



Warsop & District U3A Code of Conduct 25th May 2018

Code of Conduct – Discrimination and Harassment

Sexist, Racist, Homophobic, transphobic or otherwise offensive and inflammatory remarks and behaviour are not acceptable. These constitute harassment, and have no place in the Warsop & District U3A.

If any member of Warsop & District U3A feels they have been discriminated against by the Warsop & District U3A or harassed at a Warsop & District U3A event they should raise this with a member of the committee. The committee will investigate the complaint, listening to all members involved. (If the complaint is against a committee member, that member will not be part of conducting the investigation).

If the complaint is against an individual, this person will have the opportunity to express their point of view, they may be accompanied by a friend for support, who may also speak in a personal capacity.

The person making the complaint will also have the right to speak to the meeting.

If the complaint is against the Warsop & District U3A as a whole, and found to be proven, the Committee will work to ensure that such discrimination is not repeated in the future, and will inform the members of how they propose to do this.

Any decision to exclude a person from the U3A due to discriminatory or harassing behaviour will be made with reference to Warsop & District U3A's constitution and grievance/disciplinary procedures. The U3A Trust will support people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against, and will not victimise or treat them less favourably because they have raised an issue.

Code of Conduct – Problems and Grievances

In any organisation, problems and grievances will occur from time to time and it is important that members know where to turn for help, advice and support, so that whatever the issue, it can be dealt with quickly and objectively and appropriately.

Problems which can arise within an interest group include

- Disruptive and/or unsocial behaviour.
- Poor attendance/timekeeping.
- Unsuitability.
- Failure to pay fees.
- Disagreement between members.

In most cases the group leader will be able to resolve the situation informally and amicably by just by having a quiet word with the member/members in question. If it requires more or the problem persists the group leader should refer the matter to the committee and the investigation procedure implemented.



Problems within the U3A as a whole

- Member to member.
- Member and the committee.
- Member and an individual trustee.
- A member who brings the U3A into disrepute or acts in a way which is prejudicial to the U3A.
- A member who causes damage to property and/or equipment through misuse/negligence etc.

All of the above should be referred in the first instance to the Chairman and the investigation procedure implemented.

Procedure when a problem/grievance is referred; the Chairman/Committee will

- Establish the facts quickly, consulting as many people as possible.
- The Chairman will have an informal discussion with all concerned to summarise the problem.
- If there is a case to answer but that nevertheless it is a minor issue, make it clear to all present that there must be no repeat of the sort of actions/behaviour which led to this problem.
- If, however, the situation warrants a more formal approach or a particular course of action e.g. exclusion from an interest group, refer the matter to the committee to agree a course of action.

Committee Procedure

The Committee will invite all the people involved to attend a minuted meeting, with all members of the committee available in attendance, so that the matter can be fully discussed and an opportunity provided for everybody to state their case.

The committee will then consider the matter, taking into account any mitigating circumstances and agree what action to take.

Disciplinary action

- **Level 1** - a verbal warning about future conduct by an elected officer with another officer present, which should be confirmed in writing.
- **Level 2** - a written warning which clearly states what will happen if the Situation is repeated.
- **Level 3** - a final written warning.
- **Level 4** - exclusion from an interest group.
- **Level 5** - termination of U3A membership.

For most problems level 1 would be the starting point, however, in the case of an extremely serious proven misdemeanour, for example,

- Sexual/racial abuse, discrimination, harassment, bullying.
- Dangerous or violent behaviour.
- Falsification of expense claims.
- Theft.
- Malicious damage.



- Conduct which brings the U3A into disrepute or is prejudicial to the U3A or the running of the U3A

The committee has the right to move immediately to Levels 3, 4 or 5.

Right of Appeal

Before a member is excluded from an interest group or has his/her membership terminated, a right of appeal should be offered and in the case of expulsion from the U3A, must be offered.

An appeal, must be lodged within a 7 day period, and must take the form of written request for the committee to consider; alternatively the member may request a right of reply.

If it is the latter, a meeting of the whole committee should be called and the member in question should be asked to attend and can be accompanied by a friend who may also speak in a personal capacity. The whole issue should be summarised and then the member given the opportunity to speak, along with the supporter if so desired.

In both cases, the committee will review its decision, taking into account any mitigating circumstances, and then make a final decision, which must be communicated in writing.

Committee responsibilities; they

- must ensure every action taken is documented.
- must deal with problems and grievances quickly and fairly.
- should do all they can to settle the issue without having to resort to formal disciplinary action.
- should maintain confidentiality.

Reviewing this policy

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the Warsop & District U3A on 25th May 2018 and will be reviewed at least every 2 years.