



**kia tau**  
YOUR EXPERTS  
IN DISPUTE  
RESOLUTION

**Ngā amuamu tauira**  
Study complaints



# 2025 Annual Report

**Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauira**

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**1 JULY 2024 TO 30 JUNE 2025**

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# WELCOME

# Haere mai

## Welcome to our 2025 Annual Report for Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauria.

Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauria is a free and independent dispute resolution service. We're here to help any international students or domestic tertiary learners who have unresolved complaints with New Zealand education providers. This report covers our first full operational reporting year - from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

We're pleased to see a steady flow of learners getting in touch with us. Across the 18 months that our service has been open, volumes have been very consistent. We have also seen a good balance in the enquiries with 49% being domestic tertiary and 51% being international students.

Refunds are the biggest theme across the year, with 31% of enquiries involving a refund request. In particular, many learners withdrawing within the first 10 working days have raised issues about their education provider retaining the maximum 25% possible by default without considering and providing a breakdown of actual costs incurred. We also have had several students who are experiencing exceptional circumstances get in touch with us for assistance as their education provider had not given fair and reasonable consideration to their personal situations.

In addition to financial matters, we can also assist with disputes about contracts. Examples include PhD candidates raising matters about their supervisor, disputes relating to the tuition fee charged, and disputes over costs believed to have been covered under a scholarship.

The final area where Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauria can assist is with redress claims following breaches of the Code of Pastoral Care and an investigation by the NZQA. One redress claim from a learner was accepted into our process this year.

Our approach is to resolve matters as early as possible. For the 42 disputes that were accepted as claims, 41% were resolved through facilitation. A further 23% reached an agreement together at mediation, and the remaining 26% required an adjudicator to make an independent decision on the matter.

Accessibility is important to us. This reporting year, we translated our website into six additional languages – Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Hindi, Japanese, Te Reo Māori and Samoan to support learners in finding information in their preferred language.

Outside of our core dispute resolution mahi, we also spend time raising awareness and sharing insights. Our team enjoyed engaging with learners at orientation events across the motu, providing presentations and training for the sector, and meeting with key agencies who support the learner community.

I would like to share my thanks with the amazing team of Resolution Coordinators, Resolution Facilitators and Resolution Practitioners behind this service, supported by Chris Pickering and Samantha de Coning. Your passion and dedication shines through each day.

Ngā mihi

### Jeanie Robinson

*Jeanie Robinson, Operations Manager - Commercial Services at Fairway Resolution Limited. As part of her role, Jeanie is responsible for Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauria.*



# 2025 IN REVIEW

# How we helped

Our process is designed to empower students and education providers to resolve matters early and through consensual means where possible. Our aim is to meet the needs of learners studying in Aotearoa, ensuring they have a voice in the process and their mana, identity and wellbeing is prioritised. If a student and their education provider are unable to reach an agreed outcome, Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Taura can provide finality through adjudication where a binding decision is issued.

Here is an overview of how we helped taura from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025:



208 enquiries

41% resolved  
in our 2<sup>nd</sup> phase

23% resolved  
at mediation

26% needed  
a decision made

1. Get started	2. Facilitation & negotiation	3. Mediation	4. Adjudication
We find out more about you and arrange any support you may need.	We let your education provider know and get you talking.	Collaborate and reach an agreement together at mediation.	We consider the dispute and make a decision during adjudication.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We received <b>208 enquiries</b></li><li><b>42</b> were accepted as claims</li><li>Including disputes carried over from last year, we had <b>223</b> enquiries and <b>11</b> claims on hand</li><li>We resolved or closed <b>44</b> claims.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>17 claims</b> were resolved through facilitation and negotiation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>6 claims</b> reached an agreement at mediation</li><li>67% resolved all matters</li><li>33% resolved some matters</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>18 claims</b> were adjudicated</li><li>3 were upheld</li><li>3 were partially upheld</li><li>12 were not upheld</li></ul>

## Overview of disputes

### Enquiries overview

For the period of 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 a total of 208 enquiries were received.

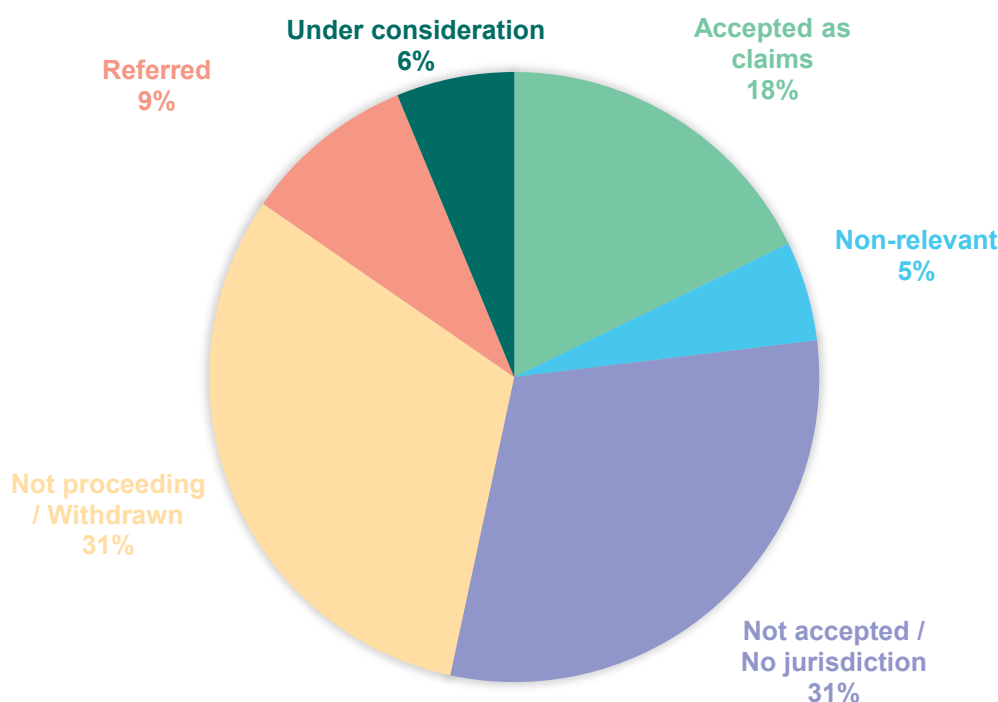
Of the total 208 enquiries, 102 were domestic and 106 were international students.

In addition, 15 enquiries carried over from the previous reporting period, bringing our total to 223 enquiries on hand this year.

**49%** were  
domestic students

**51%** were  
international  
students

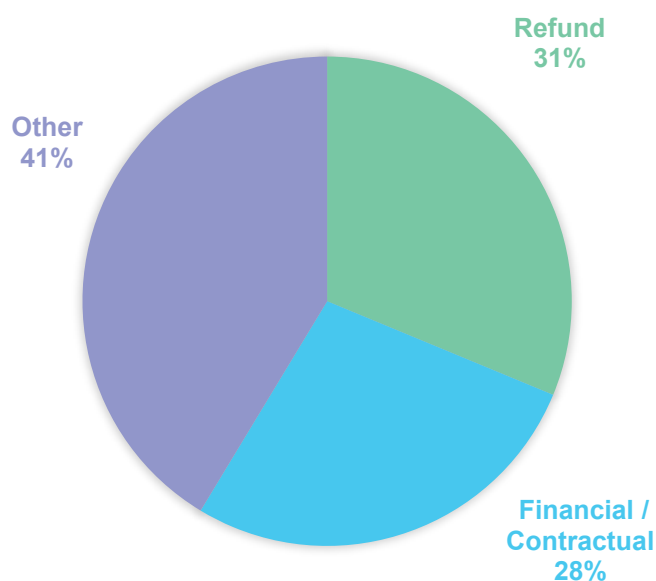
### Progression of enquiries received (combined – total 208)



The above chart shows the progression of enquiries in this period:

- 31% of enquiries did not proceed or were withdrawn – this includes disputes that were resolved early between the learner and education provider
- 31% of enquiries were not accepted and determined as outside of jurisdiction
- 18% were accepted as claims – progressing to our dispute resolution process
- 9% were referred to other agencies or complaints bodies for further assistance
- 6% remained on hand at the close of this period – under consideration by the team
- 5% of enquiries were recorded as non-relevant – for example, requests for resources.

## Nature of enquiries



The Education and Training Act 2020 enables us to resolve disputes between students (including former and prospective students) and providers or signatory providers relating to:

- (a) contractual and financial matters
- (b) a claim for redress for any loss or harm suffered by a student as a result of a breach by a provider or signatory provider of a code issued under section 534.

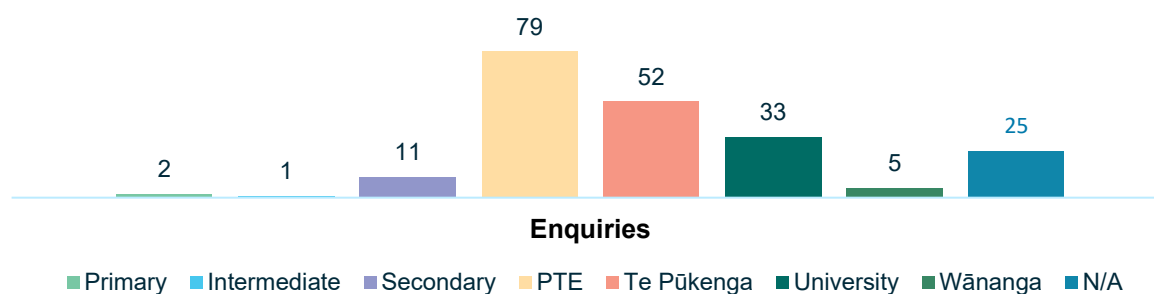
In this chart we show the main theme of enquiries. We provide a more detailed breakdown of categories below.

### Nature of enquiries (combined – total 208)

Nature of dispute	Domestic	International	Total
Compensation	3		3
Contractual/Financial	30	27	57
Course assessment	19	15	34
General enquiry	6	4	10
Not SC Issue*	23	16	39
Refund - Course Closure	1	4	5
Refund - Quality of Provision (Academic)	4	3	7
Refund - Safety and Wellbeing	5	6	11
Refund - Student Support advice and services	1	5	6
Refund - Visa issues		4	4
Refund - Withdrawal	10	22	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>208</b>

\*Not within jurisdiction for Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauira.

### Overview of enquiries by provider type (combined – 208 total)



## Claims overview

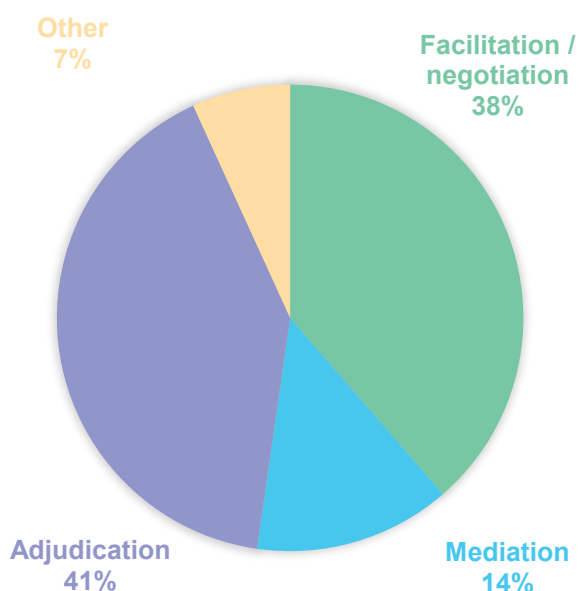
Within 10 working days of receiving an enquiry, we will either accept it as a claim, decline it, or ask for further information to help us decide whether we can accept it or not.

Of the 208 enquiries received during this reporting period, 42 were accepted as claims. An additional 13 claims were carried over from the previous reporting period.

### Overview of claims accepted (combined - total 42)

Accepted claims	International	Domestic	Total
<b>New claims accepted</b>	30	12	<b>42</b>
<b>Brought forward</b> (ongoing claims from previous reporting year)	8	5	<b>13</b>
<b>Total claims received</b>	38	17	<b>55</b>
<b>Claims closed during period</b>	28	16	<b>44</b>
<b>Claims remaining on hand</b>	10	1	<b>11</b>

### Overview of how claims were resolved (combined - 44 total)



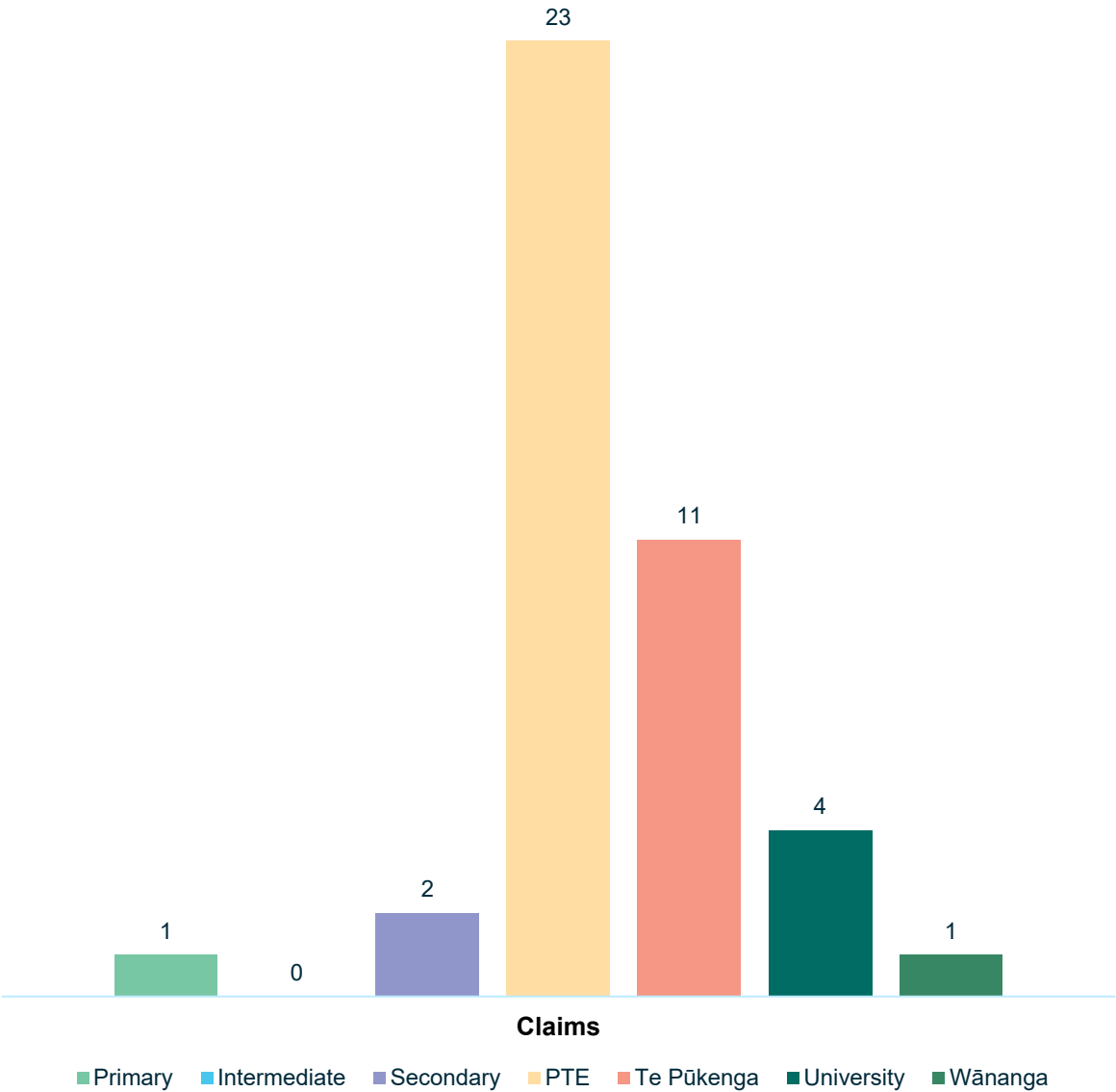
Of the total 55 claims on hand during this period (new cases and brought forward), 44 were resolved and closed as follows:

- 52% (23 claims) were resolved consensually
  - » 17 through facilitation and negotiation
  - » 6 through mediation
- 41% (18 claims) were adjudicated
  - » 3 claims were upheld
  - » 3 claims were partly upheld
  - » 12 claims were not upheld.
- 7% (3 claims) were withdrawn when the student did not pursue the matter.

The percentage of claims being adjudicated has increased from 27% to 41% in this full year. This is in part due to disputes being more developed and entrenched by the time they get to Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Taura. As students feel they have already been through a lengthy internal complaints process with their provider and early facilitation by Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Taura has not resulted in a resolution, the parties are increasingly declining to mediate and moving directly to adjudication.

**Claims received by provider type (combined – 42 total)**

Across all providers, most claims accepted were in relation to Private Training Establishments (PTEs), followed secondly by Te Pūkenga - Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics.



# THE DETAILS

## About disputes

### Overview of enquiries received (208 total)

Overview	Domestic	International	Total
Enquiries received	102	106	208
Accepted	11	26	37
Non-relevant	9	2	11
Not accepted / No jurisdiction	29	34	63
Not proceeding / Withdrawn	37	28	65
Referred	10	9	19 - 9 to NZQA, 8 to Universities NZ, 1 to BCITO, 1 to NZ Defence Force
Under consideration (as at 1 July 2025)	6	7	13

### Overview of enquiries by provider type (208 total)

All enquiries								
Provider	Primary School	Intermediate School	Secondary School	PTE	Te Pūkenga	University	Wānanga	N/A
Enquiries	2	1	11	78	51	33	5	27

### Overview of accepted claims (42 total)

Accepted disputes							
Provider	Primary School	Intermediate School	Secondary School	PTE	Te Pūkenga	University	Wānanga
International	1		2	18	6	3	
Domestic				5	5	1	1

### Overview of enquiries and claims that were referred to other agencies (19 total)

Referred enquiries to different body								
	Provider	Primary School	Intermediate School	Secondary School	PTE	Te Pūkenga	University	Wānanga
Enquiries	International				1	3	5	
	Domestic				1	4	3	2
Claims	International							
	Domestic							

## Breakdown of disputes (combined)

Overview of all disputes – by nature, provider type and outcome

Nature	Provider Type	Outcome	Total
Compensation	N/A	Non-Relevant	1
	PTE	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
	Te Pūkenga	Accepted	1
Compensation Total			3
Contractual/Financial	High School	Accepted	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
	N/A	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	4
		Under Consideration	3
	PTE	Accepted	7
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	4
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	6
		Under Consideration	1
	Te Pūkenga	Accepted	5
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	5
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	5
		Referred	1
	University	Accepted	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	3
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	5
		Referred	1
	Wānanga	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Under Consideration	1
Contractual/Financial Total			57
Course Assessment	N/A	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
	Primary School	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	PTE	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
		Referred	2
		Under Consideration	1
	Te Pūkenga	Accepted	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	5
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	4
		Referred	4
		Under Consideration	1
	University	Non-Relevant	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	4
		Referred	2

		Under Consideration	2
	Wānanga	Referred	1
Course Assessment Total			34
General Enquiry	High School	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	N/A	Non-Relevant	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
		Referred	1
	PTE	Non-Relevant	2
	Te Pūkenga	Referred	1
		Under Consideration	1
	University	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
General Enquiry Total			10
Not SC Issue	High School	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
	N/A	Non-Relevant	2
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	4
	PTE	Non-Relevant	2
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	4
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	3
	Te Pūkenga	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	8
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	3
		Referred	1
	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
		Referred	4
	Wānanga	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
		Referred	1
Not SC Issue Total			39
Refund - Course Closure	High School	Accepted	1
	PTE	Accepted	2
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
Refund - Course Closure Total			5
Refund - Quality of Provision	High School	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	N/A	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	PTE	Accepted	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
Refund - Quality of Provision Total			7
Refund - Safety & Wellbeing	PTE	Accepted	3
		Non-Relevant	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1

		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	3
		Under Consideration	1
	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
Refund - Safety & Wellbeing Total			11
Refund - Student Support Advice and Services	N/A	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	Primary School	Accepted	1
	PTE	Accepted	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	Te Pūkenga	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
Refund - Student Support Advice and Services Total			6
Refund - Visa Issues	N/A	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
	PTE	Accepted	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
Refund - Visa Issues Total			4
Refund - Withdrawal	High School	Accepted	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	Intermediate School	Non-Relevant	1
	N/A	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Under Consideration	1
	PTE	Accepted	8
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	4
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	9
		Under Consideration	1
	Te Pūkenga	Accepted	2
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
Refund - Withdrawal Total			32
Grand Total			208

## Breakdown of international student disputes

### Overview of international student disputes – by nature, provider type and outcome

Nature	Provider Type	Outcome	Total
Contractual/Financial	High School	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
	N/A	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
		Under Consideration	2
	PTE	Accepted	4
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
		Under Consideration	1
	Te Pūkenga	Accepted	3
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	4
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
	University	Accepted	1
		Not Accepted/No jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
		Referred	1
Contractual/Financial Total			27
Course Assessment	Primary School	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	PTE	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Referred	1
	Te Pūkenga	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
		Referred	2
	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	4
		Referred	2
		Under Consideration	1
Course Assessment Total			15
General Enquiry	N/A	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
	Te Pūkenga	Referred	1
		Under Consideration	1
	University	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
General Enquiry Total			4
Not SC Issue	High School	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
	N/A	Non-Relevant	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	PTE	Non-Relevant	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	Te Pūkenga	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	5
	University	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
	Referred	2	

	Wānanga	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
Not SC Issue Total			16
Refund - Course Closure	High School	Accepted	1
	PTE	Accepted	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
Refund - Course Closure Total			4
Refund - Quality of Provision	High School	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	PTE	Accepted	1
	University	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
Refund - Quality of Provision Total			3
Refund - Safety & Wellbeing	PTE	Accepted	3
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
	University	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
Refund - Safety & Wellbeing Total			6
Refund - Student Support Advice and Services	N/A	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	Primary School	Accepted	1
	PTE	Accepted	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	Te Pūkenga	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
Refund - Student Support Advice and Services Total			5
Refund - Visa Issues	N/A	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
	PTE	Accepted	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
Refund - Visa Issues Total			4
Refund - Withdrawal	High School	Accepted	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	N/A	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Under Consideration	1
	PTE	Accepted	7
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	6
		Under Consideration	1
	Te Pūkenga	Accepted	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
Refund - Withdrawal Total			22
Grand Total			106

## Breakdown of domestic tertiary student disputes

### Overview of domestic tertiary disputes – by nature, provider type and outcome

Nature	Provider Type	SR Response	Total
Compensation	N/A	Non-Relevant	1
	PTE	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
	Te Pūkenga	Accepted	1
Compensation Total			3
Contractual/Financial	High School	Accepted	1
	N/A	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
		Under Consideration	1
	PTE	Accepted	3
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	6
	Te Pūkenga	Accepted	2
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	3
		Referred	1
	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	4
	Wānanga	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Under Consideration	1
Contractual/Financial Total			30
Course Assessment	N/A	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
	PTE	Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	2
		Referred	1
		Under Consideration	1
	Te Pūkenga	Accepted	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	3
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	3
		Referred	2
		Under Consideration	1
	University	Non-Relevant	1
		Under Consideration	1
	Wānanga	Referred	1
Course Assessment Total			19
General Enquiry	High School	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	N/A	Non-Relevant	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
		Referred	1
	PTE	Non-Relevant	2
General Enquiry Total			6

Not SC Issue	N/A	Non-Relevant	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	4
	PTE	Non-Relevant	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	3
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	3
	Te Pūkenga	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	3
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	3
		Referred	1
	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Referred	2
	Wānanga	Referred	1
Not SC Issue Total			23
Refund - Course Closure	PTE	Accepted	1
Refund - Course Closure Total			1
Refund - Quality of Provision	N/A	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
	PTE	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
Refund - Quality of Provision Total			4
Refund - Safety & Wellbeing	PTE	Non-Relevant	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
		Under Consideration	1
	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
Refund - Safety & Wellbeing Total			5
Refund - Student Support Advice and Services	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
Refund - Student Support Advice and Services Total			1
Refund - Withdrawal	Intermediate School	Non-relevant	1
	PTE	Accepted	1
		Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	2
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	3
	Te Pūkenga	Accepted	1
		Not Proceeding/Withdrawn	1
	University	Not Accepted/No Jurisdiction	1
Refund - Withdrawal Total			10
Grand Total			102

## Learner nationality

While we record whether students are domestic or international, it is not mandatory for students to share their nationality or ethnicity with us.

## About claims

Nationality of learners with accepted claims (42 total)

Accepted Claims by Nationality							
Nationality	Primary School	Intermediate School	Secondary School	PTE	Te Pūkenga	University	Wānanga
China	1		2	5	3	1	
New Zealand				5	5	1	1
India				2	2		
Sri Lanka				3			
Papua New Guinea				1		1	
Bhutan				1			
Brazil				1			
Canada						1	
Chile				1			
Columbia				1			
Indonesia				1			
Russia				1			
Taiwan					1		
USA				1			

Māori student enquiries (3 total)

Nature of Dispute	Provider Type	Outcome	Total
Student support & wellbeing	PTE	Not accepted	1
Student support & wellbeing	Te Pūkenga	Accepted	1
Refund application	PTE	Not accepted	1

## Resolved claims

### Method of resolution

How domestic student claims were resolved by provider type (14 total)

Domestic students – Resolved claims				
	PTE	Te Pūkenga	University	Wānanga
Facilitation/ Negotiation	3	2	2	
Mediation	2			
Adjudication	2	2	1	

How international student claims were resolved by provider type (30 total)

International students – Resolved claims							
	Primary School	Intermediate School	Secondary School	PTE	Te Pūkenga	University	Wānanga
Facilitation/ Negotiation			1	6	4	2	
Mediation	1			2	1		
Adjudication				9	2	2	

### Outcome of adjudication

Adjudication in favour (including partially upheld) of:							
	Primary School	Intermediate School	Secondary School	PTE	Te Pūkenga	University	Wānanga
Student				3	1		
Provider				8	5	1	

### Average timeframes

Dispute resolution	Average length (days)
Facilitation/Negotiation	29
Mediation	48
Adjudication	132
Jurisdiction Challenged	42

Please note the above timeframes are based on the 42 claims received and the timeframes include the initial triaging of the cases.

# OPERATIONAL UPDATE

## Trends

### Refunds

Student refunds are still the main reason learners are reaching out to us.

### PhD candidates

There has been an increase in university students with complaints in relation to their PhD supervisor appointments or where their education provider has been unable to provide a suitable replacement supervisor. Universities New Zealand have not picked up these cases and we have limited any consideration to complaints with a contractual basis. Suitability of academic supervision is outside our expertise and jurisdiction. PhD complaints have also been received in relation to student support.

### Agents

There has also been an increase in complaints from international students in relation to study agents. A range of complaints included agents not refunding the fees to students when withdrawing and agents not completing the enrolment with the education provider, so the student is not registered when requesting a refund resulting in issues with the refunding route. One specific agent has seen two complaints raised in relation to refunds and has proven to be difficult to engage with by both Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauira and the education provider. This issue has been raised with the Ministry of Education. Questions of agency, whether or not the agent has a relationship with the education provider and if they are acting on behalf of the provider or not, need to be considered in cases like these as Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauira only has jurisdiction if this has been established.

### Complaint process accessibility

Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauira engaged with a PTE provider to make them aware that they did not have a clear complaint process accessible on their website. Accessibility of this provider's complaint process is an ongoing issue.

### Pastoral care

We are noticing an increase in complaints about pastoral care from students. The students are often unsure who to reach out to, so we support them to lodge their complaint with the correct service.

## Systemic issues

### Default application of refund policy

Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauria reported a systemic issue to the Ministry of Education when we observed a pattern of disputes relating to a single provider. When refunds are requested, the education provider is retaining the maximum 25% of tuition fees as a default, without providing the students with a breakdown justifying that these costs were incurred.

Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauria continued to deal with the cases individually after reporting the issue.

### Education provider closure

Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauria has been in contact with NZQA in relation to the provider of a training programme which has been unable to continue to offer students study. NZQA and another agency are working to get the provider re-approved. We are aware there are a large number of students with potential contract breaches and refund requests. We continue to keep in contact with NZQA to discuss the situation.

### Exceptional circumstances

We have observed a trend of complaints lodged where students have requested a refund under exceptional circumstances and these circumstances have not been given fair and reasonable consideration by their provide.

These complaints resulted in adjudication and some of the decisions issued by Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauria were upheld in favour of the students, finding the provider had not considered the situation the students found themselves in.

In our recent webinar series with NZQA, Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauria focused on this topic as an area for awareness and learning amongst education providers.

### Non-registered education provider

We received a number of complaints in relation to an international online education provider which is not registered as an education provider with the NZQA. We were unable to assist as they do not fall within our jurisdiction. We reported this to the Ministry of Education.

### Poor management and administration

We have also observed a series of enquiries from learners of an educational institute who are reporting poor management and administration. While these complaints are outside the jurisdiction of our service, we have referred the students to NZQA.

## Learner needs

Our service is designed to be learner-centric, each step of the way. Our process starts with the learner to ensure they have a voice and their mana, identity and wellbeing is prioritised.

Our team have hands-on experience working with learners from around the world and Aotearoa, designing dispute resolution processes that meet their needs and recognise their culture. Our approach is to ask each person about their needs and culture so we can design a process that works for them and ensure they can participate effectively.

For people who wish to have a Te Ao Māori approach, we have a range of options. We can appoint practitioners who conduct mediations in Te Reo Māori, we can provide a tikanga-based process, or our practitioners can use the Tūhono Māori mediation model which is a kaupapa Māori model of practice inspired by traditional Māori narratives and dispute resolution methodologies.

In addition to our in-house capability, our partnership approach supports us in meeting each learner's needs. Our practitioners include members of Laidlaw who specialise in providing a kaupapa Māori approach to dispute resolution. The Tūhono Collective have provided our team with training on tikanga-based dispute resolution and the Tūhono Model of Mediation. HIVĀ assist us in providing dispute resolution services that are embedded in Pacific values and ideologies. Asian Family Services provide support to our students, and we are supporting their team to develop their skills and experience in mediation. We have a wide team of practitioners and partners to draw upon.

Providing the support people need and ensuring that their specific cultural needs or circumstances are provided for within the process creates accessible services which empowers them to have a voice, facilitates participation and promotes positive outcomes.

### Examples in practice

- We have made interpreters and translators available for submissions and mediations.
- We also appointed a bilingual Resolution Coordinator to triage and support a case, allowing the student to express their concerns in their first language.

## Case study consent

Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauira has not been able to secure the consent of both parties involved in a dispute to publish an anonymised case study.

The Education (Domestic Tertiary Student and International Student Contract Dispute Resolution Scheme) Rules 2023 sets out that in compiling and publishing a case study, we must obtain the consent of the parties involved in the dispute or disputes on which the case study is based.

We are finding that either the education provider or student will decline consent if they believe the outcome to not have gone in their favour.

## Awareness and engagement

Our team spend time raising awareness and sharing insights with both the learner and education provider communities. Here are a selection of highlights from the last year:

- Attending and presenting at the Australia & New Zealand Education Law Association (ANZELA) National Conference 2024 in Hobart, Tasmania
- Engaging at a local school level by attending school cluster meetings in Auckland to discuss international student disputes
- Meeting with student representatives on-campus at the University of Otago in Dunedin
- Connecting with the National Disabled Students Association
- Online presentations to providers and students in Christchurch and Dunedin
- Hosting a stall at the Tsingmiao:Careers Lab 2024 event arranged by the Auckland University Chinese Student Society (AUCSS)
- Information stands at orientation events for the Massey University campuses in Auckland and Wellington and at the University of Auckland.

## Financial update

For the year 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

2025	
\$000	
<b>Income</b>	<b>515</b>
Personnel	204
Other **	353
Operating costs	557
<b>Operating surplus</b>	<b>-42</b>

\* Presented as an extract from financial statements prepared for FairWay Resolution Holdings Limited.

\*\* Other includes Interpreters, Occupancy, ICT, Finance, HR Support, and Travel.

## Feedback

Here is a selection of comments from education providers:

"Thank you again for finalising a resolution for [student name] on this complaint."

"Thank you for your decision, which we accept. I am afraid we have slipped up on this one. Apologies, and thank you for your good work on behalf of students and schools."

"I appreciate your assistance and will happily work with Study Complaints again in the future."

"We also appreciate your support for the student in raising their concerns with us."

"Thank you for the final report. Also thank you for your support throughout the process."

"I sincerely appreciate your support in handling this case and working towards its resolution."

Here is a selection of comments from students:

"Thank you sincerely for your support and coordination.... I'm truly grateful for the goodwill, fairness, and effort shown to help resolve my case... I made sure to highlight the integrity of New Zealand's adjudication process and acknowledged the positive work being done here to protect students' rights... I believe organizations like yours play a crucial role in maintaining justice and fair standards."

"Thank you very much for your coordination and help, after the mediation the complaint has been resolved, and the cancellation fee has been finally set at an acceptable %."

"I feel relieved now. Really appreciated your support and quick action on this matter."

"It feels good that we have agreed on a payment plan, I really appreciate your help."

"Thank you very much for all your help, it's been a long process and I'm grateful for all your efforts to get this issue resolved!"

"I'm truly grateful for your continued support and coordination... I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for your guidance and kind assistance at every step. Your help was instrumental in navigating this dispute and reaching such a positive outcome. My heartfelt gratitude goes out to you—without your support, this result would not have been possible. You have truly been the pillar of my success story. I would also like to express my appreciation to the adjudicator for their fair and unbiased decision-making. It is reassuring to know that there are impartial and thorough processes in place to support students when challenges arise. Lastly, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the entire Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauira team. Your commitment to ensuring fairness and justice in disputes between students and education providers is an invaluable service, and I deeply appreciate the role you play in supporting students like myself."



**kia tau**  
YOUR EXPERTS  
IN DISPUTE  
RESOLUTION

**Ngā amuamu tauira**  
**Study complaints**



## Study Complaints | Ngā Amuamu Tauira

**Free phone:** [0800 00 66 75](tel:0800 00 66 75)

**Email:** [help@studycomplaints.org.nz](mailto:help@studycomplaints.org.nz)

**Web:** [www.studycomplaints.org.nz](http://www.studycomplaints.org.nz)