



UPDATED GROUP LEADERS AIDE MEMOIRE

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to organise an interest group. We are sure you will find it very rewarding, however, it might seem a bit daunting initially, so we have prepared this Aide Memoire which is intended to provide you with advice and support.

It is often said that interest groups are the life blood of the U3A and each group will develop its own structure. However, it is important that your group follows the U3A ethos of shared, participative and self-help learning. 'The teachers learn, and the learners teach.' The result then will be not only an increase in knowledge, but a supportive and friendly atmosphere which enables everyone to participate.

The first steps to forming a new group

- 1) Agree the aims of your group with the Group Coordinator who will be in regular contact with you and who would appreciate prompt responses.
- 2) For help and support first contact your Group Coordinator also be aware that there are existing national subject advisers on the national website available on:
www.u3a.org.uk
- 3) The Group Coordinator will obtain agreement from the Executive Committee for the formation of your new group.
- 4) Organise an initial meeting and invite people to attend.
- 5) At the initial meeting introduce yourself and then identify the aims of your group with your members.
- 6) Ask about the skills within the group.
- 7) Agree the tasks that will be needed to run the group and who is willing to support these – who will help with the programme and keep the register of those attending each meeting. A list of participating members to be sent to the Group coordinator once the group is up and running and thereafter every January.
- 8) Agree how the group will work – discussion, instruction, presentation etc.
- 9) Agree when and where the group will meet.
- 10) Please ensure that you only accept members who do not belong to an existing group with the same objectives.
- 11) Identify any accessibility needs that group members may have and refer to the U3A national website.
- 12) Agree the costs for running the group and what members will pay? If it is to be funded by your Executive agree a budget with the Groups' Treasurer.
- 13) Confirm with your Groups' Treasurer how monies will be handled and reported and discuss with him if there will be a need to hire premises or equipment.
- 14) Discuss how group members will communicate with each other bearing in mind data protection concerns e.g all emails to be sent bcc (blind copies).
- 15) Agree some ground rules e.g:
 - a) Be punctual.
 - b) Allow others to speak.
 - c) Let the Group Leader know if you are unable to attend.
 - d) Agree to disagree amicably and be respectful to other group members.

16) Your Group coordinator has an asset register detailing the equipment available on a first come, first served, basis, also a photocopier he can use for your group. If high amounts of photocopying are involved, then your own group will have to pay for the cost of copying.

Guidance on Speakers addressing Study Groups

- a) Payments are not permitted to members of ANY U3A for a talk/presentation even though they may be a professional speaker or speaking on behalf of a charity.
- b) They can request that attendees make individual donation to a collection box for charity in which case a nomination form* needs to be signed. It should be made clear that any donation is entirely voluntary and is not a contribution to the group's meeting expenses.
- c) Speakers who are not U3A members can be paid speaker's fee with no form needed.
- d) If speaker, who is not a U3A member, requests payment direct to charity he volunteers or works for, then a nomination form* to be signed by the speaker.

*Template available from Groups Treasurer.

Policies and Procedures

Your Group Coordinator will advise you of the U3A Insurance arrangements, policies and procedures that you need to be aware of. These will include matters concerning:

- Finance
- Data Protection
- Safeguarding
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Accessibility
- Complaints
- Incident reporting

Many of the above policies are detailed on the Radlett & District website.

Problem solving

If you are unsure how to resolve a problem that arises between members, or just want someone to explore options with, please contact your Group Coordinator or your Executive Committee.

Accidents and Incidents

Report all accidents and incidents to your Group Coordinator as soon as possible and complete an accident form, retaining a copy for your records. A template accident report form is attached. Remember that the Third Age Trust provides insurance for group activities.

It important to ask members to bring their U3A membership cards to each meeting, showing an emergency contact detail on the reverse.

Promoting Your Group

Remember to generate interest in your Group by promoting it at our monthly meetings. Send any information for inclusion in the monthly member's email update or the Radlett & District website:

communications@radlett3a.org.uk Also send information of your activities and photos to the Radlett & District newsletter which is published every four months: newsletter@radlett3a.org.uk (remember to ask your members' permission before taking their photos).