

STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

Policy number	40	Version	3
Approved by Board on	25 September 2015	Scheduled review date	September 2016

1 Purpose

To develop and maintain an effective, timely, fair, accessible and equitable grievance handling system.

2 Scope

This procedure applies to all NIODA students, including prospective students seeking to enrol.

3 Policy Statement

Grievance processes at NIODA provide further opportunity for students to appeal against decisions made about assessment, misconduct, special consideration, enrolment and progression eligibility and other academic matters, or complaints about relationships, interactions or processes that have been unable to be resolved through other* appeal or request mediums. It is the highest level appeal process for students at NIODA and outcomes supersede previous decisions.

*Other appeal or request mediums include Academic Progress and Academic/General Misconduct subcommittees and decisions made at Executive Management level, such as admission, enrolment, special consideration, credit transfer and recognition of prior learning decisions.

NIODA is committed to developing and maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable grievance handling system that is easily accessible.

NIODA aims to:

- develop a culture that views grievances as an opportunity to improve the organisation and how it works
- set in place a grievance handling system that is in accordance with NIODA aims of openness, collaboration, respect and dialogue and aims to prevent grievances from recurring
- ensure that all grievances are resolved in a timely manner and are handled professionally, confidentially and with the principles of natural justice
- ensure that the views of each party involved in the grievance are respected and are not discriminated against or victimised
- ensure that there is a consistent response to grievances
- ensure that records of all grievances and the procedures undertaken will be kept accessible to all interested parties for a period of no less than five years (subject to NIODA's Privacy Policy). The records will remain confidential and will be retained in a separate file.

Students who initiate grievance procedures will not be adversely affected in ongoing relations with any NIODA board, committee or staff member, or have any component of their studies compromised as a result of making the complaint.

This policy and procedure is designed to ensure that NIODA responds effectively to individual cases of dissatisfaction before an issue becomes a more formalised grievance.

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Students (or potential students seeking to enrol in a course of study with NIODA) are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) concerned. The CEO, Directors and Student Advisor are available to assist in this process.

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

There will be no financial cost to students who initiate internal grievance procedures.

4 Procedures

Formal student grievances must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Academic Board of Governance. Receipt of the grievance will be acknowledged within five working days.

The ABG Chair has discretionary authority to determine what type of procedure should occur on receipt of a grievance. This decision will be based on the type and severity of the issue.

1. Some grievances may be a matter of miscommunication or misunderstanding that may be able to be resolved through a telephone or face-to-face meeting with the participant. The ABG Chair will ensure that this takes place within five working days on receipt of the grievance.

2. Others grievances may be more complicated. In this case of students, a Grievance subcommittee of the Academic Board of Governance will be convened. The Chair of this subcommittee is responsible for determining whether the grievance is justified on the basis of the evidence presented. The subcommittee will proceed with reference to the following:

- the issue must be handled in a timely, efficient, fair and equitable way
- the complainant must have the opportunity to present their case to the subcommittee
- the complainant may invite another person to support them when presenting their case to the subcommittee
- the complainant must receive a written report of outcomes within 10 working days of a resolution being determined by the subcommittee
- the subcommittee must record decisions and actions taken by the subcommittee and the reasoning behind them for record keeping and to be used (in a non-identifiable form) in institutional and/or program review processes.

There may also be grievances that trigger external intervention from statutory or legal authorities. In this instance the Chair of the Grievance subcommittee will contact the appropriate authority as soon as is possible.

5 Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Records of all grievances handled under this procedure and their outcomes shall be maintained for a period of at least five years to allow all parties to the grievance appropriate access to these records, upon written request to the NIODA Administrator. These records will be maintained electronically in a password protected file and in a locked filing cabinet in the office of the Administrator.

All records relating to complaints will be treated as confidential.

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6 Publication

This Policy is published on NIODA's website (insert url).

7 Related Documents

Assessment Policy

Code of Conduct Policy

Academic Misconduct Policy

General Misconduct Policy

Progression and Exclusion Policy

Eligibility, Admissions and Enrolment Policy

Credit Transfer Policy

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy