



Australian International Conservatorium of Music

31-33 Allen St, Harris Park, NSW 2150 Australia

PH: 61 2 9637 0777 Fax: 61 2 9637 0222

Email: admin@aicm.edu.au Website: www.aicm.edu.au

Complaints and Grievance Resolution: Policy and Procedure Policy

(Academic and Non-Academic)

The Australian International Conservatorium of Music (AICM) is committed to developing and maintaining an effective complaints and grievance handling system. We view receipt of a complaint or grievance as an opportunity to improve our ability to meet the needs of our students and potential students.

We aim to:

- Develop a culture that views student complaints and grievances as an opportunity to improve our organisation and how we work;
- Ensure that any complaints or grievances are resolved promptly, objectively and with sensitivity and in complete confidentiality;
- Set in place a complaints and grievances handling system that is student focussed and helps us to prevent complaints or grievances from recurring;
- Ensure that we are consistent in our response to complaints and grievances.
- Ensure that complainant and respondent will not be victimized or discriminated against.

Definition of a complaint or grievance

A complaint or grievance can be defined as a student's expression of dissatisfaction with an aspect of AICM's services and activities.

A complaint or grievance may be a student expressing dissatisfaction with:

- The enrolment, induction/orientation process;
- The quality of training provided;
- Access to their personal records;
- The way they were treated.

It is our policy to ensure that AICM responds effectively to individual cases of dissatisfaction.

Procedure

This procedure can be utilised by students, potential students and staff regardless of the campus on which the incident took place, the student's place of residence or the mode in which they study. The internal aspects of this procedure are performed without cost and in complete confidentiality.

Stage One:

When a problem or issue arises, staff/students are advised to seek information from appropriate staff, eg, the Principal, the Dean of Student Matters, or the Dean of Studies. Staff/students then have three options for proceeding:

- Take no further action;
- Make comments or suggestions;
- Make a complaint

Stage two

Formal complaints or grievances must be submitted in writing to the Director. Receipt of the complaint or grievance will be acknowledged within five working days.

The Director, or their nominee, will then, if necessary, seek to clarify the outcome that the aggrieved person hopes to achieve. This will occur within 14 days of the receipt of the original complaint. When such clarification occurs in a face-to-face interview with the aggrieved person, they and/or the respondent may ask another person to accompany them. The Director, or nominee, will then endeavour to resolve the grievance, providing a written report to the aggrieved person on the steps taken to address the grievance. This report will be made within 30 days of the receipt of the original complaint. The issue may be resolved at the local level with the least amount of disruption for all parties. The majority of complaints are resolved successfully at this stage.

Stage Three: If the grievance remains unresolved, third parties may be appointed to consult with the aggrieved

person and other relevant parties.

The third parties established by the AICM are:

Leah Boucher: B. Comm. (Hons); AWT (cert. IV). Higher Education Policy Research at Macquarie University. 9850 9764

Margaret Hopkins: B Arts (Hons); MA (Hons). Former inspector of schools and retired founding manager of LMPC for OTEM. 9982 8026

Ruth Neumann: BA (Hons); Dip Ed; PhD. Associate Professor of the Macquarie Graduate School of Management. 9850 7766

Where possible such consultations should take the form of face-to-face interviews. The aggrieved person and the respondent may ask another person to accompany them to interviews. This stage will begin, if utilised, within 14 days of the receipt of the request to proceed to Stage Three from the complainant. This stage is free of charge for the complainant.

The Director, or their nominee, will provide a written report to the aggrieved person on the further steps taken to address the grievance within 14 days of receiving a report of the consultation procedure.

External Review

At any stage, the complainant or respondent may request review by an independent external body. The AICM will inform the complainant of their right to an external review in each report provided to them. If the aggrieved person remains unsatisfied with the outcome of the AICM's procedures, mediation is available through the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET). The AICM will provide the complainant with contact details for ACPET and refer the matter to them within 14 days of the receipt of the request.

The AICM has ascertained that the Australian Council for Private Education and Training can and is prepared to perform this function. They can be contacted at:

ACPET
Box Q1076
QVB PO
SYDNEY NSW 1230
Ph: (02) 9299 4555
Fax: (02) 9299 4221
acpet@acpet.edu.au
www.acpet.edu.au

This stage is free of charge for the complainant. The complainant and respondent have the right to be accompanied by another person. At any stage both complainant and respondent may request reasons and a full explanation for decisions and actions in writing. The AICM will endeavour to achieve resolution within 30 days. If grievances remain unresolved, the aggrieved person may decide to refer the matter to another external agency such as The Anti-Discrimination Board or the Department of Fair Trading.

Records

All records of complaint and grievance procedures are kept in a separate locked file for a period of at least five years after the incident. Only senior members of staff have access to AICM locked files (Director, Dean of Studies, Dean of Student Matters, and the Principal). The complainant and respondent will be allowed supervised access to these records at any time by making a written request to the Director.

Publication of this Policy and Procedure

This document is to be made available in the Staff and Student Handbooks, in the Policy and Procedures Manual and publicly on the AICM website (<http://www.aicm.edu.au/Application%20Forms/grievance-procedure.pdf>) in order to be readily accessible.

Authority and Implementation

This policy and procedure was agreed to by the AICM Board of Directors at its June meeting, 2005. The Board of Directors determined that a copy of this procedure be made available to all staff for Semester II, 2005, and that staff are trained no less frequently than at the beginning of year staff meeting on Orientation Day (by the Academic Coordinator and Director), or for new staff as a part of their general orientation.

The procedures set out in this document do not replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities which may arise under other higher education provider policies or under statute or any other law. Nothing in this Complaints and Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedure limits the rights of students to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection laws. Also, these dispute resolution procedures do not circumscribe student's rights to pursue other legal remedies.