



## U3A Canberra POLICY No. P150

Safety and Wellbeing Policy	
<b>Publication date:</b> 19 June 2024	<b>Applies to:</b> All U3A Members
<b>Responsible person:</b> U3A Volunteer responsible for the event or activity	<b>Scheduled review date:</b> Every three years
<b>Approved by:</b> Committee on 11 June 2024	<b>Authors:</b> Tom Flynn (Secretary), Louise Morauta (Facilities Manager), Garth Setchell (Committee Member), Paul Minogue (Committee Member)

### INTRODUCTION

This policy is designed to align U3A-ACT Inc. (**U3A**) practices with the principles underpinning the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Work Health and Safety Act)* and relevant provisions of the *Discrimination Act 1991 (Discrimination Act)*.

While the Work Health and Safety does not apply to U3A as a volunteer association, it is in the best interests of the physical and psychological health of its members, and others engaged in U3A's activities, to adopt a policy and practices consistent with the principles that underpin that Act.

The Discrimination Act provides protection against discrimination (being treated unfavourably or placed at disadvantage) on the basis of attributes such as age, gender, race, religion, disability, sexual harassment, vilification or victimisation. While U3A as a voluntary body is not prohibited by the Act from discriminating in relation to membership or the provision of benefits, facilities or services, it is in the best interests of the wellbeing of its members, others engaged in U3A's activities and the broader community to comply fully with the Act wherever reasonably possible.

### PURPOSE

This policy identifies U3A's commitment to the safety and wellbeing of its members and our collective and individual responsibility while carrying out U3A activities to act safely, cause no harm and engage with activities that can help prevent injuries and illness. This policy is divided into two parts: matters relating to all U3A activities wherever they occur and matters relating to U3A premises.

### ATTACHMENT

**Attachment A.** Incident/Accident Report Template

### POLICY

#### **Matters relating to U3A activities wherever they occur:**

1. All members of U3A who provide volunteer services, or conduct courses, tours or related activities must take sensible and reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all attending any activity run on behalf of U3A and to minimise risks to their physical and psychological wellbeing.
2. When engaged in U3A activities members must not:

- 2.1. Discriminate against any person on the basis of age, disability, gender, race, political or religious conviction (or any other attribute protected by the Discrimination Act).
- 2.2. Sexually harass another person.
- 2.3. Incite hatred toward, revulsion of, serious contempt for or severe ridicule of a person on the basis of disability, gender identity, HIV/AIDS status, race, religious conviction, sex characteristics, or sexuality.
- 2.4. Victimise any person involved in taking action against discrimination.

Matters relating to behavioural issues, such as those above involving volunteers or members, need to be addressed with reference to the *Complaints and Disputes Resolution Policy* or U3A's Objects and Rules (Rules 12 and 13).

As provided for by the *Complaints and Disputes Resolution Policy*, consultation with the Member Liaison Person (MLP) may assist in informal resolution of the issue. The MLP is an experienced volunteer willing to assist the person making a complaint to resolve his/her complaint by listening to the issue and liaising with the relevant group or team leader. The MLP may help take the "heat" out of the discussion.

3. Members involved in a U3A activity who are participants and not volunteers must act reasonably and sensibly for the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others while they are engaged in that activity.
4. On a tour or excursion, seat belts must be worn at all times by members when seated in a coach hired by U3A.
5. Members must not attend U3A face-to-face activities if they are feeling unwell with any infectious condition, such as COVID-19, flu, RSV, colds or coughs, or have any symptoms of these infections.
6. Members are encouraged to protect themselves and others from the risk of transmission of infectious diseases by keeping up-to-date with relevant vaccinations, considering wearing a mask when entering public indoor settings or where it is difficult to maintain physical distancing, and practising good hand hygiene.
7. Where activities are conducted in the premises of another organisation U3A members must comply with all health and safety rules applying to those premises.
8. From time to time, health and safety risks may also be identified in the *Risk Policy*.
9. U3A will produce an annual Mental Health and Wellbeing Risk Assessment for the Committee. This will be prepared by the MLP.
  - 9.1. The MLP, from their work responding to issues identified by members, will identify behavioural issues, which could include whether there have been sudden increases in absenteeism, deterioration in participation, or behavioural changes in areas where there were instances of possible offensive action.
  - 9.2. The report of the annual assessment will be considered by the Committee together with any recommendations arising from the assessment.
  - 9.3. *People at work - a psychosocial risk assessment tool* is available from ACT Health to assist the MLP in assessing mental health issues within U3A.
10. Should an accident or incident related to physical safety or wellbeing be identified during any U3A activity, the observer, usually a course leader or volunteer, should complete an Accident/Incident Report as soon as practicable (see Attachment A) and forward it to the Secretary. The Secretary will then direct the form to the relevant authority where appropriate for relevant action. For incidents in U3A premises the form will also be referred to the Facilities Manager. In other premises the form may be referred to the landlord or manager of the premises concerned.

- 10.1. If the incident results in a death or serious injury, Emergency Services should be contacted immediately, the President contacted immediately and the site secured until Emergency Services arrive.
- 10.2. The Committee will consider all such reports at its next meeting following the accident/incident or if the incident is serious, at an out-of-session meeting.
- 10.3. A register of all accidents and incidents will be kept by the Secretary and considered annually as part of the annual risk assessment processes referred to in paragraphs 9 and 12.3.

### **Matters relating to U3A premises**

11. U3A premises are those premises leased by U3A for the sole purpose of U3A activities. At the present time there are three U3A premises: Cook, Flynn and Hughes.
12. The Facilities Manager and Facilities Team is responsible to the Committee for enabling U3A to meet its workplace health and safety responsibilities in relation to U3A premises, including, but not limited to the following:
  - 12.1. U3A will conduct a safety and wellbeing risk assessment annually at U3A premises as outlined in the Work Health and Safety Act and its associated documentation.
  - 12.2. Volunteers who have a key role in relevant operational activities, including site managers, will be involved in the annual safety and wellbeing risk assessment process.
  - 12.3. The report of the annual assessment will be considered by the Committee together with any recommendations from the assessment.
  - 12.4. The Facilities Team will introduce controls to minimise any significant risks identified in this assessment and more generally, updated procedures will be inserted annually into U3A-ACT Facilities Procedures.
13. The Facilities Manager is responsible for advice to the Committee on policies and plans in relation to public health matters in U3A premises, including in relation to any public health emergency (for example, *Public Health (Emergency) Declaration 2020 (no 1) in relation to COVID-19*). The Committee will make final decisions on any safety plans and policies

### **RELATED POLICIES**

Risk Policy

Complaints and Disputes Resolution Policy

Code of Conduct Policy

Objects and Rules of U3A-ACT Inc (Rules 12 & 13)

### **SOURCES**

*Associations Incorporation Act 1991*

*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

People at work – a psychosocial risk assessment tool at: <http://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/healthand-safety-portal/safety-topics/mental-health>

*Discrimination Act 1991*



**ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT**

- This report must be completed when any accident or incident involving a person has occurred in relation to any U3A ACT Inc. (U3A) course or activity, whether on U3A rented premises or elsewhere, and irrespective of whether an injury or illness is apparent as a result. The report can be prepared by the person involved or another person, such as a witness to the event, and should be completed as soon as possible after the event. This report will provide U3A with a record of the event in the case of an insurance claim arising from the accident or incident
- **Accident** means an unplanned occurrence or incident that causes or contributes to personal injury or damage to property
- **Incident** means any unplanned event resulting in, or having a potential for injury, ill health, damage or other loss.

1. Date and time of accident/incident:
2. Name of person involved (including contact details if known) and U3A membership number
3. Location and site of accident/incident:
4. Describe fully the nature of the accident/incident:
5. First aid, medical or other assistance, if any, was given following the accident/incident. Including was ambulance called or contact person of member.
6. If possible, indicate the names and contact details of at least two people who witnessed the accident/incident:
7. Suggested follow-up action for U3A to mitigate against such an occurrence in the future (if applicable)
8. Name of the person preparing this report (please give contact details):
9. Date of this report:
10. Signature of member conducting the activity in which the accident/incident occurred (if applicable)

If space is insufficient for any entry please continue on the back of the sheet.

Please forward the completed report to the Secretary U3A-ACT Inc. address: Hughes Community Centre, 2 Wisdom Street, Hughes. ACT 2605 or at [secretary@u3acanberra.org.au](mailto:secretary@u3acanberra.org.au). This report may be shared with the landlord or lessee of the property where the incident occurred.