

Aims and Guiding Principles

The Universities of the Third Age (u3a) is made up of autonomous, self-help organisations run by the voluntary efforts of their members. The word “university” is used in its original sense of people coming together to share and pursue learning in all its forms.

Aims

- To encourage and enable older people no longer in full-time paid employment to help each other share knowledge, skills, interests and experience.
- To demonstrate the benefits and enjoyment to be gained and the new horizons to be discovered in learning throughout life.
- To celebrate the capabilities and potential of older people and their value to society.

Guiding Principles

- The u3a cannot run without volunteers. Members should be willing to contribute their time, without payment, to the many and varied tasks necessary to run their u3a.
- Membership is open to all irrespective of religion, ethnicity etc.
- u3a members regard themselves as both learners and teachers
- The pleasure of learning is a driving force in the work of u3as. They neither require nor award any qualifications.
- u3as are funded by the subscriptions of their members and contributions to Group expenses.
- u3as collaborate with institutions such as museums, galleries, libraries and universities in learning partnerships in which both u3as and the institutions themselves may benefit through research, advancement of knowledge and mutual respect for capabilities.
- u3as collaborate with institutions undertaking research into ageing and the position of older people in society.
- As appropriate, u3as offer voluntary assistance in learning activities to educational and cultural bodies in their communities.
- u3as make use of new technologies as they become available.