COMPLIMENTS, CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

V5 SEPTEMBER 2026

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Review Date	August 2027

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Version 2 Sept 24	Minor wording and formatting changes
Version 3 Sept 25	New sections added: Legal and Regulatory Framework. Scope, Roles and Responsibilities and Principles. Cross reference with AIM Qualifications Policy.
Version 4 Oct 25	Minor review and formatting amendments.
Version 5 Sep 26	Policy comprehensively revised and restructured. Simplified complaints procedure, updated legal framework and statutory references, strengthened safeguarding, clarified roles and responsibilities, improved accessibility and readability, and aligned with policy framework.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Overworld AMP Limited ("the Provision") is committed to providing high-quality, person-centred support and education. We value feedback from young people, parents, carers, commissioners, partner organisations and members of the public as an important part of continually improving our services.

We welcome compliments as an opportunity to recognise good practice and celebrate the positive experiences of those who work with us. We also encourage concerns to be raised as early as possible so they can often be resolved quickly, fairly and informally.

Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, or where someone wishes to make a formal complaint, the Provision will investigate the matter thoroughly, impartially and without prejudice.

Everyone raising a compliment, concern or complaint will be treated with respect. We are committed to responding openly, learning from feedback and using it to improve the quality and safety of our provision.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to ensure that this procedure is accessible to everyone.

2. SCOPE

2.1 This policy applies to:

- 2.1.1 Young people accessing the Provision.
- 2.1.2 Parents, carers and family members.
- 2.1.3 Commissioners, partner schools and Local Authorities.
- 2.1.4 Members of the public and prospective service users.
- 2.1.5 All employees, volunteers and contractors.

2.2 This policy covers:

- 2.2.1 Compliments about any aspect of the Provision.
- 2.2.2 Concerns that can usually be resolved informally.
- 2.2.3 Formal complaints regarding the quality of services provided by the Provision.

2.3 This policy does not apply to:

- 2.3.1 Safeguarding concerns (see the *Young Person Protection Policy*).
- 2.3.2 Staff grievances and disciplinary matters *(Employee Handbook)*.
- 2.3.3 Whistleblowing concerns *(Employee Handbook and Young Person Protection Policy)*.
- 2.3.5 Appeals in the context of education *(Qualifications, Certificated Learning and Exams Policy)*.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND GUIDANCE

The Provision operates in accordance with relevant legislation and recognised good practice. This policy is informed by:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)

Where complaints relate to regulated qualifications, the relevant awarding organisation's procedures will also apply.

4. AIMS

The aims of this policy are to:

4.1 Welcome and value compliments, concerns and complaints.

4.2 Resolve concerns at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

4.3 Ensure complaints are handled fairly, consistently and without prejudice.

4.4 Promote openness, transparency and accountability.

4.5 Protect confidentiality whilst meeting safeguarding responsibilities.

4.6 Learn from feedback to improve the quality of our provision.

4.7 Ensure complaints are managed within agreed timescales wherever reasonably practicable.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The **CEO** has overall responsibility for ensuring that compliments, concerns and complaints are managed fairly, consistently and in accordance with this policy. The CEO will:

- 5.1.1 Ensure formal complaints are acknowledged and managed within the agreed timescales.
- 5.1.2 Appoint an appropriate Investigating Officer where required.
- 5.1.3 Review investigation findings and communicate Stage 1 outcomes.
- 5.1.4 Ensure learning from complaints informs service improvement.

5.2. **The Senior Leadership Team** will:

- 5.2.1 Support the early and informal resolution of concerns wherever appropriate.
- 5.2.2 Promote a positive culture where feedback is welcomed and valued.
- 5.2.3 Monitor complaints to identify themes, trends and opportunities for improvement.
- 5.2.4 Escalate matters appropriately where safeguarding, quality or governance concerns are identified.

5.3 **The Investigating Officer** will:

- 5.3.1 Conduct investigations fairly, objectively and without conflict of interest.
- 5.3.2 Gather and review relevant information.
- 5.3.3 Speak with those involved where appropriate.
- 5.3.4 Produce a written summary of findings and recommendations.

5.4 Where a Stage 2 review is requested, the **Chief Operations Officer or an appropriately appointed independent person** will:

- 5.4.1 Review the complaint independently.
- 5.4.2 Consider all available evidence.
- 5.4.3 Reach a fair and impartial decision.
- 5.4.4 Provide the complainant with a written outcome.

5.5 **The Training and Quality Manager** will:

- 5.5.1 Coordinate the administration of complaints.
- 5.5.2 Maintain confidential records.
- 5.5.3 Monitor complaints and identify recurring themes.

5.5.4 Ensure this policy is reviewed regularly and updated in line with legislation and best practice.

5.6 **All Staff** will:

5.6.1 Listen respectfully to compliments, concerns and complaints.

5.6.2 Seek to resolve concerns informally where appropriate.

5.6.3 Escalate concerns in accordance with this policy.

5.6.4 Maintain confidentiality and accurate records.

5.6.5 Report safeguarding concerns immediately in accordance with the *Young Person Protection Policy*.

5.7 **Anyone raising a concern or complaint** is encouraged to:

5.7.1 Raise the matter as soon as reasonably practicable.

5.7.2 Provide clear information to help the Provision understand the issue.

5.7.3 Engage respectfully throughout the process.

5.7.4 Work collaboratively towards an appropriate resolution.

6. RAISING A COMPLIMENT, CONCERN OR COMPLAINT

6.1 We welcome **compliments** and encourage people to tell us when they have had a positive experience with the Provision. Compliments help us to recognise good practice, celebrate staff achievements and continue to improve our services.

Compliments can be shared in person, by telephone, by email or in writing.

6.2 A **concern** is an expression of worry or dissatisfaction that someone would like resolved.

Most concerns can be resolved quickly through open and respectful discussion. We encourage concerns to be raised as soon as possible with the member of staff involved or a member of the Senior Leadership Team so that we can work together to find an appropriate resolution.

Where a concern cannot be resolved informally, it may be progressed as a formal complaint.

6.3 A **complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction about the Provision, the services we provide, or actions taken (or not taken) by the Provision.

Formal complaints should normally be made within **10 working days** of the incident or of the matter coming to the complainant's attention. Complaints received outside this timeframe may still be considered where there are exceptional circumstances.

6.4 **Resolution Process:**

Step 1 – Raise the concern

Speak with the member of staff involved or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Many concerns can be resolved quickly without the need for a formal complaint.

Step 2 – Submit a Stage 1 Complaint

If the matter remains unresolved, complete the *Stage 1 Complaint Form* (Appendix 1) and submit it to the Provision. Complaints may also be submitted in writing or by email where completing the form is not possible.

Step 3 – Request a Stage 2 Review

If you remain dissatisfied with the Stage 1 outcome, you may request a Stage 2 Review by completing the *Stage 2 Complaint Form* (Appendix 2).

Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to ensure this procedure is accessible to everyone.

6.5 **Anonymous complaints** will not normally be investigated, however, where the information raises safeguarding concerns or identifies a significant risk, the Provision may investigate where appropriate.

6.6 Where a concern or complaint identifies a **safeguarding concern**, it will be managed immediately in accordance with the Provision's Young Person Protection Policy. Where necessary, the complaints procedure may be paused while safeguarding enquiries are undertaken.

7. FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

7.1 Where a concern cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint may be made using the Stage 1 Complaint Form (Appendix 1).

7.2 The following timescales normally apply:

Stage	Timescale
Acknowledge Stage 1 complaint	Within 2 working days
Stage 1 investigation and outcome	Normally within 10 working days
Request Stage 2 Review	Within 10 working days of the Stage 1 outcome
Stage 2 Review outcome	Normally within 10 working days

7.3 If it is not possible to meet these timescales, the complainant will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable, together with the reason for the delay and a revised timescale.

7.4 Stage 1 complaints will be managed as follows:

7.4.1 The complainant must complete the Stage 1 Complaint Form (Appendix 1).

7.4.2 The complaint should include:

- details of the complaint;
- any action already taken;
- why the matter remains unresolved;
- the outcome being sought; and
- any supporting information.

8. STAGE 2 REVIEW

8.1 If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the Stage 1 outcome, they may request a Stage 2 Review by completing the *Stage 2 Complaint Form* (Appendix 2) within **10 working days** of receiving the Stage 1 decision.

8.2 The request should explain:

8.2.1 Which aspects of the complaint remain unresolved.

8.2.2 Why the Stage 1 outcome is being challenged.

8.2.3 The outcome being sought.

8.3 The Stage 2 Review will be undertaken by the Chief Operations Officer or an appropriately appointed independent person who has had no previous involvement in the complaint.

8.4 The review may include:

- reviewing the Stage 1 investigation and outcome;
- considering any additional relevant information;
- meeting with the complainant and/or relevant staff where appropriate.

8.5 Following the review, the complaint may be:

- upheld;
- partially upheld; or
- not upheld.

8.6 The complainant will receive a written outcome, including the reasons for the decision and any actions arising from the review, normally within 10 working days. If it is not possible to meet these timescales, the complainant will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable, together with the reason for the delay and a revised timescale.

8.7 The Stage 2 Review is the Provision's final internal stage. Where appropriate, the complainant will be advised of any relevant external organisations to which they may refer the matter.

9. RECORD KEEPING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

9.1 All compliments, concerns and complaints will be recorded and retained securely in accordance with the Provision's Data Protection Policy and Records Management procedures.

9.2 Information will be shared only where there is a lawful basis to do so or where safeguarding, legal or contractual responsibilities require it.

9.3 Records will include:

- the nature of the concern or complaint;
- actions taken;
- the outcome;
- any recommendations or learning identified.

9.4 Data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information where it is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

10.1 The Provision will monitor compliments, concerns and complaints to identify themes, trends and opportunities for improvement.

10.2 Learning arising from complaints will inform staff development, quality assurance, policy review and service improvement.

10.3 This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes in legislation statutory guidance or operational practice require.

APPENDIX 1 – STAGE 1 COMPLAINT FORM

Before completing this form, we encourage you to discuss your concern with the member of staff involved or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Many concerns can be resolved quickly without the need for a formal complaint.

Your Details

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

1. What is your complaint?

2. What has happened so far?

(Who have you spoken to? What actions have already been taken?)

3. Why are you dissatisfied with the outcome?

4. What outcome are you hoping for?

5. Supporting information

(List any documents or evidence you wish to provide.)

Signature:

Date:

For office use only
Date received:
Received by:
Acknowledged on:
Reference number:

APPENDIX 2 – STAGE 2 REVIEW REQUEST

Your Details

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

1. Which part of the Stage 1 outcome do you disagree with?

2. Why do you believe the Stage 1 decision should be reviewed?

3. Is there any additional information you would like the reviewer to consider?

4. What outcome are you seeking?

Signature:

Date:

For office use only
Date received:
Received by:
Acknowledged on:
Reference number: