

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE ADELAIDE
HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS, SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS

This document sets out the procedures established by the Board of Adelaide U3A for handling complaints, suggestions and comments. Where members wish to raise these matters, they are encouraged first to discuss them informally with the Members' Liaison Officer (MLO). It may be that the MLO can provide or obtain satisfactory answers or resolution on an informal basis.

If not, or in circumstances where a breach of the Code of Conduct might have occurred, the member will need to lodge the matter formally by completing the form provided for that purpose. Copies of the form are available at the office, or it can be download from the web site. The remainder of this document relates to issues raised formally.

Complaints, suggestions and comments relating to courses will be referred to the Program Coordinator, those relating to facilities will be referred to the Officer Manager. These officers may be able to provide satisfactory resolution of the issue. If not, they will refer the matter to the Board for resolution. Either way a formal response will be provided.

Where the issue relates to a possible breach of the Code of Conduct it will be referred to the MLO and dealt with in the following way as provided for by the Constitution of the U3A.

1. The President or another member of the Board will meet with the MLO to determine whether the reported breach is serious or is a minor breach. In the latter case the board will attempt to resolve the matter by working with the member who has allegedly breached the Code of Conduct, as follows:
 - a) The matter will be discussed, informally, with the member by the president or the vice president and another board member
 - b) If the member responds favourably then no further action need be taken.
 - c) A record of the interview will be kept for a period of 5 years.
 - d) If the member does not respond favourably then the matter will be dealt with as a serious breach.

If the matter is thought to be a serious breach or as provided by (d) above the procedure set out below will be followed.

2. Particulars of the alleged breach will be communicated in writing to the member who has allegedly breached the Code of Conduct.
3. The Board (or, if there is more than two weeks before the next meeting of the Board, the President acting on behalf of the Board) will appoint one or more people (not necessarily Board members) to investigate the matter.
4. The member will have a reasonable opportunity to be heard orally by the investigators and to make written submissions to them. The member will have the right for a supporter to accompany him/her to any meetings at which he/she may be heard in relation to the alleged breach.
5. After completing their work, the investigators will prepare a report for the Board including recommendations as to whether the allegation has been proved and, if so, what action should be taken.
6. If the allegation is not deemed to be proved, then the alleged offender and the complainant will be advised of the outcome and the matter will be closed.
7. If deemed to be proved, the action might be:
 - a) The member should be formally counselled,
 - b) The member should be removed from a particular class/group either permanently or for a specified time,
 - c) The member should be expelled.
8. If the investigators consider the allegation to be proved, then that decision together with the action proposed to be taken will be advised to the alleged offender in writing at least 14 days prior to a Board meeting where the recommendations will be considered. At that meeting the member will be able to attend to present arguments orally and/or in writing and, if they wish, be accompanied by a supporter. After considering any such further representations the Board will decide whether to accept the recommendations of the investigators, acquit the alleged offender, or impose a greater or lesser penalty. In most cases the Board will accept the recommendation of the investigators unless there is strong contrary argument.

9. The determination of the Board will be communicated in writing to the member within seven days of its determination. However, the Board's consideration of the alleged breach may be such that the determination can also be delivered verbally immediately.
10. In cases of expulsion, it shall be immediate and for the remainder of the year. If the person wishes to re-enrol in the following year, application for enrolment would come to the Board for consideration and may involve discussion by members of the Board nominated by the Board with the person regarding his/her acceptance of the reasons for the action taken to expel him/her.