

The University of the Third Age

Guidance Notes for Convenors 2018

Group Convenors are responsible for overseeing their interest group and for liaising with relevant members of the Executive Committee to ensure that the group is run in an orderly manner with regard to the general policies of the U3A. Convenors are NOT expected to lead the group at all times, but to allow all members to participate in accordance with the general tenets of the U3A that all members should contribute in teaching and learning.

Group Convenors;

- Must keep a record of attendances, especially when members pay a fee for attending a group meeting. The Treasurer must, at the end of the financial year (31st January) receive the completed record of the group's accounts form.
- Must liaise with the Groups Co-ordinator to enable groups lists to be kept updated. This includes letting the Groups Co-ordinator know when the group is full so that he/she may update their records.
- Must check with the Groups Co-ordinator that there is no one on the waiting list before a new member is invited to join the group. There must be no prioritising or queue jumping. When the group is full, members' names must go on a waiting list first and be taken in strict rotation.
- When there are names on a waiting list, consideration should be given to whether a new group can be formed. This should be done in discussion with the Groups Co-ordinator.
- Prospective U3A members are allowed to attend two group meetings as 'taster' sessions before joining the U3A. Any payment made for the 'taster' meeting should be regarded as a donation. If the individual concerned wishes to attend future meetings of the group and, assuming there are places available, they must first become a member of the Branston & District U3A. If in doubt, the convenor should check with the Membership Secretary first. Note that if the new group applicant is already a member of a local U3A and is ONLY joining a single group within Branston & District U3A, no membership fee applies.
- Must have an Accident Report Form available and must complete the form in the event of any untoward incident occurring. The completed form must be given to a member of the Executive Committee (preferably the Groups Co-ordinator). Copies of the accident report form are available on the Documents page of the website as part of the Health and Safety Policy.
- Must have an up-to-date copy of the group's members' emergency contacts list, at ALL meetings and outings. This list must be kept confidential. It should be kept in a sealed envelope to be opened only in the event of needing to be referred to.
- Must have access to a mobile phone (or other means of contacting the emergency services) when on 'outside' activities. It is also a wise precaution to carry some basic 'first aid' items.

- If it is necessary to leave the group, the group convenor must designate someone else to lead the group during your absence, and that person must be given the emergency contacts list.
- Ideally you should work alongside a 'deputy' who can take over the group's activities at short notice.
- Should try to carry out a risk assessment of any possible hazards before embarking on group activities and make sure that these are pointed out to your group members. Guidance is available in the U3A's Health and Safety Policy.
- Should make good use of the Monthly Meeting Groups display to promote your programmes and group activities.
- Must ensure that the website entry for your group is up-to-date and correct. The Website Manager should be asked to make any appropriate amendments.
- Should seek to encourage members to be new convenors or take other responsibilities.
- Should, if appropriate, make use of the Third Age Trust Resources Centre to help widen the opportunities available for your group.
- If there are any problems, should liaise with the Group Co-ordinator or other member of the Executive Committee.
- Must ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation by;
 - a) Ensuring that ALL personal data is kept secure and up-to-date.
 - b) Deleting or otherwise destroying all out-of-date records containing personal data.
 - c) Keeping members' emergency contact details in a sealed envelope or secure phone or tablet.
 - d) Ensuring that if members' email addresses are shared within the group, that all members of the group have given traceable (preferably written) permission. See the suggested Group Email Permissions Form below. And that if the agreement of ALL members of the group has not been gained, emails circulated within the group MUST use BLIND copies.
- Be aware that if group members do not attend meetings or outings without submitting apologies for more than 3 sequential meetings without good reason, you are at liberty to strike them off the members list. Liaise with the Groups Co-ordinator or other member of the Executive Committee if you wish to do so.
- If you have any misgivings about the welfare of you members, you should contact the Welfare Officer or other member of the Executive Committee to seek advice and support.
- The Committee will consider applications for reasonable grants to help towards purchasing capital items for individual Groups. However, the practicality of granting a loan, repayable from Group funds, must be the first consideration. If a Group wishes to purchase a high cost item an application should be made to an outside grant giving body. Any such application must be made by the committee, who as Trustees, will ensure financial diligence.

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Interest Groups Members' Permission to Share Email Addresses

To comply with General Data Protection Regulation, if group members wish to share email addresses, we need your express permission to do so. Please complete this form and submit it to your Group Convenor, who will retain it as evidence of your agreement (or otherwise) until such time as you leave the group or withdraw your agreement.

I, the undersigned, as a member of

..... Group (name of interest group)

Agree Am not willing (Tick as appropriate)

to share my email address with other members of the group for the purpose of information and discussion **on group matters only**.

Signed Date

Email