 6. Principles

6.1. Complaints will be dealt with in a fair, transparent and timely manner.

6.2. Complainants will not be discriminated against or suffer any recrimination for bringing forward a complaint.

6.3. All complaints should be handled with discretion and all involved parties will take care to ensure that confidentiality is respected, and data related to the complaint is protected under EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

6.4. Complaints will be monitored and reported with the aim to understand, whenever feasible, the underlying causes and to take steps to prevent any future occurrences.

6.5. CHARM-EU is committed to creating excellence in teaching and learning by providing the

appropriate measures that remove barriers to success and support student and staff access and participation needs.

- 6.6. CHARM-EU strictly forbids discrimination on any basis.
- 6.7. CHARM-EU is dedicated to fostering an open, welcoming, safe atmosphere, where all forms of diversity are recognized, respected, and regarded as a source of strength and benefit to the CHARM-EU community and beyond.

## 7. Policy

- 7.1. CHARM-EU will adhere to the timelines prescribed in the Complaints Procedure for the resolution of the complaint at all stages of the complaint process.
- 7.2. The Complaint Procedure will be available on the CHARM-EU website and will be provided in an accessible format on request.
- 7.3. The Complaints Procedure will be integral to monitoring the quality, effectiveness and non-discriminatory nature of the joint CHARM-EU programmes.
- 7.4. CHARM-EU will deal with complaints in line with confidentiality rules and according to the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and CHARM-EU Privacy Policy.
- 7.5. CHARM-EU will keep a register of complaints and will issue an annual report in an accessible format on the number of complaints received, their outcomes and any actions taken in response.
- 7.6. All stakeholders are required to read, understand and comply with this policy and the related procedure.

## 8. Responsibility

- 8.1. The Executive Board is responsible for oversight of this policy.
- 8.2. The Joint Virtual Administration Office is responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented as approved.

## 9. Related Documents

- 9.1. CHARM-EU Complaints Procedure
- 9.2. CHARM-EU Complaints Form
- 9.3. Appeals Policy

## 10. Document Control

- 10.1. Date of initial approval: Executive Board 15/05/2025
- 10.2. Date policy effective from: 15/05/2025
- 10.3. Date of next review: Academic Year 2027/2028

## 11. Appendices

### 11.1. Appendix 1: Complaint Form Instructions:

This form should be completed in conjunction with the requirements of the Complaints Procedure (<https://www.charm-eu.eu/policies-and-regulations>). Complete all sections of the form.

If you encounter any barriers in terms of accessibility with the form, or you wish to submit your complaint in an alternative format, please let us know.

Be aware that the complaint will be shared with the person or service to which the complaint relates to.

Return completed form to: The Joint Administration Office at [CHARM-JVAO@uu.nl](mailto:CHARM-JVAO@uu.nl)

### Section 1: Personal details

1.1	Your student number if available	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
1.2	Your name Student/Applicant/Staff	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
1.3	Your position:	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
1.4	Your Email	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
1.5	Contact number (Phone)	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>

### Section 2: Details of complaint

Date of incident [Click here to enter a date.](#)

(Note: If the event happened over a period of time, please insert the start date of the incident)

Please provide a summary of your complaint below. If this is a group complaint, please list other complainants where relevant. (max 1250 chars)

Please provide a summary of your complaint below (max 1250 chars)

Have you tried discussing this complaint with the person or persons directly involved?

If so, how and with whom?.

Please provide a list of the people, positions, units you have communicated with (and the dates this occurred)

This is what happened and why I believe it did not resolve my complaint (max 1250 chars.)

Please provide a summary (max 1250 chars)

Please explain the impact of the issue on you (max 1250 chars.)

Please explain the impact (max 1250 chars)

If you are submitting a complaint more than six weeks following the last related incident please provide a brief explanation for the delay (max 1250 chars.)

If applicable, please provide a brief explanation for the delay (max 1250 chars)

Do you have a suggestion for a possible solution to your complaint? (maximum 250 characters) \*

Have you already submitted this complaint elsewhere? If so, where? (maximum 250 characters) \*

By submitting this form, I confirm that I have read the Complaints Policy and have attempted to resolve the matter locally (please check the box).

## 11.2. Appendix 2 List of institutional services for Complaints on a legal basis

TCD	<a href="https://www.tcd.ie/hr/dignity-and-respect/about/the-policies-and-complaints-process/">https://www.tcd.ie/hr/dignity-and-respect/about/the-policies-and-complaints-process/</a>
UU	<a href="https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/talk-in-confidence-report-or-file-a-complaint/talking-to-someone-about-inappropriate-behaviour#:~:text=If%20you%20feel%20that%20your,will%20then%20investigate%20your%20complaint.">https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/talk-in-confidence-report-or-file-a-complaint/talking-to-someone-about-inappropriate-behaviour#:~:text=If%20you%20feel%20that%20your,will%20then%20investigate%20your%20complaint.</a>
UiB	<a href="https://www.uib.no/en/whistleblowing/146444/speak-about-bullying-harassment-and-sexual-harassment-%E2%80%93-perpetrated-students">https://www.uib.no/en/whistleblowing/146444/speak-about-bullying-harassment-and-sexual-harassment-%E2%80%93-perpetrated-students</a>
UM	<a href="https://www.umontpellier.fr/en/universite/enjeux-environnementaux-et-responsabilite-sociale/signaler-les-actes-de-violence-de-discrimination-de-harcelement-et-dagissements-sexistes">https://www.umontpellier.fr/en/universite/enjeux-environnementaux-et-responsabilite-sociale/signaler-les-actes-de-violence-de-discrimination-de-harcelement-et-dagissements-sexistes</a>
ELTE	<a href="https://www.elte.hu/en/complaints?m=141#:~:text=E%C3%B6tv%C3%B6s%20Lor%C3%A1nd%20University%20handles%20written,both%20complainant%20and%20accused%20party.">https://www.elte.hu/en/complaints?m=141#:~:text=E%C3%B6tv%C3%B6s%20Lor%C3%A1nd%20University%20handles%20written,both%20complainant%20and%20accused%20party.</a>
HRW	<a href="https://www.hochschule-ruhr-west.de/en/the-hrw/we-live-diversity/against-discrimination">https://www.hochschule-ruhr-west.de/en/the-hrw/we-live-diversity/against-discrimination</a>
AAU	<a href="https://www.abo.fi/en/study/already-in/student-wellbeing/harassment/#:~:text=%C3%85bo%20Akademi%20does%20not%20accept,protects%20those%20who%20report%20it.">https://www.abo.fi/en/study/already-in/student-wellbeing/harassment/#:~:text=%C3%85bo%20Akademi%20does%20not%20accept,protects%20those%20who%20report%20it.</a>
JMU	<a href="https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/en/equity/diversity/advice-and-support/">https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/en/equity/diversity/advice-and-support/</a>
UB	<a href="https://www.ub.edu/portal/documents/9128180/0/PROTOCOL-english+2019.pdf/c11700f9-7a5a-5974-6b82-047a0c4e8122">https://www.ub.edu/portal/documents/9128180/0/PROTOCOL-english+2019.pdf/c11700f9-7a5a-5974-6b82-047a0c4e8122</a>