

Coordinators' Handbook

Main role of a Group Coordinator

- Coordinate group activities in line with Bu3a and u3a policies
- Share responsibilities within the group, including appointing a deputy
- Act as the main contact for new members and Bu3a colleagues
- Maintain an accurate group record on the Beacon system including adding and removing members

Support for Coordinators

Guidance is available from the Development Officer, Room Bookings Officer, Webmaster, Treasurer and the Activity and Safety Officer.

Training can be provided on the use of the Beacon and communications system

Coordinators meeting

Useful Resources are available at www.u3a.org.uk Subject Advisors can be found via this website

Third age Matters magazine

Online resources

Setting up a new group

Groups can be set up through a variety of ways. First, contact should be made with the Development Officer who will guide you in the process and involve other members as and when required.

The Development Officer will gain the appropriate approval from other committee members. It can take up to two months to complete this process depending on the availability of appropriate committee members. For example, new venues will need to be assessed by our Activity and Safety Officer.

Considerations prior to a new group starting:

- Type of activity and it's appropriateness for our members e.g. physical risks to members

- Is there an existing or similar group
- Proximity of similar groups
- Financial risk e.g. is there a financial outlay for a new group?
- Is there a viable number of members interested?

When the group is approved and ready to start, a registration form will be sent from the Development Officer to Webmaster, Beacon Administrator, Treasurer, Room Booking Officer, Safety Officer.

That registration form will contain:

Group Name

Day and frequency of meetings

Start and end times

Maximum numbers for the group

Coordinator name and contact details

Venue

Small grants may be available to cover start-up costs – this could delay the start date.

Coordinator tasks

Records

Keep a record of members on the Beacon system and update as necessary. If a member has not attended for some time, check that the member still wishes to be part of the group.

Inform Development Officer if group has reached maximum numbers and a waiting list has been started.

Consult with members to plan and provide ideas for the content and delivery of the group's programme – if appropriate.

In case of cancellations inform the Room Booking Officer and Treasurer to ensure the room is not invoiced for.

Remind members that group activities are taking part at their own risk. Liaise with Safety Officer to ensure safety checks are up to date.

The Business Secretary can provide a copy of licences with reference to photocopying and sharing/playing music.

Walking group coordinators will be issued the checklist via the Development Officer.

Group Monies

Groups should only hold in cash, small amounts of money to cover teas and coffees, typically in the region of £50.

If groups require larger amounts of money (e.g. fees, licences or trips) or have regular expenditure please seek advice from the Treasurer. This will ensure Charity Commission requirements and good financial practice is maintained.

Blue boxes (where used) should be exchanged every 2/3 months.

Problems and safeguarding

Discretely note any specific health problems of members to ensure steps are taken to include all members of the group in activities. E.g. Choir members who need to sit during performances.

In the event of problems with or between members of the group, speak to the Development Officer for Advice.

Report all accidents and incidents to the committee as soon as possible and complete an accident report which can be found on the website.

Stay up to date with u3a copyright guidance. Infringements are serious and have led to fines.

Ethos and fundraising

The u3a ethos is based on three principles with the addition of fundraising guidance for clarity.

Third Age

Open to all in their third age which is generally considered to be a period of life after retirement.

Promotes the value of lifelong learning and the positive attitudes of belonging to a u3a.

Self Help Learning

Member led learning where qualifications are not necessary. Everyone is both a learner and a contributor.

Learning is by the members for the members. No qualifications are sought or offered.

Mutual Aid

Operationally independent but part of the Third Age Trust.

No member receives payment for services.

Outside funding should only be sought if it does not compromise the integrity of the u3a.

Fund Raising

Bu3a is a Registered Charity (No: 10776554) Groups/ group members must not raise funds for other charities within a group environment as this could breach the charity Commission's rules.