



GRIEVANCE AND ASSESSMENT APPEALS POLICY

Overview

This policy encompasses:

- a) academic matters from students;
- b) non-academic matters from students; and
- c) non-academic matters from persons seeking to enrol with AIM in a course or unit of study

Academic matters include matters related to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course.

Non-academic matters include complaints in relation to personal information that is held in relation to the student. Non-academic matters come from decisions made by AIM and can cover issues such as harassment, vilification, discrimination, financial matters, fines and payments, application procedures, exclusions from events and facilities.

This policy applies to all AIM interactions regardless of the location at which the grievance has arisen, the person's place of residence or mode of study. It covers current students as well as those people who are seeking to enrol with AIM.

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Policy

The Australian Institute of Management (AIM) welcomes and respects all forms of feedback as it is central to the notion and maintenance of an effective continuous improvement regime. AIM employees, consultants, students, candidates and clients are openly invited to offer feedback on any matter, at any time. AIM has allocated specific employees to handle a compliment, an issue, a concern or a complaint should it not be resolved in the first instance.

To achieve this, AIM will respond to any grievances and appeals raised by students, candidates, employees, facilitators, students, and any other stakeholders quickly and objectively regardless of the location of the training site, the place of residence of the complainant or the mode of study.

The most important elements to consider during the application of this policy are:

- **Timely** – complaints and grievances should be dealt with as soon as they are received
- **Sensitive** – the feelings and perspectives of all involved are respected throughout the process
- **Fair and impartial** – all parties must be afforded substantive and procedural fairness in any investigation. Both sides of the story must be heard. An external investigator can be contracted to undertake the investigation to ensure a fair process where required. The complainant and respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against at any stage of this procedure.
- **Privacy and record keeping** – only parties directly involved in the investigation of the complaint or those involved in making decisions about outcomes should have access to information about the grievance
- **Supportive** - If so desired, the aggrieved party may be accompanied and assisted by a third party during any stage of the grievance process
- **Accessible** – All internal stages of the grievance process can be accessed without any financial expense. Any costs for external appeals will be of a reasonable amount as determined by the third party. Options of third parties are given to ensure equal access.
- **Continuous improvement** – AIM is always seeking opportunities to improve their services to better meet the needs of clients. This may include but is not limited to reviewing policies, procedures or documentation to ensure clarity, efficiency and fairness.

Process for Non-Academic Matters

Stage 1 – Informal Notification

Where the aggrieved party raises a complaint or grievance directly with an AIM employee or consultant, it is expected that the employee or consultant make every effort (within their role jurisdiction) to resolve the issue directly and in a timely manner.

The majority of matters or issues of concern are resolved with open dialogue at this stage. Where the complainant is satisfied at this stage, the appropriate steps will be taken to implement the action that will produce the agreed outcome.

Where the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, or where the matter concerned is beyond the jurisdiction of the employee or consultant it is appropriate for the grievance to be escalated.

Stage 2 – Written Notification and Internal Review

The aggrieved party is encouraged to put their grievance in writing using a Feedback Report available at www.aimqld.com.au. Upon receipt of this form, all AIM employees and consultants will welcome the opportunity to respond to the matter and commence the resolution process by seeking an immediate response from the appropriate manager.

The manager will commence an investigation of the matter and identify the expected outcome of the aggrieved party. The investigation will conclude with a recommended course of action that specifically addresses the grievance within five (5) working days of receipt of the complaint.

If the aggrieved party is satisfied with the proposed outcome, appropriate steps need to be taken to implement that outcome. Depending on the type of action to be taken, the outcome will be completed to the complainant's and AIM's satisfaction within five (5) working days of the resolution being determined or as agreed to between both parties.

A written statement documenting the outcome of the complaint including the details of the reasons for the outcome will be provided to the complainant and kept on record for continuous improvement processes. Documented records are maintained for a minimum of five (5) years.

Stage 3 – Escalated Review

If the aggrieved party is dissatisfied with the proposed outcome, they have the right, in the first instance, to take their grievance to the Executive General Manager, who will review the evidence and the outcome and confirm or overturn the original decision.

Stage 4 – External Dispute Resolution

If the matter remains unresolved after being addressed by both the appropriate Manager and the Executive General Manager, the complainant may request that the matter be dealt with through an external dispute resolution process. This stage of the process will be dealt with in a reasonable period of time depending on all parties, normally 28 days. There may be nominal cost to the applicant for this service depending on their choice of third party.

The Executive General Manager will provide the complainant with information about the referral of the matter to an external agencies for resolution:

The Dispute Resolution Branch,
Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney General.
Level 13 of the Central court building,
170 North Quay, Brisbane
(07) 3239 6269

Upon resolution, appropriate steps need to be taken to implement the decided and agreed outcome. Depending on the type of action to be taken, the outcome will be completed to the complainants and AIM's satisfaction within five (5) working days of the resolution being determined or as agreed to between both parties.

A written statement documenting the outcome of the complaint, including the details of the reasons for the outcome will be provided to the complainant and kept on record for continuous improvement processes. Documented records are maintained for a minimum period of five (5) years.

Process for VET Academic Matters

Assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgements on a student's competency. It is the means by which progress or achievement in one or more units of competency is evaluated. Assessment is a key part of the teaching and learning environment. AIM assessment is criteria based rather than norm referenced. This means that clear expectations are set out on knowledge, skill or behavioural performance that will be taken to reflect a competent level of achievement.

When assessment tasks are marked and returned to students (except for formal final examinations), feedback to the student must be clear and readable. Such feedback must be substantive and focused solely on the academic content of the task. Comments of a pejorative or derogatory nature shall not be made under any circumstances. The feedback should provide guidance and direction that can be utilised by the student in future assessment tasks.

Assessment Appeals Process

Stage 1 – Informal Notification

Students dissatisfied with an assessment result may request further information to clarify feedback given. Students will be given access to the Assessor for detailed coaching on the improvements required to reach a competent result.

Stage 2 – Written Notification and Internal Review by an Impartial Senior Officer

Students may request that an assessment be re-assessed, in its original form, in circumstances where the student presents a strong case arguing that the original assessment decision was unfair or inconsistent. This request must be directly addressed to

the Assessment Coordinator, by the student within 10 working days of receipt of the original marked assessment.

It will be the Assessment Coordinator's responsibility to arrange for the re-marking to be done by another Assessor. Only a single re-mark will be permitted, and the result of the re-mark will be recorded as the final mark for that assessment task, irrespective of its position relative to the original mark.

Stage 3 – Escalated Review

If the student remains dissatisfied with the review outcome, they have the right, in the first instance, to take their grievance to the Executive General Manager, who will investigate the process conducted so far and will either agree with the internal review outcome or request further action. Further action may include a third Assessors review.

Stage 4 – External Dispute Resolution

The Executive General Manager will provide the complainant with information about the referral of the matter to external agencies such as:

Queensland Ombudsman
Level 17, 53 Albert Street
Brisbane QLD 4000
GPO Box 3314, Brisbane QLD 4001
07 3005 7000
1800 068 908

NSW Ombudsman:
Level 24, 580 George Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: 02 9286 1000
1800 451 524

Victorian Ombudsman
Level 1 North Tower
459 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
DX210174 Melbourne
03 9613 6222
1800 806 314 (Regional)

Ombudsman SA
Level 5 East Wing
50 Grenfell Street
Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone: (08) 8226 8699
1800 182 150 (outside metro SA only)

Upon resolution, appropriate steps need to be taken to implement the decided and agreed outcome. Depending on the type of action to be taken, the outcome will be completed to the complainants and AIM's satisfaction within five (5) working days of the resolution being determined or as agreed to between both parties.

A written statement documenting the outcome of the complaint and of any appeals, including the details of the reasons for the outcome will be provided to the complainant and kept on record for continuous improvement processes. Documented records are maintained for a minimum period of five (5) years.

Confidentiality

Records of grievances and their outcomes and the Complaints Register will be kept for a minimum period of five (5) years in strictly confidential files. Parties to the complaint will be allowed supervised access to these records upon request, while ensuring that the records are treated as confidential.

Management of, and access to, any grievance records (including the complaints register) will be restricted as per privacy guidelines.

All parties, subject to the grievance process, shall at all times treat grievances and appeals as confidential and shall not reveal the names of complainants making a grievance or where applicable those referred to in the grievance to any third party without the express permission of those concerned.

The complainant and respondent have the right to be represented by a third person (such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional support person) at any stage throughout this process.

Publication

Access to this policy is made available free of charge. This policy will be publicly available to students on AIM's website. AIM will also advise students about where this policy may be obtained as part of their enrolment information.

If a person or body requests a copy of this policy in a particular form, AIM will take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to give the person or body a copy in that form.

Reference Documents

Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cwlth) (Clause 19 of Schedule 1A)

VET Guidelines (Section 5.3)

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) Standards for Continuing Registration (SNR 16.7)

Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth)