



**A***ustralian*  
**M***usic*  
**E***xaminations*  
**B***oard*

**FEDERAL PRACTICAL AND WRITTEN  
COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURES**



## **1. Summary of Policy and Procedures**

From time to time, teachers, parents and/or candidates may wish to raise concerns with the Australian Music Examinations Board (Federal) relating to its examinations procedures. On such occasions a teacher or candidate may wish to lodge a formal complaint about the conduct of an examination or appeal a result.

The following procedures are designed to resolve complaints as quickly as possible, whilst ensuring that teachers, parents and/or candidates are not disadvantaged and that the rights of AMEB employees and examiners are not prejudiced. The procedures apply to only Federal Practical and written examinations (LMusA, LTMusA, FMusA, FSDA, ADPA, and LDPA)

A complaint or appeal must be lodged in writing and the grounds for the appeal should be clearly stated. The complaint or appeal should be addressed in writing to the General Manager Federal Office of AMEB Ltd and must be lodged within fourteen days of the teacher or candidate's receipt of the result for the particular examination. After due consideration of the issues raised and consultation with AMEB examiners, supervisors and administrators, as appropriate, a written response will be provided to the complainant. Due to the nature of these procedures, it may take several weeks to finalise the matter and provide a final reply. AMEB Federal will follow established procedures for the proper management of complaints and appeals and will endeavour to resolve any issues that are brought to its attention. All formal complaints will be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality and every effort will be made to reach a suitable resolution as quickly as possible. It is important to note that anonymous complaints are not accepted or acted upon.

## **2. Complaints**

There are three levels of complaint management:

- (a) Complaints are initially addressed to the General Manager Federal Office, AMEB Ltd;
- (b) Issues which require further consideration may be referred to a Federal Examiners' Committee;
- (c) Difficult issues requiring further resolution, or matters of a legal or more serious nature may be referred to the AMEB Federal Board

If a complaint is referred to the Federal Board the Board will:

- (a) review all relevant material;
- (b) discuss the issues with the person making the appeal and any other relevant parties as appropriate;



- (c) attempt to resolve the complaint through further conciliation and, if this is not possible, determine a course of action;
- (d) advise all the parties of the decision and the reasons for it.

The decision of the Federal Board will be binding and no further correspondence will be entered into.

### **3. Resolution of a Complaint**

Upon receipt of a response from the candidate (or if under the age of 18 their legal guardian) or teacher (but only if the teacher enrolled the student for the examination), the General Manager Federal Office in consultation, if necessary, with the relevant State Manager, will co-ordinate a response to the complainant or the person who is the subject of the complaint.

The focus of effective complaint resolution is conciliation. Conciliation may be achieved either by facilitating a meeting between the relevant parties (subject to the consent of all parties) or by discussing the issue with the parties separately. In all cases this may be done in person, by telephone or correspondence as is deemed appropriate.

Typically the outcomes of successful conciliation may be that:

- (a) the parties resolve their differences; or
- (b) the complaint is withdrawn; or
- (c) a reasonable compromise is agreed upon.

### **4. Further Conciliation**

If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, further conciliation may take place between the parties and the Federal Examiners' Committee. The Federal Examiners' Committee must make a decision after considering:

- (a) the substance of the complaint;
- (b) all relevant information; and
- (c) any relevant AMEB policy.

The decision may include one or more of the following:

- (d) conclusion that the complaint has been substantially resolved;
- (e) dismissal of the complaint
- (f) referral of the matter to the Federal Board with an appropriate recommendation.



## **5. Notification of Decision**

The Federal Examiners' Committee must provide a copy of the decision and reasons to the complainant or to the person who is the subject of the complaint.

## **6. Appeal**

Should the complainant or the person who is the subject of the complaint be unhappy with the decision, they may appeal to the Federal Board.

Any such appeal must be made in writing within 14 days of receiving a copy of the decision.

## **7. Grounds for Appeals Against Practical Examination Results**

Appeals simply questioning the result awarded without any specific grounds will not be accepted. Furthermore, it is not possible to appeal to change a grade from Award to Award with Distinction.

Appeals shall be considered on the following four criteria in cases where it is claimed that there was:

- (a) a material procedural error on the part of the examiner; **OR**
- (b) an apparent discrepancy between the examiner's written comments and the result awarded, in relation to the published criteria; **OR**
- (c) the examination report is inconsistent with syllabus objectives; **OR**
- (d) studio facilities had a direct and substantial adverse effect on the candidate's performance, as supported by a report from the Federal Examiner who was engaged for that examination

Appeals may be upheld by the AMEB if any one of the above four criteria is deemed to have been breached. In the case of an appeal being upheld, the candidate will normally be offered a free re-examination at the next Federal Examining session held in that State.



## **Appeals against Written Paper Results**

A request may be made for a written paper to be re-marked, provided an application in writing is lodged within 14 days of the date of the teacher or candidate's receipt of the result for the particular examination. A review fee of 75% of the entry fee will be payable before any action is taken.

Upon receipt of the candidate's request for review and the accompanying fee the Federal office will ask for the recall of the examination paper and report (or copies thereof) from the relevant State office.

A third examiner, equivalent in status and experience to the original examiners, will review the examination paper and report. The third examiner shall be appointed as the need arises.

The third examiner will then re-mark the paper, with an option to increase, decrease or let the original mark stand. In all situations, the mark of this third examiner shall be the final.

The third examiner will provide a written report on the paper, similar to the report written by the original examiners, which will substantiate the mark that has been awarded. The report of the third examiner together with the examination and original report will be forwarded to the State office so that the candidate's record can be updated if required. The Federal office will inform the candidate of the result.

The revised result will be entered into the official records. If the paper receives a "pass" mark when the original mark was "fail", the review fee shall be refunded in full.

Unless requested, candidates will not receive a copy of the third examiner's report.