

u3a COVID-19 Guidance

The Third Age Trust will always follow government guidance in relation to covid and advises u3as to encourage their members to do so also. Currently there are no legal requirements, but the government recommend choosing to follow these actions:

- 1) Get vaccinated
- 2) Let fresh air in if meeting others indoors (open windows and doors where possible)
- 3) Practice good hygiene:
 - a) Wash your hands
 - b) Cover your coughs and sneezes
 - c) Clean your surroundings frequently
- 4) Consider wearing a face mask if in crowded situations

u3as should encourage members to isolate if they experience COVID-19 symptoms or test positive on a lateral flow test. Groups can remind members to review the risks to themselves and others in their household in attending u3a activities, and act accordingly.

Vaccination does not guarantee that you will not pass on COVID-19, so you should always act with caution and follow government guidelines.

COVID-19 FAQs

1 What is Third Age Trust's latest COVID-19 advice?

Our advice will always be to follow current government guidelines. The government currently recommend choosing the following:

- 1) Get vaccinated
- 2) Let fresh air in if meeting others indoors (open windows and doors where possible)
- 3) Practice good hygiene:
 - a) Wash your hands
 - b) Cover your coughs and sneezes
 - c) Clean your surroundings frequently
- 4) Consider wearing a face mask if in crowded situations

2 Can I ask members to take a lateral flow test?

You may encourage members to take lateral flow tests before attending a u3a activity but there is no requirement for members to do so. You should encourage members who have symptoms to self-isolate.

3 Can I ask members to share their vaccination status?

You cannot ask for another person's vaccination status for participation in most activities. Travel abroad may require members to share their vaccination status depending on the entry requirements which can be checked here: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>.

You cannot share another member's vaccination status with other members, nor is it appropriate to share that some members are/are not vaccinated in a group.

4 Can I ask members to be vaccinated in order to attend a u3a activity/event?

There are no government regulations requiring individuals to be vaccinated to participate in activities or events that occur within a u3a. Consequently, you cannot require members to be vaccinated in order to engage in u3a activities.

5 Can we run a separate activity session for non-vaccinated members?

You won't be able to run specific classes for people based on vaccination status, ask for people to be vaccinated before attending or ask with their vaccination status is – you could risk a claim of discrimination against you in these circumstances.

Whilst you can't ask people to be vaccinated, you may wish to consider running a 'remote' alternative for those who feel they are vulnerable or are otherwise unable/ do not wish to access the activity in person. Ultimately, this is down to the individual to decide whether they would like to attend in person considering current government guidance and their own vulnerability.

6 Can we exclude non-vaccinated members from our group?

You cannot exclude non-vaccinated members from a u3a group or activity, whatever the reason for non-vaccination. Excluding members from activities based on vaccination status risks a claim of discrimination being made against you. Of note is that being vaccinated does not eliminate the risk of passing on COVID-19. You should encourage all members to self-isolate if they experience COVID-19 symptoms or test positive on a lateral flow test.

7 Our group is vulnerable, can we ask people to be vaccinated to protect them?

If you have vulnerable members, you should complete a risk assessment and put in place measures to mitigate these risks. Examples include encouraging mask wearing and hand washing, access to hand sanitiser, and keeping rooms well ventilated. Vaccination should not be considered as a measure to manage risk as this is an individual's choice and cannot be enforced. The Government recommend individuals are vaccinated but this is not a requirement.

8 Do we need to complete COVID-19 risk assessments?

It is no longer necessary to complete a specific COVID-19 risk assessment for activities, but you should be completing general group risk assessments. There is no requirement to complete a personal member checklist, but individual members may wish to complete them to identify and manage their personal risks, including COVID-19.

Version	Description of changes	Date
0.1	Draft prepared by Laura Blake	20 05 2023