

1 Purpose and Scope

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure positive relationships with members, stakeholders and others through effective management of complaints. We view complaints as a positive part of our feedback and continuous improvement process.

This policy provides guidelines to the Board, staff, members and other Linkwest stakeholders to achieve resolution of complaints in a positive manner, as quickly, fairly and effectively as possible. Maintaining a good relationship throughout the complaints process and the satisfactory resolution of any complaint will be the ultimate goal for all parties.

1.2 Scope

This policy sets out the policy framework for the handling of complaints made by organisations, or by individuals who are not staff members of Linkwest.

2 Related Documents

The following Linkwest documents either contain references to this policy or are referred to in it:

- 8-002 Complaints Procedure
- 8-003 Complaints Record Form
- 8-004 Complaints Register

Note: Linkwest Staff, Board or Volunteers with a problem, concern or complaint are to refer to:

- 4-004 Grievance Policy

3 Relevant Legislation

Linkwest Constitution

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Privacy Act 1988

Privacy Act Amendments 2012 and 2017

Racial Discrimination Act 1975

Equal Employment Opportunity Act (WA) 1984

Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981

4 Definitions

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| Complaint | A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made by either an organisation or an individual who is not a Linkwest staff member. A complaint can be made either orally or in writing. |
| Complainant | An organisation or individual who makes a complaint. |
| Grievance | Any type of problem, concern or complaint where a staff member believes that they have received unreasonable treatment from Linkwest or other staff, or a board member has a grievance in relation to another board member or a staff member. |
| Staff | Paid employees, volunteers, students on placement. |

5 Background

Complaints may be raised as a result of our actions, perceived actions or omissions.

Complaints can have a major impact on our organisation. Complaints which are not resolved successfully can cause negative consequences such as negative perceptions and dissatisfaction within our membership and amongst our stakeholders and damage to our reputation.

6 Policy

6.1 Approach to Complaints

We view complaints as an opportunity to receive feedback and to review and evaluate our performance.

Where complaints occur within the context of our relationship with partners or stakeholders, we will deal with each relationship separately. A complaint will be addressed according to the arrangements (such as those included in contracts or memorandums of understanding) which apply to that particular relationship.

In addition to our complaints process we will actively engage with members and other stakeholders to obtain feedback and improve our services

6.2 Provision of information

We will provide information about this policy and the Complaints Procedure on our website and in other public sources of information.

We will provide our staff with details of the policy and procedure to ensure that they are aware of how to respond to complaints.

6.3 Complaints process

The CEO is responsible for overseeing the complaints process and reporting on the outcome of each complaint to the Board.

- We will deal with complaints promptly and transparently, and keep all parties involved informed of the progress of the complaint.
- We will ensure that complainants are aware that they have the right to request that a witness is present at any meetings about the complaint.
- We will keep confidential records of all complaints.
- The Board will appoint a Complaints Auditor annually, and the CEO will provide the records of each complaint to the Auditor as soon as it is resolved.
- The Complaints Auditor will in each case review the process used to ensure that it complies with this policy and with the principles of natural justice.
- We will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and of the Complaints Procedure.

6.4 Responsibilities

The CEO will appoint a person to manage each complaint, and this person is responsible for ensuring that:

- The complaint is dealt with promptly.
- Everyone involved is informed of their rights and responsibilities.
- The complaint is investigated thoroughly.
- All parties involved are kept informed about the progress of the complaint.
- A confidential record is kept of the complaint and the process used to resolve it.

The CEO is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the complaint is managed effectively and resolved.
- Providing the records of each complaint to the Complaints Auditor.

7 Document History

| Document name: | | | |
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| Version number | Version date | Approved by | Description of changes |
| 3.0 | 28 Jan 2020 | Board | <p><i>2. Related Documents</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed grievance documents • Added complaint documents • Added notation for staff/ board with issues to refer to Grievance Policy. <p>Added Grievance to list of definitions. Formatting changes for readability.</p> |
| 2.0 | 12 Jan 2017 | Board | <p>Document Format Changes Separation of complaints and grievance policy Complaints policy modified to mirror that of CCSA</p> |
| 1.0 | 21 Mar 2013 | Board | Adopted |