

# UMSU Advocacy CHARTER



## Our Vision

We envision a university community where students are empowered to negotiate academic and administrative issues, supported by independent and expert advice. We aim to empower students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to navigate the University's policies and procedures.

## Our Purpose

We help address the inherent power imbalance between students and the University by providing expert, independent advice to students on their rights and obligations in the context of their education. We also use this casework to inform and support the work of elected student representatives in identifying and addressing systemic problems to manifest meaningful change.

## WE PROVIDE

- Free, confidential, and expert advice on how to approach your problem in the context of the University's policies, procedures, and regulatory framework.
- Resources to help you self-advocate and negotiate more positive outcomes.
- Information and resources to help you to make informed decisions.
- Referrals to other services where necessary.

## WE NEED YOU TO

- Work with us in good faith.
- Let us know if you cannot keep an appointment.
- Be patient and please understand that we can be very busy at times.
- Treat us and our volunteers with courtesy, respect, and consideration.
- Provide us with accurate, honest, and complete information in a timely manner.

## Understand that:

- We cannot act in your place.
- We have no coercive powers and cannot compel the University to act in a particular way.
- We must be honest and realistic in our advice, and about the level of assistance we can provide.
- You do not have to take our advice on a matter, however, if you choose not to we may be unable to assist you.
- If we cannot meet the level of service you expect, or a relationship of trust and confidence cannot be established, then we may cease to assist you.

## YOU CAN EXPECT TO

- Be treated with courtesy, respect, and consideration.
- Receive clear information and advice in a timely manner.
- Receive information and resources so you can make informed choices and act in your own best interests.

## INFORMATION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

We operate under a strict [confidentiality policy](#) and handle all of your personal and health information in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic).

We will not divulge any of your information without your consent unless we are legally obligated to do so.

## MAKING A COMPLAINT

If you are dissatisfied with the service you are receiving:

- Let the advocate handling your case know and try to work the problem out with them.
- If you are unable to do this, you can contact the [Advocacy & Legal Divisional Manager](#).
- If you remain dissatisfied, you can make a complaint in writing to the [UMSU CEO](#).
- You can also submit general feedback (positive and negative) via our [feedback form](#).
- If you require assistance with these steps, you can contact the [Assessment & Triage Coordinator](#).