

Sexual Harassment Policy

Introduction

1. U3A Castlemaine recognises it is the right of every member, volunteer and employee to attend classes, activities or functions, and/or to perform their duties as a volunteer or employee within a U3A Castlemaine environment without being subjected to any form of sexual harassment.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this document is to set down U3A Castlemaine's policy on sexual harassment and the process that will be followed should any complaint of sexual harassment be received.

Policy

3. Sexual harassment can be experienced by both men and women. Sexual harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual advance or request for sexual favours, or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated, and where that reaction is reasonable in the circumstances. Lack of intent is no defence in sexual harassment cases. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:
 - intrusive enquiries into a person's private life
 - reference to their physical appearance or sexuality
 - unwanted brushing against another person's body, body touching or physically molesting a person
 - standing too close
 - obscene, suggestive or offensive communications, including electronic mail
 - pornographic or offensive posters, handouts or screensavers
 - sexual jokes or anecdotes
 - leering or staring
 - unwanted sexual compliments or excessive flirting.
4. U3A Castlemaine will not tolerate sexual harassment. Responsibility lies with every member, volunteer or employee to ensure that sexual harassment does not occur. No member, volunteer or employee should be subject to any form of sexual harassment.
5. No member, volunteer or employee will be treated unfairly as a result of lodging a complaint. Disciplinary action may be taken against anyone who victimises or retaliates against a person who has complained of sexual harassment or against any employee or volunteer who has been alleged to be a harasser.
6. All employees and volunteers have the right to seek assistance from the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission in the resolution of a sexual harassment incident.
7. The principles set out in this policy apply to any event auspiced by U3A Castlemaine and any U3A workplace.
8. A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action.
9. Some forms of sexual harassment (e.g. sexual assault, stalking and indecent exposure) may constitute criminal conduct. While U3A Castlemaine is committed to handling most sexual harassment complaints at the local level, more extreme forms of harassment are not suited to internal resolution and should be handled by the criminal justice system. It is not the role of U3A Castlemaine to report such matters to the police on behalf of the complainant.

Procedures

10. U3A Castlemaine strongly encourages any member, volunteer or employee who feels sexually harassed to take immediate action. Where circumstances permit, the aggrieved person should make it clear that such behaviour is unwelcome and offensive. Alternatively, or in addition, they may follow the procedures for reporting the behaviour.
11. A complaint of sexual harassment may be made to any member of U3A Castlemaine's Committee of Management. The Committee Member will inform the President immediately.
12. U3A Castlemaine will handle a complaint of sexual harassment promptly, seriously and sensitively. There will be no presumption of guilt and no finding will be made until any resolution process, including any investigation has been completed.
13. Unless the Committee of Management decides otherwise, a complaint made under this policy will be handled in accordance with the 'Disputes and Mediation' provision of the Constitution of U3A Castlemaine.
14. Possible disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to:
 - formal apology and undertaking that specified behaviour will cease
 - counselling
 - warning
 - cancellation of membership
 - removal from a volunteer or leadership role
 - termination of paid employment.

Responsibilities

15. U3A Castlemaine's Committee of Management is responsible for:
 - implementing and publishing this policy
 - treating all complaints seriously and confidentially
 - taking immediate and appropriate corrective action if they become aware of any offensive action
 - managing complaints of sexual harassment
 - monitoring and revising this policy as and when the need arises.
16. A Committee Member who receives a complaint of sexual harassment is responsible for referring the matter to the President immediately.
17. The Secretary is responsible for receiving enquiries about this policy.

Authorisation

18. This Sexual Harassment Policy was adopted by the Committee of Management of U3A Castlemaine on 16 September 2019.

Related Policies

19. U3A Castlemaine's Privacy Policy