

# Running your U3A during Covid-19

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Covid-19 Advice on U3A activities - U3A-KMS-DOC-072

## 1. Document Control

The Third Age Trust **Document Management System**

Doc **Covid-19 Advice on U3A activities**

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## 2. Introduction

There has been further clarity around the implications of different rules and guidance recently introduced to the Covid-19 measures for the different nations and islands in Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Island of Great Britain which are summarized in the table below for your convenience. Further detail is added below for each nation.

For your information the definition for clinically extremely vulnerable are available in [Risk Checklist for outdoor activities - U3A-KMS-DOC-073](#)

### 2.1. Purpose

The process remains as before, any U3A wishing to restart activity must carry out an appropriate risk assessment/checklist to ensure the activity is safe for members to participate in. The conclusion of the risk assessment/checklist will determine what actions must be taken to make the activity safe or conclude it is not yet safe to restart even with additional measures in place. Government guidelines continue to be central to any risk assessment and must be adhered to. Each U3A activity, venue and circumstance is different and must be assessed as such.

### 2.2. Scope

Relevant to all U3As

### 2.3. Related documentation

- [Risk Checklist for outdoor activities - U3A-KMS-DOC-073](#)
- [General Outdoor Activity Risk Assessment Checklist - U3A-KMS-FRM-014](#)

## 3. What you can and cannot do

The government says **you should not leave your home** to take part in U3A activity if you are in a category which should stay at home or if you or anyone in your household has symptoms of Coronavirus

The government advises that, if you or someone in your household or your support bubble (or other similar title e.g. Wales uses 'extended family') is showing coronavirus symptoms, everyone in your support bubble should stay at home. If you or a member of your support bubble is contacted as part of the test, track and trace programme, the individual contacted should stay at home. If that individual becomes symptomatic, everyone in the support bubble must then isolate. This is critical to staying safe and saving lives. It is advisable that any U3A group activities that are taking place at this time should keep a log of those participating for track and trace purposes should the need arise and you would need to advise members that this information would be shared with the relevant NHS Track and Trace team in that event.

You must check the government guidance for your local area in case there are additional restrictions to consider.

	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
<b>How many outdoors</b>	6 from different households, socially distancing.  Maximum of 30 only if from two households only.	Any number of people from 2 households with social distancing	Up to 5 households (consisting of a maximum of 15 people) can meet per day, socially distancing.	Up to 30 individuals, as many households, socially distancing
<b>Implications for U3A interest groups and activities</b>	Interest groups of up to 6 individual U3A members can meet, socially distancing for an outdoor activity that has been assessed for Covid-19 safety.	Unlikely interest groups can meet presently unless in pairs or pairs of couple members. Up to 30 people can take part in an organised outdoor activity. There are strict rules to be	Interest groups of up to 5 individual U3A members (in addition any partner-members or members from within the same household) up to a maximum of 15 can meet for outdoor activities, assessed for Covid-19 safety. <a href="#">See 6.2</a>  This is the maximum amount of people that can meet per	Outdoor interest groups such as walking, or cycling can resume activities with up to 30 members, subject to social distancing and with a Covid-19

See 4.1 followed by day– which needs to safety risk those organising be considered if assessment. See such activities. members are thinking 7.2 of doing more than one socially distanced activity in a day.

<b>At what distance</b>	1 metre plus	2 metres apart <i>(less in some premises)</i>	2 metres apart <i>(less in some premises)</i>	1 metre apart
<b>How many indoors</b>	2 households with a limit of 30 people	2 households can form one extended household	8 from 3 households	Up to 10 people from 4 households (face coverings are advised)
<b>Implications/options for U3A interest groups and activities</b>  <i>(Social distancing is still required in all nations during these activities)</i>	Individual interest groups cannot take place in members' homes, however small sub-sets of 2 households could meet. Blended groups with members attending via video conferencing is an option. Some activities may begin to resume that U3A members could attend in covid-19 secure venues See 4.3	It is unlikely individual Interest groups can take place under current restrictions. People from another extended household cannot come into the extended household of another. Blended groups with members also attending via video conferencing an	Small sub-sets of Interest groups may come together with 3 members plus any other U3A members in their household up to 8 people maximum. Blended groups with members also attending via video conferencing an option. Some organised activities may begin to resume that U3A members could attend in covid-19 secure venues. See 6.3	Small interest groups of 4 members plus any U3A members from their 4 households can meet. Blended groups with members attending via video conferencing an option. Some organised activities may begin to resume that U3A members could attend in covid-19

option. [See 5.3](#)

secure venues.  
[See 7.3](#)

## Travel

(All nations advise avoiding car sharing with people outside of your household and wearing face coverings on public transport)

There are no travel restrictions in England other than in areas experiencing local restrictions. You should walk or cycle if you can, however where this is not possible, you can use public transport or drive.

There are no restrictions on travel in Wales, there is a limited service on public transport, advised researching the local position on service provision first

There are no restrictions on travel within Scotland in accordance with reasonable measures, but advised to stay local as much as possible for goods, services and activities

Public transport still operating reduced service but non-essential travel is permitted. Avoid peak times if possible.

## People over 70 yrs

Whilst people over 70 can meet people both indoors and outdoors they should be careful and diligent about social distancing and hand hygiene.

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People over 70 should continue to follow guidelines on social distancing, hand washing, surface cleaning and respiratory hygiene guidance on the [NHS Inform website](#).

Whilst people over 70 can meet people both indoors and outdoors they should be careful and diligent about social distancing and hand hygiene

## People in extremely vulnerable category

You may if you wish meet in a group of up to 6 people outdoors from different households maintaining social distancing. From the 1st August the government may pause shielding. [See 4.4](#)

If infection rates in Wales continue to fall, the Government will look to pause shielding from 16th August.

Anyone who is shielding for medical reasons is strongly advised to continue following the advice for this group until shielding period is paused on 31st July.

People in the extremely vulnerable category are shielding and these measures continue until 31st July

## 4. Further guidance for England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

### 4.1 Test and Trace requirements and when to end isolation

The NHS test and trace service ensures that anyone who develops symptoms of coronavirus can quickly be tested to find out if they have the virus and also helps trace close recent contacts of anyone who tests positive for coronavirus and if necessary notifies them that they must self-isolate at home to help stop the spread of the virus. To obtain a test order one immediately at [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) or call 119 if you have no internet access.

### 4.2 Taking part in organised outdoor activities in larger groups

You can continue to meet in any outdoor space in a group of up to 6 people from different households or in 2 households you can meet with a maximum of 30 from these 2 households and continue to follow strict social distancing with people outside your household, take hygiene precautions. Try to avoid using shared equipment, use your own tennis racquet, golf club for example.

#### 4.2.1 Playing sports

The government has published guidance on how [team sports can restart safely](#). Sports governing bodies are developing tailored guidance outlining how their sport can be conducted safely, which will be reviewed by Public Health England. People should follow the approved guidance when playing team sports. You are able to play team sport in any number if this is formally organised by a sports club or similar organisation and sports-governing body guidance has been issued. Team sports that do not have approved guidance should not be played.

### 4.3 Taking part in organised activities indoors in Covid-19 Secure venues.

It is important to remember that COVID-19 is a public health emergency. Everyone needs to assess and manage the risks and we are doing all that we can to prepare the correct and appropriate safety guidance for U3As during this time.

Some community facilities and halls have contacted U3As to inform them that their doors will be reopening. They will have followed Health and Safety Executive guidance to ensure their premises is Covid-19 Secure and that all measures have been taken to prevent the spread of Coronavirus but it is advised that you should check this first.

Where premises have reopened following these guidelines, some third party activity organisers may be proposing to resume activities with larger numbers but they will have to meet a required HSE Covid-19 risk assessments and many will be covered by a governing body or federation who have gone through a process of identifying the rules and measures they must follow in order to resume these activities safely for example for Yoga, Table tennis, Pilates classes.. These assessments will have been carried out to meet the current government guidance and comply with Health and Safety Legislation and still require social distancing and other measures

It is unlikely at this stage that U3A Interest Group activities could resume indoors without following a thorough Covid-19 risk assessments and it is advised you discuss your plans and preparations with your U3A Interest Group Coordinator informing your Committee and follow the guidance from Third Age Trust before proceeding with an indoor U3A organised activity for more than two households for the first time since lock down.

It is not possible for U3A activities to resume for numbers greater than the current permitted numbers in your area within members houses. That is because these would not be deemed as Covid-19 Secure Premises.

You should obtain information from the venue management about their requirements for Covid-19 health and safety for clubs and groups using their premises. They may require you to complete a Covid-19 Risk Assessment of their own for resuming activities which you can follow but for smaller venues where no Covid-19 Risk Assessments are available we are working with our Insurers and their Risk Assessment Advisor to prepare templates that U3A group leaders could follow to resume certain types of activities. These will be available for members to review and download in the next ten days.

For general information and advice on Health and Safety you can visit

- <https://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/assessment.htm>

*“A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your group or activity”*

#### **4.4 Current government advice to clinically extremely vulnerable**

- You may, if you wish, meet in a group of up to six people outdoors, including people from different households, while maintaining strict social distancing
- You no longer need to observe social distancing with other members of your household
- In line with the wider guidance for single adult households you may form a ‘support bubble’ with one other household. All those in a support bubble will be able to spend time together inside each other’s homes, including overnight, without needing to socially distance

From 1 August, the government will be advising that shielding will be paused. From this date, the government is advising you to adopt strict social distancing rather than full shielding measures. Strict social distancing means you may wish to go out to more places and see more people, but you

should take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household or support bubble. In practice, this means from 1 August you are advised that you no longer need to shield and:

- You can go outside to buy food and for exercise, but you should maintain strict social distancing
- You should remain cautious as you are still at risk of severe illness if you catch coronavirus, so the advice is to stay at home where possible and, if you do go out, follow strict social distancing

The remains advisory.

The definition of clinically vulnerable is available in [Risk Checklist for outdoor activities - U3A-KMS-DOC-073](#)

## 5. Further guidance for Wales

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-regulations-guidance>

### 5.1 If you develop Covid-19 symptoms, you should:

- follow the [self-isolation guidance](#)

and

- [apply for a coronavirus test](#)

The [COVID-19 online symptom checker \(on NHS 111 Wales\)](#) can tell you if you need medical help.

### 5.2 Taking part in organised outdoor activities in larger groups

Organised outdoor activities, including team sports and classes, involving up to 30 people are allowed to take place. The activity must be outdoors and organised by a business, a public body or charitable institution, a club, or the national governing body of sport or other activity. The person organising the activity needs to have carried out an appropriate risk assessment.

### 5.3 Taking part in organised activities indoors in Covid-19 Secure venues

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Some community facilities and halls have contacted U3As to inform them that their doors will be reopening. They will have followed Health and Safety Executive guidance to ensure their premises is Covid-19 Secure and that all measures have been taken to prevent the spread of Coronavirus but it

is advised that you should check this first.

Where premises have reopened following these guidelines, some third party activity organisers may be proposing to resume activities with larger numbers but they will have to meet a required HSE Covid-19 risk assessments and many will be covered by a governing body or federation who have gone through a process of identifying the rules and measures they must follow in order to resume these activities safely for example for Yoga, Table tennis, Pilates classes.. These assessments will have been carried out to meet the current government guidance and comply with Health and Safety Legislation and still require social distancing and other measures.

It is unlikely at this stage that U3A Interest Group activities could resume indoors without following a thorough Covid-19 risk assessments and it is advised you discuss your plans and preparations with your U3A Interest Group Coordinator informing your Committee and follow the guidance from Third Age Trust before proceeding with an indoor U3A organised activity for more than two households for the first time since lock down.

It is not possible for U3A activities to resume for numbers greater than the current permitted numbers in your area within members houses. That is because they would not be deemed as Covid-19 Secure premises under current guidance.

You should obtain information from the venue management about their requirements for Covid-19 health and safety for clubs and groups using their premises. They may require you to complete a Covid-19 Risk Assessment of their own for resuming activities which you can follow but for smaller venues where no Covid-19 Risk Assessments are available we are working with our Insurers and their Risk Assessment Advisor to prepare templates that U3A group leaders could follow to resume certain types of activities.

These will be available for members to review and download in the next ten days.

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## **5.4 Current government advice to clinically extremely vulnerable**

From 16 August, we will pause shielding for everyone on the shielding list (children and adults) unless the number of COVID-19 cases in the community starts to rise significantly. The chief Medical officer for wales will write to everyone who is shielding before the 16th august to advise them what to do next. From 16 August, you'll be advised you can go out to more places and see more people, for example, the advice is:

- People can go to work, as long as the workplace is COVID-secure – but carry on working from home where possible



- You can go outside to buy food, – keeping 2 metres (or 3 steps) away wherever possible. (Those who are receiving food boxes will continue to receive them until 16 August after which date they will cease but priority shopping slots will continue to be available).
- Children and young people can go back to school or college/university.

## 6. Further guidance for Scotland

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-individuals-and-businesses-in-scotland>

### 6.1 Test and Protect requirements

Any person who has symptoms of COVID-19 - that is a cough, a temperature or loss of taste or smell - should take immediate steps to book a test. If this applies to you, please go straight to [nhsinform.scot](https://nhsinform.scot) to get a test or, if you can't go online, call NHS 24 on 0800 028 2816. Don't wait to see if you feel better before booking a test, and all people in your household should self-isolate.

### 6.2 Taking part in organised outdoor activities in larger groups

You can now meet up and take part in outdoor recreation with people from up to 4 other households at a time (but you should not meet with more than 4 other households in total each day) up to a maximum of 15 people at a time. Therefore 4 members, with any other U3A members from their household could meet up whilst maintaining social distancing for outdoor activities.

#### 6.2.1 Latest sport and physical activity guidance.

If your Interest group is a sports or physical activity you may be able to resume these activities but you should follow the latest sport-specific guidance as published by the Scottish Government, the link below will take you to these published guidance documents for things like Angling, Badminton, Howls, Cricket, Croquet, Cycling, Rowing, Tennis etc.

<https://sportscotland.org.uk/covid-19/latest-sport-and-physical-activity-guidance/>

### 6.3 Taking part in organised activities indoors in Covid-19 Secure venues

The Scottish Government guidance for Community Learning and Development (CLD) includes adult learning and came into effect on the first day of Phase 3 of their route map to recovery on 9th July. U3A interest group activities would fall under this guidance and you can find guidance on the planning which must be in place and the Risk Assessment requirements to resume such activities ([undefined](#)). A key principle to resuming activities is that the health, safety and wellbeing of learners and volunteers and the wider community will be the priority in decisions relating to the easing of Covid-19 restrictions across this sector. Following a suitable and sufficient risk assessment which we

are currently working on, you will be required to introduce measures to enable learning to be carried out in a safe manner this may include guidance on how to maintain physical distancing, regularly reviewing Hygiene and cleaning protocols in order to adapt them in response to changing public health advice and risk levels. These measures should be reviewed and approved by your Interest Group Coordinator and U3A committee as part of an implementation timetable in order to work towards resuming these activities.

It is important to remember that COVID-19 is a public health emergency. Everyone needs to assess and manage the risks and we are doing all that we can to prepare the correct and appropriate safety guidance for U3As during this time.

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Where premises have reopened following these guidelines, some third party activity organisers may be proposing to resume activities with larger numbers but they will have to meet a required HSE Covid-19 risk assessments and many will be covered by a governing body or federation who have gone through a process of identifying the rules and measures they must follow in order to resume these activities safely for example for Yoga, Table tennis, Pilates classes.. These assessments will have been carried out to meet the current government guidance and comply with Health and Safety Legislation and still require social distancing and other measures

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<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-community-learning-and-development-sector/pages/overview/>

## **6.4 Current government advice to clinically extremely vulnerable**

Our advice is to keep shielding until 31 July 2020. From Friday 24 July, you can choose to:

- Meet indoors with up to 8 people from 2 other households with physical distancing
- Meet outdoors with up to 15 people from 4 other households outdoors with physical distancing
- Use public transport wearing a face covering
- Go to pubs and restaurants with outdoor spaces

Shielding will pause on 1<sup>st</sup> August because it is anticipated the levels in Scotland will be low enough to do this. A letter will go out to people who have been advised to shield to explain what will happen when shielding is paused. Essentially this will mean that you will be able to follow the same guidance as the rest of Scotland unless told otherwise by your medical practitioner.

## 7. Further guidance for Northern Ireland

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-and-what-they-mean-you>

### **7.1 Testing and Contact Tracing**

Everyone with symptoms of Coronavirus is now eligible for testing. The advice from the Public Health Agency is that you should get tested in the first three days of coronavirus symptoms appearing although testing is considered effective up until day five. You can complete an online form at the following link to find out if you should be tested and the type of test you will need.

#### [Should I get tested for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Contact tracing is a method to help prevent the further spread of infections such as Covid-19. It works by identifying a confirmed case, contacting them by telephone and asking them who they have been in contact with. To facilitate this initiative, we are asking the group leaders or organisers keep a register of participants and their contact details to share with the contact tracing team should the need arise. You are requested keep this information for up to 21 days after an activity has taken place

### **7.2 Taking part in organised outdoor activities in larger groups**

Outdoor activities in general are now permitted in Northern Ireland subject to social distancing being maintained. You should avoid sharing equipment and think about the potential for transmission of the

virus through contact with shared surfaces that cannot be disinfected.

### **7.3 Taking part in organised activities indoors in Covid-19 Secure venues**

The 30 person restriction for gatherings indoors does not apply to gatherings of a particular nature, including those organised for cultural, entertainment, recreational, outdoor sports, community, educational purposes. However, the organiser must have carried out a risk assessment which meets the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland 2000) and take all reasonable measures to limit the risk of transmission of the coronavirus.

It is important to remember that COVID-19 is a public health emergency. Everyone needs to assess and manage the risks and we are doing all that we can to prepare the correct and appropriate safety guidance for U3As during this time.

Some community facilities and halls have contacted U3As to inform them that their doors will be reopening. They will have followed Health and Safety Executive guidance to ensure their premises is Covid-19 Secure and that all measures have been taken to prevent the spread of Coronavirus but it is advised that you should check this first.

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It is advised that U3A Interest Group activities could resume after following a thorough Covid-19 risk assessments but you should discuss your plans and preparations with your U3A Interest Group Coordinator informing your Committee and follow the guidance from Third Age Trust before proceeding with an indoor U3A organised activity for the first time since lock down.

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## **7.4 Current government advice to clinically extremely vulnerable**

From 31 July, subject to the rate of community transmission continuing to be low, individuals will no longer need to shield and should instead follow the same guidance and precautions as those considered to be generally vulnerable. That involves taking particular care when out and about - and strictly maintaining social distancing. Further information on shielding can be found on the following page:

[Guidance on shielding for extremely vulnerable people](#)