

U3A National Office - latest guidance for U3As 13 July 2020 - Extract

When should you stay at home?

You should not leave your home to take part in U3A activity if government advice means that you should stay at home or if you or anyone in your household has symptoms of Coronavirus.

If you or someone in your household or your support bubble is showing coronavirus symptoms, everyone in your support bubble should stay home. If you or a member of your support bubble is contacted as part of the test and trace programme, the individual contacted should stay at home. If that individual becomes symptomatic, everyone in the support bubble must then isolate. This is critical to staying safe and saving lives. It is advisable that any U3A group activities that are taking place at this time should keep a log of those participating for track and trace purposes should the need arise.

People aged over 70 and those who are clinically vulnerable

When you are meeting outside you can continue to meet in groups of up to six people from different households, following social distancing guidelines.

You can now meet in groups of up to 2 households in any location. However it remains the case that you should socially distance from anyone not in your household or bubble.

This means that it is highly unlikely that a U3A can operate indoors.

People who are extremely clinically vulnerable

From 01 August the advice is that you should continue to stay at home as much as possible. If people do go out, take particular care to minimise contact with others outside their household or bubble and practise good, frequent handwashing.

Risk assessment for all locations

Our advice is that it is important to carry out a risk assessment as you would do for any U3A activity. In the case of resuming an outdoor U3A exercise activity there would be two elements to any risk assessment to be considered. It is strongly advised that you record any assessment before taking part in activity.

The first part of the risk assessment – identify what steps Group leaders propose taking to ensure the activity is Covid-secure? For Example: limiting numbers, taking masks and hand sanitisers, own refreshments, limiting time and duration of activities. This information should be shared with participants so that they can complete the next part of the risk assessment for themselves.

The Second part of the risk assessment is for each potential participant to undertake a personal participation risk assessment considering the Covid-19 risks and hazards that taking part poses to the individual.

Our advice is that it is imperative that everyone completes a personal assessment of this nature and records it. This is however, a personal exercise and does not need to be shared with group leaders. It is sufficient to inform them that you have considered your personal situation and decided that you are safe to take part in the activity as arranged.

This is important because there are differing requirements for

- people with different health conditions - clinically vulnerable, or clinically extremely vulnerable
- people of different ages

- members living in a household where there is someone who is considered clinically vulnerable, or clinically extremely vulnerable and therefore has limitations on contact with others.

Our advice is that a personal participation risk assessment should take into consideration a person's physical health and any underlying issues, age and the health and circumstances of those they may be living with or isolating with in their household. As previously stated, there is no requirement for you to share your personal risk assessment but that you have considered the factors for yourself and concluded that you can safely take part.