



Guidelines for U3A Members starting a Group

Groups are an essential part of every U3A. We are very grateful to all our members who undertake to lead a group. A wide variety of groups helps the U3A to thrive and be successful.

1. Group Leader

- Every Group needs is a 'Leader' with an idea / proposal that would interest other members. The Leader is not necessarily an expert in the subject matter and is more of a facilitator to get the group started and ensure that it runs smoothly. Other group members should be encouraged to contribute to the running of the group.
- Think about what your group will do when they meet: e.g. discuss ideas / make something / learn something / go on visits / a variety of things?
- Where will the group meet? At your home? Will the group take it in turns to host?
- How often will the group meet? Once a month? Twice a month? Every week?
- Which day of the week will the group meet? Morning or afternoon? Have a look at the Days of Group Meetings on the website [a link in the Groups section] to help choose a day and time.
- Discuss your ideas with the Interest Group Coordinator, currently Brian Lipman, who can be contacted through the Contacts page of this website.
- The Coordinator will help you to advertise your group via the monthly meeting, the website, the Email Update, and the Newsletter.
- Please make sure you keep an attendance record, which may be needed for insurance purposes. Attendance Record sheets that you can use if desired are available from the Group Coordinator and there is a link to the sheet in the Groups section of the website.
- Radlett U3A owns a computer, projector and screen, and also a laminator, which may be borrowed for use at group meetings.
- Log in to u3a.org.uk. The Resource Centre offers loans of extensive materials to U3A groups.
- In the Third Age Trust magazine there is a list of Subject Advisers and Subject Advice is given in the members' area of the national website.
- There is a link on the Groups page of the Radlett U3A website to other Guidelines produced by the U3A Trust. There is, for example, advice on problems and how to run a discussion group.
- Please note that external tutors are discouraged by the U3A Trust.

2 Running a Group from Home

The easiest way to start a Group is to commence small and run from someone's home. This means that usually the overheads are low and start-up costs also low. The usual charge is 50 pence or £1.00 for tea/coffee biscuits and any other requirements e.g. photocopying or printing, payable to the host. No accounts are expected to be kept for these payments. Alternatively, the group may take turns and meet in each other's homes in which case no charge may be necessary.

3 Running a Group in Hired Premises

The Leader should consider what premises are available and suitable. There is information about Rooms for hire on the Radlett U3A website. Go to the Groups section and click on the Links tab. The next job is to make a list of all expenditure to be incurred over an Academic Term [or any defined period] for your Group.

Then consider how much you will need to charge each member of the Group in order to be sure of covering your costs. A minimum number of members must therefore sign up.

When a new Group is starting funds may be granted to assist with payment for the first meetings.

The Executive Committee wishes to encourage new Groups to start up and recognises that they may not be completely self financing initially. However they must become self financing thereafter.

Contact should be made with the Groups Treasurer, currently Bryan Fox, who can be contacted through the Contacts page of this website. Cheques and money collected should be given to him. He will explain what accounts should be kept and will pay the invoices for room hire. Cheques should be payable to Radlett and District U3A.

Further Guidelines for U3A Group leaders

Usual responsibilities

- ◆ Coordinate the group and its activities.
- ◆ Arrange a suitable meeting place.
- ◆ Plan sessions in advance [topics, speakers, methods, materials & equipment required].
- ◆ Keep an up to date list of the membership number and contact details of each group member.
- ◆ The contact details should remain confidential, by sending emails Bcc, unless all members have agreed to share them with the other group members.
- ◆ Check annually in September/October that members have renewed their U3A membership by asking to see their membership card.
- ◆ Consider any special needs of group members [eg. those requiring transport].
- ◆ Ensure new group members are made welcome.
- ◆ Publicise the group's activities to other U3A members through the website, Email Update and Newsletter.
- ◆ Regularly check that the information about the group on the website is up to date.
- ◆ Delegate as far as possible some of the tasks involved to other members of the group.
- ◆ Keep a register of those attending each session.

Waiting lists

If a group has a waiting list and it is not possible to accommodate more members in the existing group, the Leader should see if a member can be found to start a second group, or whether the group is sufficiently large to move into hired premises.

Visitors

Only U3A members are covered by U3A insurance. However there is provision for non members to attend a maximum of **two** visits in total. The Third Age Trust advises that details of any visitor should be recorded: name and address, phone number, name and date of the group attended.

Members of other U3As may attend group meetings on two occasions also. After that it is expected that they will join our U3A if they wish to continue.

Joint Groups

A Joint Group with another local U3A can be a solution if the group is short of members or if you wish to share expertise or organise specialised visits. If you wish to do this you will need to discuss it with the Group Coordinator who will liaise with the Coordinator of the other U3A.

Finances

Each group is self financing [though some financial help may be offered by the Group Treasurer at the outset].

If the cost to each member is more than the 50p or £1 for refreshments etc, the leader should contact the Group Treasurer who will explain what accounts need to be kept and how money is to be dealt with, for example, if premises are hired for meetings.

Accidents

If an accident should occur during a group meeting an Accident Report form should be completed [see the last page of these Guidelines]. The completed form should be given to the Secretary of the Executive Committee who will keep them in a file. If an insurance claim is made statements may be sought from witnesses. It is therefore essential to keep a record of attendances at each meeting.

ACCIDENT REPORT FORM – Radlett & District U3A

Name of injured party or property owner/address/telephone number :

Name/address/telephone number of any others involved :

Date/ time of accident/incident : Location :

Circumstances of accident/ incident

Injury/property damage details :

Name/address/telephone number of person/people involved in the incident:

Witnessed by :

1.

2.

Address :

Telephone number :

Immediate action taken :

Details of any specialised assistance required at the scene.

Was medical advice sought afterwards? If so give details.

Name of Group Leader/Convenor

Telephone number

Signed(injured party/parties)

Signed (Group Leader) Date

When completed and signed, this form should be given to the Radlett & District U3A Secretary who will keep it in the Secretary's file.