

ST ALBANS U3A EQUALITIES POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Introduction

St Albans U3A (StAU3A) is committed to providing life-enhancing and life-changing opportunities by bringing together people in their 'third age' to develop their interests and continue their learning in a friendly and informal environment. The "third age" is defined as a time after people have finished working full-time or raising a family and have time to pursue their interests or just try something new.

It recognises that some people are particularly likely to experience discrimination and harassment and is committed to making sure it is as inclusive and welcoming as possible and is therefore committed to treating all people equally and with respect.

Membership

Membership of StAU3A shall be open to all people in their 'third age' irrespective of their age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. No person shall be prevented from joining StAU3A on any of these grounds

Codes of Conduct

The Trustees of StAU3A shall agree, and be bound by, the Third Age Trust's (TAT) and Charity Commission's (CC) Codes of Conduct for Trustees/Directors, which also incorporate the Nolan principles of public life. These codes promote equality and diversity and prohibit discrimination. (They can be found on the TAT and CC websites).

All members of StAU3A shall agree to

- Abide by the principles of the U3A movement
- Always act in the best interest of the U3A and never do anything to bring the U3A into disrepute
- Abide by the terms and conditions of the constitution
- Treat fellow members with respect and courtesy at all times
- Comply with and support the decisions of the elected committee
- Advise the committee of any change in your personal details.

These codes of conduct forbid any form of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. The Executive Committee of Trustees shall investigate and take action on any complaints of discrimination or harassment towards members or potential members of StAU3A.

Access Policy

StAU3A shall seek to make its events and activities as accessible as possible within the self-help and personal responsibility ethos of the U3A movement.

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Set out here are policies and guidance agreed by the committee after a recent review. They apply to talks and meetings. Groups exercise their own discretion on these issues and trips will depend on the event itself.

StAU3A shall always use accessible venues for talks and meetings, and, ideally, venues with hearing loops. The committee is looking at whether hearing loop provision can be made universal.

Assistance dogs are welcome at talks and meetings, and, as a corollary, members should expect to encounter them.

Accompanying carers are welcome at talks and meetings, where no charge is made, and do not need to be U3A members (nor meet the membership criteria).

We have posted guidance on car sharing and payment for mileage on the website and hope this will be of particular value to members who do not have access to their own cars. We also commend to members with transport issues the St Albans Good Neighbour Scheme and its volunteer drivers. They provide help with among other things transport. Their website is at www.sagns.org. The person concerned would need to contact SAGNS direct.

Other Equalities Provisions

StAU3A (and its inclusiveness) are promoted through the local media and with other relevant organisations (e.g. the Council for Voluntary Service and St Albans District Council) as opportunities and invitations arise.

The only restriction on Groups' memberships and activities is numbers and the practicalities of dealing with them. This restriction has to operate on a first come first served basis.

StAU3A can communicate with members who are not on the internet or email.

Speakers are invited who can talk about topics such as social justice campaigning or health and social care services reform, even though StAU3A cannot itself deliver any of these.

New members enjoy a personal approach to discuss how best they can benefit from and contribute to U3A and raise any concerns.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed every 2 years from its date of adoption.