

## Student Grievance and Mediation Policy and Procedures

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Review date
01	Board of Directors (In consultation with AB)	25 October 2025	September 2026

<b>Administrators Responsible</b>	President, Dean, Registrar, Assistant Deans, Head of Program Administration
<b>Purpose</b>	This policy articulates ISGL's commitment to providing a fair, impartial, and confidential system for addressing and resolving student grievances and disputes through mediation, promoting a harmonious and inclusive learning environment.
<b>Scope</b>	This policy applies to all students enrolled at ISGL, including grievances related to academic matters, administrative decisions, interpersonal conflicts in relation to any aspect of the student's experience with ISGL, its education agents or related parties.
<b>Policy Statement</b>	ISGL encourages students to communicate openly and resolve disputes amicably. ISGL will enable accessible channels for grievances to be raised, will ensure that ISGL adopts a student-centred approach to grievance handling, and where necessary, offers formal grievance resolution and mediation processes that uphold the principles of natural justice, confidentiality, and fairness.

### EXPLANATION OF TERMS

#### Grievance

A grievance is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern that stems from actions, decisions, or omissions that an individual perceives as unfair, incorrect, or discriminatory and that fall under the jurisdiction of ISGL.

#### Mediation

Mediation refers to a facilitative method wherein disputing parties, with the guidance of a neutral third person, systematically address contested issues with the goal of formulating solutions, exploring alternatives, and achieving a mutually acceptable resolution that meets their requirements.

**Academic Grievance:** encompasses concerns related to but not confined to:

- Selection and Admission Processes.
- Interactions with agents and experiences with formally recognised or legally established affiliations.
- Subject content and course delivery.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- Assessment Methods (such as assignments, examinations).
- Notices intending to report on a student due to unsatisfactory course progression.
- Termination of enrolment.

**Non-Academic Grievance:** encompasses concerns related to but not confined to:

- Fee Arrangements.
- Temporary Suspension of Candidature.
- Termination of Enrolment
- Refusal of a transfer request
- Withdrawal without Financial Penalty
- Misconduct Instances (excluding plagiarism)
- Instances of Sexual Assault and Harassment
- Critical Events
- Harassment and Discrimination Experiences
- Gender based violence<sup>1</sup>
- Health and Wellness Issues
- Facility-related Concerns

<sup>1</sup> See: [National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence legislation passes Parliament - Department of Education, Australian Government](#)

## Prevention of Bullying or Harassment

ISGL maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of inappropriate conduct. Students who file a complaint or voice a grievance will be protected from discrimination or retaliatory actions. Similarly, individuals responding to complaints or grievances will be safeguarded from discrimination or retaliatory measures.

### Key information about lodging a grievance:

- a. Students can lodge grievances through multiple channels, for example, by contacting a member of ISGL staff including the Dean or the Registrar directly by email [dean@isgl.com.au] or in person.
- b. Any staff member who receives a grievance will report directly to the Dean or the Registrar.
- c. Grievances can be made anonymously noting that this may impact the investigation, consideration or outcome of the grievance.
- d. Grievances are treated confidentially by ISGL with all documents and records relating to the grievance and outcome treated confidentially in line with privacy requirements.
- e. Where appropriate, student complainants or respondents who require support throughout the grievance process will be referred by ISGL to suitable support services.
- f. All parties involved in a grievance process will be updated in line with the procedures set out below throughout the process.
- g. Decisions about formal grievances are promptly communicated to all parties in writing, subject to relevant privacy obligations, outlining the activities undertaken to manage the grievance, any outcomes of the grievance, the reasons for those outcomes including reference to the assessment of the grievance against ISGL policies and other relevant information, and further avenues for appeal or review.
- h. Students may present their grievance at no cost to the student and may be accompanied and assisted by a support person of their choice at any relevant meetings throughout the grievance process, including informal resolution, mediation, formal grievance investigation, and appeal stages.

## STAFF TRAINING FOR GRIEVANCE HANDLING

ISGL is committed to ensuring that all staff members involved in the grievance handling process are well-trained and fully understand their roles, responsibilities, and the principles underpinning our Student Grievance and Mediation Policy. Additionally, ISGL will ensure that its staffing arrangements for grievance handling is sufficient to manage the volume and complexity of complaints that ISGL receives. Monitoring by ISGL will inform the sufficiency of staffing profile and capabilities.

To achieve this, ISGL will:

**Conduct Regular Training Sessions:** Mandatory training sessions will be held annually for all staff involved in the grievance process. These sessions will cover the policy's objectives, confidentiality requirements, principles of natural justice, and the procedural steps for handling grievances. Training will include

- a. trauma-informed and person-centred practice for sensitive complaints
- b. supporting culturally and racially marginalised persons<sup>2</sup>
- c. the provider's policies and procedures around complaints-handling
- d. if their role requires, administrative decision making.

## PROCEDURES

**Timeliness in the Grievance Process:** To ensure that grievances are resolved in a timely and efficient manner, ISGL sets forth the following timeframes for each stage of the grievance process:

- a. Informal Resolution Attempt: Students are encouraged to seek an informal resolution within 10 working days from the date of the incident.
- b. Formal Grievance Submission: Once a formal grievance is submitted, the Program Administration will acknowledge receipt within 2 working days.
- c. Investigation Period: The investigation of the grievance will be completed, and a decision communicated to the student within 20 working days from the acknowledgment of the formal grievance.
- d. Mediation Process: If mediation is initiated, the process will be completed within 15 working days from the date of request.
- e. Appeal Process: Should an appeal be necessary, it will be reviewed, and a final decision made within 15 working days of the appeal submission.

<sup>2</sup> Reference: [TEQSA Statement of Regulatory Expectations; Student grievance and complaint mechanisms](#): "Persons who are culturally and racially marginalised are those who experience disadvantage because of their 'cultural background, migration status, race or ethnicity' (Australian Human Rights Commission: [Speaking from experience](#), 2025, p. 5). Given the diversity of students in Australia's higher education sector, appropriate training to support culturally and racially marginalised persons needs to be self-determined at the local level by relevant individuals and communities (The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021–2031; Lowitja Institute: [Cultural Safety in Australia](#), 2024)".

### Informal Resolution

- a. Initial Contact: Students are encouraged to address their grievances informally with the concerned party or department.
- b. Assistance: Students can seek assistance from Program Administration or a trusted staff member to facilitate informal discussions.
- c. Documentation: Although informal, it is advised to document the discussions and outcomes for future reference.

### Mediation

- a. Initiation: If the grievance is not resolved satisfactorily, mediation can be initiated, facilitated by an impartial mediator.
- b. Meeting: A mediation meeting will be arranged, allowing both parties to present their views and work towards a mutually agreeable solution.
- c. Agreement: If an agreement is reached, it will be documented and signed by both parties.
- d. Failure to Agree: In case an agreement is not reached, the student may appeal the decision.

### Formal Grievance

- a. Submission: If the informal resolution is unsatisfactory, students can submit a formal grievance in writing to the Program Administration.
- b. Acknowledgement: Receipt of the grievance will be acknowledged within two working days, and the student will be informed of the subsequent steps.
- c. Investigation: Head of Program Administration or its delegates will conduct a thorough investigation, ensuring an impartial process.
- e. Outcome: The outcome will be communicated by the Dean in writing, outlining the reasons for the decision and any proposed resolution or outcome, within 20 working days of receiving the grievance.

### Appeal

- a. Submission: Students can submit an appeal to the Dean, explaining the reasons for the appeal and providing supporting documentation.
- b. Review: The Dean, or an appointed delegate, will review the appeal, considering all the information provided.
- c. Decision: The Dean's recommendation will be forwarded to the President for approval. The final decision will be communicated by the Dean to the student in writing within 15 working days of receiving the appeal.

### Other External Appeal Avenues and Processes

- a. Domestic and international students can access information about the external appeal avenues and processes available in Australia through the website links:
  - <https://www.studyassist.gov.au/support-while-you-study/higher-education-student-complaints>
  - <https://www.study.nsw.gov.au/current-students/support-services/>
- b. All prospective students, students, former students and graduates, are able to make a complaint to the Commonwealth [National Student Ombudsman \(NSO\)](#) at any time. To make a complaint to the NSO, you can use the NSO's [online form](#), or phone 1300 395 775 (Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm AEDT). The NSO is a free service and assist with complaints about many issues including:
  - Student safety and wellbeing, including gender-based violence, discrimination, racism, antisemitism and islamophobia
  - Student enrolment and exclusion
  - Student applications for special consideration
  - Providers changes to course structures
  - Providers complaint and appeal procedures
  - Providers failure to clearly explain their decisions.
- c. If an internal appeal relates to a decision to suspend or cancel an enrolment, the student enrolment will be maintained throughout the internal appeals process until the process is completed, unless the wellbeing of the student or others is likely to be at risk.
- d. If the internal or any external complaints handling or appeal process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of the overseas student, ISGL will immediately implement the decision or recommendation and/or take the preventive or corrective action required by the decision and advise the student of that action.
- e. Where a student has been unsuccessful in the internal complaints handling and appeals process, ISGL will advise the student in writing within 10 working days of the outcome that:
  - they have not been successful in the internal process
  - the matter can be referred to an external complaints handling and appeals process
  - access to the external complaints handling and appeals process is at no cost or minimal cost to the student, and
  - the student's enrolment will be maintained whilst the external appeal process is ongoing, unless the

wellbeing of the student or others is likely to be at risk.

### Monitoring, Review and Improvement

- f. ISGL is committed to monitoring and improving grievance processes through the following activities:
- cyclic review and benchmarking of policies, procedures and complaints-handling training
  - feedback on ISGL's grievance processes is invited following the completion of the process
  - student feedback is considered, and where changes or improvements are made, notification will be published
  - de-identified grievance data (including handling data) is analysed at least once every 6 months to identify themes and opportunities for improvements
  - identified themes or opportunities for improvement are reviewed by the President and Registrar to inform key risks and actions and reported to the Board of Directors
  - barriers to making complaints are identified and reasonable steps are taken to minimise or remove these barriers.

### Governance and Oversight

- a. The Board of Directors of ISGL reviews a report of de-identified grievance data at least once every 6 months presented by the President to provide assurance that the underlying causes of identified trends or issues are being adequately addressed. The report will:
- include analysis of trends, identification of underlying causes, and actions taken to address underlying causes, and
  - list the review and improvement activities undertaken related to grievance handling, including identification of areas for improvement, and actions taken to improve service delivery, and clearly identify delegations of authority and accountability.

### Record Keeping

- a. ISGL will maintain a written record of each complaint and appeal, including:
- Details of the complaint or appeal
  - All actions taken to address the complaint or appeal
  - A statement of the outcome, and
  - The reasons for the outcome.

These records will be maintained in accordance with ISGL's privacy obligations and record retention requirements.

### Related Documents

- a. Appendix 1 – Complaints and Grievance Form
- b. Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure
- c. Deferral Policy
- d. Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- e. Student Academic Progression and Completion Policy
- f. Student at Risk Policy
- g. Student Code of Conduct Policy
- h. Student Refund Policy & Procedure
- i. Student SASH Policy and Procedure

Version	Approved Date	Approved By	Changes Made
01.1	24 October 2025	Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Included 'Key information about lodging a grievance'</li><li>– Included point 'b' in Other External Appeal Avenues and Processes</li><li>– Included a section on Monitoring, Review and Improvement</li><li>– Included a section on Governance and Oversight</li></ul>

## **(APPENDIX 1)**

### **COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE FORM**

We value your feedback and are committed to resolving any issues you may have experienced. Please use this form to report a complaint or grievance.

#### **Personal Information**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Course/Program: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Grievance Details**

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Individuals Involved (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Type of Grievance**

Please tick the appropriate box(es):

☐ Academic (e.g., assessments, course content, admissions)

☐ Non-Academic (e.g., fee payment, scholarships, facilities)

☐ Bullying or Harassment

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Detailed Description of the Grievance**

Please provide a detailed description of the grievance (attach additional sheets if necessary):

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#### **Supporting Documents**

Please attach any supporting documents or evidence that can help in resolving this matter (photos, emails, etc.).

☐ Document 1: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Document 2: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Document 3: \_\_\_\_\_

**Desired Outcome**

Please describe the resolution or outcome you are seeking:

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**Declaration**

I hereby confirm that the information provided above is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

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**OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

Received By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Assigned to: \_\_\_\_\_

Resolution: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Resolved: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. We will investigate your complaint thoroughly and keep you updated on the progress.