

Student Grievance Policy and Procedure

Approving body	Governing Board (GB)
Date approved	24 Apr 2025
Date of effect	Date of operation commencement
Next scheduled review	Two years from when policy commences
Policy owner	Chief Executive Officer
Policy contact	Chief Executive Officer
Related Documents	<p>Student Grievance and Appeals Register</p> <p>Student Appeals Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Academic Progression and Student at Risk Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Assessment Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Course Monitoring and Review Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Student Enrolment and Completion Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Admission Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Student Code of Conduct</p>
Related Legislative and Regulatory Instruments	<p>HESF Section 2.4</p> <p>HESF Section 6.2</p> <p>HESF Standard 6.3.2</p> <p>HESF Standard 7.2.2</p> <p>HESF Standard 7.3.3</p> <p><i>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth)</i></p> <p><i>National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth)</i></p> <p><i>Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2001 (Cth)</i></p>

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to outline the principles and processes for handling student grievances at **Zenith Innovation Institute (Zenith / the Institute)**.

Scope

2. This Policy and Procedure applies to:
 - (a) prospective students of the Institute
 - (b) currently enrolled students and
 - (c) graduates of the Institute whose enrolment ended less than six months before the grievance was lodged.
3. The grievance process allows students to raise concerns about quality, experiences at the Institute, or issues in relation to standards, behaviour or processes. The Institute provides for students to lodge their grievances or to complain concerning specific issues under respective policies listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 | Grievance matters: associated processes and policies

Issue	Policy and Procedure
Academic progress	Academic Progression and Students at Risk Policy and Procedure
Academic integrity	Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure
Assessment	Assessment Review Policy and Procedure
Sexual assault or harassment	Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy and Procedure
Student refunds	Student Refund Policy and Procedure
Student Misconduct	Student Misconduct Policy and Procedure
Decisions made by the Institute arising from other student-related policies	Student Appeals Policy and Procedure
Outcomes of grievances	Student Appeals Policy and Procedure

Policy

Principles

4. This Policy and Procedure recognises that effective grievance management:
 - (a) contributes to an improved educational and support environment for students and
 - (b) assists the Institute to improve the student experience by identifying areas of risk and areas for improvement.

5. Grievance management at the Institute is guided by the following principles:
 - (a) consistency
 - (b) ethical and equitable practices
 - (c) resolution and de-escalation at the initial level where possible
 - (d) respect for all parties
 - (e) due process and procedural fairness
 - (f) transparency and
 - (g) timely and effective processes.
6. the Institute aims to ensure that:
 - (a) **Culture:** a culture is developed that views grievances as an opportunity to improve policy, process and procedure
 - (b) **Student-focussed:** the grievance-handling system is student-focussed and helps the Institute to prevent grievances from recurring
 - (c) **Efficient and effective:** grievances are resolved promptly, objectively, and with sensitivity and confidentiality
 - (d) **Fair:** the views of complainant and respondent are respected and that parties to a grievance are not discriminated against nor victimised and
 - (e) **Equal:** responses to grievances are consistent.
7. At all stages of grievance handling the Institute will provide:
 - (a) **Opportunity to present:** All parties to a grievance has opportunity to formally present and to be accompanied and assisted by a support person, if required by the student, at any relevant meetings
 - (b) **Explanation:** a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the process will be provided to all parties
 - (c) **Action:** where the resolution of a grievance results in a decision that supports the complainant, the Institute will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the complainant of the outcome and
 - (d) **No financial disadvantage:** There is no cost for using the Institute's grievance processes.
8. Access and Awareness:
 - (a) This Policy and Procedure will be made available to students and prospective students through publication in the Student Handbook and on the Institute's website. This policy will be informed / communicated to students during orientation.
 - (b) This Policy and Procedure will form part of the staff induction process and included in the Staff Handbook.

Procedure

9. Students are encouraged to seek assistance and support from Student Services before taking action in relation to a grievance.
10. Grievances may be resolved:
 - (a) **Informally:** informal local discussion and resolution

- (b) **Formally:** submission of a formal grievance and
 - (c) **Appeals:** through appeals, where needed.
11. There are considered in a step-by step process. Appendix 1 provides a representation of the Student Grievance process.

Step 1 | Informal level resolution

12. Where appropriate and safe to do so, complainants are encouraged to attempt to resolve matters informally, at the initial level if it is safe to do so. In other words, students are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) concerned.
13. Resolution of grievances related to any of the following matters should not be attempted informally:
- (a) Violence, harm or safety concerns
 - (b) fraud, corruption or malpractice and
 - (c) discrimination, vilification or victimisation.
14. Students should identify causes and desired outcomes before they enter into discussions with the person concerned.
15. When a staff member becomes aware of a student grievance, they should endeavour to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of all parties wherever possible.
16. In the process of resolving a grievance, the staff member may consult more senior staff members for advice and may direct the student to appropriate support services where required.

Step 2 | Formal grievances

17. Formal grievances may be lodged when the issue is not suitable for informal resolution or where an attempt at informal resolution has been unsatisfactory or unresolved.
18. Formal grievances are submitted in writing to the Academic Dean. Receipt of the grievance will be acknowledged within five (5) working days and all reasonable measures will be taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
19. The Academic Dean or nominee will determine the nature of the grievance. Where a grievance is particularly complex, serious or sensitive the Academic Dean may refer the grievance to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for action.

Minor grievances

20. Where a grievance is determined as minor, the Academic Dean or nominee will seek to clarify the outcome that the complainant hopes to achieve and may also seek a response from any respondent implicated.
21. Such clarification may be sought by written or verbal request or by a face-to-face interview with the complainant or respondent. During face-to-face interactions, the complainant or respondent may ask another person to accompany them.
22. The Academic Dean will seek to resolve the grievance through appropriate actions or recommendations to senior staff as appropriate.
23. Within ten (10) working days of a determination the Academic Dean will provide a letter to the complainant outlining:
- (a) the process undertaken
 - (b) the decision/s and the reason/s and

- (c) appeal rights.

Serious or complex complaints

- 24. For serious, complex or sensitive grievances the CEO will appoint an independent person to investigate the circumstances of the grievance and prepare a report detailing findings and recommendations for resolution. An independent person may include a senior manager with no connection to the complaint/ grievance or relationship to the complainant.
- 25. Upon receipt of the report from the senior manager or independent person, the CEO will, within ten (10) working days:
 - (a) examine the report to ensure the findings and recommendations from the investigation are relevant to the student's grievance, and are based on evidence
 - (b) determine the recommendations to be implemented and
 - (c) provide a letter to the complainant:
 - (i) outlining the process undertaken
 - (ii) the decision/s and the reason/s and
 - (iii) appeal rights.

Step 3 | Appeals

- 26. An internal and external appeals processes is provided for instances where students are not satisfied with a grievance outcome. The appeals process is outlined in the *Student Appeals Policy and Procedure*. Student should be aware appeals need to be lodged within twenty (20) days.
- 27. Where a student chooses to access any provisions under this Policy and Procedure, the Institute will in most cases maintain the student's enrolment while the grievance is ongoing. During this whole grievance process, the enrolment of the complainant and respondent will be maintained and students afforded student support under the Student Support Framework.
- 28. For more information on the enrolment status of an international student in relation to appeals, refer to the Institute's *Student Enrolment and Completion Policy and Procedure*.
- 29. Appendix 2 of this document provides a representation of the Student Appeals process.

Outcomes and further action

- 30. Where the outcome of any grievance process supports the student, the Institute will implement the decision or corrective action as soon as possible and advise students accordingly.
- 31. The procedures set out in this document do not replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Nothing in this Policy and Procedure limits the rights of individuals to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection laws. Also, these procedures do not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

Record keeping and confidentiality

- 32. A written record of all grievances and outcomes handled under this policy and procedure shall be maintained for a period of at least five (5) years in the *Student Grievance and Appeals Register*. All parties may seek appropriate access to these records upon written request to the Academic Dean.

33. All records relating to grievances will be treated as confidential and are covered by the Institute's *Personal Information and Privacy Policy and Procedure*.

Reporting

34. The Academic Dean will prepare a report annually to the Governing Board (GB). This report will analyse data from and make service and operational improvement recommendations based on the *Student Grievance and Appeals Register*.
35. The GB will consider and approve recommendations, as appropriate, and allocate resources and responsibility for implementation.

Responsibilities

36. The Institute will seek to achieve ongoing improvement and learning that acts on grievances, identifies patterns and ensures governance oversight.
37. The Student Service Manager is responsible for:
- acknowledging receipt of formal grievances lodged by students
 - establishing the complexity of student grievances and referring matters to relevant personnel for further consideration
 - resolving minor grievances
 - maintaining a record of all grievances in the *Student Grievance and Appeals Register* and
 - preparing an annual Grievance and Appeals Report.
38. The CEO is responsible for resolving serious or complex complaints, and ensuring any recommendations arising are implemented.
39. The GB is responsible for ensuring that any systemic issues arising from observed trends in grievances and appeals are addressed and monitored.

Definitions

40. For the purposes of this Policy and Procedure:

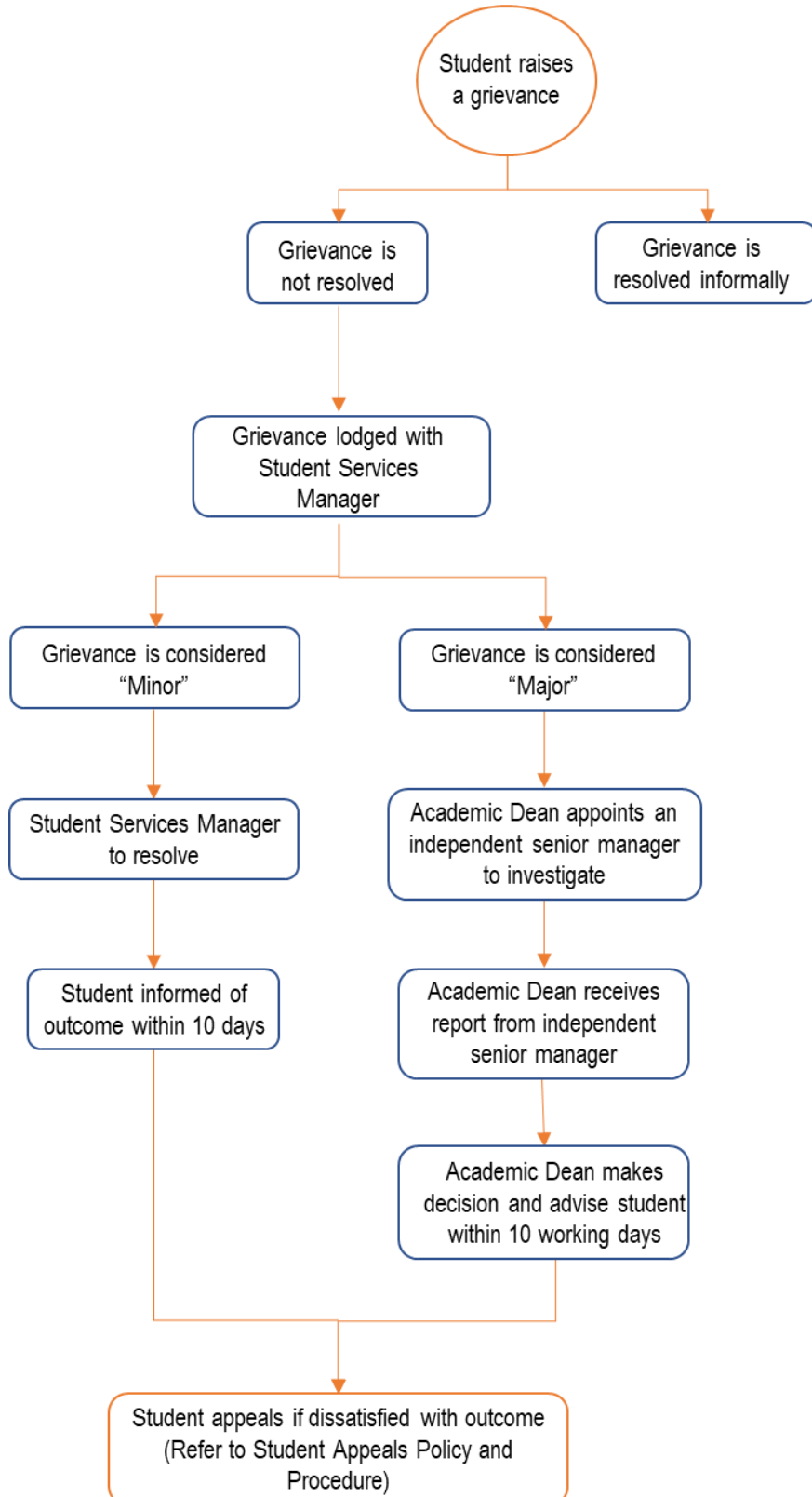
Term	Definition
Appeal	an action taken when students wish to challenge the outcome of a grievance or a decision made by the Institute in defined circumstances
Complainant	the student who is taking action in relation to a grievance under this Policy
Grievance	a student's expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of the Institute's services and activities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the enrolment, induction/orientation process the quality of education provided handling of personal information and access to personal records attitude and behaviour of academic or administrative staff or



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Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">the way someone has been treated including victimisation or bullying, discrimination, (non-sexual) harassment, vilification and any matter that arises from a perception of unfair or inappropriate treatment.
Respondent	a person against whom a grievance has been lodged, formal or informal.

Flow Chart of Student Grievance Process Overview



Version control

Version	Changes	Approval Body	Approval Date
1.0	New Policy	Governing Board (GB)	
1.1	Flowchart added	Governing Board	
1.2	<p>Point 3 replaced “Institute processes that handle” with “The Institute provides for students to lodge their grievances or to complain concerning”</p> <p>Under Sexual Assault or harassment replaced “Sexual Harm Prevention and Response Policy and Procedure” with “Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy and Procedure”</p> <p>Point 4 a) added “and support”</p> <p>Point 5 c) added “and de-escalation” and replaced “local” with “initial”</p> <p>Point 5 e) added “due process and”</p> <p>Point 7 a) added “by the student”</p> <p>Point 7 d) added “the Institute’s”</p> <p>Point 8 a) added “during Orientation”</p> <p>Point 11 replaced “turn in turn” with “a step-by step”</p> <p>Step 1 – replaced “Local” with Informal</p> <p>Point 12 replaced “local” with “informal”</p> <p>Point 13 a) added “harm or safety concerns”</p> <p>Point 24 added “connection to the complaint/ grievance or”</p> <p>Point 27 and 28 added</p> <p>Point 34 added “will prepare”</p> <p>To Flow Chart added “of Student Grievance Process Overview”</p> <p>Deleted Schedule 2 - Overview of Student Appeals Process</p>	Governing Board	
1.3	<p>Point 8 a) replaced “This Policy and Procedure will be made available to students and prospective students through publication in the Student Handbook, during Orientation and on the Institute’s website” with “This Policy and Procedure will be made available to students and prospective students through publication in the Student Handbook and on the Institute’s</p>	Governing Board	24 Apr 2025



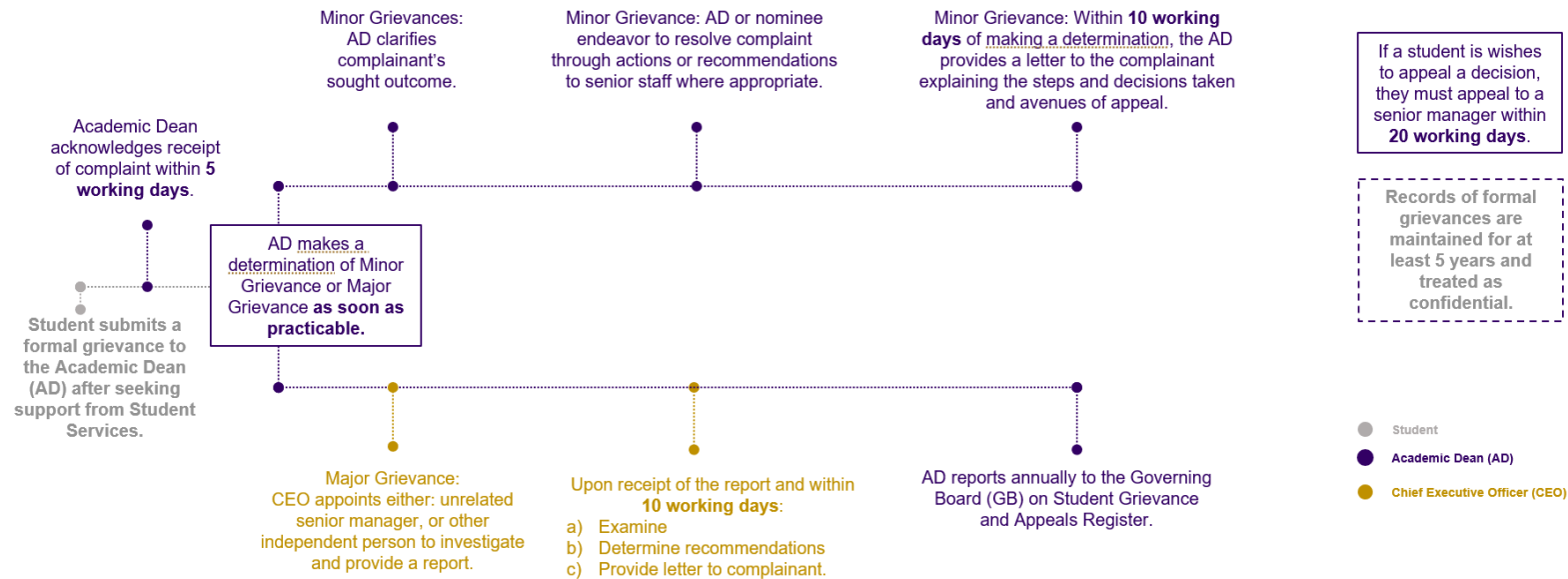
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	website. This policy will be informed / communicated to students during orientation.”		
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Schedule 1 – Overview of Student Grievances Process

Zenith Student Grievances Timelines

Zenith will seek to resolve grievances in a manner that is professional, fair, transparent and timely. The following timeline illustrates Zenith's approach to resolving formal student grievances.



Based on Zenith Student Grievance Policy and Procedure