

Complaints and Appeals Procedures

1. Governing policy

The *Complaints and Appeals Procedures* (“procedures”) relate to the *Complaints and Appeals Policy* (“policy”). They describe how students and staff are to enact the policy, including the steps to be taken in managing the complaints and appeals process.

2. Scope

These procedures are relevant to all enrolled students, prospective students and past students and any staff involved in a complaint or appeal.

3. Procedures

These procedures set out the three key internal processes that may be used to resolve a complaint or appeal:

Informal resolution or disclosure- self-managed

In the first instance, students are encouraged to seek an informal settlement of their issue at the local level, where it is reasonable and appropriate to do so, before a formal complaint or appeal is submitted.

Or students may choose to disclose an issue without making a formal complaint. Disclosure means telling another person about an incident that happened either in the past or it may be ongoing. The person disclosing may not want to make a complaint. The primary aim of disclosure is to offer information and support to the person sharing their experience. Students are encouraged to talk to the Student Success Centre for support or refer to <https://www.icms.edu.au/respect-and-safety/> for more information.

Complaint

Where a matter cannot be informally resolved, or if a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of a decision, the student may lodge a formal complaint using the

ONLINE COMPLAINTS FORM. Students who require support to lodge a complaint, including a different method of submission, should contact the Student Success Centre for advice. This process should not be used for general feedback or routine queries that arise throughout the trimester.

Students are entitled to lodge a complaint about any academic or administrative matter, including (but not limited to):

1. the conduct and performance of staff;
2. services and facilities provided by or managed by the Institution;
3. dealings with the Institution's international representatives (agents), homestay providers, welfare providers or other related parties;
4. conduct and performance of other students;
5. review of a decision made by the Institution;
6. failure to adhere to relevant policies and procedures.

A complaint lodged by a former student more than six months after completing their studies is not normally considered. Exceptions to this are made in exceptional circumstances only (e.g. FEE-HELP re-credit). A delay in lodging can affect the Institution's ability to investigate the matter.

Appeal

Where a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint the student may initiate a formal appeal provided there are sufficient grounds as follows:

1. failure to provide natural justice or procedural fairness;
2. where the decision is inconsistent with a published policy or procedures;
3. where there are new or different grounds and/or supporting evidence to those already considered by the original decision maker;
4. the penalty was not commensurate to the incident; and/or
5. on other reasonable grounds, as determined on a case by case by the Chair of the Appeals Committee, beyond the above.

An Appeal Committee is only convened if the Chair of the Appeals Committee is satisfied that there are grounds for an appeal and the relevant documentary evidence submitted.

External review

Students who are not satisfied with the outcome or the management of a decision made by the Institution may make a complaint to an appropriate external agency at any time. External agencies normally only act if all the internal processes have been completed.

Table 1. Internal complaints and appeals resolution process

Process	Responsibilities	Timeframe
A. Informal resolution procedures		
<p>1. Students are encouraged to resolve their concern informally either via email or in person (between to two parties) if it is reasonable and appropriate to do so. This option is not encouraged for students with a grievance relating to sexual harm (see paragraph B.3).</p> <p>2. Students can also seek advice and support from the Student Success Centre, Student Services, the wellness team, faculty staff or operations staff.</p> <p>3. Students seeking a review of a final grade or assessment mark of a subject must refer to the <i>Student Review of Assessment Results Procedures</i> in the first instance.</p> <p>4. All requests to informally resolve a concern, either in writing or in person, are addressed within five working days.</p>	<p>Lecturers and Program Managers Student Success Centre Student Services Wellness team Operations staff</p>	<p>Requests addressed within five working days</p>
B. Complaint procedures		

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal resolution process, or they have opted not to seek informal resolution, they may lodge a complaint. 2. Complaints must be lodged on via the ONLINE COMPLAINTS FORM with any supporting documentation within 20 working days of the issue occurring or upon notification of the initial decision (extensions of this timeframe may be granted in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Institution). Students who require support to lodge a complaint, including a different method of submission, should contact the Student Success Centre for advice. This timeframe does not apply for students seeking to complain about sexual harm. 3. Students seeking to make a disclosure or formal report/complaint relating to sexual harm are encouraged to seek assistance from the Student Success Centre Manager who can provide confidential support, advice on the complaints process and referral to external agencies as appropriate See also https://www.icms.edu.au/respect-and-safety/ 4. The completed online form (and any supporting documentation) is acknowledged and registered within two working days. 5. Complaints are dealt with as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Deans and Associate Dean (as relevant) for academic matters, with the exception of complaints relating to academic misconduct decisions b. The Dean (Academic) for complaints relating to academic misconduct decisions c. The Vice President (Student Administration) for non-academic matters, excluding financial matters d. The Group Finance Manager for financial-related matters. 6. If the complaint relates to the person involved in the complaint handling process it will be referred to the relevant line manager. 7. An investigation is conducted, which may involve formal meetings/interviews where those involved in a complaint have a right to present their case. The investigating officer takes heed to past precedents and closely follows the Institution's policies and procedures to ensure outcomes are consistent. 8. Anonymous reports or feedback can be submitted via the Your Voice Matters Online Form. The actions available to the Institution may be limited for anonymous submissions. 9. The investigation of a complaint commences within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint and is finalised as soon as practicable. The student is notified if the investigation takes longer than 10 working days. 10. If a complaint outcome is in the favour of the student, the Institution immediately implements the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventative or corrective action required by the decision and notify the complainant accordingly. 11. However, if the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint they may submit an appeal provided there are sufficient grounds as outlined in these procedures. 12. Student Services to set up work task to check progress after 20 working days. If an appeal has not been submitted then the case is closed. 13. Student Services to record outcomes and all correspondence in Student Record Management System. 	<p>Deans and Associate Dean (as relevant) for academic matters, with the exception of complaints relating to the academic misconduct decisions</p> <p>Dean (Academic) for complaints relating to academic misconduct decisions</p> <p>Associate Vice President (Student Administration) for non-academic matters</p> <p>Group Finance Manager for finance related complaints</p>	<p>Lodge within 20 working days</p> <p>Acknowledgement within two working days.</p> <p>Commence investigation within 10 working days</p> <p>finalise outcome as soon as practicable.</p>
C. Appeal procedures		

<p>1. If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint they may lodge an appeal provided there are sufficient grounds and additional evidence as outlined in these procedures.</p> <p>2. Appeals must be lodged on the ONLINE APPEALS FORM within 20 working days of notification of the complaint decision (extensions of this timeframe may be granted in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Chief Quality Officer). This timeframe does not apply for students seeking to complain about sexual harm or those with any other compelling and compassionate reasons.</p> <p>3. Students seeking to appeal an outcome relating to sexual harm are encouraged to seek assistance from the Student Success Centre Manager who can provide confidential support, counselling, advice on the appeals process and referral to external agencies as appropriate.</p> <p>4. The completed online form and any supporting documentation is acknowledged and registered within two working days.</p> <p>5. Appeals must include the grounds for the appeal as outlined in paragraph 3.1 of these procedures and additional evidence to support the appeal application.</p> <p>6. All types of appeals are considered by the Appeals Committee, which is convened normally within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal. The student has the right to attend the committee meeting to present their case. They may be accompanied by a support person but may not have legal representation. All deliberations and outcomes are determined by the Committee in closed session. The student is notified if the investigation takes longer than 10 working days. The Appeals Committee takes heed to past precedents and closely follows the Institution's policies and procedures in reaching a decision to ensure outcomes are consistent.</p> <p>7. The student is notified in writing of the outcome of the appeal within 10 working days of a decision being reached. The correspondence will state a student's right to access an external review of the decision and provides full details of the external review options.</p> <p>8. If an outcome of an appeal is in the favour of the student, the Institution immediately implements the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventative or corrective action required by the decision and notify the complainant accordingly.</p> <p>9. The outcome of the Appeals Committee is the final internal avenue of complaint and appeal resolution process. The student can access the external review as outlined in paragraph 4 of these procedures. The Appeals Committee Secretary records outcomes and all correspondence in Student Record Management System and refers outcomes to Student Services for further administrative action (if applicable). International students, where the Appeals Committee upholds a decision to cancel or suspend enrolment, have 10 working days to notify the Institution that they have lodged an external appeal with the National Student Ombudsman (NSO). Students are required to provide evidence to the Institution of the lodgement to NSO within that period.</p> <p>10. Students whose enrolment has been suspended or cancelled due to unsatisfactory course progress and/or attendance will not have their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) cancelled until the Institution is notified of the outcome by the National Student Ombudsman (NSO).</p> <p>11. The Institution only reports unsatisfactory course progress or unsatisfactory course attendance in PRISMS if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the internal and external complaints processes have been completed and the decision or recommendation supports the Institution, or the international student has chosen not to access the internal complaints and appeals process within the 20-working day period, or the international student has chosen not to access the external complaints and appeals process, or the overseas student withdraws from the internal or external appeals processes by notifying the registered provider in writing. 	<p>Appeals Committee</p>	<p>Lodge within 20 working days</p> <p>Appeals Committee normally convened within 10 working days, and the outcome finalised as soon as practicable.</p> <p>Acknowledgement within two working days.</p> <p>Students notified by the Appeals Committee Secretary of Appeals Committee decision within five working days of the Committee being convened</p> <p>International students, where the Appeals Committee upholds a decision to cancel or suspend enrolment, have 10 working days to notify the Institution that they have lodged an external appeal with the National Student Ombudsman (NSO).</p>
<p>Student feedback</p>		
<p>Feedback on the complaints and appeals process can be provided through the Your Voice Matters Online Form or through student forums and student surveys. Routine queries should be directed to Student Services in the first instance.</p>	<p>Students</p>	<p>Anytime</p>

4. External review

4.1 When students are not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint or appeal, they may seek a review with the [National Student Ombudsman \(NSO\)](#). The NSO works with students to resolve complaints about the actions taken by their higher education provider. Whether a domestic or international student, an undergraduate or postgraduate student, the NSO is available. The NSO is independent, impartial, and can consider how a student's higher education provider has handled a range of issues including student safety and wellbeing, racism and racial vilification, discrimination, gender-based violence, course administration, teaching provisions and facilities, and the fairness and effectiveness of student complaints processes.

The NSO cannot consider complaints related to a vocational education and training (VET) course, complaints related to education providers who are not Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) registered, complaints related to an individuals' employment with a higher education provider or complaints related to the appointment of a person to an office of a higher education provider. The NSO cannot consider complaints about academic decisions, such as complaints about grades. However, administrative complaints related to grades, such as complaints about the appeals process, may be considered by the NSO.

If a student is dissatisfied with the way the Institution has handled a complaint, they can talk to the NSO. The NSO can consider whether the decisions or actions of the Institution were unreasonable or unfair and make recommendations to improve the student experience. The NSO offers a restorative engagement process, where appropriate, as well as alternative dispute resolution processes including mediation.

The NSO is a free and confidential service for all students, and a student can make their complaint in a way that is safe for them. The NSO will work with a student to consider the best resolution pathway, and if their services are not right for their situation, they can refer them to a service that's more appropriate. Visit nso.gov.au to find out more.

5. Student conduct

5.1 Students must make complaints and appeals responsibly and must not seek to raise an issue for trivial or vexatious reasons. The Institution does not tolerate

unreasonable behaviour, exaggeration or dishonesty, unreasonable persistence after an investigation has closed, or unrealistic or disproportionate demands. Students are expected to provide serious reasons and factual evidence in support of a complaint or an appeal or request for review. Vexatious complainants are dealt with in accordance with the General Misconduct Policy and General Misconduct Procedures.

6. Compliance and monitoring

6.1 In accordance with TEQSA Standard 2.4, the approach to complaint and appeal handling is intended to be timely, free of cost, consistent, fair, without reprisal and handled confidentially and all subsequent actions are intended to be achieved in good time. Also, in accordance with TEQSA Standard 7.2, information about grievance handling is easily accessible to students as is information about advocacy and external sources for further appeals.

6.2 Additionally, reports on complaints and appeals are provided to relevant departments and committees to ensure that the Institution acts systemically on frequent sources of complaint for students. Complaints are used to identify and address any issues in the Institution's policies, procedures and operations.

7. Reporting

All reporting requirements are outlined in the Complaints and Appeals Policy.

8. Records management

8.1 The Associate Vice President (Student Administration) maintains a record of correspondence and documentation related to complaints and appeals actions and outcomes in the student management system.

8.2 The Quality Assurance and Accreditation team is responsible for maintaining documentation and outcomes pertaining to Appeals Committee proceedings.

See [Complaints-and-Appeals-Flowchart](#)

9. Related documents

- *Academic Integrity Policy*
- *Academic Integrity Procedures*

- *Artificial Intelligence Policy*
- *Assessment Policy*
- *Assessment Procedures*
- *Complaints and Appeals Policy*
- *General Misconduct Policy*
- *General Misconduct Procedures*
- *Sexual Harm Policy*
- *Sexual Harm Procedures*
- *Student Code of Conduct*
- *Student Review of Assessment Results Procedures*

9. Version history

Summary of changes	Approval date	Approved by
Created	18 March 2019	Board of Directors
	5 April 2019	Board of Directors
	14 September 2020	Board of Directors
	29 July 2021	EMG
	22 August 2024	EMG
	20 February 2025	EMG

<p>Changes include: Addition of a disclosure clause - students may disclose without making a formal complaint. Dean (Academic) now responsible for complaints relating to academic misconduct decisions.</p> <p>Anonymous reports or feedback can be submitted via the <u>Your Voice Matters Online Form</u></p> <p>International students, where the Appeals Committee upholds a decision to cancel or suspend enrolment, have 10 working days to notify the Institution that they have lodged an external appeal with the NSO.</p>	<p>2 April 2026</p>	<p>EMG</p>
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