

Ombuds Office for Students at FHWien der WKW

1. Objective

- a. In certain cases students should be offered the opportunity to communicate complaints or specific requests to a higher authority who
 - is independent from FHWien der WKW and its owner
 - is not the Head of an Academic Department
 - has comprehensive knowledge of the legal framework for studying at a university of applied sciences

2. Calling in the Ombuds Office

The Ombuds Office may only be contacted in case of the following problems:

- a. The exclusion of a student from FHWien der WKW.
- b. The failure of an examination for the third and final permissible time.
- c. Non-compliance with the valid examination regulations.
- d. Acting contrary to the regulations of the University of Applied Sciences Act (FHStG) or other applicable laws.

In cases of suspicion of plagiarism, the Ombuds Office will be contacted by the Academic Board directly and asked to make a statement.

3. Conditions necessary for a claim to be handled by the Ombuds Office

All other internal options must have been exhausted before the complaint can be brought to the Ombuds Office.

Depending on the subject area, the issue must have been brought to:

- a faculty member
- a Head of a Degree Program
- a Head of Department

4. Operating procedure for the Ombuds Office

- a. the Ombuds Office acts independently
- b. the Ombuds Office talks to the complainant about the issue. If it is ascertained that the requirements laid out in point 2 or 3 have not been fulfilled, the Ombuds Office must reject the complaint.
- c. If point 2 and 3 have been fulfilled, the Ombuds Office takes up the complaint and assesses all facts about the complaint. The Ombuds Office has the right to examine all available documents that are relevant to the complaint.
- d. taking up the complaint suspends measures implemented by the Department or FHWien der WKW for the duration of the process (postponing effect)
- e. if the Ombuds Office believes it to be necessary, interviews can be conducted with the persons involved (i.e. teaching staff, fellow students). All persons who have a contract with FHWien der WKW are obliged to answer truthfully and as soon as possible.
- f. in every case the ombuds office must discuss the issue with the relevant Head of Department and the complainant.
- g. if the Ombuds Office believes it to be necessary, the opinion of the Austrian Ombuds Office for Students can be asked for.
- h. the Ombuds Office writes a final report, which should make clear whether the situation experienced by the complainant as listed in point 2 goes against laws, guidelines or regulations.
- i. the written report is to be handed personally to the following people:
 - the complainant
 - the Chair of the Academic Board
 - the Head of the Department where the complainant studies

5. Consequences

- a. The Academic Board must check whether a systematic error in an internal process occurred and introduce relevant, general corrections. The Ombuds Office should be called on to assist in this process along with the Head of Quality Management.
- b. The Ombuds Office files all reports and documents chronologically. Only the Chair of the Academic Board and the Ombuds Office have access to these documents.

6. The current **Ombuds Office** representative for FHWien der WKW is:

Univ. Prof. Dr. Monika Petermandl

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