

Student Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy

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| Category | Policy |
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| Policy Contact | Director of Academic Programs |
| Approving Authority | Academic Governance Board |
| Endorsing Authority | Executive Capability Advisory Committee (ELCAC) |
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| Related Documents | <p>AFP Complaints and Feedback (afp.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/complaints-and-feedback/complaints)</p> <p>The National Student Ombudsman (nso.gov.au)</p> <p>AIPM Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Academic Integrity Policy and associated Procedure</p> <p>Academic Progression Policy and associated Procedure</p> <p>Admission, Enrolment and Credit Policy and associated Procedure</p> <p>Assessment Policy and associated Procedure</p> <p>Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy</p> <p>Records Management Policy and associated Procedure</p> <p>Research and Scholarship Policy and associated Procedure</p> <p>Student Charter</p> <p>Student Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy</p> <p>Student Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy and associated Procedure</p> <p>Student Misconduct Policy and associated Procedure</p> |

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Australian Institute of Police Management (AIPM) Student Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy:
 - 1.1.1 Establishes a standard for the AIPM complaint management processes.
 - 1.1.2 Details the grounds under which a Complainant may appeal a formal complaint process.
- 1.2 The objective of the formal complaint and appeal processes is to provide prompt and procedurally fair resolution of matters.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all students enrolled in higher education programs at the AIPM who have a grievance or complaint they wish to have resolved, or to appeal a previous decision made in accordance with AIPM policy, procedures and rules, and to AIPM staff involved in managing or responding to student grievances or appeals.
- 2.2 This policy will be used for managing student complaints relating to all aspects of a student's educational experience and learning environment at the AIPM.
- 2.3 Students may also lodge a complaint about the conduct or actions of a staff member or AIPM practices and procedures through the Australian Federal Police (AFP) complaints processes (for details and access to the online form refer <https://afp.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/complaints-and-feedback/complaints>), refer 5.9.

3. Policy Principles

- 3.1 The AIPM recognises an individual's right to raise an issue or concern regarding the conduct of the Institute's operations, services, staff, students and facilities and for this to be considered with courtesy and without fear of prejudicial treatment.
- 3.2 Grievances and complaints will be resolved expeditiously, with due regard to any legislative requirements.
- 3.3 Grievances and complaints will be addressed as close as possible to the source of student dissatisfaction. If possible, the grievance should be raised immediately with the person or persons involved.
- 3.4 It is expected that Complainants and Respondents involved in a complaint will cooperate in good faith.
- 3.5 Confidentiality will be maintained by all parties throughout the complaint or appeal process, as far as practical.
- 3.6 Students will have access to advocacy and support services through the grievance resolution process.
- 3.7 The AIPM will:
 - 3.7.1 Provide an effective process for individuals to express grievances and submit complaints.
 - 3.7.2 Ensure complaints are considered in a timely, impartial, fair and confidential process.
 - 3.7.3 Promote honest and transparent processes and outcomes.
 - 3.7.4 Outline the responsibilities and rights of individuals involved in the process.
- 3.8 Complaints relating to the following matters should be referred as outlined below:
 - 3.8.1 Academic misconduct matters will be referred to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and associated [Procedure](#).
 - 3.8.2 Academic progression matters will be referred to the [Academic Progression Policy](#) and associated [Procedure](#).

- 3.8.3 Matters relating to admission, enrolment and applications for credit will be referred to the [Admission, Enrolment and Credit Policy](#) and associated [Procedure](#).
- 3.8.4 Any complaints relating to marking of submitted work or overall grade for a unit will be referred to the [Assessment Policy](#) and associated [Procedure](#).
- 3.9 Sexual harassment and sexually-based assault reports will be referred to the [Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy](#) and associated [Procedure for students](#), and the relevant AFP and home jurisdiction policies.
- 3.10 In the cases referred to in 3.8 above, this Policy will only apply where the complaint is that the applicable policy or procedure has not been properly followed, a penalty has been imposed that was manifestly excessive, or a concern has arisen as a direct and demonstrable result of an interpersonal conflict or prejudicial relationship, and that all other appeals as set out in the respective policy have been exhausted.
- 3.11 Students who have submitted a complaint or lodged an appeal will be protected from any reprisal or disadvantage.

4. Informal Complaints

- 4.1 It is expected that students and staff are mutually responsible for resolving problems through discussion and/or in writing quickly at a local level, limiting the number of people involved to a minimum for the purpose of avoiding an escalation of the problem in scope and impact, and before lodging a formal complaint. This is appropriate in matters where the student feels comfortable with making a direct approach and does not wish to make a formal complaint.
- 4.2 Any staff member can receive an informal complaint and may work to resolve that complaint as promptly as possible. Students are welcome to speak to any trusted staff member or fellow students to seek advice regarding complaints. The Director of Academic Programs is to be advised of any complaints in order to ensure that managing the complaint 'informally' is appropriate or whether there is an obligation to formalise the complaint.
- 4.3 In resolving problems, interactions among students and staff are to be based on mutual respect, fairness and fulfilment of their obligations as specified in the [Student Charter](#).
- 4.4 AIPM staff receiving an informal complaint will keep a note of the meeting with the student raising the informal complaint.
- 4.5 In the case that the issue was not resolved to the student's satisfaction through informally making a complaint, the matter is to be taken to the Director of Academic Programs with consideration for making a formal complaint.

5. Formal Complaints

- 5.1 A formal complaint is a concern raised by a student who considers themselves wronged because of an action, decision or omission that relates to an aspect of their experience at the AIPM.
- 5.2 A formal complaint under this Policy may relate to, but is not limited to:
 - 5.2.1 The provision of inaccurate or misleading advice affecting academic progression.

- 5.2.2 The improper application of an AIPM policy or procedure.
- 5.2.3 A change in policy and/or procedure perceived to unfairly or unreasonably disadvantage students.
- 5.2.4 A negative impact caused by a third party.
- 5.3 Complainants must lodge their complaint through the AIPM Complaint Portal (website) for attention of the Director of Academic Programs, or if the complaint involves the Director of Academic Programs, to the Head of School (refer [Student Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Procedure, Section 4](#)).
- 5.4 The AIPM may decline to consider a formal complaint that is considered frivolous in nature or vexatious or is lodged outside the prescribed timeframe (refer [Student Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Procedure, Section 5](#)).
- 5.5 The Director of Academic Programs or Head of School will manage the complaint in accordance with the processes set out in [Section 5 of the Grievance, Complaints and Appeals Procedure](#).
- 5.6 If an action by the AIPM is required as a result of a formal complaint, that action will be initiated promptly.. If deemed appropriate by the Director of Academic Programs or the Head of School, the relevant home jurisdiction of the members involved may also be notified.
- 5.7 The privacy and confidentiality of parties to a formal complaint will be respected to the extent that is practical and appropriate. AIPM staff receiving and managing formal complaints will keep appropriate confidential records of the assessment of facts and outcome.
- 5.8 The complainant may withdraw a complaint at any time during the process. Notwithstanding this, the AIPM reserves the right to continue to investigate the complaint if required to do so to satisfy other requirements or to protect its own interests.
- 5.9 Students also have access to the AFP Complaints process through the AFP portal. A student may complain about the conduct or actions of individual AFP appointees (which includes the staff of AIPM) or AFP practices and procedures (by default includes practices and procedures in operation at the AIPM). Minor complaints will be dealt with by the AFP Workplace Issues and Complaints Resolution (WICR) team while serious misconduct and corruption matters are investigated by the AFP Professional Standards (PRS) team. In the exceptional case of serious corruption-related complaints, the PRS will refer the complaint to the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) for appropriate action. For further details and information on how to lodge a complaint refer <https://afp.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/complaints-and-feedback/complaints>.
- 5.10 Notwithstanding the appeal process outlined below, students may contact the National Student Ombudsman (NSO) to discuss complaints arising from their interactions with AIPM. The NSO can consider a range of issues including student safety and wellbeing, racism and racial vilification, discrimination, gender-based violence, course administration, and the fairness and effectiveness of student complaints processes. The NSO is a free, accessible and confidential service. See nso.gov.au for contact details or call 1300 395 775. Refer also to the [AIPM Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Procedure, Section 8 for more details about this service](#).

6. Appeals

- 6.1 A Complainant may appeal a formal complaint process in which they were involved.
- 6.2 A student may also appeal a process carried out under the provisions of other AIPM policies, beyond the Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- 6.3 Appeals relating to a decision or complaint concerning academic matters as set out in Clause 3.8 of this Policy will be heard by the Higher Education Assurance and Regulation Committee, refer [Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Procedure, Section 6](#).
- 6.4 All other complaints or grievances will be referred to either the Australian Federal Police Complaints process (refer 5.9 above), and / or will be considered by relevant members of the AIPM including governance committee members; refer [Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Procedure, Section 7](#).
- 6.5 If a Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of a formal complaint or appeal, options for further appeal include lodging a complaint to the NSO (see 5.10 above) , the AFP WICR team (see 5.9 above) or depending on the nature of the complaint, contacting another relevant external agency for advice or assistance.
- 6.6 The AIPM will not continue further consideration of matters where the process options have been exhausted or where a student has taken their grievance to an external agency.

Enrolment

- 6.7 A Complainant or Appellant will normally remain enrolled in their program of study, and have access to the facilities of the AIPM, whilst the complaint is being resolved or the appeal is being considered.
- 6.8 The AIPM will take all appropriate measures to ensure Complainants or Appellants do not suffer any victimisation or discrimination as a result of submitting a formal complaint or appeal.

7. Definitions

Appeal is an application made by a student to have a decision reviewed where that decision relates to a matter affecting their studies or life as a student.

Appellant is a student who is submitting an appeal against a decision made by the AIPM.

Complainant means a person making a complaint. For the purpose of this Policy they must be a student of the AIPM.

Complaint refers to an expression of concern or dissatisfaction in relation to the treatment of a student, the quality or delivery of a service, or the conduct of staff and students.

Grievance is the issue that led to a complaint, whether informal or formal. The term complaint is often used interchangeably with grievance.

NSO is the National Student Ombudsman, a free national complaints service for students.

Procedural fairness is a principle that is applied by the AIPM to ensure that decisions are made in accordance with the rule against bias and the hearing rule (i.e. a person is given an opportunity to

present their case with knowledge of any prejudicial material that may be taken into account by the decision-maker). It is the processes by which an outcome is reached and not the outcome itself.

Respondent is the person who responds to an informal or formal complaint made by a student.

Staff includes all those involved in the design and delivery of a program at AIPM, such as Visiting Fellows, affiliates and guest lecturers.

| REVISION HISTORY | | | | |
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| Version | Endorsed By | Approved By | Approval Date | Description of changes |
| 1.0 | ELCAC | AGB | 1.7.23 | New document. |
| 1.1 | N/R (Minor) | DAP on behalf of AGB | 31.10.23 | Minor revisions for clarification |
| 1.2 | N/R (minor) | DAP on behalf of AGB | 24.4.25 | Insertion of reference to the National Student Ombudsman service and the AFP Complaints process. |