



**Title: Complaints Policy**  
**Section: Risk Management**

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### **Policy Statement**

UBC is committed to effective and efficient complaints management. UBC strives to manage complaints in an accountable, transparent, timely and fair manner that is compatible with human rights.

### **Purpose and Scope**

This policy is intended to ensure that UBC handle complaints fairly, efficiently and effectively. This policy provides guidance to staff, members and volunteers who wish to make a complaint.

This policy applies to State Committee, staff, members and volunteers, receiving or managing complaints from the public made to or about UBC, regarding services, allocation of funds, staff, or our complaint handling process.

### **Organisational commitment**

UBC expects State Committee, staff, members and volunteers to be committed to fair, effective and efficient complaint handling. The following table outlines the nature of the commitment expected and the way that commitment should be implemented.

<b>Who</b>	<b>Commitment</b>	<b>How</b>
<b>State President</b>	Promote a culture that values complaints and their effective resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to the governing body on our complaint handling.</li> <li>• Provide adequate support and direction to key staff responsible for handling complaints.</li> <li>• Regularly review reports about complaint trends and issues arising from complaints.</li> <li>• Encourage all staff to be alert to complaints and assist those responsible for handling complaints to resolve them promptly.</li> <li>• Encourage staff to make recommendations for system improvements.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support recommendations for service, staff and complaint handling improvements arising from the analysis of complaint data</li> </ul>
<b>State Committee</b>	Demonstrate exemplary complaint handling practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat all people with respect, including people who make complaints.</li> <li>• Assist people to make a complaint, if needed.</li> <li>• Comply with the policy and associated procedures.</li> <li>• Provide regular feedback to the governing body on issues arising from complaints.</li> <li>• Provide suggestions to staff on ways to improve the complaints management system.</li> <li>• Implement changes arising from individual complaints and from the analysis of complaint data.</li> </ul>
<b>Staff, Branches &amp; Groups</b>	Understand and comply with the complaint handling practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat all people with respect, including people who make complaints.</li> <li>• Be aware of UBC's complaint handling policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Assist people who wish to make complaints access UBC's complaints process.</li> <li>• Be alert to complaints and assist staff handling complaints to resolve matters promptly</li> </ul>

## Definitions

UBC: The Uncle Bobs Club

Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about UBC, our services, staff or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required (AS/NZ 10002:2014).

As well as complaints being made directly to the organisation, remember that some complaints (or at least negative comments) can be made on social media.

Complaint handling/management system: All policies, procedures, practices, staff, hardware and software used by UBC in the management of complaints.

Dispute: An unresolved complaint escalated either within or outside of the organisation.

Feedback: Opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, to or about UBC, about UBC's services or complaint handling system where a response is not explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

Grievance: A clear, formal written statement by an individual staff member about another staff member or a work-related problem.

Policy: A statement of instruction that sets out how UBC should fulfil our vision, mission and goals.

Procedure: A statement or instruction that sets out how UBC policies will be implemented and by whom

State Committee: Directors of Uncle Bobs Club

## **Policy**

An effective complaint handling system must be modelled on the principles of fairness, accessibility, responsiveness, efficiency and integration into organisational culture.

### Facilitate complaints

#### *People focus*

UBC are committed to seeking and receiving feedback and complaints about our services, systems, practices, procedures, products and complaint handling.

Any concerns raised in feedback or complaints will be dealt with within a reasonable time frame (as in AS/NZ 10002).

People making complaints will be:

- provided with information about UBC's complaint handling process and how to access it
- listened to, treated with respect by staff and actively involved in the complaint process where possible and appropriate, and
- provided with reasons for UBC's decision/s and any options for redress or review.

#### *No detriment to people making complaints*

UBC will take all reasonable steps to ensure that people making complaints are not adversely affected because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf.

#### *Anonymous complaints*

UBC accept anonymous complaints if there is a compelling reason to do so and will carry out a confidential investigation of the issues raised where there is enough information provided.

#### *Accessibility*

UBC will ensure that information about how and where complaints may be made to or about UBC is well publicised on UBC's website. We will ensure that UBC's systems to manage complaints are easily understood and accessible to everyone, particularly people who may require assistance.

If a person prefers or needs another person or organisation to assist or represent them in the making and/ or resolution of their complaint, UBC will communicate with them through their representative if this is their wish. Anyone may represent a person wishing to make a complaint with their consent (e.g. advocate, family member, legal or community representative, member of Parliament, another organisation).

## Respond to complaints

### *Early resolution*

Where possible, complaints will be resolved at first contact with UBC. The complaint will be added to the complaints register and reviewed by State Committee at the next State Committee meeting.

When appropriate UBC may offer an explanation or apology to the person making the complaint.

### *Responsiveness*

UBC will promptly acknowledge receipt of complaints.

UBC will assess and prioritise complaints in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the issues raised. If a matter concerns an immediate risk to safety or security the response will be immediate and will be escalated appropriately.

UBC are committed to managing people's expectations, and will inform them as soon as possible, of the following:

- the complaints process
- the expected time frames for our actions
- the progress of the complaint and reasons for any delay
- their likely involvement in the process, and
- the possible or likely outcome of their complaint.

UBC will advise people as soon as possible when we are unable to deal with any part of their complaint and provide advice about where such issues and/or complaints may be directed (if known and appropriate).

UBC will also advise people as soon as possible when we are unable to meet our time frames for responding to their complaint and the reason for our delay.

### *Objectivity and fairness*

UBC will address each complaint with integrity and in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner.

UBC will ensure that the person handling a complaint is different from any staff member whose conduct or service is being complained about.

Conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived, will be managed responsibly. In particular, internal reviews of how a complaint was managed will be conducted by a person other than the original decision maker.

### *Responding flexibly*

UBC staff are empowered to resolve complaints promptly and with as little formality as possible. UBC will adopt flexible approaches to service delivery and problem solving to enhance accessibility for people making complaints and/or their representatives.

UBC will assess each complaint on its merits and involve people making complaints and/or their representative in the process as far as possible.

#### *Confidentiality*

UBC will protect the identity of people making complaints where this is practical and appropriate.

Personal information that identifies individuals will only be disclosed or used by UBC as permitted under the relevant privacy laws, secrecy provisions and any relevant confidentiality obligations.

#### Manage the parties to a complaint

##### *Complaints involving multiple agencies*

Where a complaint involves multiple organisations, UBC will work with the other organisation/s where possible, to ensure that communication with the person making a complaint and/or their representative is clear and coordinated.

Subject to privacy and confidentiality considerations, communication and information sharing between the parties will also be organised to facilitate a timely response to the complaint.

Where a complaint involves multiple areas within UBC, responsibility for communicating with the person making the complaint and/or their representative will also be coordinated.

Where UBC services are contracted out, UBC expect contracted service providers to have an accessible and comprehensive complaint management system. UBC take complaints not only about the actions of our staff but also the actions of our service providers.

##### *Empowerment of staff*

All staff managing complaints are empowered to implement UBC's complaint management system as relevant to their role and responsibilities. Staff are encouraged to provide feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of all aspects of our complaint management system.

##### *Managing unreasonable conduct by people making complaints*

UBC are committed to being accessible and responsive to all people who approach UBC with feedback or complaints. At the same time UBC's success depends on:

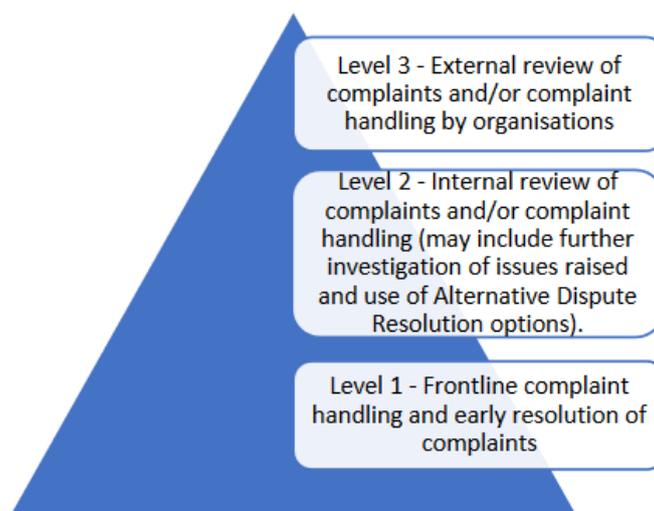
- UBC's ability to do our work and perform our functions in the most effective and efficient way possible
- the health, safety and security of UBC staff, and
- UBC's ability to allocate resources fairly across all complaints received.

When people behave unreasonably in their dealings with UBC, their conduct can significantly affect the progress and efficiency of our work. As a result, UBC will take proactive and decisive action to manage any conduct that negatively and unreasonably affects UBC and will support staff to do the same in accordance with this policy.

### Alternative avenues for dealing with complaints

UBC will inform people who make complaints to or about UBC about any internal or external review options available to them (including any relevant Ombudsman or oversight regulatory bodies).

The three levels of complaint handling



#### Level 1

UBC aim to resolve complaints at the first level, the frontline. Wherever possible staff will be adequately equipped to respond to complaints, including being given appropriate authority, training and supervision.

#### Level 2

Where this is not possible, UBC may decide to escalate the complaint to State Committee. This second level of complaint handling will provide for the following internal mechanisms:

- assessment and possible investigation of the complaint and decision/s already made, and/or
- facilitated resolution (where a person not connected with the complaint reviews the matter and attempts to find an outcome acceptable to the relevant parties).

#### Level 3

Where a person making a complaint is dissatisfied with the outcome of UBC's review of their complaint, they may seek an external review of the decision (by the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission).

### Accountability and learning

#### *Analysis and evaluation of complaints*

UBC will ensure that complaints are recorded in a systematic way so that information can be easily retrieved for reporting and analysis by State Committee.

UBC will run regular reports on:

- the number of complaints received
- the outcome of complaints, including matters resolved at the frontline
- issues arising from complaints
- systemic issues identified, and
- the number of requests we receive for internal and/or external review of our complaint handling.

Regular analysis of these reports will be undertaken to monitor trends, measure the quality of our customer service and make improvements.

Both reports and their analysis will be provided to State Committee quarterly.

#### *Monitoring of the complaint management system*

UBC will continually monitor our complaint management system to:

- ensure its effectiveness in responding to and resolving complaints
- identify and correct deficiencies in the operation of the system, and
- monitoring may include the use of audits, complaint satisfaction surveys and online listening tools and alerts.

#### Continuous improvement

UBC are committed to improving the way the organisation operates, including the management of the effectiveness and efficiency of UBC's complaint management system. To this end, UBC will:

- support the making and appropriate resolution of complaints
- implement best practices in complaint handling
- recognise and reward exemplary complaint handling by staff
- regularly review the complaint management system and complaint data, and
- implement appropriate system changes arising out of our analysis of complaints data and continual monitoring of the system.

#### Review

This policy and related procedures will be reviewed every three years, unless changed circumstances require earlier review.

### Associated Policies, Procedures and Other Documents

- Privacy Policy

### References

- Justice Connect – Not-for profit Law. Complaint handling by charities and not-for-profits  
[https://www.nfplaw.org.au/sites/default/files/media/Complaint\\_Handling\\_By\\_Charities\\_and\\_Not-for-profits\\_0.pdf](https://www.nfplaw.org.au/sites/default/files/media/Complaint_Handling_By_Charities_and_Not-for-profits_0.pdf)

Policy Name: Complaints

Responsible Director: State Secretary

Functional Area: Risk Management

Date adopted: 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Review Date: 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023

### Review History

Date	Review Details	Action

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

I confirm I have read and understood the Complaints Policy

Staff Signature ..... Date .....

Print Name .....