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Complaint, Grievance and Dispute Resolution Procedure

1. Purpose

This procedure sets out how Fairbridge Education addresses complaints, grievances and disputes raised by students, prospective students, employers, third parties and other stakeholders, and applies to any disputes between Fairbridge Education and external parties.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to:

- Academic matters from students
- Non-academic matters from students
- Non-academic matters from persons seeking to enrol with Fairbridge Education in a VET course or unit of study.

3. Principles

Fairbridge Education ensures that:

- No fees are applicable or levied to the student or other complainant for any stage of the complaints process
- Complaints are assessed and resolved in a professional, fair and transparent manner
- Complainants are given an opportunity to formally present their case at no cost and be accompanied by a support person
- Decisions are merit-based, made with an open mind and without bias
- Support is provided to individuals who require assistance to lodge a complaint, e.g. language, literacy, disability or other access needs.

4. Complaint Resolution Process

Step 1: Informal Discussion

In the first instance, where appropriate, a complainant is encouraged to discuss the matter with the personnel, member or responsible person concerned. Where this is not considered appropriate, the complainant is encouraged to discuss the matter with Fairbridge Education management. If the complainant is satisfied with the outcome of the discussion, the matter is resolved.

Step 2: Lodge a Complaint

Any client may submit a complaint via discussion, telephone or in writing. Where a complaint is made verbally, Fairbridge Education will document the complaint in writing.

The complaint must include:

- Submission date of complaint
- Name of complainant
- Nature of complaint
- Date of the event which led to the complaint
- Any other relevant information or attachments (if applicable).

Step 3: Assessment

Fairbridge Education will commence assessment of the complaint within two (2) business days of it being made and finalise the outcome as soon as practicable, preferably on first contact if the complaint is straightforward. Complaints are assessed to assign priority, with personnel alert to the needs of students who are vulnerable or require special assistance.

Step 4: Acknowledgement

The Fairbridge Education Manager will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within two (2) business days and:

- Arrange a suitable time if needed to discuss the complaint
- Advise complainants of expected timeframes
- Give complainants a contact number and, where possible, the name of a contact person they can speak to about their complaint.

Step 5: Investigation and Decision

The RTO Manager will investigate the complaint or refer the matter to appropriate Fairbridge personnel to investigate. The investigation will be resolved, and decisions made on the complaint, within 20 working days of the complaint being received in writing. All complainants are given an opportunity to formally present their case at no cost and be accompanied and assisted by a support person at all relevant meetings.

Step 6: Outcome

All complainants are given a written statement of the outcome of the complaint, including detailed reasons for the outcome, explanations for decisions and remedies where appropriate. With this notification, all complainants will receive information on how they can progress their complaint if still unhappy.

Step 7: Escalation to the Chief Executive Officer

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may escalate the complaint in writing to the Fairbridge Chief Executive Officer. Escalated complaints must include:

- Submission date of complaint
- Name of complainant
- Nature of complaint
- Reasons why the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the original complaint
- Any other relevant information or attachments (if applicable).

Step 8: CEO Review and Final Outcome

The Fairbridge Chief Executive Officer will acknowledge receipt of the escalated complaint in writing within five working days and arrange a suitable time if needed to discuss the complaint. All complainants are given a written statement of the outcome of the complaint, including detailed reasons for the outcome, and information on how they can progress their complaint if still unhappy.

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5. Timeframes

If at any stage Fairbridge Education considers more than sixty (60) calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint, Fairbridge Education:

- Provides regular updates to the complainant where the complaint will take longer than usual to investigate or there is a delay
- Informs the complainant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required
- Regularly updates the complainant on the progress of the matter
- If the process is not finalised within 60 days, the complainant may choose to access external review options at any time.

6. External Review

If a complainant is not successful in Fairbridge Education's internal complaints handling process, the RTO advises the complainant within 5 working days of concluding the internal review of the complainant's right to access an external complaint handling and appeals process at no cost. Fairbridge Education gives complainants the contact details of the appropriate complaints handling and external appeals body (see the Complaints and Appeals Policy, "Complaints Key Contacts").

If the internal or any external complaints handling or appeal process results in a decision or recommendation in favour of a complainant, Fairbridge Education immediately implements the decision(s) or recommendation(s) and/or takes the preventive or corrective action(s) required by the decision and advises the complainant of that action in writing.

7. Recordkeeping

- All stages of the complaints process are documented, with notes provided to all parties involved
- Each complaint and its outcome are recorded in writing and stored on the Complaints Register
- Records of complaints and grievances are maintained confidentially
- Records are retained for a period of at least five years, with parties given appropriate access to their records.

8. Related Documents

- Fairbridge Education Complaints and Appeals Policy

9. Review and Amendment Log

Document No	**Version**	**Document Owner**	**Key Stakeholders**
RTO_SWI_004_V01	1.0	RTO Manager	All RTO Staff

Approval Date	Authorised by	Review Frequency	Next Review Date
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Review Version	Review Date	Context
1	27/08/2026	Creation of Complaint, Grievance and Dispute Resolution procedure document