

Complaints Procedure Policy

POLICY

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for any member who wishes to make a complaint
- To publicise the existence of its complaints procedure so that members know how to contact us to make a complaint
- To ensure U3AC staff and members know what to do if a complaint is received
- To ensure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- To ensure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information which helps U3AC to improve its practices

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by a member, whether justified or not, about any aspect of U3AC which has not been resolved by discussion with staff or Officers.

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, the complainant will be given the opportunity to follow the formal complaints procedure.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively; only those who need to know will be informed and information will be treated according to the requirements of GDPR.

Sending Complaints

Written complaints may be sent to the U3AC office by post or e-mail.

Verbal complaints may be made by phone or in person to the U3AC Office Manager or any Council member.

PROCEDURES

Procedure for receiving complaints

The person who receives a complaint by telephone or in person should record the details as follows:

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address, email address and telephone number
- Tell the complainant that U3AC has a complaints procedure
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

Resolving Complaints Stage 1

- In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the problem being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.
- If the person receiving the complaint is not responsible for the problem, it should be referred to the person who is responsible and an attempt made to deal with the complaint.
- If it is not appropriate for that person to take responsibility for dealing with the complaint it should be reported to the Chair of the Council who will designate a Council member to deal with the next stage.

Resolving Complaints Stage 2

- The designated Council member should consult any U3AC Officers or staff who may have an interest in the issues raised by the complainant.
- Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, information on the complaint on should be passed to the Chair of the Council within a week.
- If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.
- Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within a week. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a full reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached.
- Ideally complainants should receive a full reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
- Whether the complaint is considered justified or not, the full reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

Resolving Complaints Stage 3

- If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 2 they can request that the complaint be reviewed by the Council and it will first be passed to the Secretary
- The request for review by Council should be acknowledged within a week of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say when the complainant can expect a reply.
- The Secretary may investigate the facts of the case or, where appropriate, ask another Officer to do so (providing this does not create a conflict of interest).
- If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed that it is to be dealt with by Council and given a further opportunity to respond.
- The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage 1 should be kept informed of what is happening.
- Ideally complainants should receive a full reply within four weeks of the request. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
- Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.
- The decision taken at this stage is final.

U3AC views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person who made the complaint.

Approved by Council: 24 June 2019

Next review date: June 2022