

Grievance Policy & Procedure

1. What is a grievance?

A grievance is a concern, complaint or dispute involving U3A Strathalbyn - for example between two members, between a member and a tutor, or concerning behaviour, fairness, or breach of the Code of Conduct. Matters of a criminal nature are referred to authorities.

2. Our guiding principles

All grievances will be handled with respect, confidentiality, natural justice, promptness, and support for all parties. Wherever possible, we aim for informal resolution first.

3. What you can expect

You will be heard fairly, informed of any decision, and allowed to appeal if dissatisfied. The process will be impartial and respectful.

4. How to resolve a grievance

Informal / Direct Approach:

Speak calmly with the person involved. Most issues can be resolved this way.

Formal Procedure: (Suggested timeframe for steps 1-5: 14 days)

1. Member lodges in writing to the President or Secretary. The matter will be referred to either delegates or the full
2. Committee.
3. Committee or delegates acknowledge receipt of the above and notifies the other party.
4. Committee or delegates investigate.
5. Resolution meeting. Both parties may be accompanied by a support person.
6. Written decision issued.
7. Decision may be appealed within 14 days and will be reviewed by an impartial panel not previously involved.

If unresolved, parties may seek external mediation or statutory bodies such as the Ombudsman or Equal Opportunity Commission.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

President/Grievance Officer: oversees fairness and confidentiality.

Committee: ensures policy is followed.

Members: act respectfully and honestly in all stages of the process.

6. Confidentiality & Records

All records are confidential. Reports may be anonymised for committee learning. Policy reviewed every 2 years or as needed.

7. Simplified Flow

Issue arises → Attempt informal resolution → If unresolved → Lodge written complaint → Investigation → Meeting → Decision → Appeal → Final decision.

8. Your Rights

To be heard, to respond, to bring a support person, to receive written reasons, and to appeal fairly.

Adapted from U3A Australia examples and community best practice.