

U3A CLARENCE INC

GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a mechanism for dealing with issues that may arise in relation to the activities or operation of U3A Clarence, particularly any matters arising from non-compliance with the U3A Clarence Code of Conduct.

Policy

This policy states how U3A Clarence will deal with any member or tutor grievances, complaints or disputes. It gives the Committee of Management the responsibility and authority to advise and request changes in behaviour, or warn and, if necessary to exclude a member or tutor. The policy is to be read in conjunction with the U3A Clarence Code of Conduct.

Informal Procedure

Our aim is to achieve conciliation and the resolution of complaints quickly and confidentially, and with fairness, sensitivity and understanding. It is expected that parties to a dispute will attempt to resolve the dispute between themselves within fourteen days of the dispute coming to the attention of each party.

Where a complaint or grievance can not be resolved informally, any of those involved may request a formal grievance process.

Formal Procedure

1. A formal written complaint can be made by letter or email addressed to the President or Secretary of U3A Clarence. Any formal complaints will be logged and registered by the Secretary, with all notes and documentation stored in a secure place.
2. A Grievance Officer will be appointed by the President. This may be the President, Secretary or other member of the Committee of Management, or the President may delegate the role to a member of the organisation.
3. A confidential meeting between the complainant and the Grievance Officer will be organised to ascertain the details of the complaint and the complainant's expectations of the grievance process, and to advise the complainant of their right to have support throughout the grievance process. The complainant will also be advised that the subject of the complaint has the right to know the details of the complaint and that the identity of the complainant will be revealed in the course of the grievance procedure, unless there is reason to be concerned for the complainant's safety.
4. The Grievance Officer will then meet with the person/s named in the complaint to make that person aware of the complaint, of their right to have support throughout the grievance process, and to enable them to respond fully to any formal allegation/s made.
5. A meeting between the parties to the complaint and the Grievance Officer will be held, with a view to finding common ground and achieving a resolution.
6. If the matter is not resolved through this process, the Grievance Officer may involve other members of the Committee of Management as appropriate. If necessary, the CoM

may choose to appoint a mediator who is acceptable to both parties and who will ensure that natural justice is accorded to all participants. The outcome of the mediation will be binding.

7. If a meeting of the parties is not possible, or if the matter remains unresolved after mediation, the CoM retains the right to impose disciplinary action on the person who is the subject of complaint. Possible disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to
 - requiring the offender to make a formal apology to the complainant
 - giving the offender an official warning
 - cancellation of membership or tutorship.

If cancellation of membership or tutorship is the proposed course of action, the U3A Clarence Rules of the Association give the member or tutor to be expelled 'the right of appeal to a General Meeting, and a Special General Meeting to hear the appeal shall be called within twenty-one days of the receipt by the Secretary of written notice of appeal'.

8. Confidential written reports will be prepared after each meeting conducted during the grievance procedure and provided to the CoM.
9. U3A Clarence will maintain confidential written records of all formal grievance processes undertaken, including details of all actions taken to resolve or attempt to resolve each grievance and the outcomes of these actions. Such records will be retained for three years and then destroyed, unless a further complaint is made about the same member or tutor during that time, in which case the record will be retained for six years. During this period, any complainant or any member or tutor about whom a complaint has been lodged may request the President to provide access to these records, at a time and place that is mutually convenient.

Responsibilities

The Committee of Management of U3A Clarence is responsible for

- establishing, implementing, publishing and reviewing this policy
- treating all complaints seriously and confidentially
- taking immediate and appropriate action in response to complaints made
- investigating formal complaints promptly, in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy
- instituting disciplinary action as/if appropriate
- maintaining confidential and secure written records of each formal process.

Authorisation

The adoption of this Grievance Policy and Procedure by the Committee of Management of U3A Clarence Inc was recorded in the minutes of the Committee meeting of 19 March 2018 and approved for publication on its website.

Policy Review Date: March 2021

Related Policies/Documents

U3A Clarence Inc's: Rules of the Association; Code of Conduct; Privacy Policy.