

CHAIR ROLE DESCRIPTION

1. Role summary (*as set out by the Third Age Trust*)

- To provide inclusive and democratic leadership of the board of Trustees (the committee).
- To ensure the committee fulfils its responsibilities for the overall governance, strategic direction, financial stability, administration and sustainability of the U3A.
- To ensure the U3A applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its charitable objects/purposes, abides by its governing document (the constitution) and complies with charity law and other relevant legislation.
- To ensure the U3A upholds the guiding principles.
- To oversee adherence to the terms and conditions of affiliation to the Third Age Trust.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the U3A.
- To safeguard the good name and values of the U3A organisation.

2. Main responsibilities

The specific tasks listed below are in addition to the statutory requirements and responsibilities of Trustees of charitable organisations in the UK as laid down by the relevant regulatory bodies.

2.1 Committee Meetings

- To plan the meeting agenda in advance with the Secretary and agree on any papers to be circulated with it.
- To chair committee meetings ensuring that:
 - the meeting starts and ends on time.
 - all necessary business is covered.
 - discussions involve everybody and are not dominated by a few people.
 - discussions remain focussed on the stated agenda items.
 - clear decisions are reached following a unanimous or majority vote of the committee.
 - a timetable for implementation of actions/decisions is agreed.
- To be impartial and encourage objectivity in decision-making.
- To encourage all members to put forward new ideas and initiatives for discussion.
- To provide a casting vote in the event of an equal split.
- To review draft minutes and sign off final minutes at next committee meeting.
- To agree the annual cycle of dates for committee meetings.

2.2 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- To write a Chair's Annual Report and ensure the final draft of this report is presented to the committee for approval in good time prior to the AGM.
- To chair the AGM ensuring that the business of the meeting is conducted in accordance with our Constitution.
- To arrange an induction for newly elected Trustees so they start with a sound knowledge base.
- To ensure the bank signature mandate is updated as required.

2.3 Governance

- To ensure the committee complies with its constitution and remains focussed on the U3A's stated charitable objects/purposes and its aims.
- To ensure the U3A applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects/purposes.
- To ensure that the U3A abides by the guiding principles and ethos of the U3A movement.
- To protect and manage any property and assets belonging to the U3A.
- To ensure that all Trustees clearly understand their duties and responsibilities and can make best use of their particular skills so they can become fully engaged and involved.
- To ensure all board decisions are implemented in a timely manner.
- To ensure that the committee reviews activities once they have taken place, to highlight what if anything can be learned and improved.
- To develop a strong team ethos within the committee and maintain positive working relationships dealing with any conflicts which arise quickly and constructively.
- To encourage the committee to review its own effectiveness and consider whether individual roles can be better organised and/or distributed.
- To ensure the committee reviews risks on a regular basis and puts measures in place to mitigate any which are identified.
- To discuss succession planning and ways of encouraging members to volunteer for the committee.

2.4 Finance

- To be constantly aware of the financial position of the U3A through regular communication with the Treasurer.

2.5 U3A Members

- To ensure the U3A has maximum impact for its members.
- In conjunction with the Membership Secretary ensure new members are welcomed and supported and understand the ethos and self-help nature of the organisation.
- To ensure that all possible methods are used to achieve the best level of communication between the committee and the members.
- To encourage members to provide feedback, raise issues and suggest new initiatives to be brought before the committee for discussion.
- To ensure all volunteers feel valued and supported.
- To ensure that the committee regularly reviews its structure, ways of working and relationship with the membership.
- To host monthly meetings.

2.6 External contacts

- To liaise with local organisations and to be the first point of contact.
- To attend or delegate attendance at network, regional and national meetings as appropriate.
- To be a spokesperson and an ambassador for the U3A ensuring that the local community is aware of what the U3A is and does.
- To represent the U3A at external functions, meetings and events.

3. On completion

- To carry out a comprehensive handover to the new Chair.

In order to carry out the role the Chair undertakes the following routine and periodic activities:

- Prior to monthly meetings, ensures all necessary arrangements are in place.
- Chairs monthly meetings updating members on current issues and activities.
- Prepares the monthly Chair's letter for distribution to all members.
- Responds to ad hoc communications received directly from members or outside organisations.
- Attends Thames Valley Network (TVN) meetings as appropriate.
- Keeps abreast of communications from TAT and TVN and determines whether action is required.
- Ensures our policies and procedures are kept up-to-date.
- Periodically reviews our website and liaises with the webmaster over any required changes.
- Initiates planning for an annual social event and open meeting.
- Supports the Groups' Co-ordinator and Database Manager in organising the annual group census and convenors' meeting.
- Participates in planning of the speaker programme for the following year.
- Ensures the assets register is kept up to date and arrangements are made for the annual P.A.T. testing of electrical equipment.