

1 POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

To ensure that all academic grievances are managed in a fair and objective manner, with the desired outcome of reaching a mutually acceptable solution in the shortest possible timeframe.

All students of ICHM as well as those seeking to enrol in a course of the college, are entitled to access the grievance procedures set out in this policy for matters related to student progress, attendance records, assessment, curriculum, timetabling, and awards in a course of study. This policy is published on the College website.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all ICHM students and prospective students, regardless of location or study mode.

3 DEFINITIONS

Informal grievance - An initial complaint that is often verbal between the complainant and respondent, generally minor in nature, and does not escalate to a formal grievance (see Informal Internal Process below).

Formal grievance - A formal complaint submitted in writing requiring resolution (see Formal Internal Process below).

Complainant - Person making the complaint.

Respondent - Person against whom the complaint is made.

Support person - A person nominated by the student to provide support and/or represent the student during the process. Example: a friend or a member of the family. This **may not** include legal counsel.

Academic grievance - Any expression of dissatisfaction with an academic aspect of a student's experience with ICHM.

Examples of academic grievances are listed below, but not limited to:

- Academic courses (content or structure)
- Subject enrolment, delivery, learning environment, outcomes, access to resources
- Academic staff members
- Assessment (including provisional results)
- Participation/Attendance
- Students' academic course progression

4 POLICY DETAILS

All complaints are taken seriously and are treated in confidence.

The complainant(s) and respondent(s) are to be informed of the College's procedure and offered the option of having a support person present or accessing counselling.

Complaints may be informal or formal. The difference between the two is an informal complaint is unwritten and often unofficial, whereby a formal complaint is in writing.

Where possible, complaints should be discussed at an informal level between the persons involved. However, if this is impracticable and/or the complainant is dissatisfied with this outcome, then complainants have the right to follow the formal complaint resolution process. Please note that there are no fees associated with the internal and external processes.

Internal Mechanisms

Informal Internal Process

- The first stage aims to provide an opportunity for grievances to be resolved promptly and in an informal way, involving as few people as possible, and preventing the grievance from escalating in scope and impact. All requests to resolve an academic grievance should be raised informally with the staff member concerned, either in writing or in person, and will be addressed within 5 working days. If the student is dissatisfied with the informal resolution outcome, they may lodge a formal grievance.

Formal Internal Process

- **First stage of the formal process:**
If the academic grievance cannot be resolved informally, or if the complainant is dissatisfied with the initial decision regarding the matter, they may submit a formal review of their grievance within 10 working days of the grievance occurrence, by completing an academic grievances form. The completed form must include:
 - A clear statement of the academic grievance
 - A summary of the issues relating to the academic grievance
 - Supporting documents
 - Specify the resolution the complainant is seeking

This will be reviewed and decided by:

- The Academic Director (or delegate)

The complainant will be notified within 10 working days of their formal grievance being lodged. The complainant will be informed in writing of the outcome, including full details of the reason for the decision, and advised of any delays that may occur during the process.

- **Second stage of the formal process:**
A student may request a review of the outcome of their formal grievance within 10 working days of receiving the written response if they believe that the outcome is unfair or incorrect on one of the following grounds:
 - The process was not followed correctly and/or the policy was incorrectly applied, or
 - New evidence is available which was not available to the original decision maker.Appeals on the ground that the complainant disagrees with the outcome will not be heard.

A complainant can request a review of the decision by a completed review form to the Academic Committee, including the following:

- The decision and circumstances the student is requesting be reviewed, and
- An overview of how the policies and procedures have not been followed, and/or
- The student's desired outcome.

The Chair of the Academic Committee will review the appeal and make a determination if it meets the requirements to proceed to the Academic Committee:

The appeal will be reviewed and decided by:

- The Academic Committee

Following submission of the grievance, the Chair of the Academic Committee will acknowledge receipt of the grievance within 5 working days and the grievance will be addressed by the Academic Committee as soon as practicable. The student will be invited to the Academic Committee meeting to present their case and may bring a support person (see Further Information below); however, the student is not compelled to attend the

meeting. Students will be informed in writing of the outcome within 10 days of the grievance being lodged, including full details of the reason for the decision, and advised of any delays that may occur during the process.

External Independent Review

If not satisfied with the decision of the Academic Committee, the complainant may request that the matter be dealt with through an External Visitor appointed for that purpose within 10 working days of receipt of the Academic Committee's decision. The Chair of the Academic Committee will provide the contact details of the External Visitor with the written response to the student. The Visitor will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days and provide a written statement of the outcome within 21 days of receipt of the complaint.

*Note – Where a student has chosen not to access the Second stage of the formal process, nor seek an External independent review within the timeframes outlined above, the matter will be deemed closed and no further action is required.

Additional External Mechanisms

In addition to the aforementioned information and informal/formal processes, all students have the right to refer complaints to other bodies. Please note that complainants are generally expected to have exhausted all avenues of appeal provided by ICHM before they submit a complaint to one of the bodies outlined below:

- South Australian Skills Commission
<https://skillscommission.sa.gov.au/>
- Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman
<https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/complaints/how-to-make-a-complaint>
- Office of the State Ombudsman of South Australia
<http://www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au>
- Equal Opportunity Commission of South Australia
<http://www.eoc.sa.gov.au>
- Australian Human Rights Commission
<http://www.hreoc.gov.au>
- TEQSA
<https://www.teqsa.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/raising-complaint-or-concern>

In addition to the above, international students may also contact:

- ESOS Enquiry Form
The purpose of the **ESOS enquiry form** is to provide general advice and assistance to persons on provider obligations and students' rights pertaining to the ESOS legislative framework administered by the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIISRTE). The Department does not give legal advice.
<https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Education-Services-for-Overseas-Students-ESOS-Legislative-Framework/Pages/ESOSEnquiry.aspx>

Further information

The complainant and respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against in any procedures set out in this policy and is entitled to remain enrolled in their course of study and attend classes.

These policies are communicated to academic and support staff. The Academic Director is responsible for the training of academic and support staff in the application of the policy.

The complainant and/or respondent have the right to be represented by a third person (such as a family member, friend, counselor or other professional support person) if they so desire. This person should not be a legal practitioner. If a complainant wishes to be represented by a third person, 24 hours' notice should be given.

At all stages of the process, reasons and a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the procedures must be given if so, requested by the complainant and/or respondent.

Records of all grievances and applications for review of decisions and outcomes must be kept for a period of 5 years. Such records will be strictly confidential and kept in a separate file (not kept in the student or staff file). The Academic Director is responsible to maintain the record of grievances and appeals to the Visitor, and they will be filed with restricted access by the Academic Director for 5 years. Parties to the complaint will be allowed supervised access to these records upon formal request.

Students of the College are entitled to access and use the grievance procedures set out in this policy, regardless of the location of the campus of the College at which the grievance has arisen, the student's place of residence or the mode in which they study.

5 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Not applicable.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES

The Academic Director is the policy owner and any changes to this policy must be approved by the Academic Board.

7 REVIEW

The Academic Director is responsible for the review of this policy on a 3-yearly basis.

Accountability and review			
Delegate	Academic Director	Ref: ICHM Delegations Register	
Approval body	Academic Board		
Approval date	20231121		
Review date	3 years from last review 20261121		
Supporting information			
Related legislation	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cwth)		
Sector benchmarking			
Supporting documents			
Related documents			
Superseded documents			
Type and location			
Policy type <select row and shade>	Corporate Governance Academic Governance Academic Management Operational Management		
Location/access <select row and shade>	Website Student access Staff access Overseas		
Amendments			
Version No.	Amendment type	Amendment Date	Key changes
1.0	New Doc	19/01/2011	This policy was approved by the College Council on 30 th June 2007. Change were made on 19 January 2011 following advice from DEEWR.
1.1	Minor	28/11/2011	New version based on previous.
2.0	Major	06/11/2012	Addition of changes to the policy section.
3.0	Major	07/01/2014	Academic and Non-academic Grievance policies combined into one Grievance policy following recommendations by TEQSA in letter of 19/12/2013.
4.0	Major	07/01/2014	Addition of reference to Overseas Students Ombudsman as recommended by TEQSA in letter of 19/12/2013.
5.0	Major	Jan 2017	Non-academic policy created requiring change to title of Grievance policy.
6.0	Major	Oct 2019	Removed reference to the Office of the Training Advocate.
7.0	Major	Nov 2019	Review of policy as part of cyclical review and alignment with National Code 2018.
8.0	Major	March 2020	Change to ensure College Council is the Approval Authority.
8.1	Minor	September 2020	Additional clarifications for student attendance at Academic Committee Meetings and non-access to Second Stage and External Review

8.2	Minor	15/03/2022	Change of position titles, update to broader business name
8.3	Minor	02/05/2023	Update to position titles of Program Director Academic and Chief Executive Officer
9.0	Major	21/11/2023	Change to informal and formal grievance processes to streamline and improve the student experience. Academic Committee removed from first formal stage of the process. Updates to items that are considered as academic grievances. Updates to turnaround times.

9 APPENDICES

Stage	Person responsible for decision	Time limit for student to proceed	Time limit for ICHM to respond (time measured from receipt from grievance)
Informal Grievance	Staff member concerned	As soon as practicable	Within 5 working days of the date of the grievance occurrence.
Formal Grievance – Stage 1	Academic Director or Delegate	Within 10 working days of the date of the grievance occurrence.	Within 10 working days of their stage 1 formal grievance being lodged.
Formal Grievance – Stage 2	Academic Committee	Within 10 working days of notification of the decision from stage 1.	Within 10 working days of the stage 2 formal grievance being lodged.
External Independent Review	External Visitor	Within 10 working days of notification of the decision from stage 2.	Within 21 working days of the external independent review being lodged.