



U3A SUNSHINE COAST INC.- Policies and Procedures

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

Background

The Anti-Discrimination Act aims to protect people in Queensland from unfair discrimination (direct or indirect), sexual harassment and other objectionable conduct and provides a means to bring a complaint and have it resolved. Protections under the legislation include but are not limited to sex, sexuality, age, race, religious beliefs or activity, impairment, political beliefs or activity, family responsibilities, discriminatory advertising or unlawful requests for information. The Act prohibits discrimination in areas which may apply to U3A such as Education, Goods and Services and Club Membership and affairs.

U3A associations are not for profit bodies managed by volunteers. U3As deliver their programs through the service of volunteer tutors. However, the objective of the U3A movement is to provide programs to those in their third age (that period in life of active retirement, following middle age) with activities designed to offer intellectual stimulation, improved physical health and well-being and opportunities for social engagement.

Purpose of the Policy

The policy is intended to encourage understanding of the obligations of U3A personnel under the Anti-Discrimination Act which requires the equal treatment of all members and potential members of U3A regardless of impairment or attributes such as sex, race, religion or individual circumstance. However, the The University of the Third Age is defined by its aims, being the education and stimulation of mainly retired members of the community—those in their third 'age' of life.

Policy

U3A will provide an accepting, caring, friendly, inclusive, safe and comfortable environment for all members, in which every person will be treated without bias or prejudice and where every practicable endeavor will be made to accommodate those with impairments or special needs.

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Procedures for the Management of Access for People with Impairments or Disabilities

Responsibilities

The Management Committee will:

- promote a culture of effective policy compliance across the organisation;
- actively promote anti-discrimination policy and practice and monitor performance in enactment of the policy;
- appoint a liaison officer whose role is to facilitate the accommodation and acceptance of persons with a disability and to initially deal with issues raised by those feeling discriminated against and/or those who have been accused of discriminatory behaviour;
- ensure that any adverse practice or performance is addressed;
- identify the need for and provide additional support for those who require it, discuss the need with the applicant and make changes provided that those changes do not impose unjustifiable hardship on U3A and its tutors running classes out of private homes; and
- investigate all insurance requirements and ensure that they have been met.

All office holders, tutors and members will:

- ensure that they are aware of the organisation's policy against discrimination;
- refrain from acting in a manner which could be considered discriminatory;
- offer assistance and where necessary, mentoring, to those who require it; and
- report immediately to the Liaison Officer any instances of behaviour that may need to be addressed.

Applicants with a disability or special need, or their agents:

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- will identify, where necessary, any potential adjustment required to courses or premises to enable participation in activities and/or classes;
- discuss the special needs of the applicant with the U3A Liaison Officer and with the permission of the applicant the Liaison Officer will review details with relevant people such as the tutor;
- may be accompanied at a class or activity by a carer who can facilitate their participation in the activity;
- must if they rely on a carer, have their carer present at all times during a U3A class or activity.
- Will pay for the full U3A membership of their carer; however, will not be required to pay for individual courses chosen for their carer to accompany them, in accordance with the Queensland Government's companion card scheme which allows the carer to accompany their clients for free
- May be accompanied by a substitute carer in the event of their main carer being unavailable on a given day, who will be recognised as an honorary member for that day.

Processes

- The Membership application forms either paper or online will provide an opportunity for a prospective member with a disability to identify any special needs using words such as: *Do you need adjustments to accommodate a disability? (response optional)*;
- With the tutor's cooperation, any necessary adjustments will be made to the course/es in which the applicant seeks to enrol, provided that: the adjustments can be reasonably accommodated, do not change the basic nature of the course, do not require a change of venue that cannot be accommodated because of cost or unavailability or do not require a change to the timetable that cannot be reasonably accommodated;

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- If adjustments would require structural modifications to premises, the matter should be referred to the Management Committee;
- The Management Committee will assess the request for adjustment and determine whether it is a reasonable adjustment that can be accommodated, or an unjustifiable hardship that cannot be accommodated. The Committee may seek legal advice in such a determination;
- In the event that the applicant/member feels that his/her special needs have not been adequately made provision for, he/she can take their grievance to the Liaison Officer who will attempt to resolve the grievance;
- If the Liaison Officer is unable to resolve the situation it will be dealt with by the Management Committee in accord with the Grievance Policy and Procedures/Constitution and By-Laws/ Code of Conduct;
- A person who believes that their complaint about discrimination has not been adequately addressed by the U3A is able to take their complaint to the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland.

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