

GROUP GUIDELINES

U3As are self-managed learning co-operatives for older people no longer in full time work, providing opportunities to share experiences in a wide range of interest groups and to pursue learning for fun.

1. Establishing a Group

- 1.1. Any member who would like to start a new group should contact the groups coordinator who will take the request to the committee for approval.
- 1.2. Members may host or facilitate the group, they do not need to act as an instructor themselves.
- 1.3. Hutton U3A (HU3A) group activities are primarily for HU3A members but where space permits members of other U3As may attend. However, all participants must have a current U3A membership. In certain circumstances the committee may agree joint group activity with other U3As where numbers or expertise is lacking.
- 1.4. If a group leader wishes to resign the committee will make all efforts to keep the group active until a new leader is found.

2. Group Administration

- 2.1. Only U3A members are covered by our liability insurance, a copy of which is available on the website. For this reason all participants must have a valid U3A membership.
- 2.2. Once established the group should agree on its expectations and study plans, which should be reviewed regularly.
- 2.3. Groups may have guest speakers and occasional outside expert help, but must not regularly use instructors who are not U3A members.
- 2.4. The venue and frequency of meetings are to be agreed by the group and advised to the groups coordinator, who maintains a central diary of all events.
- 2.5. A register of attendance **must** be kept by all group leaders. The register is required so that in the event of an incident it may be necessary to inform any of the emergency services, including the insurance company of those present. (See section 2.1)
The committee has an interest in the progress of all activities and therefore the register should also be available for viewing by the committee.

A suitable register form is available with this document. Group leaders may wish to maintain a master copy of their group's attendance on computer and print a copy as required. For help with setting this up please contact the groups coordinator.

- 2.6. Any accident, illness or incident during an event must be recorded and reported on the incident form (a copy of which is available with this document) and returned to the secretary as soon as possible. Group leaders should ensure that this form is available at all meetings.

3. Conduct within a Group

- 3.1. Start and finish times should be adhered to. Latecomers cannot expect the meeting to restart for them.
- 3.2. Everyone in the group is of equal value and has the right to speak freely and be heard. Whilst members should be encouraged to join in frank and open discussions knowing that confidentiality will be respected, all criticism

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should be positive as the emphasis of the groups should be enjoyment.

3.3. If a problem or dispute arises between members or within the group try to solve the problem immediately. If it cannot be resolved the groups coordinator or a member of the committee must be informed as soon as possible after the meeting. The groups coordinator will then arrange a meeting with those involved. If the problem remains the committee can hear both sides of the case and arrange an arbitration meeting to try and resolve any issues and make a fair decision on the outcome. In the case of suspected theft or other criminal offence the appropriate authority and the committee must be informed immediately.

4. HU3A Newsletter

4.1. The group leader should send a report of the group's activities/studies each month to the newsletter editor at **huttonu3anews@gmail.com**. The report should also include the date, time and the venue of the next meeting. This should be sent by 5pm on the Tuesday before the Hutton U3A monthly meeting. Articles not received by this time may result in only the date of the group's next meeting being published.

4.2. The editor will assemble the reports and any other material and submit it to another committee member for proof reading prior to publication. Any article deemed unsuitable by the editor will be returned to the sender for re-submission. In the event of a dispute the chairman has final arbitration before publication.

5. Finance

5.1. All groups should be self-financing with costs being borne equally by that group's members.

5.2. All financial transactions must be recorded in a permanent record which is open to scrutiny by the treasurer at any time. Any cash in hand remains the property of Hutton U3A and must not exceed £50.

5.3. For group meetings held in a home all attendees should pay 40p towards the cost of refreshments, etc. (For group meeting room hire see below.)

5.4. If a group requires outside speakers, tutors, course downloads, or outings etc. the cost is to be divided equally between members of the group. Members wishing to participate in such activities should pay in advance any costs involved to the event organiser, preferably by cheque made out to Hutton U3A. It is the responsibility of the organiser to ensure that the enterprise is viable, to collect all funds due and pay these over to the treasurer. For advance meal bookings, group members should show a commitment by paying a deposit in advance of any booking as required.

5.5. The cost of an enterprise should include an element for administration e.g. postage, telephone calls etc. These can be reclaimed by the event organiser from the treasurer by completing a claim form. **5.6.** Group leaders should not be out of pocket and can be paid 5p per sheet for use of their own printer.

5.7. Payment for outgoings will be made by the treasurer upon receipt of an invoice or a signed payment request form with supporting documents as applicable.

5.8. It may be necessary for the event organisers to retain funds for payment to be made. All such transactions must be recorded in the group records and submitted to the treasurer in summary format at quarterly intervals.

5.9. Outings and functions should be paid up front by members into a Hutton U3A account and paid for by a cheque/card issued by the treasurer or social treasurer. Where relevant the treasurer may be asked to pay for an event in advance. Group leaders or organisers are not normally advised to pay for any bookings for a venue or event with their own personal cheque or card although it is recognised that in some instances this is unavoidable.

5.10 Hutton U3A social events and travel arrangements should be advertised to all members in the monthly newsletter. Group Leaders must ensure that the 'sales price' covers all costs. Contracts or agreements in the name of Hutton U3A may only be signed by a Trustee. Members should make payments into either the Hutton U3A Social or the Hutton U3A Main account depending on how the event has been categorised. U3A social events and travel are covered by 3rd Age Trust insurance except for holidays.

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5.11 In the case of holidays abroad, travel agents or tour companies should carry the appropriate Atol, Abta or liability insurance to protect the organiser against personal liability. Within Europe all members must possess a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) and in addition individual private health/travel insurance should also be held, which will avoid an added burden being placed on other members if a need arises. Individual member's payments should be made direct to the agency concerned in order to facilitate any potential claim.

6. Group Meeting Room Hire

6.1. Groups wishing to hire a room for their meetings must do so through the groups coordinator who is the only person contractually authorised to book rooms.

6.2. Where membership levels are sufficient, in order to reduce the cost to each group member overall, the group may choose to pay for the term in advance, provided that all room booking costs are met in full. In such cases, to assist the treasurer's bookkeeping, advance payments should ideally cover the fiscal year, (or part thereof), i.e. 1 April-31 March.

6.3. For groups not paying in advance, the cost per meeting for each attendee is as published in the Hutton U3A Newsletter - i.e. £2 for 2017.

6.4. When payments for a room are passed to the treasurer the number of members, cost of the room, and the period represented should be provided. It would also be appreciated if this payment is made by cheque, as it is easier for the treasurer to reconcile and reduces the possession of large amounts of cash.

Group leaders must be aware of their responsibilities under the terms and conditions of the hall in question. T&C's are available for viewing in the Members Section on the website.

7. Data Protection

7.1 The HU3A Committee has overall responsibility for Data Protection and has obtained consent from Members via their membership form to use their data for HU3A activities. For more information please see the HU3A Data Protection and Privacy Policies on our website.

7.2 Group Leaders should collect only the level of data required for their group, selected from Name, Address, Phone, Mobile and Email address. Member details may be obtained from the Chairman, Membership Secretary or Website Editor. These details must be held securely by only the Group Leader and should not be shared with any other parties unless required for HU3A activities. An example might be for Travel or Accommodation and in these instances the Group Leader must ensure that any third party maintains their details equally securely.

7.3 Avoid sending inappropriate emails that could be considered offensive or discriminatory and that might be used for marketing and/or promotional materials from external service providers.

Emails should always be sent as Blind Carbon Copy (BCC), however, group members names can be listed in the body of the email if required.