

The Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies would like to acknowledge both the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung, and Wurundjeri people as the Traditional Custodians of the Lands on which we are located in Melbourne. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We also acknowledge the Aboriginal language groups across all of Victoria, whose lands we provide funding for specific projects around Early Childhood Education. We acknowledge their history, their people, and their stories. As an Association we will work together for reconciliation, a process that starts with the acknowledgement of true Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures of Australia, and will always value the contribution to our community and culture, the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their families, communities and their stories.

Council Grievance and Dispute Resolution Policy

1. Introduction

The Council of AGECS is committed to reaching a speedy and just resolution of any disputes or grievances that may arise and that threaten the harmonious functioning of the Council.

2. Purpose

This policy is designed to set out the process for resolution of disputes or grievances involving Council members that are unable to be resolved through respectful debate in Council meetings.

3. Policy

Where possible disputes will be resolved by mediation by a member of the Executive not involved in the dispute or by an external mediator.

4. Procedure

4.1 Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the President to ensure that:

- a) Council members are aware of this policy and procedure.
- b) Disputes are handled respectfully, confidentially, and in accordance with natural justice.

It is the responsibility of all Council Members to ensure that their usage of electronic media conforms to this policy.

4.2 Process

Subject to anything to the contrary contained within the AGECS's constitution:

- a) The parties to the dispute must meet and discuss the matter in dispute and, if possible, resolve the dispute within 14 days after the dispute comes to the attention of all the parties.
- b) If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute at such a meeting, or if either party fails to attend that meeting, then the parties must, within 10 days, hold a meeting in the presence of a mediator.

- c) The mediator must be:
 - o person chosen by agreement between the parties; or
 - o in the absence of agreement, a person appointed by the Council.
- d) A member of AGECS can be a mediator, but may not be a member who is a party to the dispute.
- e) The parties to the dispute must, in good faith, attempt to settle the dispute by mediation.
- f) The mediator, in conducting the mediation, must:
 - o give the parties to the mediation process every opportunity to be heard;
 - o allow due consideration by all parties of any written statement submitted by any party; and
 - o ensure that natural justice is accorded to the parties to the dispute throughout the mediation process.
- g) The mediator must not determine the dispute.
- h) The mediator must be confidential and without prejudice.
- i) If the mediation process does not result in the dispute being resolved, the parties may seek to resolve the dispute otherwise via legal proceedings.

5. Related policies

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with other AGECS policies found on AGECS website:
<https://agecs.org.au/policies/>

It is the responsibility of the President to ensure that Council members are aware of this policy and procedure.

For questions about this policy, contact the President.

Version	2	Approved by Council on	03/05/2021, 29/072024
Responsible person	The President	Scheduled review date	3 years