

POLICY 8 – CONFLICT RESOLUTION

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to document U3A Croydon Inc's Conflict Resolution policy for members and the processes that will be followed where a complaint, grievance, breach of the Code of Conduct policy or other related policies is reported.

POLICY:

U3A Croydon aims to resolve problems and complaints promptly and as close to the source as possible with graduated steps for further discussion and resolution at higher levels of authority as necessary.

- Complaints must be fully described by the person with the grievance.
- The person(s) should be given the full details of the allegation(s) against them.
- The person(s) against whom the grievance/complaint is made should have the opportunity and be given a reasonable time to put their side of the story before resolution is attempted.
- Proceedings should be conducted honestly, fairly and without bias.
- Proceedings should not be unduly delayed.

The principles set out in this policy are intended to apply to any U3A-related context including classes, activities, auspiced social functions, meetings, conferences and holiday trips.

The principles set out in this policy apply equally to all members and volunteers/employees.

PROCEDURES:

The procedure has two components:

- (i) Negotiation process
- (ii) Formal Grievance procedure

Negotiation process:

-The member notifies the Secretary (in writing or otherwise) as to the substance of the grievance/complaint. The Secretary notifies the President immediately.

-The President appoints a Negotiator who is responsible for:

-Contacting the Complainant within 7 days to confirm receipt of the Complaint and to explain the process for resolving the issue. The Complainant is to be given the option of:

- lodging the complaint and letting a U3A Croydon officer assess the complaint, or
- proceeding with the Negotiation process, or
- proceeding to the formal Grievance procedure.

-Collecting details from the Complainant on the issue and any proposed remedy or action sought.

-Discussing the Complaint with the Defendant party(s) to obtain the Defendant's response or position on the issue.

-Where appropriate, obtaining a Risk Assessment from the Risk Management Officer to assess any risks to the individuals or U3A Croydon.

-Meeting the parties either individually or together (if agreed to by the Complainant) to attempt to negotiate a solution.

-Reporting to the Committee on the results of the Negotiation.

If the matter is not resolved, the conflict resolution process will follow the U3A Croydon Constitution's Grievance procedure as follows:

Formal Grievance procedure

27 Appointment of mediator

- (1) If the parties to a dispute are unable to resolve the dispute between themselves within the time required by rule 26, the parties must within 10 days—
 - (a) notify the Committee of the dispute; and
 - (b) agree to or request the appointment of a mediator; and
 - (c) attempt in good faith to settle the dispute by mediation.
- (2) The mediator must be—
 - (a) a person chosen by agreement between the parties; or
 - (b) in the absence of agreement—
 - (i) if the dispute is between a member and another member—a person appointed by the Committee; or
 - (ii) if the dispute is between a member and the Committee or the Association—a person appointed or employed by the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria.
- (3) A mediator appointed by the Committee may be a member or former member of the Association but in any case must not be a person who—
 - (a) has a personal interest in the dispute; or
 - (b) is biased in favour of or against any party.

28 Mediation process

- (1) The mediator to the dispute, in conducting the mediation, must—
 - (a) give each party every opportunity to be heard; and
 - (b) allow due consideration by all parties of any written statement submitted by any party; and

(c) ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties throughout the mediation process.

(2) The mediator must not determine the dispute.

29 Failure to resolve dispute by mediation

If the mediation process does not resolve the dispute, the parties may seek to resolve the dispute in accordance with the Act or otherwise at law.

AUTHORISATION:

This Conflict Resolution policy was adopted by the Committee of Management of U3A Croydon Inc and minuted as such on 2 August 2018. It will be filed in U3A Croydon's Policies and Procedures Manual.

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| 2 August 2018 | Date endorsed by Committee of Management of U3A Croydon |