

Student Support and Wellbeing Policy	
Student Grievance, Complaints and Appeals	
2_A_POL_StudentGrievance_190301	
1. Policy Statement	The School of Audio Engineering (NZ) Ltd, trading as SAE Institute (SAE), is committed to providing a collaborative and collegial teaching and learning environment by undertaking all necessary actions to resolve grievances in a fair and expeditious manner.
2. Purpose	The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate a clear commitment to the receipt and proper processing of all grievances and subsequent appeals relating to the operations of SAE Institute.
3. Scope	<p>This policy applies in the context of SAE's operations in New Zealand and is applicable to all students, whether prospective, deferred, current or graduands.</p> <p>Procedures for SAE campuses internationally may vary in compliance with statutory requirements in other countries of operation. Students registered with SAE Institute who transfer their studies to a campus outside of New Zealand are required to adhere to the guidelines, policies and procedures of the legal entity to whom they have transferred their registration. This policy is applicable to all students or prospective students of SAE, irrespective of their place of residence, campus or mode of study.</p>
4. Associated Policies and Procedures	<p>This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Grievance, Complaints and Appeals Procedure
5. Associated Documents	<p>This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student handbook • Student online Complaints Form • The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021
6. Policy	<p>6.1 Introduction</p> <p>The Student Grievance, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures are intended to facilitate the resolution of formal grievances brought to the attention of SAE. This policy and associated procedures and any decisions made under them, are not intended to give rise to legal rights, or obligations on SAE to pay compensation either in respect of a decision made pursuant to the procedures, or for a breach of these procedures. Anonymous grievances will not normally be considered.</p> <p>Complaints and Appeals (Grievances) include but are not restricted to matters of concern to a student relating to delivery and assessment; the</p>

	<p>quality of support and materials provided by SAE; concerns regarding other students, or any form of discrimination or harassment.</p> <p>In the case of any student grievance, complaint or appeal, natural justice will be applied. Natural Justice is concerned with ensuring procedural fairness whereby:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions and processes are free from bias • All parties have the right to be heard • A respondent has a right to know of what they have been accused of • All parties are told the decision and the reasons for the decision <p>All complaints and appeals will be resolved within 60 days. If SAE requires more than 60 days to resolve any complaint or appeal, they will write to all parties involved to explain why more time is required and give an expected date that a resolution will be made. SAE will keep all parties informed during this time in writing.</p> <p>6.2 Before an Issue Becomes a Formal Grievance Students are encouraged, wherever possible, to discuss and resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) concerned. There are various staff including the Campus Director, Student Support, the Academic Dean, Heads of Discipline, Kaiako/Lecturing staff, Studio Supervisors and other staff who are available to assist students to resolve their issues at this informal level.</p> <p>This is the informal stage of the grievance process and must be attempted before a formal grievance is lodged.</p> <p>6.3 Lodging a Formal Grievance If the complaint is not resolved at the informal level, students may lodge a formal grievance. All formal grievances must be lodged online using the Student Complaints and Appeals form on the SAE website. Refer to the Grievance, Complaints and Appeals procedure for details of the processes and procedures to be followed.</p> <p>Unless there are extenuating circumstances, a formal grievance should be lodged within no more than 30 days after the relevant incident.</p> <p>6.4 Processing a Formal Grievance A formal grievance will, in the first instance, be considered by the Academic Dean, Student Experience Manager, and Operations Manager to determine if the grievance is an academic or non-academic matter. If, in the opinion of the Academic Dean, Student Experience Manager, or Operations Manager there are insufficient grounds or cause to proceed, due reason will be communicated to the complainant in writing and the matter considered closed.</p>
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If, in the opinion of the Academic Dean, Student Experience Manager, or Operations Manager, there are sufficient grounds or cause to proceed, then a proposed resolution will be put forward to the complaint in writing within ten (10) working days of the grievance having been received. The Campus Director will be alerted of the grievance and kept informed of proceedings.

If the complaint is not satisfied with the outcome proposed by the Academic Dean, Student Experience Manager, or Operations Manager, they may appeal to the Campus Director.

The Campus Director, having received the appeal shall:

1. Acknowledge its receipt within five (5) working days
2. Inform the Chair of the Academic Board and the Navitas C&I Executive General, Education that a grievance, complaint or appeal has been received
3. Inform the Academic Dean, Student Experience Manager, and Operations Manager that an appeal has been received
4. Update the grievance, complaint or appeal record in the online Tickit system

The Campus Director will thereby decide to:

1. Enforce the implementation of the recommendations made by the Academic Dean, Student Experience Manager, or Operations Manager; or
2. Dismiss the case, giving reasons in writing to the complainant; or
3. Determine whether there are sufficient grounds to move to convene a Grievance Panel and/or have the matter formally investigated and, if so, shall establish a Grievance Panel to hear the appeal or appoint an internal Investigator to undertake a formal investigation of the matter.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Grievance Panel or Investigation outcome, they may make a written request to the Campus Director that they wish the matter be dealt with through an external dispute resolution process.

NZQA provides guidance on [avenues for escalation](#) should anyone have ongoing concerns. Anyone wanting to notify NZQA of any concerns will need to complete a [webform available on the website](#). Assistance with completing the form may be provided by our [contact centre](#), where needed.

The complainant may also wish to visit the following site: Student Complaints (<https://www.studycomplaints.org.nz/>) . Contact details for Student Complaints are available on the SAE Auckland website and published in the Student Handbook.

6.5 General Stipulations

General stipulations that are applied to any formal grievance include:

- The complainant will be given the opportunity to present their case in person
- All matters arising shall be accurately documented and recorded
- A complaint is not considered formal unless it is in writing
- Formal complaints are reviewed by the Compliance Committee quarterly
- The number and nature of any formal complaints are published at least annually on the SAE Auckland website in accordance with Code of Practice guidelines.
- Records shall be maintained for a minimum period of five years and treated as confidential in accordance with SAE Institute policy on information privacy
- A written statement of the outcomes will be issued at each stage of the process giving due reasons for decisions reached
- The complainant will have the right to have a representative present who may be a relative, friend or colleague, but not a legal representative, during any negotiations with SAE or its representatives
- The complainant will not be required to meet any costs associated with lodging a grievance, provided the procedures contained herein are adhered to
- The complainant shall not be subject to discrimination, victimisation or any other form of harassment as a result of actions taken

6.6 Principles that Underpin these Grievance Procedures

The guiding principles of these procedures are that grievances shall be:

- Treated seriously and with fairness
- Dealt with promptly and simply
- Subject to the principles of natural justice
- Progressed through informal and formal stages
- Dealt with and resolved wherever possible without recourse to the formal stage, and shall be without prejudice to a complainant's right to pursue external legal remedies after having exhausted all internal SAE Institute grievance procedures
- 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

6.7 Grounds for Lodging an Academic Appeal

There are four grounds for lodging an academic appeal:

- a. Performance in an assessment suffered through illness or other factors that the student was unable or, for valid reasons, unwilling, to disclose before the results were awarded. An appeal under such grounds will normally be dismissed unless an acceptable explanation is given for not presenting the extenuating circumstances in advance of the results having been awarded.

- b. An assessment was not conducted in accordance with the approved programme regulations.
- c. There was a material administrative error in the conduct of an assessment or other academic decision.
- d. Some other material irregularity occurred in making an academic decision.

Students should also note that:

Academic appeals lodged on grounds other than illness, may only be made against formal published decisions - not against informal marks or grades that have yet to be approved. Assessment marks are formalised through the SAE Examiners Committee, following a moderation and validation process.

SAE will not accept academic appeals based on a claim by the student that they did not know or fully appreciate the assessment regulations and procedures, or that they were unaware of the grievance procedure, or their rights and responsibilities, which includes the process for presenting extenuating circumstances.

6.8 Staff Responsibility

Improving the quality of service and reducing dissatisfaction or grievances is the responsibility of all. All staff are encouraged to informally and formally identify, report and where possible prevent or remedy problems and concerns related to the fair treatment of students or potential students.

The Campus Director is responsible for reviewing and approving process improvement reports, for investigating the cause(s) of potential problems identified, for initiating preventative action to eliminate the problem or potential problem, for verifying that approved process improvements have been implemented and preventative action has taken place to prevent or reduce future grievances or appeals and that this action complies with relevant legislation.

6.9 Review of Student Complaints, Grievances or Appeals

The SAE Auckland Compliance Committee reviews any student complaints, grievances or appeals as a standing agenda item. Such review is undertaken to determine appropriate action to ensure ongoing improvement to services, systems, or teaching and learning design and delivery.

6.10 Retention of Records

SAE will retain appropriate records for all formal grievances for a period of five years and allow parties to the complaint, appropriate access to these records. Any associated assessments relating to the grievance will also be stored for a period of five years.

All records pertaining to formal grievances are stored in accordance with the New Zealand Privacy Act (1993) and its amendments.

<p>7. Records</p>	<p>2_A_POL_StudentGrievance_190301</p> <p>DRAFT version released 5 March 2019</p> <p>FINAL version approved by Academic Board 17 April 2019 and released</p> <p>Reviewed, with minimal updates. Re-released for consultation 22 May, 2023</p> <p>UPDATED version approved by SAE Auckland Academic Board 2 June 2023</p> <p>UPDATED 6 June 2024 with new job titles. Staff notified 4 July 2024.</p> <p>UPDATED 7 March 2025 with reference to new external agency, Student Complaints. Released for consultation on 7 March 2025.</p> <p>FINAL revised version approved by SAE Auckland Academic Board 30 April 2025.</p> <p>UPDATED 25 September with new NZQA complaint contact details, and inclusion of Student Experience Manager role, and released for consultation.</p> <p>FINAL revised version approved by SAE Auckland Academic Board 12 November 2025 and released.</p>
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