

u3a

NORTHAMPTON

GROUP LEADERS' HANDBOOK

9th January 2023

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INTRODUCTION

This is a general guide for leaders and co-ordinators of u3a Groups. The running of a group and its administration will vary greatly, depending on its needs. If there are any omissions or errors that affect your group, please advise the Group Liaison Officer (GLO). These will then be considered for inclusion when these notes are updated.

Details of the Officers and Committee representing Northampton u3a will be found in your current Newsletter

THE u3a ETHOS

The Third Age Principle

- Membership of a u3a is open to all in their third age
- Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a u3a
- Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join a u3a can do so

Self-help Learning Principle

- Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire
- Learning is **by the members, for the members**
- No qualification are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the price motive, not qualifications or awards
- There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers. They are all u3a members

The Mutual Aid principle

- Each u3a is a mutual aid organization. Operationally independent but a member of the Third Age Trust, which requires adherence to the u3a movement
- No payments are made to members for services to any u3a
- Each u3a is self-funded with membership subscriptions kept as low as possible
- Outside financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the u3a

GROUP LEADER GUIDANCE NOTES

1. Administration

- Content, duration and administration
- Venue frequency and timing is by group agreement
- A Deputy should be appointed to act in the absence of the GL
- Compose a programme as a basis for the Group Activity for entry onto the website and keep it updated
- Agree a practical size for the group. The GLO should be informed when the group is full and also when there is space again.

2. Register of Attendance

- All Membership Cards should be checked and Membership numbers recorded at the beginning of each financial year – 1st April. Members will be issued with a new card showing an unchanged Membership Number
- Register should be taken to every meeting containing
 - Every Group Members' phone number
 - Emergency number contact
 - Membership Number
- Members' address, telephone number, email address and "In case of Emergency" numbers should all be recorded.

3. Finance

- All groups should be self-financing
- Groups are responsible for all money they handle and should not accumulate a large surplus. This is purely for GL protection. GLs are advised to take action if their level of reserves increase to more than the cost of 3 meetings. The surplus may be used for the benefit of the group in anyway the group agrees fit i.e.
 - a Having a free session
 - b Depositing any excess funds into the u3a accounts: any deposits will be classed as "restricted funds" and could only be used for that particular group. These funds will be available on request to the Treasurer should they be needed. They should not be depositing monies into their own personal account.
- A one off visiting paid speaker, may be considered if funds permit
- Charitable donations should **NOT** be made in the name of u3a as this contravenes Charity Trust Laws. All group members must be informed, in reasonable detail how their group's money is spent.
- Accounts must be kept according to the Charity Commission Regulations if hire charges for accommodation/educational outings are incurred. Sample forms attached. The Treasurer will contact all Group Leaders in January/February of each year to remind them of the submission date for their year-end accounts.
- Group Leaders Annual Membership will be half the normal subscription

4. Accommodation

- In Members' homes
- If it is necessary to book a regular venue for the group meetings, the GL is responsible for keeping accurate records of payments to the venue. Receipts copy invoices are required where possible or details of the contact for the venue booking. If the cost is a regular amount, the GL can deposit monies taken in by members to the Treasurer and ask for a cheque to be issued to the venue for payment. **DO NOT** sign rental agreement, without referring to GLO
- Please consult GLO if you have any problems

5. Equipment

If there is an item of equipment the group would like to enhance their learning, Group Leaders may submit a request to the Committee. Details of the items, the cost and a brief description of how it will benefit the group should be forwarded to the GLO who will raise it at the next Committee meeting. Any equipment purchased must be clearly labelled to show it is u3a property. (Labels available from the Treasurer). Details of the model number and serial number must be passed to the Treasurer for inclusion on the asset register. Please note such a request should not include consumables.

6. Communication

- Magazine 3 times a year. Contributions gratefully received by the Editor
- Group News – Updates on the groups are emailed or sent by post, if members are not on email, most months, if there is not a General Meeting.
- When you are emailing group members please remember Data Protection Laws demand that blind copies are sent unless verbal agreement is made by the group

7. Copyright

- We have copyright licenses which enable you to copy a small amount from books, journals, magazines and periodicals. Also for music.

8. Safety

- Electrical and other potentially hazardous equipment belonging to a member of the group which is used in any group activity must be maintained in safe working order. It is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure that these conditions are strictly observed.

9. Risk Assessment

- A Risk Assessment Form must be completed for each new venue. This may be obtained from the National Website or going to the Northampton u3a website Groups Page and clicking on Risk Assessments

10. Insurance

- u3a Northampton has insurance cover for various risks, provided nationally by the Third Age Trust. Details of the cover provided is shown on the national website www.u3a.org.uk, where you need to register and log on to access the information. Go to "Support for u3as" and click on "Insurance". The most useful document is "Insurance Overview", but the "Insurance Cover

Note 2023” and “Insurance FAQs” provide additional information.

11. Accidents/Incidents

- If, during a group meeting, an incident occurs, which results in an injury to a member or damage to property, our insurance provider would ask for a completed risk assessment to be able to prove how the risk was identified. They use these as the basis of any claims made. Therefore all groups should complete risk assessments (attached) to protect themselves. Only fully paid up members are covered. (This is not a personal accident insurance)
- For most groups a checklist is sufficient. An Accident/Incident Report Form (attached) must be completed as soon as it reasonably practical following the event and returned to the Business Secretary together with a completed Risk Assessment Form. This will ensure that an accurate record is kept should there be further consequences either medical or legal
- If an incident occurs in premises other than a member’s home, the appropriate official eg landlord or safety officer, must also be informed.
- If a member is taken ill while engaged in any u3a group attendance, including coach trips, then there is a strict protocol to be followed. All members must supply an emergency contact number when they join u3a which can be used to contact next of kin in the event of an emergency or when a member is taken ill. Any decision about calling for an ambulance will be made by the Group Leader.

12. Access Need

- You should consider whether there are any risks that might occur as a result of the group’s activities. Speak to the GLO if you are in any doubt
- If any members have impairment or disability needs and there is a possibility we could help, please inform the GLO
- We do have a Loop System which may be borrowed if any of your group have a hearing problem. We also have ramps which may also be borrowed.

13. Duty of Care

- You should be aware that as Members of u3a we have a duty of care with regard to the wellbeing of all our members. If you have any concerns about a member’s physical or mental health please inform a Committee Member in order the matter may be looked at.

14. Problem Solving

- Sometimes issues can arise within a group that disrupt the smooth running and spoil the enjoyment for everyone. Don’t leave a problem too long before trying to resolve it. Take to the GLO if you are unsure how to resolve the problem or just want someone to explore the options with you. You can also ring National Office if you want to talk something through or check something out.

- Where there is potential for friction between group members, it is advisable to begin by bringing it into the open. Either you or another person could try to facilitate a discussion either with the members concerned or with the whole group, but it is important that the facilitator remains neutral and non-judgmental. If you cannot reach a resolution informally speak to the GLO. If the situation does not resolve and becomes acrimonious your Committee can consult the advice on disciplinary procedure provided by the Trust. There are also Trust volunteers trained to support with resolving disputes.

u3a Northampton - Transfer of assets and responsibilities for change in Group Leader

If you relinquish responsibility for a group, please ensure that you and the new Group Leader complete this form. It is important, for accounting and auditing purposes, to record what monies are in the group's funds on handover and any equipment transferred to the new Group Leader.

Group equipment should be shown on the u3a Asset Register. This is updated annually to show current estimated value but just as importantly, the location of equipment purchased by u3a funds.

Name of Group:

Existing Group Leader:

New Group Leader:

Date of transfer of responsibilities:

The accounts documents of the group should be passed to the new Group Leader for continuity.

1. Balance of monies handed over to the new Group Leader: £

2. Details of equipment handed over to the new Group Leader:

.....
.....
.....

I confirm I have handed over funds and equipment as shown in (1) and (2) above:

Existing Group Leader signature

Print name

I confirm I have received funds and equipment as shown in (1) and (2) above:

New Group Leader signature

Print name

The completed form should be returned to Marie Catling as Group Liaison Officer. This will then be passed to Kath Bottwood, Treasurer to update financial accounts and Asset Register.

HELP AND SUPPORT

Sources On Line

We are also offering a number of workshops, webinars and interactive sessions delivered by members for members, which are free to join. These are in high demand and spaces are limited, particularly for those with an interactive element. At the time of booking please ensure that you are committed to attending to avoid other members missing out on places. If you are unable to attend please cancel your place through Eventbrite.

Many online events are being delivered via the Zoom video conferencing/webinar platform. We have some 'How to Guides' and are offering 'Online Tutorials' for using Zoom that may assist you if you are not familiar with this tool.

Subject Advisers

Trust volunteers with specialist knowledge in a wide range of topics. Contact details are available on the national webpage and in third Age Matters

External Organisations

Museums, libraries, schools, universities

u3a Publications

Check the national website for the latest publications

Networks, Regions, Neighbouring u3as

Allow you to draw on experience from within the movement

Regional Trustee

Will provide an overview of the region and a link to National Office

National Office

The staff team are available Monday to Friday to offer support

Research Database

This contains up-to-date information regarding research projects. The database is available under the resources tab of the website

Other learning opportunities

- Enquiry lead Learning/the Research Network: Shared Learning Projects and Research links with universities and within u3as: contacts available from the national website
- National and Regional Summer Schools
- Events facilitated by National Office
- National, Regional and Network Workshops and study days
- On line learning: MOOCS (Massive Open Online Courses), You Tube "How to" videos, Futurelearn

SUBJECT GROUP ACCOUNTS SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR 1ST APRIL 2022 – 31ST MARCH 2023

GROUP LEADER

GROUP NAME

Notes for Guidance

As discussed, the Committee is responsible for reporting all receipts and payments incurred on official u3a business and activities. At the end of the financial year, your accounts will be subsumed into the accounting system which will be externally examined by our Auditors.

Generally, all groups are self-funding but should you require any particular items of equipment that would enhance the development of your group, please contact Marie Catling. Marie will take your proposals to the Committee for approval.

The following is a summary of the receipts and payments incurred throughout the year. You may use your own system or use the form provided by the Treasurer. The Auditors MAY ask to see detailed accounts for individual groups, so please keep them up to date and keep receipts for any items over £20.

Balance of funds brought forward from previous year	
Receipts (income) for the year 2022 – 2023	
Payments (expenditure for room hire and consumables)	
Balance as at 31 st March 2023 $(1) + (2) - (3) = (4)$	

Asset register

Do you have any items of equipment purchased from u3a funds? We are required to submit an up to date asset register with our accounts so would be grateful if you would list details of any equipment below:

Equipment (include serial numbers where appropriate)	Date of purchase	Cost when purchased

Signature of Group Leader

Checked by Committee member

Date

Name of Injured party/address/telephone number :

Name/address/telephone number of others involved :

Date/Time of Accident :

Location :

Nature of Accident/Circumstances :

Injury Details/Property Damage :

Name/address/telephone number of person causing injury/damage :

Witnessed by : Address :

Telephone number :

Action Taken :

Was any specialised assistance required at the scene? If so give details.

Was medical advice sought afterwards? If so give details.

Name of Group Leader Telephone number.....

Signed(injured party) Signed (group leader)

Date

