

U3A SUTTON BRIDGE

Procedures and Policies

Finance

Financial year ends on 31st March. Membership fees are due on 1st April.

Membership fees for new and existing members are calculated annually. Paid up members of another U3A may reduce the membership fee by the amount of the Third Age Trust Capitation Fee (£3.50 in 2018-19) on production of their membership card for the other U3A.

There is a reduced fee for new members joining after 31st October.

For new members joining in February and March the membership fee will give membership until 31st March of the following year.

Membership fees for each year will be calculated by the Committee and advised to the members before the date for renewal of subscriptions.

Group Finance

The end of the financial year for U3A Sutton Bridge is 31st March and our Treasurer will need to get the accounts ready for auditing.

All Group Leaders shall keep records whenever money is collected from group members, other than a maximum of 50p for refreshments, and shall prepare a signed and dated Financial Return as at 31st March and 30th September and hand it to the Treasurer as soon as practicable. If there is no money held, a financial return is still required with the wording "No group money held. Only 50p per person for tea/coffee paid to host".

A quotation from U3A Financial Matters states: -

"For interest groups meeting in private houses, it is often the case that the U3A committee defines a maximum payment (typically 50p) to be made to the host at each meeting to cover refreshments. If, however, a U3A decides on a larger payment then the money belongs to the U3A and the host must record the amount received and this must be treated as petty cash by the Group Leader and paid to the Treasurer with a completed financial return (including acceptable deductions for refreshments)."

Each Group must be self-sufficient, although each Group shall not hold a float of more than £50.00 maximum, anything over and above this should be handed to the Treasurer, as all funds belong to the U3A. The good news is that Group Financial Returns do not need to be audited. Where monies, over the £50.00, are handed to the Treasurer, the Treasurer shall ensure that this money is allocated to the group for their future use.

Groups/Group Leaders are not allowed to open Bank Accounts nor can U3A monies be kept in a personal account.

Any queries, please contact the Treasurer.

Group Members

Members shall inform the Group Leader whether or not they will be attending a Group Meeting.

Group Members who do not communicate with the Group Leader and who do not attend two (2) consecutive Group Meetings without notice shall, at the discretion of the Group Leader, be deleted from the members of that Group and shall have to add their name again to the group list and, if necessary, wait for a vacancy before re-joining the group.

All Members shall be courteous to the Committee Members, Group Leaders and other members at all times.

Taster Sessions

Visitors are welcome to attend two (2) Monthly Meetings as taster sessions for a small fee per meeting.

Visitors will be encouraged to join as members, visitors who join at the monthly meeting will have their visitors fee for the current meeting refunded.

Visitors are not able to enrol in any Group or to attend any Group Meetings until the membership fee is paid and a membership number issued.

Recording Attendance

Group Leaders shall keep a list of those who attend each meeting.

It is good practice to give a short health and safety briefing at the start of meetings including location of exits, toilets, etc.

Data Protection

Group Leaders shall be aware of the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulations in regard to personal information they hold on Group Members and they are reminded to take all necessary steps to ensure the safety of that data and that they only hold what is absolutely necessary for them to run the group. The data they hold shall not be divulged to any person.

Please see Data Protection Policy and Statement and membership forms in separate documents.

Confidentiality

Committee Members, Group Leaders and members shall ensure confidentiality of all members data and shall not divulge these to anyone. Please refer matters to the Committee if necessary for advice or action. When the person is no longer in that position he/she shall ensure that all hard copies be shredded, or incinerated, and soft copies deleted from the computer and from the recycle bin. All data shall be shredded/deleted after 12 months unless the Committee advises otherwise.

Resources

The Resource Centre at the U3A National Office has a selection of resources that are available to borrow free of charge except for return postage. Please contact the Secretary to arrange loans from the Resource Centre. Loan periods are three weeks. See www.resource.centre@u3a.org.uk

Accidents

Accidents can occur and if this should happen during a meeting please complete an Accident Report Form (attached) and return it within 7 days to the Secretary with a copy to the Group Co-Ordinators.

Health and Safety

See separate document in connection with Health and Safety, checklists, incident report forms, etc. forms shall be completed by the Group Leader for group activities and retained by the Group Leader and for monthly meetings by the Committee Member appointed as Health and Safety Officer and retained by the Secretary.

U3A website

The U3A website has a lot of advice on the running of U3As and should be consulted as required. www.u3a.org.uk

Problems for a Group Leader within an Interest Group

Problems can arise within a group e.g.

- Disruptive and/or unsocial behaviour.
- Poor attendance/timekeeping.
- Incompatibility with the group.
- Failure to pay fees.
- Disagreement between members.

In most cases the Group Leader will be able to resolve the situation informally and amicably by just by having a quiet word with the member / members in question. In certain situations, asking a member to leave the group for the remainder of the session may well be the best solution.

If it requires more or this fails, and the problem persists the Group Leader should refer the matter to the Group Co-ordinators on the committee or if that role does not exist, the trustee on the committee designated to deal with problems / grievances. The Group Leader should not allow a situation to continue which impacts on the enjoyment of other members of the group.

Group Leaders do not have the authority to exclude a member from the a group. .
Group Leaders shall consult with the Group Coordinator(s) and/or the Committee in cases where they cannot resolve an issue with a group member.

Problems with the Group Leader

Initially, the member / members should try to resolve the problem by discussing it with the Group Leader. However, if this is unsuccessful or if the member / members involved feel unable to do so, the matter should be referred to the Group Co-ordinators or the designated trustee.

Problems within the U3A as a whole

- Member to member.
- Member and the committee.
- Member and an individual trustee.
- A member who brings the U3A into disrepute or acts in a way which is prejudicial to the U3A.
- A member who causes damage to property and / or equipment through misuse/negligence etc.

The above should all be referred to the designated trustee in the first instance unless that person is personally involved, in which case, the Chairman will decide who should take over.

Initial Procedure when a Problem / Grievance is Referred

Establish the facts quickly, consulting as many people as possible.

Have an informal discussion with all concerned to summarise the problem, hear everybody's views and clear the air.

If you feel there is a case to answer but that nevertheless it is a minor issue, make it clear to all present that there must be no repeat of the sort of actions / behaviour which led to this problem.

If, however, you feel that the situation warrants a more formal approach or a particular course of action e.g. exclusion from an interest group, you should refer the matter to the committee to agree a course of action.

Committee Procedure

It is advisable to invite all the people involved to attend a minuted meeting with either some or all members of the committee so that the matter can be fully discussed, and an opportunity provided for everybody to state their case.

The committee will then consider the matter, taking into account any mitigating circumstances and agree what action to take.

Possible Forms of Disciplinary Action

Level 1 - a verbal warning about future conduct by an elected officer with another officer present, which should be confirmed in writing.

Level 2 - a written warning which clearly states what will happen if the situation is repeated.

Level 3 - a final written warning.

Level 4 - exclusion from an Interest Group.

Level 5 - termination of U3A membership.

For most problems you will start at level 1. However, in the case of an extremely serious proven misdemeanour, for example,

- Sexual/racial abuse, all forms of discrimination, harassment, bullying.
- Dangerous or violent behaviour.
- Falsification of expense claims.
- Theft.
- Malicious damage.
- Conduct which brings the U3A into disrepute or is prejudicial to the U3A or the running of the U3A

the committee has the right to move immediately to Levels 3, 4 or 5.

Right of appeal

Before a member is excluded from an Interest Group or has his / her membership terminated, a right of appeal should be offered and in the case of expulsion from the U3A, must be offered. An appeal, providing it is lodged within a 7-day period, can take the form of written representation for the committee to consider or a request for a right of reply. If it is the latter, a meeting of the whole committee should be called and the member in question should be asked to attend and can be accompanied by a friend who may also speak in a personal capacity. The whole issue should be summarised and then the member given the opportunity to speak, along with the supporter if so desired. In both cases, the committee will review its decision, taking into account any mitigating circumstances, and then make a final decision, which must be communicated in writing.

Please Remember the Following

You must ensure every action you take is documented.

You must deal with problems and grievances quickly and fairly.

You should do all you can to settle the issue without having to resort to formal disciplinary action.

You should maintain confidentiality.

Reviewed on: 28th June 2018

Issue 1R