

Code of Conduct for all members

Every group, business and organisation depends on good relationships. Here are measures we have put in place to make sure our U3A stays strong and healthy.

Like all U3As, Radlett and District U3A (Radlett U3A) is built around interactions between people. All of us have roles here whether as participants, tutors and group leaders, administrative coordinators and helpers, committee and working group members. We also have important relationships with outside people, particularly the staff of the venues where groups are held and our coach drivers. It is the thoughtful and mindful communication and cooperation between all these parties that makes Radlett U3A run so smoothly and well. We wish and need to keep it that way.

Your committee has developed the following Code of Conduct (based on other U3A's similar policies and procedures) to make sure that all of us, in whatever role we are acting, but especially as members, are aware of our responsibilities to each other and to Radlett U3A. Also provided below are guidelines for making and dealing with complaints or grievances, should they arise.

Code of Conduct

As a self-funded, member-based organisation, Radlett U3A expects that all members, tutors and other volunteers will behave in a courteous and civilised manner at all times in all dealings relevant to Radlett U3A. As a condition of your membership of Radlett U3A, you therefore agree to abide by this Code of Conduct by:

- a) Participating in Radlett U3A activities in a respectful, inclusive and positive way at all times.
- b) Being honest and ethical in all dealings with Radlett U3A, its members and other related organisations.
- c) Showing respect, courtesy and consideration to everyone with whom you deal within Radlett U3A, related organisations and the general public in relation to U3A activities.
- d) Being punctual and reliable in attending U3A group meetings, events or other commitments and, wherever possible, letting the tutor or group leader know of non-attendances, longer absences, withdrawals from groups, events, or volunteer commitments.
- e) Observing strict confidentiality regarding organisational and members' personal information to which you may have access and never disclosing contact details of any Radlett U3A member, tutor or Group Leader to anyone without their permission.
- f) Avoiding all forms of discriminatory behaviour in regard to nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, culture, religion, age and mental or physical disability.
- g) Not engaging in behaviour that is inappropriate, disruptive or intimidating, such as would breach the rights of other persons to participate in a group/event or to carry out their designated role.
- h) Not engaging in any form of gambling or consumption of alcohol in any group activity or otherwise, unless expressly authorised by the Group Leader or event organiser.
- i) Preserving the wellbeing and safety of members and the organisation by:
 - I. Participating safely in each group or activity, and abiding by any reasonable directive or prerequisite specified by the tutor or event organiser for that participation.
 - II. Refraining from activities or comments that promote a personal business, product or cause, or that would place others in a vulnerable situation either financially, physically or psychologically.
 - III. Not causing any wilful damage to Radlett U3A equipment, materials, facilities, or those of other venues or suppliers we use.
- j) Promoting Radlett U3A in a positive way, refraining from harming the organisation's reputation or relationships by any inappropriate or untrue comment or action.
- k) Abiding by this and all other Radlett U3A policies and procedures from time to time in place, and the Radlett U3A constitution as well as the objects and principles of The Third Age Trust.
- l) Following the Radlett U3A Grievance Policy & Procedure (see below) if dissatisfied, and abiding by decisions thus made.

Complaints and grievance issues

Issues that may arise could involve:

- Room bookings, room and equipment usage.
- Issues between a tutor and group member or members, or between members of a group.
- Committee and operational matters.
- Course enrolments and event bookings.
- Matters related to the organisation of and participation in events.
- Any other dissatisfaction a member may have about their dealings with Radlett U3A.

Grievance Policy and Procedure

Preamble

This policy statement is underpinned by the preceding Radlett U3A Code of Conduct which applies to all members. The Grievance Procedure outlined in this document seeks to provide a mechanism to deal with issues that may arise regarding the activities or operations of the organisation, internally and in relation to other bodies, especially those matters arising from non-observance of the Code of Conduct.

Policy Statement

- a) This Grievance Procedure aims to achieve conciliation and the resolution of complaints quickly, with fairness, care and understanding. Confidentiality of all parties will be preserved; only those people with a specific role in this procedure will be involved.
- b) There is an expectation that parties should first seek to directly resolve any concerns or grievances between themselves, and in consultation with the relevant Group Leader, Study Group Coordinator or with the Event Organiser. If the issue is then not resolved, the parties may request a formal grievance process.
- c) Any matters of grievance concerning the activities, tutors, volunteers or members (including the Committee) of Radlett U3A should be responded to initially within ten working days.
- d) All grievances will be dealt with as expeditiously as possible.

Initial informal approach

All of Radlett U3A's tutors, volunteers and members are expected to behave in a courteous and civilised manner to each other and in dealing with any issue that arises, and to seek to resolve the problem informally, through discreet discussion between the parties concerned. Consultation with the relevant Group Leader may also assist in resolving the issue, where relevant.

If any party is not happy with the informal resolution, or method of dealing with the issue, then the formal procedure below should be followed.

Formal Grievance Procedure

- a) A formal written complaint should be made by a member or any other party (the Complainant) by letter or email, directed to the Committee Secretary, Radlett U3A, setting out the issues.
- b) The Radlett U3A Committee will appoint a Grievance Officer. This may be a member of the Radlett U3A Committee or other designated volunteer. The Grievance Officer may delegate any responsibility, he or she thinks fit, as appropriate, to other Officers of the Committee of Radlett U3A.
- c) A meeting will then be organised between the Grievance Officer and the Complainant alleging the grievance to ascertain the facts and his or her issues.
- d) After this a meeting will then be organised between the Grievance Officer and the parties named in the grievance to ascertain his or her issues and any factual issues.
- e) A meeting between all of the parties named above will follow, in an attempt to find common ground and a resolution.
- f) The Grievance Officer, with reference to other parties, as he or she sees fit, will make a direction as to the validity of the grievance and thereafter a decision.
- g) If no decision is reached, the Grievance Officer may involve other members of the Committee as appropriate.
- h) If either party is not satisfied with the outcome, the matter will be referred to the Chairman of the Committee for a final decision, after his or her hearing any further representations from the parties, as appropriate or relevant.
- i) Where appropriate and necessary, the Committee may appoint a facilitator to mediate between the parties. The appointment must be acceptable to both parties. Both parties shall bear the full costs, if any, of the mediation. The outcome of the mediation shall be binding.
- j) A note taker appointed by the Radlett U3A committee will attend all meetings to make a formal record of the meeting. All written grievance reports, papers and records of meetings will be forwarded to the Secretary of the Committee and treated as and kept confidential. The records will include the details of all actions taken to resolve or attempt to resolve the grievance and the outcomes of these actions.
- k) If the grievance is of a criminal nature it will be forwarded immediately to the relevant authorities.

Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

This policy, like the Grievance Policy set out above, is underpinned by the preceding Radlett U3A Code of Conduct which applies to all members. The Disciplinary Procedure seeks to provide a mechanism to deal fairly with issues which arise because of a member's conduct, either by failing to:

- a) Pay the annual subscription fee at renewal, or at all or
- b) Abide by the Code of Conduct or
- c) Behave in a suitable manner, which in the reasonable opinion of the Radlett U3A Committee, is having a consequential detrimental effect on Radlett U3A.

Policy statement

- a) This Disciplinary Policy aims to achieve resolution of a problem with a member quickly and with fairness, care and understanding. The confidence of all parties will be preserved as far as possible.
- b) There is an expectation that an officer of the Radlett U3A Committee, nominated by the Chairman of the Committee, will first seek to resolve the issue with the member where the issue is of a more minor nature, in order to clear the air and agree on a course of action.
- c) If it is not so resolved or the Radlett U3A Committee considers the situation warrants a more formal approach or a particular course of action then the Formal Disciplinary Procedure will be followed.

Formal Disciplinary Procedure

- a) The Radlett U3A Committee will appoint an Officer of the Committee to deal with the matter under the following procedure.
- b) A formal letter setting out the allegations of misconduct will be sent to the member by the Officer with a suggested timetable for dealing with matter.
- c) A suitably convenient meeting will be arranged as soon as practical between the member and the Officer to discuss the allegations and issues.
- d) The Officer will then report his or her findings to the Radlett U3A Committee who, with the exception of the Chairman, will then consider the matter, taking into account any mitigating circumstances and agree what course of action to take.
- e) The sanction will be notified to the member in writing, by the Officer.
- f) The possible forms of sanction include a verbal warning to last for a fixed period of time, a written warning to last for a fixed period of time and in either case stating what will happen if the conduct is repeated, a final written warning, exclusion from an interest group or as a final resort termination of the member's membership of Radlett U3A.

Right of Appeal

- a) If the member does not accept the sanction particularly in the case of either exclusion from a group or termination of his or her membership, the member should appeal in writing to the Chairman of the Radlett U3A Committee within 7 days of notice of the sanction, setting out the grounds of appeal.
- b) The Chairman will hear the appeal promptly, but will allow the member to make any such further representations as may be necessary and relevant in writing or in person. The member may be accompanied by a friend who may speak on behalf of the member at any appeal hearing. The Chairman will then make a final decision, which will be confirmed in writing to the member as promptly as possible.
- c) All actions steps and outcomes will be documented by a note taker, appointed by the Radlett U3A Committee, who will be in attendance at all meetings and all reports papers and records of meetings will be kept confidential by the Secretary of the Radlett U3A Committee.