



TIIS
THE INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL
STUDIES



Students Complaint and Grievance Policy

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a fair, accessible, transparent, and responsive process for resolving student complaints and grievances—academic and non-academic—at TIIS. It ensures students can raise concerns without fear of reprisal and that matters are resolved in a timely, impartial, and culturally sensitive manner.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All TIIS students (domestic and international, onshore and offshore);
- Academic and professional staff;
- Third-party delivery partners and contracted service providers;
- All academic and non-academic matters, including but not limited to:
 - Academic decisions (e.g., grades, progression);
 - Conduct of staff or students;
 - Administrative errors or unfair processes;
 - Harassment, bullying, or discrimination;
 - Fees, refunds, or visa-related issues.

Exclusions

- Certain issues fall outside the scope of this policy and are handled under specialised frameworks:
- **Sexual harm** – Refer to the *Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure*

Policy Statement

TIIS is committed to:

- Providing students with a safe, respectful environment to raise complaints;
- Resolving grievances in a timely, confidential, and procedurally fair manner;
- Ensuring all students are aware of their rights and obligations in relation to complaints;
- Complying with obligations under the **ESOS Act, HESF 2021, and National Code 2018 (Standard 10)**.

Policy Principles

Principle	Description
Accessibility	Students can lodge complaints without cost, fear, or disadvantage.
Impartiality	All complaints are handled by unbiased parties with no conflicts of interest.
Confidentiality	Personal information is protected per the TIIS Privacy Policy.
Timeliness	Complaints are acknowledged within 5 working days and resolved promptly.
Right to Appeal	Students have the right to escalate matters through internal and external channels.
Natural Justice	All parties have the opportunity to present their case.

Types of Complaints

Type	Examples
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Academic Grievance	Disputes over grades, assessment fairness, course delivery.
Non-Academic Grievance	Staff conduct, discrimination, financial matters, support services.
Serious Misconduct	Harassment, bullying, sexual harm – escalated to senior management or law enforcement where applicable.

Procedures

Informal Resolution (Stage 1)

- Students are encouraged to resolve concerns directly with the relevant staff member within 10 working days of the incident.
- Staff must make reasonable efforts to resolve the issue informally.
- No formal documentation is required unless requested.

Formal Complaint (Stage 2)

If informal resolution fails or is inappropriate:

- 1. Submission:**
 - Students complete a *Student Complaint & Grievance Form* (available online or from Student Services).
 - Submit to the **Registrar** or designated Student Services Officer.
- 2. Acknowledgement:**
 - Complaint acknowledged within **5 working days**.
 - Registrar appoints an Investigating Officer (not involved in the complaint).
- 3. Investigation:**
 - Interviews with involved parties (if needed);
 - Evidence reviewed in line with principles of natural justice.
- 4. Outcome Notification:**
 - Final decision provided in writing within **20 working days** of receipt;
 - Outcome may include corrective actions, academic review, mediation, or referral.

Internal Appeal (Stage 3)

- Student may appeal the outcome in writing to the **Academic Board Chair** within **10 working days**.
- Appeals Panel (minimum 2 senior academic/professional staff with no conflict of interest) convenes and reviews decision.
- Decision provided within **15 working days**.

External Appeal (Stage 4)

If internal options are exhausted:

- Students may escalate the complaint to an **external body**, such as:
 - **Overseas Students Ombudsman** (for international students)
 - **NSW Ombudsman**, or
 - **TEQSA** (for regulatory issues)

TIIS will maintain enrolment during complaint and appeal processes, per **National Code Standard 10.4**.

Recordkeeping and Confidentiality

- All formal complaints and outcomes are recorded in a secure **Complaints Register**.
- Records are retained for a minimum of **5 years**.
- Data is used to inform continuous improvement while protecting student privacy.

TIIS Responsibilities

To uphold the above principles, TIIS will:

- Develop, implement, and maintain this policy and its associated procedure in accordance with best practices and regulatory expectations;
- Ensure policies are accessible on the public-facing website and in the Student Handbook;
- Maintain secure records of all complaints, grievances, and appeals, including a confidential *Grievance and Appeals Register*;
- Ensure complainants are aware of their right to external advocacy or legal advice;
- Conduct ongoing analysis of complaint data to identify systemic risks and inform preventive or corrective actions.

Roles and Accountability

Role	Responsibilities
Registrar	Overall policy oversight, secure recordkeeping, procedural compliance monitoring
Academic Board	Endorsement of complaint trends and systemic academic quality improvements
Board of Directors	Policy approval and assurance of organisational governance responsibility
Student Support & Program Coordinators	First contact and informal resolution facilitation

Communication

- This policy is published on the TIIS website and LMS.
- Summarised during orientation and included in the Student Handbook.
- Assistance is available to students with language, literacy, or disability barriers to ensure equitable access to this process.

Continuous Improvement and Compliance

- Complaints data is reviewed **annually** by the Academic Board and Executive Management Committee.
- Systemic issues are escalated to relevant departments for process enhancement.
- This policy is reviewed **biennially** or earlier in response to regulatory changes or internal audits.

Version History

Policy title	Students Complaint and Grievance Resolution Policy
Policy Category	Student Experience and Compliance
Current version	2.0 draft
Previous version (if applicable)	n/a
Policy Owner	
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*****END OF POLICY and PROCEDURE*****