
Networking 1

13a: Ombuds work within a national network: how to relate with peers and with the governance

Rosa Maria Vasconcelos (Portugal), Berta Batista (Portugal)

Integrating the Portuguese higher education community, which shares cultures, values and fundamental principles of the Universal Charter of Human Rights and the rule of law, RPE's main objective is to be a stable and permanent forum that allows networking, transfer and exchange of knowledge, information and experiences related to the Student Ombudsmen, as well as the defence of students' rights within the space of the Higher Education Institutions. The work developed in RPE will be presented as well as the interaction with the national government.

Presenter(s):

Rosa Maria Vasconcelos: The Student Ombudsperson is an independent entity created at the University of Minho, with the mission is to promote and defend the rights and interests of students in the context of university life.

The activity of this entity covers all the organs, services and members of the University as well as the Schools/Institutes and the Welfare Services. This enjoys full autonomy in relation to these bodies. This is governed by the principles of neutrality and confidentiality.

The Ombudsperson examines the complaints, submissions or claims made by students against acts or omissions of the University's bodies and services. He/she acts as a mediator and suggests solutions. He/she draws up reports to prevent or remedy unfair or irregular situations.

?

Berta Batista: The Student Ombudsman defends the rights and ensures the interests of the academic community of P.PORTO by mediating in an independent, impartial and confidential way. Its role is to ensure the legality of the actions carried out by management bodies, services and all those involved in students' educational process and their compliance with the objectives of promoting institutional quality and academic success. Students can file individual or collective claims connected to actions or omissions by any agent, service or authority in P.PORTO and its various schools. They can also make suggestions concerning educational services and social services. The Student Ombudsman and their staff are bound to confidentiality on all information to which they have access.

13b: Re-framing international cooperation among university Ombudsperson offices

Jorge A. Ribeiro Pereira (Portugal), Guadalupe Barrena (Mexico)

The practice of Ombudsperson offices responds and varies according to institutional cultures; across different regions, diversity in Ombudsperson practice yields a variety of results and forms to address common issues. A re-framing of global Ombudsperson cooperation should take into account these differences and yet, take stock of the learning opportunities we have in an ever globalized world, where universities face common challenges, and share a common role in democratic societies. We need to develop specific spaces to exchange practices, and to critically compare and contrast our methods of work; all within the fast-paced environment of Ombudsperson life.

Presenter(s):

Jorge A. Ribeiro Pereira: Student Ombudsperson

Guadalupe Barrena: Head of Ombudsperson Office