Health and Safety Policy for u3as

Category: Risk assessments

Purpose

This document has been agreed and adopted by Coquetdale u3a to cover areas of health and safety within our activities. It is not to be confused with safeguarding. Where safeguarding is about protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect, health and safety is about minimising or removing the risk of accidents and injuries.

Scope

Relevant to all activities within Coquetdale u3a.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 only applies to paid workers, although volunteers must still be protected from risks. Coquetdale u3a will ensure that reasonable care is taken to avoid harming others and that participants are aware of the risks.

Policy

Coquetdale u3a aims to provide and maintain safe and healthy conditions and environments for all members including during the meeting of u3a groups, monthly meetings and at events.

Insurance
Coquetdale u3a is covered by the insurance provided by The Third Age Trust. Further details about the insurance cover can be accessed on the u3a website. If any activities are being considered that Coquetdale u3a is unsure if they are covered, they will contact the u3a Office for further advice. The Third Age Trust provides third party liability insurance however extreme sports and high hazard activities may not covered. Please check before running an activity.

Risk Assessments
Coquetdale u3a will ensure the Committee, Group Coordinators or those responsible for a meeting or event complete the relevant risk assessments. These will be used to identify any risks and explore how they could be mitigated. Coquetdale u3a is aware that some venues used for meetings/events may already have their own risk assessment, these should be reviewed and where mitigations identified, ensure they are actioned. E.g. a venue may state that no more than 5 chairs should be stacked together and or nothing placed in the way of fire escapes. Where relevant, clear instructions and guidance should be provided to anyone who requires it. Further information, guidance and templates about risk assessments can be downloaded from the u3a website.

Responding to accidents/incidents and dealing with emergencies

In the event of an incident/accident the Chair of Coquetdale u3a should be informed as soon as appropriate. Where a u3a member is involved in an accident or incident whilst taking part in a u3a event Coquetdale u3a will ensure those who witnessed the event and were involved complete an incident report. This must be completed and shared with those who need to have access to it, including the Committee Chair and kept on file. It will also need to be shared with the insurers in the event of an insurance claim.

Lone volunteering
There may be occasions where u3a members may be carrying out activities for Coquetdale u3a on their own. For example, opening a venue for a meeting, setting up for a meeting etc. Where this occurs the u3a member should ensure someone else knows where they are and when they should be expected back. The u3a member should also know who to contact in the event of an incident or accident and ensure they have, for example, their mobile phone with them and avoid activities at height e.g. using a ladder.

Manual handling
All u3a members should think about manual handling in advance to avoid injury to themselves and others. Members should not carry out any manual handling tasks if they are not able to manage them and should ask for help from other u3a members.

Venues
Where Coquetdale u3a uses external venues who have their own policies and procedures and risk assessments Coquetdale u3a will ensure these are followed. This will include making sure all u3a members in attendance are aware of what to do in the event of a fire alarm/evacuation. If Coquetdale u3a is hosting an open day this will also include ensuring those who are not u3a members are also informed.

Coquetdale will ensure this policy is kept up to date and reviewed annually.

Related documentation

The following documents are available on the u3a website to support u3as develop, approve, and adopt this policy:

- Risk assessment templates – including templates for a range of different venues and activities including groups meetings at members' houses.
- Risk Management guidance
- Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Sample
- Insurance Cover Note 2023
- Insurance FAQs
- Insurance Overview

Date of adoption:	February 2024
Date of Review:	November 2025
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