

10 Problem Solving and Managing Issues

10.1 Problem Solving

Sometimes issues can arise within a Group that disrupt the smooth running and can spoil the enjoyment for everyone. Convenors must not leave a problem too long before trying to resolve it. Convenors should talk to the Groups Coordinator or Committee if they are unsure how to resolve the problem or just want someone to explore options with.

10.2 Issues Between Group Members

Where there is potential for friction, it is advisable to begin by bringing it into the open. The Convenor or another person could try to facilitate a discussion either with the members concerned or with the whole Group, but it is important that the facilitator remains neutral and non-judgemental. If the Convenor cannot reach a resolution, they can informally speak to the Groups Coordinator or a member of the Committee.

Other issues a Convenor may encounter where they should seek help from the Groups Coordinator:

- A member's behaviour is regularly disturbing other members of the Group.
- There is a very serious problem in a session, and it may be necessary to ask a member to leave for the remainder of the session.
- A member who is not able to cope independently comes to a meeting without a 'carer'.

If a situation does not resolve and becomes acrimonious the Committee may need to implement their **Disciplinary Procedure** or the **Complaints Procedure**. This will depend on the nature of the issue. Both procedures are available on the RV u3a website on the Governance page.

The Difference Between A Complaints And A Disciplinary Procedure

Complaints procedure: this may include complaints from members about an issue that has arisen during a Group or relating to the management of a Group. Depending on the nature and source of the complaint, the Committee will make a decision as to how best to approach reaching a resolution.

Disciplinary procedure: this sets out how the Committee will approach problems related to a breach or suspected breach of the agreed code of conduct by a member or trustee.

The u3a office can be contacted for advice if necessary.

10.3 General Safeguarding information and guidance

It is a legal requirement of all the Charity Commissions that all u3as (and other charities) must have a safeguarding policy in place to protect their members.

"Safeguarding" refers to measures designed to protect the health, wellbeing and human rights of individuals.

- All u3a members have a responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns to their committee.
- All u3a committee members have an obligation to follow their safeguarding policy and procedure if they suspect that a member is at risk of abuse.

Guidance on Safeguarding and the actions to take are in the **Safeguarding Policy and Procedures provided on the Governance section of the RVu3a website**.

The policy and procedures are written to enable the committee and convenors to address issues where there are safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding includes incidents between members, concerns regarding abuse or neglect that a u3a member may be experiencing outside of the u3a, health related issues or previous or pending criminal convictions.