

Complaints Procedure for Members and Associates of the Ballarat Symphony Orchestra

1. Purpose of the Procedure/Introduction.

BSO's aim is to ensure that everyone with a complaint about another person involved with BSO can use a procedure to help resolve issues as quickly, simply and as fairly as possible. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue at the earliest possible stage, and to settle the issue amicably.

2. Principles.

1. BSO has zero tolerance for any form of harassment, bullying or discrimination.
2. BSO commits to:
 - a. Investigate all complaints promptly
 - b. Treat all members equitably
 - c. Preserve confidentiality and dignity
 - d. Resolve issues whenever possible
3. Any person being complained about has the right to:
 - a. Receive a copy of the allegations made against them
 - b. Respond to the allegations
4. A record of the process undertaken and the outcome will be retained in BSO records for 5 years, marked private and confidential, then if nothing else arises, will be destroyed.

3. Stage 1 – Informal discussions.

If a person has a concern about another BSO member or associate they are encouraged to first discuss it with that person. We hope that the majority of concerns will be resolved this way.

4. Stage 2 – Statement.

If the person feels that the matter cannot be or has not been resolved through informal discussion, they should write a clear description of the complaint on the **Contact Us Complaint Form** on the BSO website.

<https://ballaratsymphonyorchestra.com/contact/>

Email is not an acceptable form of written communication for complaints, and complainants will be directed to write their complaint on the appropriate Complaint Form on the Contact Us section of the BSO website.

The formal Complaint Form will be tabled at the next Committee meeting and receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged.

5. Stage 3 – Clarification.

If there is insufficient information to enable the Committee to understand the concerns, the person will be requested to provide further details. If the person does not provide the requested information within a reasonable timeframe the matter lapses.

6. Stage 4 – Inquiry.

The Committee will appoint two members, without any conflict of interest to either party, to investigate the matter. Investigation processes will include; examination of evidence, request for further information, meetings with both parties separately and together in a mediation process. If either party declines to attend mediation this will be taken into consideration during the final ruling.

Persons involved are expected to demonstrate adherence to the values of confidentiality and respect for others. Members involved may attend meetings with a support person, provided that person also commits to the above values.

After the initial process, the Investigator will write to the involved parties informing them of any decision or proposed action and offer them the opportunity to make further submission within a specified timeframe.

At the end of this process a final decision will be made, the parties will be informed and a report will be given at the next Committee meeting.

7. The decision is final.