



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE CRAWLEY

Registered Charity No. 1029004

CRAWLEY U3A

PROCEDURES & REFERENCE GUIDE

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Crawley U3A Procedures & Reference Guide

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FOREWARD

Crawley U3A provides the opportunity for people, no longer in full time employment, to learn together in an informal setting where knowledge and experience is shared with like-minded members. All are equal and learning comes in many forms through a wide variety of topics. It is an enjoyable and unpressured way in which to expand one's knowledge and to keep one's brain mentally active. It is not the intention that Group Leaders or Committee Members should feel a heavy burden of responsibility, as this should be shared through collaboration.

PART 1 – GROUP LEADERS

1 Section One - GROUP LEADERS

In this digital age, it is the intention of Crawley U3A that the vast majority of its business is conducted via electronic means, either through the use of email or via the Beacon Management System. This helps to reduce running costs and makes the dissemination of information more immediate and relevant. The Committee requests that any Group Leader who, for any reason, cannot comply should ask their Group members if one of them would be willing to act in this information role for the benefit of the Group. The Groups' Co-ordinator should then be advised of the nominated member's details. Group Leaders can request the Groups' Co-ordinator to enter Group members' details on Beacon. Groups without the benefit of electronic access to information may be at risk of missing important notices about special offers available to U3A groups e.g. visits, concerts, lectures and theatre performances.

1.1 Starting and running a Group

1.1.1 New groups can be formed in the following ways:

- A potential Group Leader securing sufficient interest in a subject;
- A list of interested members without a nominated Group Leader;
- The splitting of a subject group that has become too large.

1.1.2 The Groups' Co-ordinator should be advised of any potential new Group and all interested parties will be invited to a planning meeting.

1.1.3 Individual Group Leaders should ensure that the content and information about their subject group is appropriate and correct before it is published either on the website or in hard copy documents. Details should include the venue, day, time and dates, plus an outline of the current programme where space allows. This ensures that members making enquiries are adequately informed.

- 1.1.4 Group Leaders are encouraged to involve all Group members to plan the programme. This will encourage ownership and participation from Group members. There is support and advice available from U3A Subject Advisers on the Third Age Trust website at <http://www.u3a.org.uk>.
- 1.1.5 Group Leaders at fixed venues do not pay for attendance.
- 1.1.6 Group Leaders of external activity Groups do not pay the Group annual fee.
- 1.1.7 No Group Leader should be 'out of pocket' when organising such activities. (See para. 1.3.7)
- 1.1.8 For issues about running Groups and venue bookings, contact the Groups' Co-ordinator.

1.2 **The Administration of running a Group**

- 1.2.1 The Group Leader should consider appointing a Secretary or Treasurer to help in the administration of the Group.
- 1.2.2 Those Group Leaders who are using the Beacon computer system should maintain details of their Group directly on it. Those who do not use Beacon should supply the Groups' Co-ordinator with their Group membership list and other details of the Group. Group Leaders should also view the website on a regular basis and advise the Webmaster of any required changes to the Group information.
- 1.2.3 There is no limit to the number of Groups that an individual member can join, subject to payment of the appropriate fee for each one.
- 1.2.4 Group Leaders should ensure that they are aware who is at each meeting in case of emergency evacuation or similar incident. This can be achieved by use of your Group's Register.
- 1.2.5 A confidential emergency contact name and number is required on the Membership Renewal Form. Information should not be shared without the prior permission of the individual. Group Leaders should be aware that they should not keep personal details of group members on their own pcs as this may contravene data protection issues. Such details are stored securely on Beacon and can be safely accessed by Group Leaders.
- 1.2.6 Newcomers are permitted to attend a taster session with a Group without payment. They should be entered on the register separately as a visitor. If not already Crawley U3A members, they should be invited to contact the Membership Secretary in order to become a member of Crawley U3A and join the Group.
- 1.2.7 The venue and room where a Group meets is normally booked by the Groups' Co-ordinator. Where a Group meets in a Member's home, the arrangements may be made by the Group Leader. The Groups' Co-ordinator is to be informed of **all** meeting arrangements.
- 1.2.8 If a meeting is cancelled or rearranged, Group members must be informed where possible. Meeting rooms are booked and **may be** paid for in advance. Where this occurs, the Groups' Co-ordinator must also be advised.
- 1.2.9 Where applications for membership of individual Groups exceeds the Group Leader's expectation, the Groups' Co-ordinator must be informed. This should include instances where numbers exceed the limits of an individual meeting room. The Groups' Co-ordinator will provide information on the limits on numbers at venues/individual meeting rooms and make note of unplaced members. (We don't hold "waiting lists").

1.3 The Financial Aspects of running a Group

- 1.3.1 As far as is practical, all subject groups should be self financing. Group Leaders will be provided with a comprehensive list of current venues and room hire rates so that the Group's viability can be properly monitored.
- 1.3.2 The levels of Group membership fees are set by the Crawley U3A Committee and leaders are advised at a Group Leaders' meeting.
- 1.3.3 Where a subject group is unable to cover its expenses, this should be reported immediately to the Treasurer who will raise the issue with the Committee and liaise with the Group Leader to secure a solution.
- 1.3.4 The Treasurer will produce a regular Groups' Income and Expenditure report for distribution by the Groups' Co-ordinator to all Group Leaders in order to highlight potential discrepancies.
- 1.3.5 It should not be necessary for a Group to close because expenses are not covered; the Committee will however keep under review any group which is not self financing.
- 1.3.6 The Group fee is to cover room hire charges and group general expenses.
- 1.3.7 Group Leaders should claim for all appropriate expenditure to run the Group or activity & ensure they are not 'out of pocket' when organising such activities. Where a Group Leader delegates to another member in their Group, any 'out of pocket' expenses may be claimed via said Group Leader.
- 1.3.8 Certain small expenses may be claimed from the money taken in at meetings. These include any postage, stationery or photocopying and the like. Amounts up to £10.00 can be deducted from takings without obtaining prior approval providing such payments do not bring the Group into deficit. More may be agreed in exceptional circumstances. Receipts should be obtained for all purchases whenever possible for audit purposes and copies sent to the Treasurer with the appropriate form.
- 1.3.9 If a Group wishes to use additional facilities, the associated costs are to be met by the Group members, unless the Committee has **exceptionally** given permission for these to be waived. Such facilities include: - speakers/lecturers, notes available to the members, hire of equipment/facilities etc. Prior permission to purchase such goods or services must be sought through the Treasurer.
- 1.3.10 Accounts Form 01 – **Group Accounts** should be used to record attendance fees paid and passed to the Treasurer with cheque (if possible) by the end of each term.
- 1.3.11 Accounts Form 05 – **Group Fees Payment & Cheque List** may be used for Groups collecting fees annually. This must include a list of cheques provided by members.
- 1.3.12 Accounts Form 02 – **Expenses Claim** should be used to claim expenses; the Group Leader should authorise any expenses claimed by another member of the group.
- 1.3.13 Accounts Form 03 – **Events Payment & Cheque List** should be used when remitting a number of cheques to the Treasurer. All cheques **must** be listed.
- 1.3.14 Cheques should not be folded or stapled as the bank paying in machine rejects cheques with staples, folds and creases in them.
- 1.3.15 Payments for group trips will only be made if sufficient funds have been received from the members for that trip. In exceptional circumstances the Group Leader should contact the Treasurer.

- 1.3.16 Accounts Form 04 – **Payment Request** should be used to obtain a cheque or **reimbursement** from the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer. Documentary evidence or receipt must be supplied. This form should be used for:
- 1.3.16.1 Pre-payment for event, activity, visit or speaker;
 - 1.3.16.2 Reimbursement of payment made by Credit or Debit Card;
 - 1.3.16.3 Reimbursement of payment made to a speaker.
- 1.3.17 Members' cheques for any and all U3A activity should be made payable to Crawley U3A and be passed to the Treasurer or paid into the Crawley U3A bank account direct if preferred. Full details of all these direct actions must be notified to the Treasurer immediately to ensure that all transactions go through the accounts and to further ensure transparency and the avoidance of any possible uncertainty.
- 1.3.18 All monies paid by Group members for group attendance fees must be forwarded to the Treasurer as soon as possible.
- 1.3.19 All monies paid by Group members for group trips are held pending payment to the venue is the property of those members. Monies must be paid into the Crawley U3A bank account as soon as possible and will be held on the specific group account, until either:
- 1.3.19.1 The Venue needs paying direct (upon the request of the Group Leader). If the payment due date is imminent, the Group Leader must contact the Treasurer for a Priority payment, or
 - 1.3.19.2 The Group Leader/Organiser requests reimbursement if they have already personally paid the venue. All payments will be made as soon as is practically possible.
- 1.3.20 Group Trip monies do not form part of Crawley U3A Income and Expenditure and any balance remaining at the financial year end will be carried forward to the following year.
- 1.3.21 Special arrangements are in place for the management of the Spring, Summer and Winter outings that are organised for the whole of Crawley U3A.
- 1.3.22 For repairs to, or replacement of, a piece of equipment used by any Group, the Committee should be advised of the need and permission sought through the Treasurer. On no account should new items be purchased for a Group without the prior permission of the Committee.
- 1.3.23 Documents printed on home printers can be claimed at:
10p for plain black text per side of an A4 sheet
20p for colour text and pictures per side of an A4 sheet
- 1.3.24 Refreshments are arranged and paid for by members according to their own requirements. Group funds must not be used for this purpose.
- 1.3.25 The Crawley U3A Financial Year runs from **1st August to 31st July**. All account forms, expenditure claims and income should be passed to the Treasurer by 15th July at the latest so that cheques can be cashed, where possible, within the current financial year. **The Membership year runs from 1st September to 31st August.**
- 1.3.26 For any other matters of Finance, contact the Honorary Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer.

2 Section Two - GROUP LEADERS – Regular Meetings at Fixed Venue

- 2.1 This section includes all Groups holding regular meetings, at a fixed venue.
- 2.1.1 The frequency of meetings is determined by the Group Leader in liaison with members of the Group.
- 2.1.2 Venues can include hired premises or use of a room in a private house.
- 2.1.3 The levels of Group membership fees are set annually by the Crawley U3A Committee and leaders are advised at a Group Leaders' meeting with further announcement at the AGM.
- 2.1.4 Subject Group meetings are financed through the payment of group membership or attendance fees. There are three options:
 - 2.1.4.1 Members pay a minimum set amount of £1.50 per session on a weekly, monthly or per term basis. There is no concession for advance payment and no refund for non-attendance, except in exceptional circumstances.
 - 2.1.4.2 Where Groups hold regular meetings in private homes, Members pay **75p** per session split between **40p** for home and **35p** for Crawley U3A. Alternatively, the Group Leader may choose a single annual fee, currently set at **£3.00** per annum, to cover general group administration costs. It should be noted that the first option provides a small reimbursement to the home owner whereas the second option does not.
 - 2.1.4.3 A fee to cover venue hire costs for planning meetings and general group administration costs. Minimum fee payable is **£3.00**.
- 2.1.5 Terms and conditions of hire of all venues should be provided to the Treasurer and Groups' Co-ordinator and scrutinised annually by the Executive Committee.
- 2.1.6 Accounts Form 01 – Group Accounts should be used to record attendance fees paid and either passed to the Treasurer with payments, or if monies paid into the bank by the Group Leader direct, sent with that information to the Treasurer immediately.
- 2.1.7 Room bookings should include adequate time for room preparation and clearance after the meeting.
- 2.1.8 Contributions from members should be encouraged and the provision of topic outlines for subsequent sessions will enable members to carry out their own research. This should promote learning and a feeling of inclusion.
- 2.1.9 Group Leaders should contact any member of the Group who is absent for three meetings without being in contact. This may alert us to sudden health issues or other problems and should help us maintain pastoral care of our members.

3 Section Three - GROUP LEADERS – External Activities, no Fixed Venue

- 3.1 This section includes all Groups which may hold regular meetings, but for activities at external venues.
 - 3.1.1 Whilst not exclusive, this includes all Out and About, Amblers, Walkers and Theatre Groups.
 - 3.1.2 Whilst some Groups follow a set monthly pattern, others are likely to meet on an ad hoc basis during the year. The frequency and regularity are determined by the Group Leader in liaison with members of the Group.
 - 3.1.3 These Groups are likely to hold Planning meetings to discuss the Group's activities.
- 3.2 The Planning meetings and administrative costs are financed through the payment of Group membership fees set annually by the Crawley U3A Committee and leaders are advised at a Group Leaders' meeting. The fees also cover reimbursement for travel expenses for planning outings taken by Out and About Group Leaders **or their representative** where the journey is specifically for this purpose.
 - 3.2.1 For these Groups, there is a single annual fee payable, currently set at **£3.00** per annum. For members joining during the course of the year, a pro-rata rate equivalent to **£1.00** for each full term is payable.
 - 3.2.2 Accounts Form 05 – Group Fees Payment & Cheque List may be used for Groups collecting fees annually. This must include a list of cheques provided by members. **If paid into the bank direct by the Group Leader this form should immediately be sent to the Treasurer with that information.**

4 Section Four – GROUP LEADERS - Health & Safety

- 4.1 All Group Leaders must make themselves aware of emergency arrangements in their chosen venue in case of fire etc. and should relay these arrangements to group members.
- 4.2 An Incident Report Form must be completed when accidents occur during group meetings or outings. Copies signed by the injured party and Group Leader must be sent to the Secretary as soon as possible after the event. Group Leaders should also advise the Secretary by telephone in the first instance.
- 4.3 The Secretary will inform the Committee and the venue when appropriate.

5 Section Five - GROUP LEADERS – Other Useful Information

5.1 Advice

5.1.1 The Third Age Trust has issued a series of Advice Sheets, of which number 14 is specifically for Group Leaders. All sheets are available to download from the Members Area of the Third Age Trust website at <http://www.u3a.org.uk/home.html>

5.2. Insurance

5.2.1 All local U3As having paid their annual membership subscription to the U3A Trust benefit from the nationally organised insurance.

5.2.2 An overview of the insurance policies provided by the Third Age Trust is available from the Groups' Co-ordinator / Treasurer or available to download from the Members Area of the Third Age Trust website at <http://www.u3a.org.uk/home.html>

5.3 Resources

5.3.1 Crawley U3A maintains a list of Resources/Assets for use at Group meetings. This list is available on the Crawley U3A website at <https://u3asites.org.uk/crawley/> under the Notice Board tab and is maintained by the Webmaster. A copy can be obtained on request.

5.3.2 The Third Age Trust operates a Resources Centre at the U3A National Office from where material to use at Group meetings may be borrowed. This includes slides, videos, DVDs and redundant OU Courses. The Third Age Trust has blanket permission from the copyright holders for these to be shown at U3A meetings.