

Equal Opportunities Policy Declaration

CVU3A (CVU3A) is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables members in their third age to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members of each U3A draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to teach and learn from each other (peer to peer learning). CVU3A recognise that some people are particularly likely to experience discrimination and harassment and are committed to making sure that the CVU3A is as inclusive and welcoming as possible.

CVU3A endeavours to provide equality of opportunity to any person in their third age regardless of:-

- Educational background
- Gender (including marital status and gender reassignment)
- Sexual orientation (including civil partnership status)
- Race or racial group (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or belief
- Disability
- Social status
- Political beliefs/affiliation

CVU3A will strive to promote and practice equality, diversity and inclusivity, welcoming everyone and treating all equally. If anyone has concerns regarding any discriminatory practices they believe might have taken place these should be reported to the committee, who will review and take appropriate action where necessary.

Where CVU3A Committee become aware of any discriminatory practice or harassment, the committee will seek to address this through consultation with all parties concerned and, where necessary, through invoking formal procedures.

If any member of CVU3A feels they have experienced or witnessed discriminatory behaviour or harassment, this should be reported to the Committee. Any matters of concern will be reviewed by the Committee and a decision will be made, in line with the CVU3As constitution and formal procedures, as to what steps will be taken to address the issue.

Code of Conduct for CVU3A Trustees

Introduction

“Charity trustees are responsible for controlling the management and administration of a charity. They should work together as a team and have collective responsibility for their charity” (Charity Commission).

A Trustee Code of Conduct is an agreement between the organisation and the individual committee member which spells out the standards of behaviour expected.

General

- Trustees must read the Charity Commission leaflet CC3 entitled ‘The Essential Trustee – what you need to know’ which can be downloaded from the Charity Commission website.
- Trustees are expected to know, follow and promote the Principles of the U3A Movement at every opportunity.
- Trustees must always act in the best interests of CVU3A and the U3A Movement, strive to uphold its reputation and never do anything which could bring CVU3A or the Movement into disrepute or expose it to undue risk.
- Trustees are expected to reflect the current organisational policy of CVU3A, regardless of whether it conflicts with their personal views.

- Trustees must never derive any pecuniary benefit from being a trustee and must notify the Chair of any gifts received.
- Trustees are expected to use CVU3A's resources responsibly and only to further its stated charitable objects/purposes.
- Trustees should inform the Chair before accepting an invitation to speak on behalf of CVU3A.
- Trustees will respect both the authority of the Chair in the role of meeting leader and accept majority committee votes as final.
- Trustees are expected to treat fellow committee members courteously and maintain a respectful attitude towards the opinions of others.
- Organisational, committee and individual confidentiality must be respected at all times.

Specific – Committee Meetings Preparation for and attendance

Trustees are expected to study the agenda and all supporting papers prior to the meeting and strive to attend all meetings.

Conflict of Interest

Trustees must declare a conflict or possible conflict of interest at the start of the committee meeting or at the earliest possible opportunity. The Chair will then decide whether to exclude the trustee from a particular item or even from the whole meeting. In the event that the Chair has a conflict of interest, then the committee should request the Vice-Chair to rule on the matter.

Confidentiality

In order that all trustees feel comfortable expressing their views and ideas it is essential that everybody maintains complete confidentiality outside the committee at all times. The decisions made by the committee are minuted and once approved, the minutes are available on request to members.

Corporate responsibility

No matter what individual trustees' opinions or voting choices are, once an item is approved by the committee, all trustees must accept it as decisive and final and not comment further outside the committee environment.

Terms and Conditions of Membership of CVU3A

1. Abide by the Aims and Guiding Principles of the U3A movement.
2. Always act in the best interests of the U3A and never do anything to bring the U3A into disrepute.
3. Abide by the terms and conditions of the constitution of CVU3A.
4. Treat fellow members with respect and courtesy at all times.
5. Comply with and support the decisions of the elected committee.
6. Advise the Membership Secretary of any change in personal details.

Volunteers

Volunteers play a vital role in the successful running of an active U3A. They fulfil many roles which enable the majority of the membership to take part in activities. These roles range from convening groups to helping out with specific roles at Monthly Meetings or being an active member of the Committee.

As such, all volunteers (no matter how small or large a role they play) must be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of gender, race, colour, disability, religion, age or sexual orientation.

Volunteers will receive the support of the Committee in carrying out their agreed role.

Volunteers should:

- treat all CVU3A members and visitors with courtesy and respect, respecting any confidential information given to them;
- co-operate with other volunteers;
- be reliable, carrying out their agreed roles and tasks to the best of their ability;
- ask for support when and where it is required, notifying the appropriate person if they are unavailable or unable to fulfil their volunteer role.

Members and Companions/Carers

U3A membership is open to everybody in their third age, namely those no longer in full time employment and with no parental responsibilities. U3As are self-help, co-operative organisations run entirely by the members for the members and therefore it is important that individuals are able to take full responsibility for their own participation in U3A interest groups and events. Should the situation arise when a member no longer feels confident that he/she can participate fully without needing help, it will be necessary for that person to be accompanied by a companion/carer who will be covered by the liability insurance provided by The Third Age Trust whilst in attendance. Even if you have members who are willing to help you cannot allow them to take responsibility for another member's care as this could be deemed to be outside our insurance cover if any injury or damage resulted.

Vulnerable Adults (Please see Safeguarding Policy and Procedures)

CVU3A is a self-help learning organisations for people in their third age who are no longer in full time employment. Vulnerable adults who require assistance for their needs and wish to attend any U3A meetings and/or Interest Groups must be accompanied by an adult carer of their choice who is capable of assisting them with their needs, thereby ensuring their safety, comfort and well-being.

CVU3A is not a service provider, therefore whilst reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that individuals can participate and can attend with carers to support their needs, there will be certain needs that the CVU3A will not be able to accommodate due to the level of care that an individual may need.

A carer accompanying a vulnerable adult to meetings does not have to be a CVU3A member and will not be charged for attending CVU3A meetings.

1.1 Practical Approaches to Increasing Access

In ensuring equality of access CVU3A will take the following steps:

- General meetings will, as far as possible, be held at a well lit, fully wheelchair accessible venue, spacious enough to cope with wheelchairs and mobility scooters, with wheelchair accessible toilet and hearing aid loop system, and with a sound system in use.
- Speakers giving visual presentations will be asked to give a good description of the presentation if there is a possibility that people with visual impairment are present.
- At the monthly members meetings the front row of seats will be reserved for members who have impaired hearing or vision.
- Access will be reviewed by the committee on an ongoing basis with a view to considering any additional adjustments that may need to be made e.g. availability of a hearing loop or access to dementia friends training.

Equality and Accessibility Policy

- Committee members and Group Leaders will receive an induction and/or training designed to support them in having an awareness of and facilitating access.
- Group Leaders/Conveners running groups that require a certain level of fitness and/or mobility will be asked to provide this information to members in advance so that members can decide as to whether the group is suitable for them.
- Group Leaders/Conveners will liaise with the Accessibility Officer where there are concerns about an individual's ability to participate.
- CVU3A will try to ensure that there are a range of groups available that will provide access to members so that members do not feel excluded from too many interest/activity groups.
- CVU3A will encourage and may require members to bring carers with them to CVU3A activities, as needed, with no additional cost for the carer. The carer will fall under CVU3A liability insurance unless they are a professional carer, in which case the individual will be covered by their employer's insurance cover.
- CVU3A will maintain a database of venues and the facilities offered by each venue to accommodate different needs.
- CVU3A has a duty of care to all members and this may mean that difficult decisions have to be taken in assessing an individual's ability to participate either in the CVU3A as a whole or within individual activities. These decisions will always be taken through discussion with the individual member and his or her carer in order to ensure that a fair and considered decision is taken. This may include developing a risk assessment with the individual regarding their ability to participate.
- CVU3A will seek additional advice and support from U3A Plus, the Regional Trustee, National Office, the national website and external specialist organisations as required.

This policy was adopted on:

Signed:

Committee role:

Print name:

Policy review date: