



Covid Communication

Your Executive Committee remains committed to transitioning out of lockdown in the quickest and safest way possible.

We have updated our Covid position to reflect the ending of restrictions on the 19th of July. In doing so we needed to take account of the fact that Covid is still widely circulating and infection rates are rising. Government has advised that we should remain cautious. Covid has not gone away and it is our responsibility, both as individuals and as members of the u3a, to keep ourselves and others safe.

Your committee will continue to rely on the judgement of its Group Leaders (GLs) in deciding what and how face-to-face activities can resume. Previously we set out some guidelines to help our GLs in those decisions but we have now revised them to take account of the release of restrictions. Any activity falling outside these guidelines or which has not been subject to a proper Risk Assessment will not be recognised as a u3a activity and therefore will not benefit from u3a insurance or any relevant subsidy (for example, room hire costs).

Guidelines (from the 19th July)

Individual members' views must be respected. We ask our GLs to take those individual needs into account in deciding how to meet, considering alternatives where practical (if a member is wary about meeting in person, GLs should consider meeting virtually or having some form of hybrid meeting).

In summary, no face-to-face activities can begin unless:

- the GL has informed an Interest Group Coordinator (IGC) that they have undertaken a Risk Assessment showing that COVID risks are reduced to an acceptable level (template Risk Assessments are available from our website [link]). The IGL must take responsibility to properly complete the Risk Assessment and share it with their group.

Additionally, if a GL has significantly altered a Risk Assessment as a result of the end of Covid restrictions (for example, moving from outdoor to indoor meetings) we would expect the GL to share the revised Risk Assessment with their group members and inform an IGC that they have substantially altered their Risk assessment.

Meeting outdoors and indoors

There is currently no restriction on the number of people who can meet outdoors or indoors. However, it is safer to meet outdoors if possible. In the light of this, your committee would ask GLs to consider meeting outdoors in preference to indoors. Nevertheless, indoor face-to-face activities can resume subject to the GL informing an IGC that they have completed a Risk Assessment reducing COVID risk to an acceptable level and that it is impractical for the activity to take place outdoors.

When considering meeting indoors (in a private house or public venue), GLs should ensure that their Risk assessment covers issues such as good ventilation and social distancing. **Subject to these Risk Assessments groups can now meet in public venues such as halls.**

Members' responsibilities

The Committee also recognises that it is an individual's choice on whether to join a face-to-face activity: no one knows more about your particular situation than you do. In the end it is your personal decision to join a face-to face activity – you should consider the risks this might pose to you and decide whether you feel comfortable in attending that activity. You may of course ask to see the Risk Assessment that the IGL has prepared.