



Complaints Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Complaints Procedure is to provide a clear and transparent process for handling complaints and grievances within the Albury Wodonga Symphony Orchestra (AWSO). This procedure ensures that all concerns are addressed fairly and respectfully, in accordance with AWSO's constitution and relevant legal obligations. It specifically aligns with Division 2 (Disciplinary Action) and Division 3 (Grievance Procedure) of the AWSO constitution.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all AWSO members, committee members, volunteers, guest artists, and participants involved in AWSO activities. It covers:

- Complaints between members
- Complaints involving committee members or appointed roles
- Grievances between members and the association
- Matters related to AWSO activities, rehearsals, concerts, or events.

This procedure aligns with the Disciplinary and Grievance sections outlined in AWSO's constitution.

3. Glossary

- **Appointed Roles:** Individuals holding specific positions such as Orchestra Manager and Artistic Director
- **Audience:** Members of the public attending AWSO performances
- **AWSO:** Albury Wodonga Symphony Orchestra
- **Child (or Children):** Any person under the age of 18
- **Committee:** Refers to the AWSO Committee, all appointed roles including the Orchestra Manager, Artistic Director and Public Officer, and the Member Protection Officer
- **Complainant:** The person raising the complaint or grievance
- **Complaint:** A concern or issue raised regarding the behavior, decisions, or actions of AWSO members or the organisation
- **Executive Committee:** Refers to the Executive members of the AWSO Committee; the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary
- **Grievance:** A formal expression of dissatisfaction or dispute requiring resolution
- **Mediator:** A neutral third party assisting in resolving disputes, as per AWSO's constitution
- **Member Protection Officer (MPO):** Member Protection Officer, responsible for handling complaints and safeguarding member welfare
- **Non-Playing Members:** Individuals who primarily assist with events and operational support and are members of AWSO
- **Playing Members:** Musicians who perform as part of the orchestra and are members of AWSO
- **Respondent:** The person against whom a complaint has been made
- **Visiting Guest Artists:** External artists engaged for specific performances or events, or who attend rehearsals on an ad-hoc basis
- **Volunteers:** People who assist AWSO without receiving financial compensation

4. How to Make a Complaint

If you have concerns or wish to make a complaint, AWSO encourages open and respectful communication. To raise a concern:

- **Current MPO:** Graeme Stewart and Tara Chambers, elected on 24/02/2025
- **In-Person:** Speak directly with the MPO during AWSO events
- **Email:** alburywodongasymphonyorchestra@gmail.com

If the complaint involves the MPO, please direct your concern to a member of the AWSO Executive Committee.

5. Complaints and Grievance Process

5.1 Informal Resolution

- Whenever possible, AWSO encourages informal resolution of minor issues
- The Complainant is encouraged to raise the concern directly with the person involved, if they feel safe doing so
- If direct communication is not appropriate, the Complainant may approach the MPO for guidance.

5.2 Formal Complaint Process

Step	Detail
1. Acknowledgement	The MPO will acknowledge receipt of the complaint.
2. Initial Assessment	<p>The MPO will review the complaint to determine if it falls within the scope of this procedure, and may recommend informal resolution if it does not.</p> <p>If necessary, the MPO may recommend mediation or refer the matter to the Committee.</p>

<p>3. Investigation</p>	<p>An impartial investigation will be conducted.</p> <p>Both the Complainant and Respondent will have the opportunity to present their perspectives.</p> <p>The investigation will follow natural justice principles, ensuring fairness and transparency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensuring all parties are given a fair opportunity to present their version of events; - acting impartially and without bias throughout the investigation; - making decisions based on evidence and facts; and - providing reasons for decisions made.
<p>4. Outcome</p>	<p>The MPO or Committee will decide on an appropriate resolution.</p> <p>Outcomes may include mediation, disciplinary action, or no further action.</p> <p>The decision will be communicated in writing to all parties involved.</p>

5.3 Grievance Procedure (as per AWSO Constitution)

- If a member has a grievance against the association/organisation, they must submit it in writing to the Secretary (not to the MPO)
- The Committee will attempt to resolve the grievance informally
- If unresolved, the grievance may proceed to mediation, following the process outlined in Division 3 (Grievance Procedure) of the AWSO constitution.

5.4 Mediation

- Mediation will be conducted by an impartial third party agreed upon by both parties
- The aim is to reach a mutually acceptable solution

- If mediation fails, the Committee will make a final decision.

5.5 Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- All complaints and grievances will be handled confidentially
- Records of complaints and outcomes will be securely stored by the Committee.

5.6 Protection Against Victimisation

- AWSO prohibits victimisation against any individual who raises a complaint or grievance
- Any retaliation will be treated as a serious breach of conduct.

6. Review

This procedure was approved by the AWSO Committee on 24 February 2024, and will be reviewed annually or following any significant incidents.