Schiller International University
Student Grievance Policy and Procedure

Updated Sept 2026

Purpose

Schiller International University (SIU) is committed to providing a high-quality educational experience and a supportive learning environment across all its campuses. The University recognizes that concerns or grievances may arise and views complaints as an opportunity to review practices, improve services, and enhance the student experience.

This Student Grievance Policy and Procedure outlines how students may raise concerns and grievances, and how those grievances will be considered, investigated, and resolved in a fair, timely, and transparent manner.

Scope

This Policy applies to students enrolled at Schiller International University campuses located in **the United States and Europe**, including students who have recently completed their studies. The Policy establishes a common institutional framework. Where local law imposes additional or different requirements, those local requirements will take precedence.

A grievance may be made by:

- A currently registered student; or
- A former student provided the complaint is submitted within the timeframe set out in this Policy.

Group grievances may be submitted where multiple students raise the same issue and seek the same outcome. In such cases, students may be asked to nominate representatives for communication purposes.

What is a grievance?

A student grievance is defined as:

> *An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about an action or omission by the University, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the University.*

Examples include concerns relating to:

- Teaching and learning experience (excluding academic judgment)
- Student support services
- Administrative processes
- Facilities and resources
- Failure to follow published policies or procedures

What is not covered by this Policy?

The following are excluded from this Student Grievance Policy and are handled under separate procedures:

- Academic appeals against grades, progression, assessment outcomes, or academic judgment
- Student disciplinary matters
- Sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination
- Whistleblowing or public-interest disclosures
- Data protection or record access requests
- Admissions decisions or tuition and fee determinations

General Principles

Grievances under this Policy are handled in accordance with the following principles:

- **Fairness and impartiality**: Grievances are investigated by individuals with no prior involvement or conflict of interest.
- **Timeliness**: The University aims to complete the formal grievance process, including any internal review, within 90 calendar days, unless an extension is required for good reason.
- **Confidentiality**: Information is shared only with those who need it to investigate or resolve the complaint.
- **Non-retaliation**: Students will not be disadvantaged or subjected to retaliation for making a complaint in good faith.
- **Good faith engagement**: Grievances must be made honestly and respectfully. Grievances that are malicious, frivolous, or abusive may result in action under the Student Conduct Code.
- **Accessibility**: Reasonable adjustments will be made to support students with disabilities or other access needs.

Anonymous and Third-Party Grievances

Anonymous grievances will not normally be investigated, as anonymity may limit the University's ability to establish facts or offer remedies. However, the University may consider anonymous grievances where credible information suggests potential risk, misconduct, or non-compliance.

Grievances submitted by third parties (such as parents or representatives) will only be considered where the student has provided written consent.

Grievances about Members of Staff

Where a grievance is against a member of SIU staff the following principles apply**:**

- an assumption of no fault until the outcomes of the investigation finds differently.
- the right of the member of staff to be informed of the complaint and have access to any relevant evidence presented.
- the right of the member of staff to be accompanied to any discussions or meetings by a colleague or supporter.
- the right of the member of staff to know the outcome of the complaint; and
- confidentiality of the process.

Where a grievance involving an allegation of misconduct by a member of staff is upheld, this may form the basis of further action under the SIU Staff Disciplinary Policy.

The Grievance Procedure

Students are encouraged to raise concerns as soon as possible, normally within 10 working days of the issue arising. The grievance procedure operates through a structured, staged process designed to encourage early resolution of concerns while ensuring that more complex or serious matters may be investigated thoroughly and impartially where necessary. Students are expected to engage with each stage of the process in sequence, unless there are compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate. Progression through the stages allows for proportional handling of issues, clear communication of outcomes, and opportunities for review, while ensuring that grievances are resolved as efficiently, consistently, and fairly as possible.

Students may be accompanied by a friend or supporter to any discussions or meetings, but not by a legal representative. At least 48 hours before the discussion or meeting, you should advise the relevant member of staff (e.g. meeting secretary) of the name and status of the person accompanying you.

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Stage 1 provides an opportunity for concerns or grievances to be resolved promptly and informally at the earliest possible point, without the need for a formal investigation. Many issues can be addressed quickly through open discussion, clarification, or minor adjustments, and students are encouraged to engage with this stage wherever it is appropriate to do so. At Stage 1, concerns should be raised with the Associate Dean

At this stage, the University will seek to:

- understand the nature of the concern and the outcome the student is seeking
- provide information, explanations, or clarification where appropriate
- explore options for early resolution that are reasonable and proportionate and
- agree any practical steps that may address the issue

Stage 1 does not involve a formal investigation, and outcomes may include an explanation, an apology, informal corrective action, or referral to another appropriate process. Where a resolution is reached, the student will normally receive **written confirmation** of the outcome.

The University aims to provide a response at Stage 1 within **10 working days** of receiving the concern. If the issue cannot be resolved at this stage, if the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, or if the matter is not suitable for informal resolution due to its complexity or seriousness, the student may progress the complaint to Stage 2: Formal Grievance.

Stage 2: Formal Grievance

Stage 2 provides a structured process through which a grievance is **formally investigated** where it has not been resolved at Stage 1, or where informal resolution is not appropriate due to the seriousness or complexity of the issues raised. A student may submit a formal grievance, in writing, to the Director of Student Services or the Campus Director. This should normally be submitted within **10 working days** of receiving the Stage 1 outcome. Where Stage 1 has not been pursued, the student may be asked to explain why informal resolution was not appropriate.

Upon receipt of a Stage 2 grievance, the Director of Student Services or the Campus Director will acknowledge the grievance in writing and confirm the scope of the issues to be investigated. A member of staff with **no prior involvement in the matter**, and no conflict of interest, will be appointed as the investigator. The investigation may include:

- review of relevant documentation, correspondence, and records
- requests for written statements from relevant individuals

- meetings or interviews with the student and other relevant parties where appropriate; and
- consultation with other University offices where necessary

The grievance will be considered objectively and impartially, based on the available evidence, and to determine whether the grievance is upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld. The Director of Student Services or Campus Director will issue a written outcome within **15 working days** to the student addressing each point of the grievance and explaining the reasons for the decision. Where a grievance is upheld or partially upheld, the University may offer appropriate remedies, which may include an apology, clarification, corrective action, or service improvements.

If the student remains dissatisfied with the Stage 2 outcome, they may request an internal review under Stage 3.

Stage 3: Internal Review

Stage 3 is not a re-investigation of the grievance. It provides an opportunity for the student to request a review of the handling and outcome of the Stage 2 grievance, to ensure that the procedure was followed correctly and that the decision reached was reasonable in light of the evidence.

A request for Internal Review must normally be submitted to the Director of Student Services or the Campus Director within 10 working days of the Stage 2 outcome and must identify one or more of the following permitted grounds:

- a procedural irregularity occurred at Stage 2 that may have affected the outcome;
- new evidence has become available that could not reasonably have been provided earlier; or
- the Stage 2 outcome was unreasonable based on the evidence considered

The Internal Review will be carried out by a senior member of staff, committee, or review panel **not previously involved** in the grievance. The reviewer(s) will consider:

- the original grievance
- the Stage 2 investigation report and outcome
- the student's grounds for review; and
- any new evidence admitted under the review criteria

The Internal Review may conclude that:

- the original decision should stand

- the complaint should be reconsidered in whole or in part at Stage 2; or
- alternative or additional actions should be taken

The University will issue a **final written decision** explaining the outcome of the review and the reasons for it. This decision represents the completion of the University's internal grievance procedure.

Once Stage 3 has been concluded, students may, where applicable, pursue external routes of grievance in accordance with the guidance provided in this Policy.

In all other grievance matters, the student may present their grievance to the Campus Director if it relates to a Campus issue, to the University Provost if it relates to an academic issue, or to the University President/CEO if it relates to the Campus Director or the Provost. The Campus Director and/or University Provost will provide the student with an opportunity to present their case, present any evidence, and shall at the student's request, provide a decision in writing.

If a student does not feel that the school has adequately addressed a compliant or concern, the student may consider contacting the Accrediting Commission for Career Schools and Colleges. All complaints reviewed by the Commission must be in written form and should grant permission for the Commission to forward a copy of the compliant to the school for a response. This can be accomplished by filing the ACCSC Compliant Form. The complainant(s) will be kept informed as to the status of the complaint as well as the final resolution by the Commission. A copy of the ACCSC Compliant Form is available at the school, or may be obtained by contacting:

Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges
2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 302
Arlington, VA 22201
Telephone: +1 (703) 247-4212
Fax: 1-703-247-4533
Website: https://www.accsc.org
Email: complaints@accsc.org
Complaint : https://www.accsc.org/Student-Corner/Complaints.aspx

Out of State Students and Students attending the Tampa, Florida Campus may contact the:

Florida State Commission for Independent Education (CIE)
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1414
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
Telephone: +1 (888) 224-6684 (Toll Free in the U.S.A.)

E-Mail: cieinfo@fldoe.org

Distance Education Grievance Process

Students who are enrolled in a distance education program must go through the General Grievance process above. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, the student may also contact the following agency:

Florida State Commission for Independent Education (CIE)
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1414
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
Telephone: +1 (888) 224-6684 (Toll Free in the U.S.A.)
E-Mail: cieinfo@fldoe.org

Students that have completed the institution and State Entities' complaint process may appeal to the Council at: FLSARAinfo@fldoe.org. Additional information can be found at: https://www.fldoe.org/sara/student-concerns.html

Records and Monitoring

The University maintains a centralized record of all formal grievances, including:

- Nature of the grievance
- Actions taken
- Timelines
- Outcomes

Grievance data are reviewed periodically to identify trends and inform quality improvement. Records are retained in accordance with institutional retention schedules and regulatory requirements.

The University monitors the effectiveness and operation of this Student Grievance Policy and Procedure to ensure that it remains fair, effective, and compliant with applicable accreditation standards, regulatory requirements, and institutional expectations. This policy will be reviewed at least once every two (2) years, or more frequently if deemed appropriate by SIU.