

u3a Harborne and Edgbaston
(Registered Charity Number: 1101356)

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Statement

- 1.1 u3a Harborne and Edgbaston ('u3a H&E') is committed to providing life-enhancing opportunities where retired and semi-retired people come together and learn together, not for qualifications but for the joy of discovery. Members share their skills and life experiences: the learners teach and the teachers learn and there is no distinction between them. u3a H&E recognises that some people might be particularly likely to experience discrimination and harassment and is committed to making sure our group is as inclusive and welcoming as possible.
- 1.2 u3a H&E is committed to treating all people equally and with respect, irrespective of their age, disability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, race, ethnicity, religion or belief (including the absence of belief), political belief, sex or sexual orientation, class or socioeconomic status.

2. Aims of Policy

- 2.1 u3a H&E believes in the fair treatment of each member and considers that no member should suffer disadvantage or receive less favourable treatment than any other. u3a H&E aims for the absence of discrimination in all their activities and in all contact and communication with external organisations and members of the general public.

3. Accessibility

- 3.1 u3a H&E will endeavour to take all reasonable steps to accommodate the needs of existing and potential members with impaired mobility, hearing or vision to ensure that they can participate as fully as possible in both general meetings and interest/activity groups.

- 3.2 This will include consideration of the time of day of meetings, consideration of the venue for large meetings, including accessibility and facilities for wheelchair/mobility scooter users, access to a PA system and a hearing loop. Publicity and information will be made available to people who do not have access to the internet. It will also be made clear to read. Those members or potential members with impaired vision should be consulted about the way their needs can be best met, for example considering the format, font type and size and the colour of documents.
- 3.3 Speakers giving visual presentations will be asked to give a good description of the presentation to assist people with visual impairment who may be present.
- 3.4 Members who cannot participate in their chosen u3a H&E activities without help may bring a companion/carer with them, who for the time they are in attendance, will be covered by the liability insurance provided by the Third Age Trust. (The only exception to this is a professionally employed carer who would have to be covered by an individual liability policy.)
- 3.5 The majority of u3a H&E's Interest Group Meetings are held in the homes of the Group Co-ordinators. They will try to take all reasonable steps to make their activities accessible and available to members with impairment of mobility, hearing or vision. Clearly there will be some activities, such as sports or walking, where participation has to be restricted for some if not all sessions. This should be carefully explained by Group Co-ordinators to members or potential members and any difficulties should be reported via the Groups' Secretary to the Committee.

4. Code of Conduct

- 4.1 Everyone will be treated with dignity and respect at u3a H&E. Bullying, harassment via sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic or otherwise offensive and inflammatory remarks and behaviour are not acceptable and will not be tolerated in u3a H&E.
- 4.2 If any member of u3a H&E feels they have been discriminated against by a u3a H&E member, the u3a H&E itself or harassed at a

u3a H&E event, they should raise this with the Committee. The Committee will investigate the complaint, listening to all members involved. (If the complaint is against a committee member, that member will not be part of conducting the investigation.)

- 4.3 If the complaint is against a particular individual, this person will have the opportunity to express their point of view, accompanied by a friend if wanted. The person making the complaint will also have this opportunity.
- 4.4 If the complaint is against u3a H&E as a whole, the Committee must work to ensure that such discrimination is not repeated in future and must inform the members of how they intend to do this. Complaints can be escalated to the u3a West Midlands Regional Trustee.
- 4.5 Any decision to exclude a person from u3a H&E due to discriminatory or harassing behaviour will be made with reference to u3a H&E's constitution/rules. The u3a H&E and Third Age Trust will support people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against and will not victimise them for raising their concerns.
- 4.6 This policy will be made available on u3a H&E's website and also in paper format on request. Members will be made aware of this and other u3a policies on taking up membership and at the time of renewal.

Adopted: 14 September 2018 based on The Third Trust guidelines in place at the time; superseded by u3a KMS-001 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy sample, June 2023

Editorial review: June 2021

Further review: October 2023

