CPMSoc Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

CPMSoc encourages individuals to raise grievances where they arise in line with this policy and procedure. Most grievances should be raised directly with CPMSoc and handled internally. CPMSoc Executives should aim to deal with any complaints in a prompt, sensitive, impartial, confidential, and supportive manner to seek resolution and prevent future conflict.

All parties should co-operate constructively in resolving matters. Complainants are encouraged to use the formal procedure only where the matter has not been resolved through informal dialogue and/or it is not safe or appropriate for informal resolution.

2. Scope

These policies and procedures apply to current UNSW students, staff, and members of CPMSoc.

This document is designed to be a guide only and does not prescribe the actions required to handle every possible grievance. CPMSoc Executives are expected to use discretion in handling grievances, considering the circumstances, purpose, and principles of this policy.

Matters Excluded from This Procedure

The following grievances should **not** be pursued under this procedure:

- Disputes relating to matters beyond the control of CPMSoc (e.g., behaviour of attendees at a nearby event).
- Personal disputes where none of the parties are acting on behalf of CPMSoc.
- Complaints relating to incidents that occurred more than three (3) months prior to being raised, unless a reasonable explanation for the delay is provided.
    - For longer-term or repetitive issues, at least one instance must have occurred within this period.
- Grievances or complaints involving criminal offences should not be investigated by CPMSoc but reported directly to Arc.

3. Definitions

Appeal: A challenge or dispute of a decision made by CPMSoc in relation to a formal grievance.

Complaint: An objection or criticism raised about any CPMSoc-related incident. A complaint may not require formal resolution but should always be acknowledged.

Complainant: The individual who makes a complaint or raises a grievance.

Welfare Officer: The CPMSoc Executive responsible for receiving and handling formal grievances (as specified in the CPMSoc Constitution). If unavailable or inappropriate, another Executive member will assume this role.

Grievance: Any complaint, concern, dispute, or problem related to CPMSoc's activities, events, or Executive behaviour that the complainant believes to be unfair or unjustified.

Procedural Fairness: The right to a fair process when decisions are made. This includes:

- The right to be heard and respond to allegations;
- Reasonable inquiry into matters in dispute;
- Proper documentation of grievances and investigations;
- A lack of bias during the process; and
- Decisions supported by evidence and reasons.

---

4. Procedure Overview

The following steps provide a guideline for handling grievances. CPMSoc Executives should adapt their response as appropriate to each situation.

5. Informal Grievance Resolution

Informal procedures are used for less serious or complex grievances with the aim of achieving a timely and reasonable resolution.

5.1 Self-Resolution

If comfortable, the complainant should first attempt to resolve the grievance directly with the individual(s) involved.
Self-resolution encourages constructive dialogue and helps prevent escalation.

However, self-resolution is not appropriate for serious grievances such as incidents of gendered violence or criminal behaviour. These should be reported immediately to one of the following:

- Arc via the Incident Reporting Form,
- UNSW via the Gendered Violence Reporting Portal or Student Complaints Portal, or
- The police (for serious indictable offences).

5.2 Other Informal Mechanisms

Informal grievance resolution may include:

- CPMSoc Executives facilitating informal discussions;
- Internal mediation between parties; or
- Raising awareness of appropriate behaviour within the Club.

6. Formal Grievance Resolution

If informal resolution is unsuccessful, unsafe, or inappropriate, the complainant should raise the grievance with the Welfare Officer.

If the Welfare Officer is directly involved, or the complainant feels uncomfortable reporting to them, the grievance should be reported to another CPMSoc Executive.

6.1 Submitting a Formal Grievance

When submitting a grievance, the complainant must:

- Provide the grievance in writing;
- Include names, dates, and details of the incident(s);
- Attach supporting documentation (if applicable); and
- State the desired outcome.

If incomplete, the Welfare Officer will request a written report within five (5) days. The process will not advance until a formal report is received.

6.2 Initial Steps

The Welfare Officer will follow up within five (5) working days (or as soon as practicable) to:

- Confirm the details and desired outcome;
- Explain this grievance policy; and

- Determine next steps or refer the grievance to another Executive if necessary.

If unsure how to proceed, the Welfare Officer should seek advice from Arc.
If inappropriate for CPMSoc to handle, the Welfare Officer must refer the grievance to Arc in writing.

7. Investigation

Where an investigation is required, the Welfare Officer may:

- Conduct interviews with relevant parties;
- Notify individuals of allegations and provide supporting evidence;
- Allow time for response; and
- Review all relevant evidence and documentation.

If a complainant does not consent to sharing their information with the respondent, the Welfare Officer cannot proceed and must dismiss the grievance to maintain procedural fairness.

Progress updates must be communicated throughout the process.
All decisions involving individuals must afford adequate notice, information, and opportunity to respond.

8. Procedural Fairness

All parties involved are entitled to:

- At least five (5) working days' notice before any meeting;
- A reasonable and private location for meetings;
- Full information about allegations and evidence;
- Five (5) working days to prepare a response;
- The opportunity to respond;
- A fair inquiry into disputed matters; and
- The right to have a support person present.

Complainants will not participate in deciding outcomes.
The Welfare Officer acts as an impartial third party.

9. Record Keeping

- All conversations, actions, and dates must be documented and stored securely.
- Records may be shared with Arc, UNSW, or law enforcement if required.
- CPMSoc will maintain a confidential Welfare Officer email address for grievance-related communication.

10. Victimisation

CPMSoc will report any instances of victimisation or retaliation against complainants to UNSW.
This includes individuals found to have made false or vexatious complaints or to have retaliated against others under this policy.

11. Unreasonable Behaviour

CPMSoc will not tolerate mistreatment of the Welfare Officer. Unreasonable behaviour includes:

- Offensive or disrespectful conduct;
- Threats or coercion;
- Disruptive or obstructive behaviour during resolution;
- Harassment during or after the process; or
- Unreasonable demands.

12. Confidentiality and Discretion

All parties must maintain confidentiality regarding identities and incidents involved in grievances.

If reporting to Arc, UNSW, or the police is required, the complainant will be informed and the report de-identified unless identification is required by law.
Any breach of confidentiality will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary action.

13. Disciplinary Action

After formal grievance procedures, disciplinary actions may include:

- Formal warning;
- Ban from club events;
- Removal of membership; or
- Revocation of responsibilities or event management privileges.

Penalties must be proportionate, evidence-based, and communicated in writing.

14. Appeal and Review of Decisions

14.1 Internal Appeals Procedure

If dissatisfied with how a grievance was handled, the complainant may appeal to the Club President (or another Executive if the President is involved).
Appeals must be submitted within five (5) working days of receiving the outcome and must specify the grounds for appeal (e.g., lack of procedural fairness).

The President will select two (2) other Executives (without conflicts of interest) to review the process and outcome.
Their decision will be final within CPMSoc.

14.2 Appeals to Arc or UNSW

In certain cases, grievances or appeals may be escalated to Arc or UNSW.
Formal and informal CPMSoc procedures should be followed first.

- Appeals to Arc must be in writing to advice@arc.unsw.edu.au