

STUDENT GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Authority

The Australian Institute of Music Limited (AIM), known as ‘the Institute’, is governed by the Board of Directors (BoD) with academic authority delegated to the Academic Board (AB). The BoD and AB share joint responsibility for ensuring that all academic policies and procedures follow ‘best practice’ principles for Higher Education and other sectors of educational delivery, in compliance with relevant Australian legislation and current regulatory requirements.

The Institute will treat all grievances and complaints seriously, ensuring that the policy is fair and the procedures are clear and the details of the process kept confidential for all parties, except where disclosure of information may be required by law. A strong focus of this policy and procedure is the efficient and constructive resolution of all grievances and complaints in order to ensure positive learning and teaching environment and cooperative working relationships.

1.2 Application

This policy and procedure applies to Quality Assured (QA) delivery of accredited AIM programs offered at the Sydney and Melbourne campuses. If applicable, this policy and procedure will also apply in future, wherever QA AIM programs are approved for delivery elsewhere in Australia or overseas.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that the grievance and complaint handling procedures are fair and equitable, appropriately confidential, consistently managed and properly documented.

1.4 Principles

- The Institute treats all grievances and complaints seriously
- Grievance and complaint handling procedures are fair and equitable, appropriately confidential, consistently managed and properly documented
- Natural justice and best practice are followed to achieve educationally constructive and operationally fair and reasonable outcomes
- Most disputes should be satisfactorily resolved informally at the local level, by talking with the individual/s and/or immediate supervisor central to the issue to help quickly resolve concerns and remove any barriers to good working/teaching/learning relationships
- All prospective, enrolled and past students are entitled to access this policy and procedure, regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance or complaint has arisen or their place of residence
- No grievant or respondent will be victimised or discriminated against in any of the stages set out in this policy and procedure
- Any dispute not satisfactorily resolved at AIM will be referred to the AIM’s Appeals Panel
- Any complaint not resolved internally will be referred to external arbitration.

1.5 Scope

This Policy and Procedure addresses grievances and complaints that relate to both academic or non-academic matters including:

- Harassment,
- Vilification,
- Discrimination,
- Financial matters,

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- Fines and payments,
- Application procedures,
- Exclusion from events and facilities,
- Conduct and outcomes of learning, teaching, assessment and research, and
- Any AIM program or unit of study, irrespective of the AQF level, location or mode of educational delivery, unless otherwise stated.

The scope of this policy and procedure presupposes mutual compliance by the applicant, the Institute students and staff with the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and program rules, other relevant AIM policies and procedures, adhering to any relevant sector-specific requirements or obligations under legislation and/or regulations.

1.6 Coverage

This policy and procedure applies to:

- Prospective and current domestic and international students of AIM
- Former students, who have completed their qualification or who have withdrawn from the Institute, may lodge a complaint within 30 calendar days after their enrolment officially ceased or formal written notification of a decision.
- All award and non-award AIM courses
- AIM campuses in Sydney and Melbourne, and other approved locations.

1.7 Special Conditions or Exceptions

This policy and procedure **does not apply** to matters covered under separate policies and procedures including:

- Attendance requirements
- Extension of assessment deadlines
- Reasonable and routine student requests for re-marking or review of the accuracy of assessment results
- Assessment appeals
- Applications for consideration of extenuating circumstances, deferral or withdrawal without penalty
- Matters concerning FEE HELP, up-front fee payment or refunds
- Staff grievances and complaints or third-party grievances and complaints.

Neither does this policy and procedure take precedence over, or provide exemption from, other AIM policies and procedures.

2. Procedures

2.1 Implementation

A four-stage process is accessible to resolve grievances and complaints:

1. Informal Discussion/Negotiation
2. Formal Internal Grievance and Complaint
3. Panel Internal Review
4. External Independent Arbitration

In the first instance, **informal** grievances or complaints raised by students may be directed to the person involved for discussion, who must keep a record of the matter and any mutually agreed outcomes of conversation or negotiations. All conversations must be recorded in writing with a copy to the student and to the Academic Administration Manager (AAM) for filing.

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Formal internal grievances or complaints received in writing from students are administered by the AAM in accordance with the process outlined below. The AAM will check the form for completeness to ensure all relevant supporting materials have been attached before forwarding to the Head of Department for review. A case file will be established (on SharePoint) to include full documentation of grievances and complaints, evaluation of evidence provided, procedural reviews and agreed outcomes.

In an attempt to resolve the grievance and complaint, mediation can occur during any of the informal or formal stages. An independent member of staff will be nominated as the mediator, but the mediator cannot be a support person, nor a person involved in the grievance and complaint. The student may elect to take a support person with them to a meeting, either a Student Wellbeing and Life Officer or from the AIM Student Association (ASA).

If the complaint cannot be resolved through internal processes including the AIM Appeals Panel, the matter will be referred to external independent arbitration, at minimal or no cost, for a final decision that is binding on both parties.

2.2 Contextual Considerations

A grievance or complaint may be made against any of AIM's decisions, actions or processes that may include concerns over such matters as:

- Application procedures, including education agents
- Student eligibility for entry to specific courses of study
- Advanced standing involving unit exemptions
- Discrimination
- Exclusion from events and facilities
- Financial matters
- Fines and payments
- Harassment
- Health and safety management
- Management of personal information
- Vilification
- Student progress decisions involving probation, suspension or cancellation of enrolment
- Completion of designated awards in a course of study
- Any academic decision made by a member of academic staff that is seen to unfairly privilege or compromise or adversely affect the learning opportunity or achievement of outcomes for an individual student or group of students
- The nature of teaching delivery, learning resources or student support
- The content, structure or status of an academic unit or program.

In seeking to resolve a grievance and complaint, students and staff should normally first exhaust the following dispute resolution mechanisms. A student who is dissatisfied with a decision, action or process at AIM has the right to have the matter or decision reviewed and to contest the final decision.

Grievances or complaints should normally be lodged up to 10 working days from the date of occurrence of the aggrieved matter. A student making a complaint or raising a grievance should clearly and objectively identify the issue, provide directly relevant substantiating evidence in support of his or her complaint where it is possible to do so, and organise any evidence in a clear and logical manner. The student should also clearly state the outcome they are seeking from making the complaint or raising the grievance.

All grievances or complaints concerning an assessment result or final result will be dealt with via AIM's *Appeals Application Form*. The grounds for lodging an appeal against assessment results for a unit of study

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are outlined in the *Appeals Policy and Procedure* available from AIM's website and SharePoint/Quality/Policies and Procedures.

2.3 Natural Justice

Disputes arising in relation to grievances and complaints will be resolved as quickly as possible. This policy and procedure respects privacy and natural justice, is designed to assist all parties equally and reflects Institute expectations of staff and students to behave professionally at all times in relation to:

2.3.1 Confidentiality: The Institute will ensure all complaint and grievance processes are handled in a sensitive and confidential manner; and all parties will refrain from inappropriately discussing details of the grievance or complaint with friends or colleagues whilst the matter is under consideration.

2.3.2 Procedural Fairness: In line with the principles of natural justice, no complainant or respondent will be disadvantaged, victimised or discriminated against in any of the four stages set out in this policy and procedure.

2.3.3 Continuation of Enrolment: In cases other than matters of complaints against a student's serious disruptive or extreme behaviour impacting other students, or in cases of voluntary withdrawal, a student's ongoing enrolment at AIM will normally be maintained during the conduct and investigation of any grievance and complaint hearing until the matter has been decided.

Once the internal AIM grievances or complaints process is complete, and following the conclusion of any appeal, if the final outcome of the grievances and complaints process results in a decision to defer, suspend or cancel an international student's enrolment, the Institute is obliged, unless there are verifiable compassionate or compelling circumstances, to notify the relevant Australian Government department through PRISMS of the change in enrolment status. In which case, the Institute will defer, suspend or cancel an international student's enrolment, and the student has 28 calendar days to leave Australia, or show the Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) a new Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), or provide the DoHA with evidence that he or she has accessed an external appeals process.

2.3.4 Continuation of Attendance: If a grievance or complaint is raised against a student, the student will continue to attend normal classes whilst the matter is being reviewed. However, on a case-by-case basis, AIM reserves the right to decide whether or not to continue to permit class attendance by the student against which a grievance and complaint has been raised throughout the internal or external processes.

Depending on the circumstances, this might include a decision for the student to either continue to attend classes, or be excluded from attending classes but continue to undertake class work and/or assessment outside of the classroom environment.

The Institute would normally only take such action under extreme circumstances where it was determined necessary to maintain AIM's duty of care to the majority of other students and staff. In which case, due consideration of suitable guidance and alternate academic support will be given to avoid any potential academic disadvantage to the student (whether domestic or international - see National Code Standard 10), in order to minimise the impact of a temporary denial of face-to-face learning opportunities on subsequent completion of their studies.

2.3.5 Related Records:

- A staff member in receipt of documentation in **Stage 2, 3 or 4** of the grievance and/or complaint procedure, including emails, letters and supporting materials, is responsible for prompt forwarding of the documentation, in an organised, clear and confidential manner, to the AAM.

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- Records of grievance or complaint processing will be kept strictly confidential and stored in a separate file for a period of at least five years, with the outcomes noted on the student record.
- The complainant and/or respondent will have a right of supervised access to all documents held by the Institute concerning his or her grievance or complaint.
- The AAM shall maintain a register of all grievances, complaints and appeal cases noting the date the grievance or complaint was first lodged by or against the student, the policy and procedure/s under which the case was considered, the outcome of each procedural stages, and the date the matter was resolved. Senior staff of AIM and staff of Commonwealth and State Government agencies, who may not necessarily have direct involvement in the grievance or complaint case/s, may access this register if required to do so in their normal work undertakings or by law.

2.3.6 Resolution: Where grievances and complaints are first addressed at the local level, it would be expected that most matters can be resolved informally by talking with the individual(s) concerned. Constructive and open dialogue about an issue between student and academic or professional staff is normally the most effective way to resolve grievances and complaints.

If a resolution is not possible informally at **Stage 1, Stages 2 – 4** provide formal mechanisms for dealing with the matter by internal review, appeal and ultimately and external arbitration.

2.3.7 Financial Cost

- **Stages 1 - 3** of the internal academic grievance and complaint procedure, will not incur costs to the student.
- At **Stage 4:**
 - If following the conclusion of all internal processes including consideration by AIM's Appeals Panel the student remains dissatisfied, the student may elect to lodge a formal complaint with a mutually agreeable independent external arbiter or regulatory authority, and costs may be incurred
 - The complainant is responsible for ascertaining whether or not he or she will incur charges and pay costs at that stage
 - International students incur no charges for the Australian Government's Overseas Students Ombudsman service
 - If the external arbitrator finds in favour of the student, upon application and with receipts provided, the Institute may reimburse the student (in part or in full) direct costs of external arbitration.

2.4 Overview of 4 Stage Resolution Process

There are four (4) stages in the processes to resolve a grievance and complaint at AIM. Matters may be resolved at any stage, without the need to progress to the next stage. Each stage represents an increased level of formality that includes submission and review of additional, more substantive evidence and record keeping. The four stages include:

2.4.1 Stage 1. Informal Discussion/Negotiation, which is normally a conversation between the student and staff member.

2.4.2 Stage 2. Formal Internal Grievance and Complaint involves completing the *Grievance and Complaint Form* and submitting via formstack to the Academic Administration Manager (AAM) with relevant supporting documents. The AAM will check the form for completeness to ensure all relevant supporting materials have been attached before forwarding to the Head of Department for review. This stage may involve the student.

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2.4.3 Stage 3. Panel Internal Review involves hearing of the complaint by AIM's Appeals Panel. The student will be invited to attend a meeting of AIM's Appeals Panel and may be accompanied by a support person. The conduct of AIM's Appeals Panel will be in accordance with AIM's *Appeals Policy and Procedure*

2.4.4 Stage 4. External Independent Arbitration is the final stage where the ultimate determination of unresolved complaints may be escalated to an appropriately authorised independent person or body, external to the Institute, that may be:

- Nominated by the Institute as an independent external arbiter, or
- Referred by the applicant to a higher education association or authority, or the Overseas Students Ombudsman for international students.

When a case escalates from one stage to the next, the student must present evidence to demonstrate that the previous determination was lacking in either judgement and/or due process. At each stage of the process, both the complainant and respondent have a right to:

- Be accompanied by a third party for personal support, not including legal representatives
- Receive all information relating to the grievance and complaint
- A full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures.

2.5 Resolution Process

2.5.1 STAGE 1: Informal Discussion/Negotiation with the staff member most directly concerned (Mediation if required)

2.5.1.1 Within 10 working days of the occurrence of the grievance and complaint the student should fill in the *Grievance and Complaint Form* and lodge it via Formstack to the AAM before liaising with the staff member most directly concerned and/or their immediate supervisor to discuss/negotiate details of the concerns with a view to arriving at a mutually agreeable resolution.

2.5.1.2 In initiating informal discussion/negotiation, the student is responsible for ensuring that they make clear the nature and grounds of the grievance and complaint, and where applicable, provide evidence to support the complaint, they should also make clear the resolution they seek. The student may elect to take a support person with them, either a member of Student Wellbeing and Life or from the ASA to their discussion/meeting.

2.5.1.3 Staff handling the initial grievance or complaint should ensure that they:

- Take the matter seriously
- Refer the matter to their supervisor if the complaint involves a member of staff and would result in real or perceived conflict of interest for the staff member
- Listen to, and understand the nature of, the grievance or complaint
- Explore all the options and evaluate possible implications for resolving the issue with the student
- Avoid any behaviour which might reasonably be interpreted as dismissive, interrogative or judgemental
- Record all conversations and correspondence in writing (including formal and informal) with the student relating to the grievance or complaint
- Send a copy to the student and to the AAM for filing.

2.5.1.4 Following discussion, the staff member or supervisor may further investigate the complaint as appropriate. This may involve the staff member or supervisor diplomatically consulting with relevant academic and/or professional/administrative staff, as well as students of AIM, as part of their investigations. The investigation should aim to verify and inform feedback and further constructive engagement in responding to and resolving the grievance or complaint.

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2.5.1.5 Following any investigation the staff member or supervisor should respond to the student, in writing via email, within 10 working days of the student's initial raising of their grievance and complaint. This written response should briefly outline the nature and grounds of the student's grievance or complaint and the decision of staff member or supervisor on the matter, giving reasons and providing a link to this *Grievances and Complaints Policy and Procedure*.

2.5.1.6 If the student is satisfied with the response, no further action is required. If the student is dissatisfied with the response, including either the decision or the time taken to resolve the matter, he or she can proceed to **Stage 2**.

2.5.2 STAGE 2. Formal Internal Grievance or Complaint

2.5.2.1 If dissatisfied with the response to the grievance or complaint, or the time taken to resolve the matter under **Stage 1**, the student may lodge a formal internal grievance or complaint by completing the *Grievance and Complaint Form*, and submitting the form via Formstack to the AAM with relevant supporting documents.

2.5.2.2 The AAM will check the form for completeness to ensure all relevant supporting materials have been attached, including details of the outcomes of **Stage 1** of the complaints and grievance process, before forwarding to the relevant Head of Department who will review the student's concerns.

2.5.2.3 If **Stage 1** of the complaints and grievance process has not been pursued and/or supporting documents have not been supplied, the form will be returned to the student as 'unresolved', with the request that the student follow due process and provide the required documentation.

2.5.2.4 In requesting formal consideration of their grievance and complaint the student must explain the basis for the submission of the grievance and complaint and the expected outcome. The student should:

- Explain the circumstances and grounds for his or her complaint
- Provide details and the date of the initial decision following the **Stage 1** process, where possible, and attach copies of written communication between the student and the staff member that took place at **Stage 1**;
- Justify why a formal request for consideration of the complaint is requested
- Clarify the expected outcome they are seeking; and
- Attach evidence that supports his or her grounds for making a complaint, this may include new evidence).

2.5.2.5 The relevant Head of Department will investigate the grievance and complaint with procedural fairness. Including consulting with relevant academic and administrative staff, and reviewing the student record as appropriate.

2.5.2.6 The written grievance and complaint will be dealt with within a reasonable time, normally within ten (10) working days of receipt of the student submitting the grievance and complaint for formal consideration.

2.5.2.7 **Stage 2** deliberations will consider the **Stage 1** response and the appropriateness of the decision reached by the staff member and the reasons given for that decision. The Head of Department will also review any additional explanation or evidence provided by the student. They may decide to hold a meeting with the student for further clarification of the complaint and the evidence submitted.

2.5.2.8 Following this review a further decision will be taken to either:

- Confirm the original decision, or

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- Vary the original decision, stating the changes in detail, or
- Set the initial decision aside in favour of a new decision, giving details of the new decision to the Student together with a link to AIM's *Student Grievances and Complaints Policy and Procedure*.

If the student is satisfied with the response at this stage, no further action is required. If the student is dissatisfied with the decision outcome or the time taken to resolve the matter, he or she can proceed to **Stage 3**

2.5.3 STAGE 3. Panel Internal Review

2.5.3.1 If a student formally refutes a decision taken at **Stage 2**, to resolve their grievance and complaint they must, within 10 working days of their receipt of the written response from the Head of Department regarding the outcome of the review of their grievance or complaint, submit a request to the Director of Academic Affairs asking that this be heard by AIM's Appeals Panel.

2.5.3.2 In requesting that their grievance or complaint be heard by AIM's Appeals Panel the student must resubmit his or her grievance and complaint with any further substantiation or evidence relating to their complaint to the AAM. The AAM will assess the information for completeness to ensure all relevant supporting materials have been attached, and that **Stage 1** and **Stage 2** of the grievance and complaints process has taken place. The complaint should:

- Clearly outlines the nature and further grounds in support of his or her grievance and complaint
- Provide the dates and information relating to the **Stage 1** and **Stage 2** decisions and attach copies of any written communication between the student and the staff member that took place at **Stage 1** and **Stage 2**;
- Justify why a reconsideration is being requested
- Clarify the expected outcome they are seeking; and
- Attach any further substantive evidence not previously provided that supports his or her grievance and complaint, where available.

2.5.3.3 The Director of Academic Affairs will review all previous evidence and decisions and decide whether:

- There are grounds for consideration by the AIM Appeals Panel or
- To dismiss the complaint

If the Director of Academic Affairs decides there are sufficient grounds for an appeal they will convene a panel of three members from AIM's Academic Board to reconsider the full body of evidence presented by the student in relation to the grievance and complaint, in accordance with the AIM's *Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

2.5.3.4 Any member of staff who was involved in **Stages 1** or **2** may not be nominated to be a member of the panel. In the course of panel deliberations the Director of Academic Affairs has the discretion to:

- Consult with relevant academic and administrative staff, as well as students of AIM, on matters pertaining to the case, and/or
- Request the student and the initial staff member involved to meet with the panel in person or via teleconference to discuss the case and to ask or answer any questions from the panel.

2.5.3.5 The student will be advised of the outcome of the Panel recommendations, in writing via email within 10 working days of the meeting of the Panel. The Panel may decide to either:

- Uphold the **Stage 2** decision, or
- Vary the **Stage 2** decision, stating the changes in detail, or

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- Set the **Stage 2** decision aside in favour of a new decision, giving details of the final AIM decision with a link to AIM's *Student Grievances and Complaints Policy and Procedure*.

2.5.3.6 If the student is satisfied with the response at this stage, no further action is required.

2.5.3.7 If the student is dissatisfied with outcome of the panel decision then the students will be advised they can take the matter to external arbitration which is **Stage 4**, of the process. The student must be advised that seeking external arbitration may involve costs and that the final decision is binding on both parties.

2.5.4 STAGE 4. External Independent Arbitration

If the student does not accept the outcome of the internal grievance and complaint process they can elect to seek resolution via external independent arbitration to receive a final ruling. The student must be advised on how to seek external arbitration and that costs may be incurred in obtaining an external hearing of a complaint which are borne equally 50% by the complainant and 50% by the Institute.

The student must formally notify the institution that they will be seeking external resolution

2.5.4.1 STAGE 4 Process for Domestic Students

If not satisfied with the **Stage 3** decision, either the domestic student or the Institute may request that the matter be dealt with through an external independent dispute resolution process. A service for this purpose is provided through the Student Mediation Scheme by the Resolution Institute to review the case as follows:

- a. The complainant and/or the Institute makes written application to the external independent arbitrator detailing the grievance and complaint, explaining the outcome of the internal processes.
- b. The **Stage 3** decision will then be reconsidered in light of all relevant legislation, regulations, procedural guidelines and sector precedents to:
 - Prioritise and critically evaluate the summary evidence
 - Clarify the grounds for external arbitration, and
 - Determine any associated costs to be paid in advance
- c. If valid grounds for the grievance or complaint are found, the parties to the dispute may be required to attend a meeting called by the reviewer to hear a considered opinion, discuss the implications and reconcile their differences
- d. Neither party will be privileged over the other, nor will either party be discriminated against, victimised or in any way compromised as a result of the meeting
- e. Each party may elect to be accompanied and assisted by a support person, not including a legal representative
- f. The external independent arbitrator will consider the grievance and complaint in light of all obligations relating to the evidence and/or the meeting outcome to:
 - Make a determination, with or without recommendations
 - Notify the complainant, the AAM of the Institute and the arbitrator concurrently
 - Provide a decision in writing within 30 days giving reasons and a rationale for any decisions and/or actions recommended to be taken to end the dispute.

2.5.4.2 STAGE 4 Process for International Students

If not satisfied with the decision in **Stage 3**, the international student or Institute may request that the matter be dealt with through an external dispute resolution process via the Overseas Students Ombudsman. The Overseas Students Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for overseas students who have a grievance or complaint against a provider or want to lodge an external appeal about a decision made by the Institute.

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The Overseas Students Ombudsman will schedule and investigate disputed matters raised with them following their own external protocols at no cost to the student or the institute.

2.5.5 External Contact Details

Domestic Students	International Students
Student Mediation Scheme Resolution Institute Level 2, 13-15 Bridge Street, SYDNEY NSW 2000 02 9251 3366 https://www.resolution.institute/membership-information/student-mediation-scheme	Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO) GPO Box 442 CANBERRA ACT 2601 AUSTRALIA 1300 362 072 www.oso.gov.au

2.6 Conclusion: Stages 1 – 4 Resolution Process.

2.6.1 If the internal or external grievances or complaints resolution process at any stage results in a decision that supports the student, the Institute will immediately implement that decision with any recommended corrective or preventative action and advise the student of the outcome.

2.6.2 At all stages of the grievances and complaints resolution process, reasons and a full explanation will be given in writing for decisions and actions taken.

2.6.3 Records of all grievances and complaints, applications for review of decisions and outcomes of external independent arbitration will be kept for a period of five (5) years. These records will be noted on the *Grievance and Complaints Register* against actions and outcomes and cross referenced to the student file, kept strictly confidential and stored securely by the Academic Administration Manager.

2.6.4 Supervised access by the parties to the grievances or complaints to view these records will be permitted and granted upon written request.

3. Accountabilities

3.1 Responsible Officer

- a. **Director of Academic Affairs:** Has overall responsibility for this policy

3.2 Contact Officer

- a. **Lecturer/professional/administrative staff member/s:** Are to follow the procedures outlined if informally involved in a **Stage 1** (Informal Discussion/Negotiation) of the complaints resolution process, (referring the matter to the supervisor in cases of real or perceived conflict of interest), responding to the student within 10 working days
- b. **Head of Department:** Will supervise all lecturers and other staff involved in conducting a **Stage 1** complaint and grievance discussions in place of the lecturer or professional member of staff in cases of real or perceived conflict of interest.
- c. **Head of Department:** is responsible for reviewing **Stage 2** (Formal Internal Grievance or Complaint), of the grievance and complaint resolution process, responding to the student within 10 working days
- d. **Director of Academic Affairs:** Is responsible for organising the **Stage 3** (Formal Internal Panel Review) of the grievance and complaint resolution process, responding to the student within 10 working days
- e. **Academic Administration Manager:** responsible for monitoring each stage of the complaint resolution process; assessing all submissions for completeness before forwarding to the relevant

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reviewer (Head of Department/Director of Academic Affairs); informing the student and staff member/s concerned of interim outcomes and final decisions; ensuring the confidentiality, secure storage, authority and supervision of access to all case files; logging and managing the *Grievances and Complaints Register*

4. Supporting Information

4.1 Legislative Compliance

This Policy & Procedure supports AIM's compliance with the following legislation:

- [Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\)](#)
- [Education Services for Overseas Students \(ESOS\) Act 2000](#)
- [Education Services for Overseas Students \(ESOS\) Regulations 2001](#)
- [Higher Education Standards Framework \(HESF\) 2015](#)
- [Higher Education Support Act \(HESA\) 2003](#)
- [National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 \(The National Code\)](#)
- [National Standards for Foundation Programs](#)
- [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency \(TEQSA\) Act 2011](#)

4.2 Supporting Documents

- *Grievance and Complaint Form*
- *Grievances and Complaints Register*

4.3 Related Documents

- *Appeals Application*
- *Appeals Policy and Procedure*
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)

4.4 Superseded Documents

- Academic Grievances and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Non-Academic Grievances and Complaints Policy and Procedure

5. Definitions and Acronyms

AIM referred to as the 'Institute'	The Australian Institute of Music Limited ABN: 89 003 261 112; PRV: 12050; CRICOS 00665C.
Academic	Learning, teaching, assessment and research related matters including (but not limited to) eligibility for entry to a program of study, course design and delivery, student participation and attainment, attrition, retention, progression, completion, grade distribution, curriculum content and awards in a course of study.
Academic Appeal	Refers to appeals (with grounds) against decisions relating to course assessment process (assessment marks), student progress (academic progression, suspension or exclusion), enrolment (return to study), or academic integrity and misconduct (cheating, plagiarism, breaching copyright).
Complaint	Refers to a declared dispute, formal accusation or documented expression of dissatisfaction with a decision, action, process or omission, which the complainant considers likely to be unjust, wrongful or discriminatory, to which within the control of the Institute and for which the Institute is asked to officially

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	respond - in this case regarding academic matters. Informal questions of concern requiring explanation and/or moderation are referred to as grievances (refer to Grievance below).
Complainant	Person making a complaint.
Conflict of Interest	Situation where the grievance or complaint directly concerns the person nominated to deal with the matter, in which case the matter must be referred to that person’s immediate supervisor. For example, grievances or complaints involving lecturers should be referred to the relevant Program Leader.
Discrimination	A discriminatory action is one which results in less favourable treatment of, or adverse action against, an individual or a group in comparison with another individual or group in the same or similar circumstances.
Duty of Care	Is an obligation under law for the Institute to take all reasonable precautions to safeguard individual and collective rights and academic prerogatives, giving priority to maintaining a professional and constructive learning and teaching environment for the majority of students and staff. Particular obligations and responsibilities apply to students under the age of 18 years. It should be noted that any abusive, disruptive, threatening or potentially threatening dispute, grievance or complaint that is of a serious nature (such as coercive, intimidating, aggressive, violent or unlawful behaviour) the Institute will take formal action to intercede and temporarily exclude the perpetrator in order to protect the interests of others in its care.
Grievance	Informal raising of an issue or expression of concern that questions an assumption, directive, act or decision, which the grievant considers may be inaccurate, arbitrary, inappropriate, unfair or misleading and which is within the discretion of the Institute to reconsider and amend. A grievance can have a similar (if less formal or acute) meaning to that of a complaint, in this case regarding academic matters (refer to complaint above).
Grievant	The person making a grievance.
Harassment	Any action that is uninvited or unwelcome that interfered with an individual’s right to work in a non-threatening environment.
Lecturer	The person teaching a particular unit of study.
Mediation	A process in which the parties to a grievance or complaint, (with the assistance of a mediator), identify the disputed issues, develop options, consider alternatives and endeavour to reach an outcome
Mediator	An independent person (that hasn’t been involved with either the grievant/complainant) who attempts to assist people involved in a dispute reach an outcome
Natural Justice	Right to a fair hearing (prior notice of hearing, opportunity to be heard, conduct of the hearing, right to independent external advisor, the decision and reasons for it)

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Program Leader	The person responsible for specific program delivery, who oversees course management and supervises lecturers and other staff teaching or working on units of study in that program.
Prospective Student	Any person seeking to enrol in the Institute.
Respondent	The person or entity against whom a grievance is brought.
Staff	Any person currently employed by the Institute.
Student	Any person currently enrolled by the Institute, noting that grievances or complaints from former students must be made within 30 days of their enrolment with the Institute ceased.

6. Approval and Review Details

Version	Date Approved by Leadership Group	Date Approval Academic Board	Date Approved by Board of Directors	Amendment Details
1.0		12/09/2019		New policy combining the <i>Academic Grievances and Complaints Policy and Procedure</i> and <i>Non-Academic Grievances and Complaints Policy and Procedure</i>

7. Flowchart – Showing process and decision points (pending)