

STUDENT GRIEVANCE HANDLING AND RESOLUTION POLICY

Policy owner	Education Committee
Policy category	Academic
Policy status	Approved
Approval body	Academic Board
Last amended	8 th May 2023

PURPOSE:

MIECAT is committed to developing and maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable grievance handling system which is easily accessible and offered to complainants at no charge. This document defines the policy and procedures for handling and resolving grievances raised by students.

SCOPE:

This procedure applies to all students enrolled at MIECAT as well as prospective students seeking to enrol. This procedure may also be utilised by those employed by MIECAT either as contractor, casual, permanent full time or part time staff conducting teaching, assessment, supervision and/or administrative and support duties.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Principles

1.1 MIECAT seeks to develop a culture that views grievances as an opportunity to improve the organisation and its processes.

- 1.2 This policy represents a grievance handling system that aims to prevent grievances from recurring.
- 1.3 All grievances are to be resolved in a timely manner, handled professionally and confidentially, and underpinned by the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
- 1.4 The views of each party involved in the grievance are to be respected and not discriminated against nor victimised.
- 1.5 Responses to grievances must be consistent. Records of all grievances and the procedures undertaken will be kept accessible to appropriate parties for a period of no less than five years. Such records will remain confidential and retained in a Complaints Register to allow all parties to the grievance access upon written request.

2. Definitions

2.1 A grievance can be defined as a person's expression of dissatisfaction with an aspect of the MIECAT's services and activities.

MIECAT grievance procedures do not replace or modify procedures or responsibilities which may arise under statute or any other law.

2.2 A non-academic grievance may be an expression of dissatisfaction with:

- the enrolment, induction/orientation process;
- the quality of education provided;
- access to personal records;
- the way someone has been treated;
- amenities
- general complaints, including dissatisfaction with services

2.3 An academic grievance may be an expression of dissatisfaction with:

- course assessment and the issuing of results and testamurs;
- any other matters directly related to the delivery and or assessment of the accredited MIECAT courses.

2.4 Students (or potential students seeking to enrol in a course of study with MIECAT) are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) concerned.

3. Procedure

This procedure can be utilised by students and potential students seeking to enrol in a course of study with MIECAT. During all stages of the grievance handling and resolution procedure MIECAT will take all steps to ensure that the complainant and the respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against.

3.1 Stage One

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

The Director, or their nominee, will then, investigate the grievance and if necessary, seek to clarify the outcome that the complainant hopes to achieve.

Such clarification may be sought by written or verbal request or by a face-to-face meeting with the complainant. When such clarification occurs in a face-to-face meeting the complainant or respondent may ask another person to accompany them.

The Director, or their nominee, will then endeavour to resolve the grievance and provide a written report to the complainant on the steps taken to address the grievance within ten working days after the investigation has been completed.

A written report of the reasons and a full explanation of decisions and actions taken during stage one of this procedure will be made available to the complainant or respondent, upon request.

3.2 Stage Two

If the grievance remains unresolved, the Director, or their nominee, will be appointed to consult with the complainant and other relevant parties within ten working days.

Where possible such consultations should take the form of face-to-face meetings. The complainant or the respondent may ask another person to accompany them to these meetings.

Following the consultation, the Director, or their nominee, will provide a written report to the Education Committee within ten working days.

3.3 Stage Three

The Education Committee considers the report and makes recommendations for action and communicates these to the student within ten working days. If the complainant remains unsatisfied with the outcome of their grievance an external appeal or complaint against the outcome of the internal appeal process students may lodge a complaint with IHEA (Independent Higher Education Australia). Contact Dr Peter Hendy, Chief Executive Officer, IHEA peter.hendy@ihea.edu.au Students with a complaint about a higher education provider's non-compliance with the Higher Education Standards (HES) Framework may contact TEQSA. For more information see <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/raising-complaint-or-concern>

Additional support can be sought from other external agencies:

- Victorian Ombudsman: <https://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au>
- Victorian Equal Opportunity and Rights Commission: <https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au>
- Victorian Consumer Affairs: <https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au>

3.4 All details of a complaint, its process and outcome are to be recorded in the MIECAT Complaints Register.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

For academic matters the responsibility for implementation, monitoring and reporting lies with the Education Committee, which provides reports for the Academic Board.

For all other matters the responsibility for implementation, monitoring and reporting lies with the Executive Management Committee, which provides report for the MIECAT Council.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

All students at MIECAT, Education Committee, Executive Management Committee, Academic Board, MIECAT Council

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Equal Opportunity Act (Victoria) 2010

MIECAT Complaints Register

MIECAT Equal Opportunity Policy

MIECAT Student Academic Misconduct Policy

MIECAT Student Non-Academic Conduct Policy

VERSION HISTORY

Date of Issue	Version	Author	Summary of changes
11 th September 2013	1.0	Jan Allen	Approved by Academic Board
31 st January 2014	1.1	Jan Allen	Amended to remove reference to ACPET providing independent review.
31 st January 2018	1.2	L Tann	'Application' section updated to include casual and contractor staff, approving body changed to academic board, updated links to ACPET and TEQSA.
8 th May 2023	1.3	J. Mitchell	Reviewed and updated, include reference to IHEA for provision of independent review.

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