

Evesham & District u3a – RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE NOTES FOR GROUP LEADERS

1. Why do I need to complete a risk assessment?

Risk Assessments are associated with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. While this does not apply to u3as as members are not at work, the Third Age Trust insurance company expects u3as to take reasonable precautions through risk assessment checklists and they use these as a basis of any claims made. For most activities, such as a book club, a simple checklist is sufficient. The more hazardous the activity, the more comprehensive the risk assessment checklist should be. Evesham & District u3a has a General Risk Assessment Document which should be sufficient to cover most activities listed below plus a Walk Leader Checklist, both of which are in the Documents section of the website and can be adapted as required to suit particular group activity needs. There is also a section addressing Risk Assessments within the Health and Safety Policy. The Trust has also provided model risk assessment checklists based on different risk levels, activities and venues which u3as can adapt to their particular situations and these can all be accessed and downloaded from their website.

2. How often do I need to complete a risk assessment?

Best practice is to complete the appropriate risk assessment checklist at the beginning of each u3a activity, **if there are any significant changes**. However, we recognise this may not always be possible. At the very minimum, you should be completing or updating the appropriate risk assessment checklist in the following circumstances and activities, ensuring you date when it was completed. **YOU DO NOT** need to send these to any Committee Member for sign-off/approval. It is simply for your own records and you should keep each assessment for three years as this is the timeframe in which a claim can be made. If you have no record of a previous risk assessment as the basis for determining whether you need to update it in any way you should complete one for your next suitable activity.

Home:

- Before the activity takes place in a member's home for the first time.
- If the member's home changes in a significant way that would impact the u3a activity taking place or other member's access (e.g the addition of outdoor steps, building work).
- If any additional hazards or considerations have been identified since completing the last checklist (e.g a new pet).

Venue:

- Before the activity takes place in the venue for the first time.
- If the venue changes in a significant way that would impact the u3a activity, accessibility, or member safety (e.g., building work, a newly blocked off exit).
- If any additional hazards have been identified since completing the last checklist (e.g new equipment.)

NB – as mentioned in the General Risk Assessment Document and Health & Safety Policy, please ask for a copy of the venue's own Risk Assessment if appropriate and review/action as required.

Online:

- Before each online activity with a new group and/or new host.

Day trip:

- Before the trip if it differs to any significant extent from previous trips.

Sporting activity:

- Before the activity takes place for the first time.
- If the venue or sporting area changes.
- If the group leader or membership changes.
- If there are additional hazards that are identified since the last risk assessment checklist was completed.

Walking:

- Before the activity takes place for the first time.
- If the walk is of a level significantly different/harder to normal that might require a different level of fitness.
- If the group leader or membership changes.
- If additional hazards are identified since the last risk assessment was completed.

Personal member assessment:

- If a member considers themselves to be vulnerable or requires adjustments to be made so they can participate in u3a activities.
- If a member considers their needs to have changed since completing the last personal member risk assessment.
- If a member wants to consider the risk to themselves for taking part in any u3a activity or event.

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