

Student Complaints and Appeals Policy

Policy Category	Policy/guideline/procedure/rules		
Review	3 years from the date of approval		
Policy Code	AP025		
Contacts	policy@imc.edu.au		
Version	Approval Authority	Approval Date	Commencement Date
2021.06	Academic Board	24 June 2021	24 June 2021

1. PURPOSE

The Institute aims to provide a timely, effective, and transparent system for managing student concerns. The purpose of this policy is to provide information to students and staff on the conditions and procedures in place at the Institute that enable student concerns and complaints to be addressed in a timely, equitable and appropriate manner. It should be read in conjunction with the Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

Students are informed about this policy before enrolment. Also, information about the policy is included in orientation materials, the Institute Student Handbook and on the Institute's website. The Institute staff (including members of the Student Grievance Committee) responsible for its administration are informed about this policy and trained in its application.

Nothing in this policy and procedure limits the rights of individuals to pursue other legal remedies under New South Wales or Commonwealth law, in particular, their rights to take action under the *Australian Consumer Law*.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all students of the Institute, including currently enrolled students, students who have graduated within the past six months and those seeking to enrol at the Institute. It also applies to the Institute staff involved in managing or responding to appeals and grievances lodged by students. The policy applies across all Institute campuses and to online delivery.

3. DEFINITIONS

Appeal is a formal complaint made by a student (or prospective student seeking to enroll at the Institute) to have a decision reviewed and reconsidered.

Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) is the legal framework that governs the delivery of education to overseas students studying in Australia on a student visa. The framework sets out clear roles and responsibilities for providers of education and training to

international students and complements Australia's student visa laws.

Formal Complaint is a grievance that a student seeks to resolve by lodging a complaint with the Student Grievance Committee.

Grievance is a concern raised by a student about some aspect of the student's experience with the Institute.

Informal Complaint is a grievance that a student may raise informally with the person(s) concerned or Senior Student Services Manager.

International Students are students who not Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents, New Zealand citizens, or holders of an Australian permanent resident humanitarian visa.

Student Grievance Committee is the committee that considers formal complaints lodged by students at the Institute.

Senior Student Services Manager is a senior Institute staff member who will provide advice, assistance and support to students with an academic or non-academic grievance.

Student means currently enrolled students, students who have graduated within the past six months and those seeking to enrol at the Institute.

4. PRINCIPLES

4.1 General Principles

The following general principles will apply to all stages of the Institute's student grievance resolution processes:

- Confidentiality will be adhered to at all times, with information shared only when this is necessary to investigate a grievance in accordance with these principles, and then only on the basis that the person to whom it is imparted is bound by confidentiality;
- The Institute will adhere to the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness by:
 - informing everyone involved of the full details of the grievance and the response(s) to them;
 - providing those involved with an opportunity to present their side of the matter;
 - operating in a fair and unbiased way;
 - assigning the Senior Student Services Manager (or delegate) to provide advice, assistance and advocacy.
- All formal complaints and appeals will be acknowledged in writing;
- Students will be informed in writing of decisions, with a full explanation for reasons for the decision and information on further avenues of resolution including external bodies.

- The Institute will ensure that all formal complaints and appeals will be finalised as soon as practicable;
- The complainant and any respondent will be treated with courtesy and respect and will not be victimised or discriminated against;
- The complainant and any respondent will be allowed to continue with their studies during the complaint and appeal processes;
- The Institute will not impose any financial costs on a student at any stage of its grievance resolution processes.

4.2 Grounds for Complaints

Matters of student concern and complaint may include (but are not limited to):

- admission processes (including Recognition of Prior Learning, Offer Letters and Certificates of Enrolments);
- post enrolment processes (including orientation, course advise and enrolment);
- quality of courses offered (teaching, resources and facilities);
- academic issues (intervention strategies, suspending or cancelling the student's enrolment);
- administration matters (including access to and handling of student records, unreasonable decisions, and inconsistent policies and procedures);
- treatment received from staff or other students, including bullying, harassment and inappropriate behaviour;
- any complaint, issue or appeal a student may make regarding his or her dealings with the Institute, the Institute's education agents or any related party the Institute has an arrangement with to deliver the student's course or related services.

This policy and procedure do not apply to the following types of complaints:

- Reviews of academic decisions related to academic results or thesis examination. (For a review of academic decisions refer to Assessment Policy and Procedures);
- Complaints about research activities and outputs, intellectual property and research misconduct. (For complaints about research activities refer to Research Code of Conduct).

The complaints process available to students is described in the Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- i. Assessment Policy and Procedure Coursework
- ii. Examinations Policy and Procedure
- iii. Higher Degree Research Assessment and Assessment Appeals Policy
- iv. Higher Degree Research Admissions Policy
- v. Higher Degree Research Confirmation of Candidature and Progression Review Policy
- vi. Access and Equity Policy

- vii. Code of Conduct for Students
- viii. Student Academic Integrity Policy
- ix. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy
- x. Student Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy
- xi. Student Selection and Admissions Policy
- xii. Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy
- xiii. Fees and Charges Policy
- xiv. Guidelines on Minimum Resources for Higher Degree Research Students

6. VERSION CONTROL.

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2020.10	Academic Board	26 October 2020
2020.07	Academic Board	27 July 2020
2018.08	Academic Board	30 August 2018
2018.06	Academic Board	14/06/2018
2018.04 (Replace Student Grievance Mediation Policy and Procedures)	Academic Board	18/04/2018
2015.10	Academic Board	22/10/2015
2009.03	Academic Board	03/2009