

POLICY S3.5

STUDENT GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

The AIM Business School (ABS) aims to provide a fair, equitable and productive learning environment for all its students. This includes ensuring that students have access to processes which effectively resolve grievances and facilitate a seamless appeals process.

1.2 Purpose

This policy provides the principles which guide a consistent process for resolving a transparent and consistent process for resolving academic and non-academic grievances at ABS.

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to academic and non-academic complaints and appeals made by students of ABS and ABS's third party partners.

1.4 Scope Exceptions

This process does not apply to staff complaints and grievances. Refer to the Scenia Grievance Policy.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Students are responsible to comply with this policy and its procedure when making a complaint or appealing a decision.
2. Staff are responsible to comply with this policy and its procedure in managing complaints and appeals.
3. ABS's Quality and Compliance Risk Management Committee is responsible for preparing a quarterly report on the Grievances and Complaints Register to be reviewed by ABS's Academic Board and the Audit and Risk Committee. The Audit and Risk Committee reports grievances to the ABS's Corporate Board.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Principles

1. ABS welcomes all forms of feedback from students, who are openly invited to offer feedback on any matter at any time.
2. All students are entitled to access an efficient mechanism to raise and settle grievances. ABS is committed to identifying and responding to any issue or grievance relating to any aspect of its business operations, including education agents or related third parties. ABS has established a complaint and grievance resolution system to resolve:
 - academic appeals and grievances, including in relation to student progress, assessment, marking, facilitators, plagiarism, course materials, curriculum or awards in a course of study;
 - non-academic appeals and grievances, including in relation to personal information held and any other administrative matters including course fees; and
 - grievances between students and staff, and student/s between student/s.
3. Resolution of grievances in accordance with this policy is free of charge.
4. Grievance and review procedures are transparent to ensure that all students understand their rights and responsibilities.
5. At all times, ABS will respect the rights of all students to use any avenue available to them to address their grievance and/or appeal.
6. ABS responds to any grievance or appeal raised by students quickly and objectively in order to reach satisfactory outcomes for all parties.
7. Students and respondents involved in the grievance resolution process will not be disadvantaged, victimised or discriminated against as a result of lodging the grievance or at any stage of (or because of) using this policy and its procedure.
8. In relevant cases, the suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment will not take effect until the internal grievance process has been completed, unless the health or wellbeing of the student or others is likely to be at risk.
9. The student and respondent have the right to be represented by a third party (such as a family member, friend, counsellor, advocate, or support person) at all times.
10. ABS will provide students with the option for review by an external independent third party if internal appeal processes fail to resolve a grievance.
11. The Grievance Policy and Procedure is communicated
 - to academic and support staff via the Facilitator Handbook; and

- to students via the Learning Management System, Unit Guide and the ABS website.

3.2 Registers

1. ABS and third-parties maintain a Grievances and Complaints Register that records details of all grievances and complaints, actions taken and their resolution (including any appeals). The Grievances and Complaints Register records both academic and non-academic student grievances and complaints.

3.3 Confidentiality and Records

1. The grievances and complaints recorded on the Grievances and Complaints Register are kept for seven (7) years on a strictly confidential basis, including a statement of the outcome and reasons for the outcome. Parties to the grievances are allowed supervised access to the Grievances and Complaints Register and the Remissions Register on request.
2. Management of and access to any grievance records (including the Grievances and Complaints Register) is restricted to the Executive Dean, ABS, Student Support Team Leaders and Executive Director, ABS (as well as the Student Complaints and Grievances Panel, the ABS Academic Board and the ABS Quality and Compliance Risk Management Committee).
3. All parties who are involved with grievances and their resolution shall at all times treat the grievance as confidential and shall not reveal the names of any other party who is the subject of or involved in the grievance or its resolution, without express permission.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- **Appeal** - A formal application in writing to a higher authoritative figure or court to have a decision reversed.
- **Complaint** - A formal statement made in writing that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable.
- **Grievance** - An official statement of a complaint or appeal over something believed to be wrong or unfair.
- **Student**- Refers to domestic and international ABS students.

5.0 REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION

- Grievance Form
- Grievance and Complaints Register
- Deferral, Withdrawal and Refund Policy

- Student Grievances and Complaints Procedure
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS Act) 2000
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

6.0 POLICY OWNERSHIP

Policy Owner	Executive Director, ABS
Status	Reviewed on November 2022
Approval Authority	ABS Academic Board
Date of Approval	22/06/2021
Effective Date	11 January 2023
Implementation Owner	Executive Dean, ABS
Maintenance Owner	Head of Compliance
Review Due	November 2025
Content Enquiries	Sabina Cerimagic - Executive Dean - ABS Email: sabina.cerimagic@aimbusinessschool.edu.au

7.0 AMENDMENTS

Version	Amendment Approval (Date)	Amendment Made By (Position)	Amendment Details
S3.0	14 June 2017	Head of Compliance, Partners	Initial document - first draft
S3.1	21 June 2017	Head of Compliance, Partners	Changes made to reflect ABS internal review
S3.2	29 June 2017	Head of Compliance, Partners	Updated to reflect Dean, ABS review
S3.3	22 June 2021	Academic Board	Policy and procedure separated. Title Change to Student Grievances and Complaints.
S3.4	06 December 2022	Head of Compliance	Updates to Principles, Confidentiality and Records, and References. Update to staff titles
S3.5	10 March 2023	Head of Compliance	Minor administrative change: update to staffing titles.