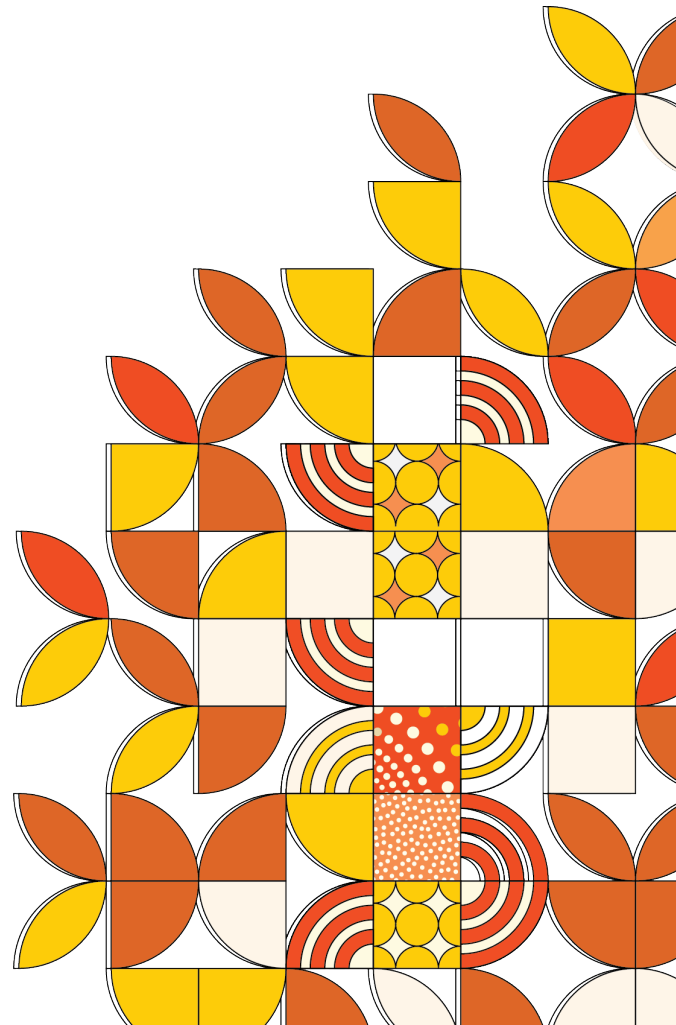


Student Complaints and Appeals Policy



SECTION 1

Purpose

1. The purpose of the Student Complaint and Appeals Policy is to ensure that the Institute of Health & Management (IHM) responds to all student complaints, grievances and appeals in a timely, appropriate, fair, and equitable manner.
2. This policy pertains to the management of IHM's student grievances by providing guidance on the procedure to be followed and ensuring that the concern raised is addressed using the appropriate channels to facilitate an equitable, confidential, and prompt resolution.

Scope

3. This policy applies to students enrolled in a course of study at IHM including:
 - a) All on shore international students, to whom the Education Services for International Students Act 2000 applies.
 - b) All students enrolled in an ongoing course of study that is delivered fully online or through any form of distance education that does not involve students' presence at a designated physical location.
 - c) All domestic students.
 - d) ALL ELICOS students.
4. Applies to staff, education agents, management and corporate governance representatives of IHM.
5. This policy covers issues arising from a student's involvement with IHM that relate to decisions based on academic or general misconduct, academic judgement, unlawful discrimination, sexual harassment, or bullying.
6. This policy also covers issues arising from a student's choice not to read and act upon notice or correspondence sent to the student's email account.
7. This policy is consistent with:
 - a) Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000.
 - b) National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Student 2018
 - c) Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021
 - d) ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students) Standards 2018

Definitions

8. Definitions for key terms are presented in the Glossary of Terms

Suite Documents

9. This Policy is linked to the following policy:
 - a) Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure
 - b) See also the Associated Information listed in the 'Related Internal Documents' in Section 3 below.

SECTION 2

Policy

10. Nature of complaints

10.1. Students may raise complaints in relation to academic, and non-academic matters and administrative decisions, including, but not limited to the:

- a) student academic progress, curriculum, quality of course delivery, academic achievement in a course and awards in a course.
- b) decisions by administrative staff affecting individuals or groups of students,
- c) administration of policies, procedures and IHM rules,
- d) standard of service received from IHM administration,
- e) access to resources or facilities,
- f) application and enrolment process, including marketing information,
- g) misconduct by an IHM staff member or student,
- h) concerns relating to course delivery and assessment, or
- i) complaint on the quality of teaching, learning resources, academic support, student amenities, discrimination, sexual harassment and/or other related matters.

11. Grounds for complaints

11.1. Grounds for complaints include, but are not limited to:

- a) a student being affected by a decision made without sufficient consideration of the facts, evidence, or circumstances,
- b) a penalty applied to the student being unduly harsh or inappropriate,
- c) a student being affected by improper or negligent conduct by another student or staff member, or
- d) a student being affected by unfair treatment, prejudice, or bias.
- e) A breach in the privacy of personal information.

12. How to raise a grievance or make a complaint

12.1. Informal Complaints

- a) Students are encouraged to raise any concerns that they may have informally by communicating to the Course Coordinator, Lecturer, Student Support officer or respective staff member. However, informal complaints are not mandatory and a student can proceed directly to making a formal complaint if they so wish.
- b) Students can raise an informal complaint through email, post, or speaking to the respective person. Alternatively, the student can also speak with one of the IHM administration and student support officers at (+61) 3 9455 4400, (+61) 1800 763 757 (Toll-free)
- c) If not satisfied with the proposed resolution of an informal academic complaint, students are encouraged to discuss their issue with the relevant Course Coordinator.
- d) In case of an unsatisfactory outcome from the informal complaint process, students have the provision to submit a formal complaint.

12.2. Formal Complaints

- a) Students can submit a formal complaint in writing, by email or by filling out the complaints form available in the IHM website and Student Hub.
- b) The paper copy of the complaints and appeals form is also available in all the campus locations.

Campus	Campus Address
North Melbourne Campus (Head Office)	Level 2, 187, Boundary Rd, North Melbourne, VIC 3051, Australia
Sydney Campus	Ground Floor, 1 Wentworth Street, Parramatta, NSW 2150, Australia
Perth Campus	Level 4, 12 St Georges Terrace, Perth, WA 6000, Australia

- c) Student can send the complaints to the email of respective staff or in general to enquiry@ihm.edu.au.
- d) IHM will thoroughly examine the complaint, and if necessary, arrange a meeting. The selection of the meeting panels will be based on the absence of any conflicts of interest, ensuring procedural fairness throughout the process.
- e) Should a meeting be deemed necessary, the student and their designated support person may receive an invitation to attend. A written decision will then be communicated to the student within 10 working days.

12.3. Appealing the Decisions

- a) Once the formal complaint process is completed and the outcome is formally informed, the complainant has the opportunity to appeal against the decision.
- b) It is recommended that complainants access the formal complaints and appeals stages of IHM's grievance process before lodging an external appeal, as external appeal applications will not be considered by the independent body if the internal stages of the grievance process have been followed.
- c) Within 10 working days, a student will be informed of their right to access an external appeals process. Additionally, contact details for this process will be provided in the event that the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal complaints and appeals process.
- d) Once a decision is made on an appeal, IHM will provide a notice of the outcome which will include reason for decision, identifying relevant external review avenues.

12.4. External complaint/appeals avenues

- a) At the completion of the internal resolution process, if a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint/appeal decision made by IHM, the student may wish to refer the matter to an external, independent mediator, such as:
 - I. The state Ombudsman
 - II. Federal Overseas Student Ombudsman
 - III. Australian Human Rights (Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, or discrimination Related matters)
 - IV. Australian Information Commission (Privacy-related matters)
 - V. Administrative Appeals Tribunal
 - VI. The Tertiary Education and Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). Note: complaints can be lodged to TEQSA if they relate to education quality issues and TEQSA will determine a response to the issues on a case by case basis.

13. The stages of the Grievance Procedure/Process

13.1. IHM follows a four-stage grievance and complaint resolution system with the informal complaint resolution, followed by formal complaint resolution and appeals process and the provision of external complaints and review.

13.2. The implementation steps of each stage are detailed in the Student Complaint, and Appeals procedure.

14. Complaints valued as a contribution to continuous improvement

- 14.1. In seeking excellence as an institution, IHM acknowledges the valuable contribution students make by raising complaints and grievances.
- 14.2. Where a problem or issue exists, it is only through awareness and acknowledgement that IHM may begin to address it.
- 14.3. Any problem that affects a student adversely may be detrimental to IHM's reputation and the ability to maintain IHM's goals as a provider of high-quality higher education.
- 14.4. Though IHM at every opportunity seeks to identify, pre-empt, and address such issues, complaints and grievances are regarded as an invaluable secondary means through which IHM receives feedback for continuous improvement.

15. Confidentiality

- 15.1. Students who raise complaints and grievances have the right to do so in the knowledge that confidentiality will be maintained. Information about matters raised may be passed on only with the prior consent of the complainant.
- 15.2. In cases where it is necessary to escalate the complaint beyond the person who initially addressed the complaint, the complainant will be informed. The student has the right to decide whether to proceed.
- 15.3. Where a complaint is escalated to a Committee or Board, it will be tabled as a confidential item, to be disclosed only to the members of that Committee or Board and will be heard and voted upon prior to the admission of observers or those deemed to have a conflict of interest.
- 15.4. If the complainant remains unidentified or submits a complaint anonymously, this complaint will be investigated and acted upon at IHM's discretion.

16. Ethical and fair treatment

- 16.1. Complainants must be treated equally, without discrimination based on factors such as race, gender, or sexuality.
- 16.2. The complaint or grievance raised will be resolved in a manner that is consistent, legal, and ethical.

17. Right of appeal

- 17.1. Where a complainant believes that the decision of a staff member or the IHM governance committee (responsible for complaints and appeals) is inappropriate or insufficient to address their complaint or grievance, they have the right to appeal, but not the obligation in accordance with clause 10.3 in this policy.

18. Timely resolution

- 18.1. IHM must consider complaints and grievances in a timely manner, the acknowledgement of receipt of complaint must be sent within five (5) working days and the outcome of the complaint/appeal must be sent to the student within twenty (20) working days from the initial response.
- 18.2. IHM will take all reasonable measures to ensure that complaints are resolved within a specified and achievable timeframe.
- 18.3. In the case of more serious complaints, this may include measures such as calling on board or committee members to bring forward the date of their next scheduled meeting or to attend an extraordinary

meeting.

19. Provision of information to Complainants

19.1. Complainants have the right to know what is being done to address their complaint and what progress has been made.

19.2. Complainants will be notified in writing:

- a) when their complaint has been received
- b) when a board or committee meets to discuss their complaint
- c) when a decision is announced regarding their complaint
- d) when any action is taken to resolve their complaint by IHM or its employees.

20. Alternate complaint resolution process

20.1. Where the complaint directly involves, or where there is a clear conflict of interest with the staff member who is a member of the panel, an alternative resolution process managed by a panel comprising other suitable members from IHM will be organised.

20.2. In such circumstances, the CEO has the authority to appoint an alternative member or panel.

21. Natural justice: no one can be a judge in their own case

21.1. A person directly implicated in a complaint or grievance will not be involved in any decision-making process regarding either the validity of the complaint or the action to be taken in response.

21.2. They may, however, be requested to explain or defend their actions, and/or provide evidence.

21.3. Where a committee or board includes one or more representatives from the student body, those students will refrain from voting if they have had any contact or association with the complainant or the respondent.

21.4. Where a member of a committee or board has a direct association with a respondent or person implicated in the complaint or grievance, they must also refrain from voting.

22. Natural justice: rights to a hearing

22.1. Those involved in making decisions regarding the resolution of a complaint must, wherever possible, hear and/or receive statements from both the complainant and any respondent who is being implicated.

22.2. Employees or governing bodies making decisions about a complaint must take all reasonable steps to inform themselves, provided that in doing so will not breach the complainant's right to confidentiality.

23. Dismissal of complaints

23.1. Any employee or governing body to whom a complaint is lodged may dismiss the complaint if they deem that:

- a) the complaint is vexatious
- b) the complaint is frivolous
- c) the complaint is trivial
- d) the complaint is false

23.2. The reasons for the dismissal of the complaint must be appropriately documented and communicated to the complainant, who has the right to appeal against the dismissal by escalating the complaint to the

next level.

23.3. Complainants who make repeated vexatious, false, or frivolous complaints may be subject to disciplinary action and such instances will be referred to the IHM Student Misconduct and Appeals Committee.

24. External complaint/appeals avenues

24.1. At the completion of the internal resolution process, if a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint/appeal decision made by IHM, the student may wish to refer the matter to an external, independent mediator, such as:

- a) The state Ombudsman
- b) Australian Human Rights (Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, or discrimination Related matters)
- c) Australian Information Commission (Privacy related matters)

25. Managing and Recording Complaints, Appeals and External Review Outcomes

25.1. IHM must keep a record of all complaints, appeals, external review procedures followed, recommendations and outcomes in the Knowledge Hub for 7 years.

25.2. All the documents used for decision-making, the communications sent out to the complainant and the outcomes will be recorded in the IHM student hub and can be accessible to the student from their student profile under the documents tab.

SECTION 3

Associated Information

<p>Related Internal Documents</p>	<p>Bullying and Harassment Policy Bullying and Harassment Procedure Complaints and Appeal Forms Complaints and Appeals Outcome Letter Complaints and Appeals Register Credit and Prior Learning Policy Credit and Prior Learning Procedure Fees, Charges and Refunds Procedure Fees, Charges and Refunds Policy International Students Transfer Request Assessment Policy International Students Transfer Request Assessment Procedure Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Procedure Student Assessment and Examination Policy Student Assessment and Examination Procedure Student Code of Conduct Student Code of Conduct Implementation Guidelines Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure Student Misconduct Policy Student Misconduct Procedure Student Academic Progression Policy Student Academic Progression Procedure</p>
<p>Related Legislation, Standards, Codes</p>	<p>ESOS (2020). ESOS legislative framework National Code of Practice (2018). National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018</p>

	National Code of Practice (2018): Standard 6: Student Support Services National Code of Practice (2018): Standard 8: Overseas student visa requirements National Code of Practice (2018): Standard 9: Deferring, suspending or cancelling the overseas student's enrolment. TEQSA (2020). Online learning good practice TEQSA (2018). Occasional Forum Series: Quality Assurance of Online Learning HESF (2021). Higher Education Standard Framework Domain 1: Student participation and attainment Standard 10: Complaints and appeals
Date Approved	24.11.2023
Date Endorsed	27.11.2023
Date of Effect	27.11.2023
Date of Next Review	01.11.2026
Approval Authority	Academic Board endorsed by Board of Directors
Responsibility for implementation	Appeals Committee
Document Custodian	Chair, Appeals Committee
IHM Doc ID	IHM-SCAP1-3.2

Change History

Version Control	Version 3.2	
Change Summary	Date	Short description of change, incl version number, changes, who considered, approved etc
	30/01/2021 Version 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy and Procedure are separated into two documents Added version number Added definitions Minor editorial changes
	26/07/2021 Version 3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor editorial changes and updated HESF reference to 2021 from 2015
	27/11/2023 Version 3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer into new template Definitions linked to Glossary of Terms Feedback from Wells Advisory was updated Minor editorial changes have been made