



## Guidance for Group Leaders

The U3A is dependent on its members for setting up and running groups. These notes have been written with the aim of supporting any member wishing to lead a new group.

### Setting up a Group

The purpose of the U3A is to share knowledge, skills and experience and to meet the social needs of its members. The U3A relies on the enthusiasm of its members and on their willingness to involve themselves in groups. A group can be established on any topic that interests you and those who wish to join. A group can be any size, though 6 and upwards is best and most grow once established. If you would like to start a group talk to the Group Coordinator who will help you to begin. Guidance may also be found in the 'Welcome' leaflet.

### Needs of a Group

- A leader to coordinate/organise and members to participate.
- An agreed programme.
- A regular time and place for meeting – a member's house or public venue.

### Types of Group

- A study group with a defined educational aim and a specific subject to learn about in a set number of meetings.
- A social study group with a definite educational aim but with no limit to the number of meetings.
- A social or activity group with no defined educational aim.

### Group Leaders

- The main function of the group leader is to make all the necessary arrangements for the group meetings and to manage the group finances.
- A group leader may be an expert and choose to take on a tutorial role in addition to an administrative one but this is entirely optional. They may also support and coordinate the learning and teaching, which is shared between members of the group and/or arrange speakers or visits.
- If a group leader is also the group tutor they may find it helpful to delegate some of the administrative tasks, eg. Finances, booking speakers etc

### Running a Group

- The Group Coordinator will provide lists at the monthly U3A meetings for members to get details of groups, and contact details of the Group Leader if they are interested in joining. The time of the meeting is agreed with the Group Coordinator and published in the monthly *Newsline*. Prospective new members are asked to contact the group

leader for further information and members should apologise for subsequent absence.

- In the event that any member does not attend a meeting of the group of which they are a member, on 2 consecutive occasions, and without apology, then they should be informed that they can no longer be a member of that group.
- It is anticipated that group leaders will publicise their groups regularly sending copy to the *Newsline* Editor. Changes of the time/venue/ status of their meeting in the coming month should be sent to Newsline for publication, This usually needs to be done at least 10 days before the Monthly Meeting. You should also let the Groups Co-ordinator know so that the necessary changes can be made to the Group Lists put up at the Monthly Meeting.
- A register should be kept and attendance at each meeting recorded. Group leaders should also ask members for emergency contact details.
- In the event of an accident of a group member during a group activity, an accident report form (form hh) should be completed (available on the website, or from the Group Coordinator, )and a copy forwarded to the Secretary. On outside visits it is good practice to carry a mobile phone so that help can be summoned if necessary.

## **Group Membership** (see also Guidance document on Joint groups )

- Please ensure that all your members are fully paid-up members of Southwell U3A and let the Group Coordinator know if this is not so.
- Members of other U3As are not allowed except under special circumstances. Any group leader who wishes to form a joint group, with members from another U3A should consult the committee for advice BEFORE acting.
- As a general rule, non-members of U3A cannot attend groups, group walks, etc, unless they have joined. If you are in doubt as to whether a person is a U3A member, you should ask to see their membership card/name badge.

However, in certain circumstances, occasional or casual attendance can be allowed.

if you have a visitor staying with you, and their attendance would not prevent a U3A member from participating in, or detract from, the group activity or enjoyment.

In the Walking Groups, it is possible for a non-group member, eg partner/friend to attend an outing on an occasional basis, but this should not be a regular occurrence. On walks, grandchildren, dogs, would be covered by U3A insurance. NB It is recommended that you do not allow dogs on walks. ( see Guidance on dogs )

A carer for a disabled/elderly person can attend in their capacity as carer.

NB. In these circumstances, non-members enjoy the same Public Liability insurance as U3A members. The policy is an insurance against the legal liability of the U3A, and is not a Personal Accident Insurance. It would have to be shown that U3A, its agents, or members had in some way been negligent in causing injury to the victim.

## **Resources**

- Southwell U3A has various items that are available for the use of groups. These include CD players, laptops and digital projectors. If a group needs any further items of this nature, this should be discussed with the Group Coordinator who will then take the request to the committee

- Making and distributing multiple copies of a copyrighted document is allowed for educational purposes within the remit of the CLA licence. The licence does not cover maps, newspapers or sheet music.
- The Third Age Trust has resources available for loan, free of charge. Details of these can be found at [www.southwellu3a.org.uk](http://www.southwellu3a.org.uk), or [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) , by telephone on 020 8315 0199 or [resources.centre@u3a.org.uk](mailto:resources.centre@u3a.org.uk). Resources are loaned free of charge. In addition, many subjects covered by groups have a national Subject Advisor, appointed by the U3A, to give help and advice on setting up a group on their particular subject. Details are available in copies of the U3A magazine, 'Third Age Matters'.

## Southwell U3A Website

Southwell and District U3A has its own website [www.southwellu3a.org.uk](http://www.southwellu3a.org.uk) and copies of all guidance and forms can be found there and downloaded.

## Support for Group Leaders

- The role of the Group Coordinator is to ensure, as far as possible, the smooth running of the groups, and to offer support and advice to group leaders.
- A meeting of group leaders is held twice a year. This is a good opportunity to meet with others and to share any successes or problems.
- Workshops are frequently organised by the Association of East Midland U3As and this provides a good opportunity to share your experience with others throughout the Region.

## Group Finances

- Groups should be self-financing, and therefore costs should be kept to a minimum and agreed between group members. .
- All monies collected are the property of the whole U3A.
- If a group is held in a member's home it is helpful if the members contribute towards the refreshments, e.g. 20p. This is given directly to the host. These monies do not need to be accounted for.
- Groups that collect and spend money, other than that noted above, should refer to the separate guidance 'Guidance for Group Leaders on Group Expenditure'

## Trips, Group Bookings and Overnight Stays ( see separate guidance ).

Groups that wish to organise

a one day event that involves travel and **this is not part of their usual activity**

or

**organise an event that involves a group booking**

or

a multi – day event that involves travel and accommodation

must **first consult the committee** and then the 'Guidance to Trip Organisers'. **This is to ensure that the event organiser has full insurance cover.**