General Policy G05 Non-Academic Grievance Policy (Students)

1. Policy Statement

SAE Institute is committed to providing a collaborative and collegial educational environment by undertaking all necessary actions to resolve complaints relating to any operations of SAE Institute in a fair and expeditious manner.

2. Purpose

This policy and procedure seeks to ensure that grievances within SAE Institute made by students are treated seriously and, if found to be valid, are acted upon to ensure that students' interests are protected as far as it is possible for SAE Institute to do so.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all students involved in SAE Institute operations in Europe, all Licensed campuses and all SAE campuses offering collaborative programmes validated by third-party institutions. The programmes of SAE Amman; as The School of Creative Media at LTUC, are accredited in Jordan by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHE), and the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions, as well as the Technical and Vocational Skills Development Commission. Hence, SAE Amman adheres to the grievance policies of both SAE International, as well as local accreditation institutions.

4. Associated Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- G01 Code of Conduct
- A07 Academic Grievance Policy

5. Policy Definitions

All types of grievances other than academic grievances relating to student results and student progression (as defined in A07 Academic Grievance Policy).

6. Introduction

These grievance procedures are intended to provide fair and timely resolution for all grievances concerned with general and procedural matters within the operations of SAE Institute.

These grievance procedures and any decisions made under them are not intended to give rise to legal rights, or obligations on SAE Institute to pay compensation either in respect of a decision made pursuant to the procedures or for a breach of these procedures. These procedures are intended to facilitate the resolution of formal grievances brought to the attention of SAE Institute. Anonymous grievances will not normally be considered.

7. General Stipulations

In the event of a grievance by a student:

- The complainant will be given the opportunity to present their case;
- All matters arising shall be accurately noted and recorded. Records shall be maintained and treated as confidential in accordance with the SAE Institute Information Privacy Policy, and no other form of recording of the proceedings shall normally be allowed;
- 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 companion present during any discussions with SAE Institute or its appointed representatives;
- Legal representation is not permitted, and communications from legal representatives will not be responded to;
- 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 under these guidelines. • complaints shall not normally be considered if they are made more than 28 days after the incident or situation to which they refer.

8. Principles That Underpin These Grievance Procedures

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

1. Treated seriously and with fairness;
2. Dealt with quickly, simply and at the level of the specific SAE Institute campus as far as is possible;
3. Treated consistently across SAE Institute;
4. Subject to the principles of natural justice;
5. Progressed through informal and formal stages;
6. Dealt with and resolved wherever possible without recourse to the formal stage, and shall be without prejudice to a complainant's right to pursue available and legitimate pathways of complaint outside SAE Institute, having first exhausted the 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 law.

9. Staff Responsibility

Improving the quality of student services and reducing dissatisfaction or grievances is the responsibility of all staff at SAE Institute. 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. This may occur during general communication in the performance of their role, by discussion, participation in meetings and formally by submitting a report to the Campus Manager suggesting process improvement.

At each SAE Institute campus, the Campus Manager 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. The Campus Manager is also responsible for verifying that approved process improvements have been implemented and that recommended preventative action has taken place to prevent or reduce future grievances or appeals and that this action complies with relevant legislation.

10. Procedures

Students are encouraged, wherever possible, to discuss and resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the relevant person(s) concerned.

10.1. Informal Stage 1

In the first instance a student who is aggrieved should seek to speak directly with the person perceived to be the cause of the alleged grievance in a spirit of goodwill intended to resolve the matter. If that process does not lead to a satisfactory resolution then the student should discuss the issue either with a student support officer or with the Academic Manager, who will advise whether or not the grievance is best progressed through:

- A Board of Studies;
- Meetings with specific persons who can assist to resolve the problem; or
- Formal grievance procedures under this policy.

If it is decided to progress the grievance through these grievance procedures, the member of staff consulted shall discuss the grievance fully with the complainant and, with the complainant's consent, with anyone else involved, to see if it can be resolved informally. This may involve referral of the grievance to a third party. The outcome of grievances dealt with informally should be briefly documented. Normally, grievances handled through Informal Stage 1 shall be dealt with within, at most, ten working days, briefly documented, and a copy of the decision sent to the complainant in writing.

In the event where the grievance is against the Academic Manager, the student should go directly to Informal stage 2.

10.2. Informal Stage 2

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of Informal Stage 1, the grievance shall be referred to the Campus Manager of the SAE Institute campus involved, within ten working days of the completion of Informal Stage 1. The Campus Manager shall investigate the grievance fully and shall seek to achieve an informal resolution of the problem(s), either by correspondence or through discussion with the complainant and other relevant parties as soon as possible. The Campus Manager will provide a written report to the complainant on the steps taken to address the grievance within ten working days.

Where the grievance cannot be resolved through those processes, the Campus Manager may refer the grievance to formal process 10.3 below. In the event where the grievance or complaint involves the actions of a Campus Manager, the student should lodge a formal

grievance.

10.3. Formal Grievance Stage

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the result of the two informal stages of this grievance procedure, or if in the opinion of the Campus Manager, the grievance may proceed to the Formal Stage. The student must state in writing the grievance, the reason why they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the two Informal Stages, to the Campus Manager within ten working days of the completion of Informal Stage 2. In the event where the grievance or complaint involves the actions of an SAE Campus Manager, the formal grievance should be referred to the Managing Director who may delegate to a member of the Executive Management Group.

The officer dealing with the formal grievance must:

- Acknowledge receipt of the grievance in writing within five working days; • advise, in writing and within five working days, any respondents to the grievance that a formal grievance has been received;
- Consider the evidence, written or otherwise, and, if necessary, hold such discussions with the complainant and any other persons deemed appropriate in order to fully investigate the grievance.

Having fully investigated the grievance over a period not normally exceeding ten working days from its receipt, the investigating officer shall:

1. Make a finding as to whether the grievance is justified or not; and
2. Either Recommend actions to address the grievance or dismiss the grievance

The investigating officer must:

- Make their decision known in writing to the complainant and to any respondents to the grievance;
- Make recommendations on actions to address the grievance;
- Set a time for the actions to be completed.

The investigating officer may convene a panel to address the grievance set out in the schedule of this policy.

If the investigating officer is not the Managing Director, a written report of the findings and actions must be provided to the Managing Director.
If disciplinary action is recommended then this recommendation is subject to confidential processes under the provisions of the Code of Conduct and Privacy Policy and must be immediately provided to the Managing Director.

All findings and recommendations must be reported directly to the Manager, Education Partnerships.

10.4. Appeals

If the student who has lodged the grievance is not satisfied with the decision at the conclusion of the Formal Stage, they may appeal in writing to the Manager, Education Partnerships. The complainant shall submit the appeal in writing within ten working days of

receiving the outcome of the Formal Stage.

The Manager, Education Partnerships, having received the appeal, shall:

- Acknowledge its receipt within seven working days; and
- Inform the investigating officer from the Formal Stage that an appeal has been received;

The appeal will be made on whether the decision was fair and due process was followed in considering the matter.

Possible outcomes of an appeal are to:

- Uphold the finding and recommendations of the Formal Stage; or
- Reverse the decision and make recommendations of actions; or
- Direct the Managing Director to commence a process of arbitration to resolve the issue without apportioning blame or fault.

The Manager, Education Partnerships will provide written advice on the appeal outcome no later than 15 working days from receipt of the appeal.

10.5. Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

A student may seek redress by making a complaint to the MOHE once the internal processes outlined above have been exhausted.

Schedule: Convening a Grievance Appeal Panel

- The Grievance Appeal Panel shall involve no more than three persons one of whom must be the investigating officer acting as Chair of the Panel. These shall be members of staff who have no actual or perceived interest in the complaint.
- A Grievance Appeal Panel shall hear the grievance within ten working days of receipt in accordance with the procedures detailed below.
- Following due consideration and the application of the procedural rules below, the decision of the Panel shall be by majority vote. If necessary the Chair shall have a casting vote.
- The Chair of the Panel shall submit, within ten working days of the Panel meeting, a written report to the Managing Director.
- The Chair of the Panel shall seek to ensure that any actions arising from the decision of the Panel are taken within the timescale identified in the report and shall report any failure to complete actions to the Managing Director and the Manager, Education Partnerships.

Procedural Rules for the Conduct of Grievance Appeal Panel Hearings

- Hearings shall take place in SAE Institute at dates and times notified in writing to the complainant, members of staff and other persons involved normally at least five working days before the hearing.
- The Chair of the Panel shall, at the same time as they notify the date of the

meeting, indicate the names of any persons that the Panel intends to call to give evidence together with a copy of any statement obtained from those persons which are to be referred to at the hearing.

- A support person may accompany the complainant or any respondents directly involved in the grievance. If the complainant or any respondent intends to be accompanied, the name and contact details of the accompanying person shall be notified to the Chair not less than twenty-four hours prior to the meeting of the Panel. Legal representation is not allowed at a hearing other than in exceptional circumstances with the discretion of the Chair of the Panel. The support person may not participate in the business of the Panel.
- At the discretion of the chair, the complainant and respondents directly involved in the grievance and persons accompanying them shall be permitted to question any persons giving evidence to the meeting and to directly address the Grievance Appeal Panel.
- If the complainant or any respondent wishes to introduce documents to the Panel they shall supply copies of all such documents to the Chair on receipt of notification of the meeting and normally at least three working days before the date of the hearing. The Chair shall ensure these papers are circulated as soon as possible to the other party and to all members of the Panel. The Chair may decide to give time to examine the documents by adjourning or delaying the meeting of the Panel for a period of up to five working days.
- The Panel shall meet in private, and attendance and participation of persons other than Panel members shall at all times be at the discretion of, and under the guidance of the Chair.
- The Panel shall initially decide and then inform all parties concerned how it will conduct the hearing subject to the procedures being consistent with the principles of these grievance procedures and of these procedural rules.
- The Panel shall establish the exact nature of the grievance, establish the facts as far as it is possible to do so, consider the facts in good faith, determine its decision, and report its decision in writing within five working days to the Regional Manager, copied to all parties involved in hearing the grievance.

11. Policy History

Revised: February 2015

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