

LONDON REGION OF U3As

DELEGATE COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE



Introduction

The following questions are about how you, as your U3A's Delegate at the London Region of U3As, communicate information from the London Region to both your U3A Committee and to all your members.

In general there are two types of information from London Region: a) information about events, study days, shared learning projects, external requests for research volunteers, etc, and b) information that has been collated from our delegate forum discussions and/or information that has come from national office.

We are interested to know what methods you have for disseminating different types of information and the results of this questionnaire should be useful to all delegates.

Response

The Questionnaire was initially sent to all Delegates. For those that didn't respond a follow-up was sent to Delegates and Chair or Secretary.

The result has been a healthy 31 responses from a maximum of 41 London U3As - 76% response.

Results

The following results show the raw data without identifying individual U3As.

The comments below each question are the London Region U3A's Committee's review of the raw data.

LONDON REGION OF U3As

DELEGATE COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE



Q1	Regarding your method of communicating with your U3A members, do you as the LR Delegate (either personally or through others within your U3A):																					
a)	Forward the information, item by item, as it arrives.	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	16 No. = 52%
b)	Collect the items and send out as part of a regular newsletter/email to members.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	17 No. = 55%
c)	Refer your members to the London Region website (independently or via hyperlinks)			✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓		✓	✓	13 No. = 42%
d)	Publish the information on your own website			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	17 No. = 55%
e)	Make the information available at your regular U3A meeting	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	23 No. = 74%
f)	Other - please describe:																					
	- Mention in bi-monthly Newsletter																					
	- PowerPoint presentation running at monthly Meetings																					
	- Publish it in our quarterly Newsletter if the information is still relevant at that time																					
	- Some members have given up on getting London Region website logon id																					
	- depends on the information as to which method is used																					
	- mail to business sec																					

Comments:

If we say a) and b) are active methods and c), d), and e) are passive methods - it is encouraging that the combined total of a) and b) is 27/31 or 87%

c) and d) rely on members accessing websites. It would be interesting to know how much individual U3A websites and LR website are accessed. Probably not much if Barnet's is anything to go by.

Encouragingly large percentage make info available at monthly meetings - and it's good to see that with only one exception, these U3As also use at least one other method of communication, because the percentage of members attend these meetings is probably quite low.

LONDON REGION OF U3As

DELEGATE COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE



Q2 Regarding the type and frequency of your U3A's regular communications:																					
a)	Email containing your U3A news																				
	- Adhoc		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	14 No. = 45%	
	- Weekly	✓											✓				✓	✓	✓	3 No. = 10%	
	- Fortnightly													✓						1 No. = 3%	
	- Monthly	✓		✓						✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	7 No. = 23%	
	- Quarterly				✓					✓										2 No. = 6%	
b)	Email containing non-U3A news (if different from above)																				
	- Adhoc					✓	✓	✓	✓									✓	✓	✓	9 No. = 29%
	- Monthly	✓	✓																	2 No. = 6%	
c)	Printed newsletter																				
	- Monthly	✓		✓		✓								✓					✓	✓	6 No. = 19%
	- Bi-Monthly				✓				✓			✓		✓							5 No. = 16%
	- Quarterly	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	17 No. = 55%
	- Twice Yearly																		✓		1 No. = 3%
d)	Noticeboards, etc. at U3A meetings																				
	- Adhoc												✓								1 No. = 3%
	- Weekly						✓														1 No. = 3%
	- Monthly	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	21 No. = 68%
	- Quarterly																✓	✓	✓	✓	2 No. = 6%
e)	Other - please describe:																				
	- We have a system for distributing information to group reps to bring to the attention of members at meetings who do not have their own email																				
	- By post for non-email and by phone for visually impaired members																				
	- U3A Review of the Year, Annually																				

Comments:

Email communications would catch most members (probably less than 10% not on email); and will be reasonably upto date.

25/31 (81%) have email communications with their members. However it is surprising that 9 of these only communicate monthly or even quarterly. The more regular communicators number 18/31 (58%)

Only 11/31 (35%) have a separate email communication for non-U3A information.

Some of LR's communications will often be considered as non-U3A news (e.g. Research requests) and may not be included in individual own-U3A comms.

We probably should have distinguished between own-U3A material, other-U3A (London Region or National), or non-U3A material.

Printed newsletters and Meeting Noticeboards are very popular methods of communication

29/31 (94%) have a printed newsletter which will catch max membership but majority are quarterly which is unlikely to be as upto date as it could be particularly taking into account upto one month copy deadline ahead of issue.

25/31 (81%) use noticeboards at monthly meetings but these are only going to catch small percentage of members.

LONDON REGION OF U3As

DELEGATE COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE



Q3	Regarding information about events, study days, shared learning projects, external requests for research volunteers, etc, do you as the LR Delegate (either personally or through others within your U3A):																		
a)	Send <u>all</u> such information to all your U3A members.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10 No. = 32%
b)	Review the information and send <u>selected</u> information to relevant Interest Groups or individual members within your U3A.								✓		✓				✓				3 No. = 10%
c)	Mix of a) and b) above, depending on the type of information.	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	16 No. = 52%
d)	Send all such information to your U3A Committee for them to decide what is circulated.		✓		✓					✓							✓	✓	6 No. = 19%
e)	Other - please describe: - Sometimes send info to committee to decide - All information is placed on the notice board at the monthly meeting for all to view - We do not circulate information from third parties i.e. concerts where there are no special rates for U3A members , we circulate research requests only to members who have email if space permits -We prioritise research from Goldsmiths																		

Comments:

Q3 and Q4 separate out two types of information that we circulate.
 Q3 was designed to reflect the type of information we had expected to interest the whole membership.
 It is therefore a disappointingly low percentage (32%) that send all info to all members.
 By answering b or c) 19/31 (62%) are saying there is an element of selection of what is circulated.

LONDON REGION OF U3As

DELEGATE COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE



Q4 Regarding information collated from our forum discussions, etc. that is relevant to good practice and the running of U3As, do you as the LR Delegate (either personally or through others within your U3A):

a) Send <u>all</u> such information to all your U3A members.			✓																1 No. = 3%		
b) Send <u>all</u> such information to your U3A Committee only.			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓					8 No. = 26%		
c) Mix of a) and b) above, depending on the type of information.	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓					9 No. = 29%		
d) Send all such information to your U3A Committee for them to decide what is circulated.		✓		✓						✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10 No. = 32%
e) Other - please describe:																					
- I am completing this questionnaire as Secretary on behalf of our delegate but I don't receive anything from him after the forum meetings but I distribute most items I get through the Forum or from Jo Livingston by email																					
- Reported at committee meetings																					
- All information is placed on the notice board at the monthly meeting for all to view																					
- we sometimes send items to members of sub committees if relevant to their area																					
- report following the meeting to the Chair																					

Comments:

Q4 was the one where we expected an element of selection with much of the information mainly being relevant to U3A committees. 27/31 (87%) are indeed selective.

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DELEGATE COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE



Summary

An encouragingly high percentage of delegates circulate information on to their members - but not 100%

Should London Region U3A be more prescriptive in getting each U3A to circulate information?

Methods of communication vary with highest percentages for less effective methods

Some information probably suits traditional methods such as Newsletters or Meeting Bulletin Boards.

But some needs more prompt circulation and/or more complete circulation.

Should London Region U3A be more proactive in saying what timescale criteria each item has?

Relatively low percentage of U3As seem to have capability to circulate mass emails to their membership.

Can London Region U3A offer information about Mass Email Services available and/or training in utilising such services?

Selection of what is circulated to all members is a bit hit and miss

London Region U3A has started to be more prescriptive in saying what items should go to all members and what should go to committees