Dispute Resolution Scheme Information Handout

The International Student Contract Dispute Resolution Scheme (DRS)

Fairway Resolution Limited administers a free, faster and more effective process for students to resolve contractual and financial disputes with education providers called the DRS (see iStudent Complaints). They can help international students resolve complaints with their education provider. The service was established by the Ministry of Education and forms part of The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021

Further information about the DRS is available on the New Zealand Government's legislation website.

What can FairWay Resolution do to help?

- iStudent Complaints is part of FairWay Resolution Limited, New Zealand's largest specialist dispute resolution organisation. FairWay provide nationwide dispute resolution and complaint management services, such as training and designing complaint systems as well as resolving disputes.
- iStudent Complaints resolves contractual and financial complaints between international students and their education providers. Most commonly, they are asked to assist in complaints that involve refund requests, for example if a student returns home before the end of their course or if they decide to switch programmes.
- They help in four different ways – facilitation, negotiation, mediation and adjudication. In most cases communication is key, and students and providers work things out between themselves with some independent assistance from iStudent Complaints. In the small number of cases where an agreement cannot be reached collaboratively, they can make an independent decision on the matter. https://www.istudent.org.nz/how-we-help

Can Ara colleagues refer international students to iStudent Complaints?

If we have reached the end of our internal complaints process and the matter is not resolved, then get in touch with the Ara Complaints Team complaints@ara.ac.nz . The Ara Complaints department can contact iStudent Complaints or we can refer the student to them directly.

At Ara, the Policy and Complaint Lead will manage the process and communications with the DRS. Link to the Ara complaints page: https://www.ara.ac.nz/about-us/complaints/