



Formal Complainment Procedure

Utrechtse Historische Studentenkring

As made by the 97th board of the UHSK

Utrecht
Januari 2023

Introduction

During the General Assembly on September 14th of 2022 a motion has been submitted concerning the handling of formal complaints within the Utrechste Historische Studentenkring (hereafter: UHSK). The contents of this motion pleaded for a transparent way of handling complaints by installing an independent Complaint Committee. This way hierarchy within the UHSK will not play a part in the complaint procedure, making it easier for members to submit a complaint. The 97th board will elaborate on the complaint procedure with this document. This document will illustrate the way the Complaint Committee is constituted and what tasks it will be responsible for. Subsequently the complaint procedure will be clarified.

This document has been composed by the 97th board of the UHSK, consisting of Dax Antheunisse, Amber Verspui, Isabel Makkinje, Hans Kobes, Jona van Vreedendaal and Tristan Hofkes, in collaboration with Ricarda Frerick and Robin Schurink, the Confidential Advisers of 2022-2023.

The Complaint Committee

To make submitting complaints within the association easier an independent Complaint Committee will be installed. The committee will carry the responsibility to process submitted complaints by members.

To make this process as transparent and impartial as possible the committee will consist of the two Confidential Advisers of the UHSK as they are already experienced in the handling of complaints. Alongside these members another confidential adviser from a different association will be part of the committee, to optimize neutrality within the committee. This setup will ensure all complaints to be handled with appropriate distance from the situation while the committee members are still sufficiently knowledgeable about the association to understand the context of a complaint.

The details of the complainant as well as the defendant will always be treated with integrity. Names of the people involved will not be shared with the external confidential adviser and the complaint will thus be handled in full anonymity.

The Complaint Procedure

With the installation of the Complaint Committee submitting complaints will be made more accessible for members. From now on they no longer have to share their complaints with the board but can instead go to an independent committee. The members of the Complaint Committee will discuss the complaint and determine its severity. The committee will also check whether both the complainant and the defendant are members of the UHSK. If not, the university wide complaint procedure might be more effective.

After determining the severity of the case the committee will decide if it can be solved informally, which is always preferable. If the complaint is deemed too serious, a

proposal will be presented to the board wherein any consequences are listed. It is within the power of the board to accept this proposal. If they decline, they will reconvene with the Complaint Committee to come to a new agreement concerning the consequences for the defendant.

Exceptions to this procedure will be made when one or more board members or members from the Complaint Committee are deemed as defendants in the complaint. If board members are concerned in the complaint the Senate of the UHSK will act as the controlling body of the proposals made by the Complaint Committee. If the complaint concerns members of the Complaint Committee, the complainant is advised to go to the board with their complaint. In this case, the board will meet with the Senate to come up with fitting consequences. This approach will ensure two neutral parties to be involved in the complaint procedure, them consequently checking on each other. Neutrality will be optimized in this way. When the plan of action has been established, it will be sent to the complainant(s) and defendant(s). Any consequences will be put into practice and the procedure will be carefully and fully anonymously archived to serve as a reference to future complaints.

Conclusion

This document elaborates on the workings of a new Complaint Committee and the process of the newly established complaint procedure. By installing a Complaint Committee, complaints will no longer be processed by just one party, and will be judged by multiple perspectives. With this approach the UHSK strives to optimize neutrality so that every member of the association feels safe and supported to speak freely.

On behalf of the 97th board of the Utrechtse Historische Studentenkring,

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h.t. secretary

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