



U3A SUNSHINE COAST INC.- Policies and Procedures

SAFETY, HEALTH & WELLBEING

Preamble

The University of the Third Age, Sunshine Coast, is required to comply with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (QLD), including associated legislation and guidance material.

The U3A policy, guidelines and procedures are aimed at providing information to assist all members, volunteers, employees and contractors to understand their obligations to participate in U3A activities safely, without causing physical or psychological harm to themselves or anyone else.

POLICY

U3A is committed to providing and maintaining, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy environment for all members, volunteers, employees and contractors.

All members, volunteers, employees and contractors are responsible for ensuring their actions and behaviour does not adversely affect the physical and psychological safety and wellbeing of themselves and others.

GUIDELINES

1. Management Committee

WH&S laws require organisations that engage workers to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable, the physical and mental health and safety of all workers including volunteers. To comply with these laws, all members of the Management Committee will:

- 1.1. Familiarise themselves with their WH&S obligations
- 1.2. Understand the nature of the work U3A does and stay aware of the risks workers and volunteers may face when working for U3A.
- 1.3. Ensure employees, tutors, volunteers', members and contractors are aware of, and have access to, U3A policy and relevant guidelines
- 1.4. Provide relevant training, information and instructions to employees, tutors, volunteers and contractors

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- 1.5. Welcome feedback on safety and health issues and have in place a process to address issues and communicate outcomes
- 1.6. Include safety, health and wellbeing as an ongoing meeting agenda item

2. Tutors and Volunteers

Under the WH&S Act you are a volunteer if you are working without payment or financial reward (but you may be receiving out of pocket expenses) for an organisation that also engages paid workers.

If you are a volunteer under the WH&S Act you are also a worker. This means that the U3A should provide you with the same protections as its' paid workers as far as is reasonably practicable. It also means that U3A does not have to guarantee that no harm will occur, but must do what is reasonably able to be done to ensure your health and safety. As a worker, you have obligations under the WH&S Act. The following is a guide for how you might meet your obligations:

- 2.1. Take reasonable care of your own health and safety
- 2.2. Take reasonable care to ensure you don't affect the health and safety of others
- 2.3. Carry out your tasks in a safe way
- 2.4. Follow any reasonable work health and safety instructions given to you by U3A
- 2.5. Cooperate with the reasonable policy, guidelines and procedures of U3A that relate to work health and safety

Essentially what is reasonable care would be what a reasonable person would do in the circumstances considering things like:

- Your knowledge
- Your role
- Your skills and resources available to you
- Your qualifications
- The information you have
- The consequences to health and safety of a failure to act in the circumstance

Other ways of making sure you take reasonable care are:

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- Carrying out activities within the role you have been given
- Not carry out activities that you don't have the skills or physical ability to undertake
- To not do anything that would seem to be unsafe

3. U3A Classes and Work in Private Homes

As a volunteer you may carry out work, including tutoring, for U3A from your own home. If this is the case, you still have a duty as a volunteer worker under the WHS Act when carrying out your volunteer work. If you do volunteer work from your own home, U3A does not own, control or manage the place that you are working from. This means that U3A has a limited ability to ensure your health and safety when at work. U3A must still comply with their duty to ensure your health and safety but what is reasonably practicable for them to do will be different if you work in a workplace that they have control over.

You still need to:

- Take reasonable care of your own health and safety
- Ensure that what you are doing for the organisation does not affect others, and follow the reasonable instructions and policies and procedures of U3A.

If you are doing volunteer work at your home and other volunteers or members will be working there with you or attending a class, you also need to make sure your home is safe for them to come into. This is the same common law, day to day duty, you have with any visitor who comes to your home.

You are required to:

- Put controls in place to mitigate any hazards or risks of people entering your home so far as reasonably practicable (e.g. electrical cords will be out of the way to prevent trip hazards, animals will be kept out of the house during tutoring, seats will be checked for sturdiness, etc)
- Communicate emergency procedures
- Consider access requirements for people with ambulatory difficulties
- Provide toilet facilities
- Provide drinking water

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4. Employees

As an employee, you should expect to work in a safe and healthy environment where facilities and equipment provided by U3A are conducive to meeting that environment.

You also have a personal responsibility under the WH&S laws to:

- take reasonable care for your own health and safety take reasonable care that you do not adversely affect the health and safety of others
- comply, so far as reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by U3A
- cooperate with any reasonable U3A policy, guideline and procedure relating to health and safety
- While U3A has overall responsibility for the provision of a safe and healthy workplace, employees also have a responsibility to raise any concerns regarding their work environment that they consider is, or may lead to, a safety or health issue. Being proactive in looking after themselves and others in the environment will help ensure that everyone goes home safely.

5. Members

- 5.1. Take reasonable care of your own health and safety
- 5.2. Take reasonable care to ensure you don't affect the health and safety of others
- 5.3. Carry out your activities in a safe way, following any reasonable work health and safety instructions given to you by your tutor
- 5.4. Be willing to accept your tutor's advice concerning your physical capability in your chosen activity
- 5.5. Be aware of the consequences to your health and safety of a failure to follow up such advice

6. Harassment and Discrimination

6.1. Workplace bullying

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The work health and safety responsibility of U3A requires us to prevent workplace bullying, stress and harassment. Workers, including volunteers, also have a duty to ensure that their actions do not constitute a risk to their own health and safety or that of other people in the workplace.

6.2. WHS discrimination

The WHS Act also expressly prohibits the discrimination or unfair treatment of workers, including volunteers, because they have raised a work health and safety concern. A person found to be engaging in this type of discrimination may be liable to criminal penalties.

If you consider you are being harassed, bullied or discriminated against, the first course of action is to approach the perpetrator to overcome the unacceptable behavior. If the unacceptable behavior does not cease after approaching the alleged perpetrator then the procedure set out in the Code of Conduct should be followed. If you feel that U3A has not satisfactorily addressed the complaint you can contact your state or territory regulator for information and advice.

PROCEDURES

1. Training and Instruction

- 1.1. Annual safety, health and wellbeing refresher training will be provided for Management Committee members. This will be scheduled as early as practicable at the beginning of each calendar year. The refresher training will include W H & S obligations, duty of care, and due diligence as a minimum. All new Management Committee members will be provided with safety, health and wellbeing induction within 1 month of their appointment to the Committee.
- 1.2. Annual safety, health and wellbeing refresher training will be provided for employees, tutors and volunteers who work regularly. This will include the on-line USC safety module and updated safety and health instructions and advice specific to U3A classes and activities.
- 1.3. All new tutors will be issued with a Tutors' Guide, that sets out class conduct requirements, including safety, health and wellbeing responsibilities and procedures.

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1.4. Safety, health and wellbeing information, advice and instructions will be issued to tutors, employees and volunteers from time to time on a needs basis.

2. Learning & Meeting Environments and Equipment

- 2.1. In all U3A classes, offices and at U3A events employees, tutors and event coordinators shall check and ensure that the venue where the class, work or event is being held and equipment are safe and appropriate for that class, work or activity.
- 2.2. Should the venue and/or equipment be unsafe the employee, tutor or event coordinator shall take action to remedy the condition before class, work or activity proceeds.
- 2.3. The employee, tutor or event coordinator has the authority not to proceed with the class or activity if it is considered unsafe to do so.

3. Incident Reporting and Safety Feedback

- 3.1. In the event of an incident/accident or observed unsafe workplace or practices, employees, tutors and volunteers are expected to report the incident and/or condition to relevant management personnel as soon as practicable and within 24 hours of the incident/accident happening. In the case of an employee or volunteer this will be the person's immediate supervisor. In the case of tutors this will be the Course and Tutors Coordinator.
- 3.2. All incident/accidents shall also be reported in writing using the U3A Accident/Incident Report Form. The form should be completed in full and submitted to the Secretary, Management Committee.
- 3.3. Employees, tutors and volunteers are encouraged to offer suggestions to improve safe work practices and safe work environments. Feedback and suggestions should be submitted to the person's supervisor or Course and Tutors Coordinator.
- 3.4. The Management Committee shall maintain a standing agenda topic, WH&S, receive incident/accident reports and safety and workplace improvement suggestions. The Management Committee shall address all reports and suggestions and Minute remedial actions taken.

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3.5. For grievances the procedure outlined in the Code of Conduct and Grievance Policy should be followed.

4. Emergency and First Aid

- 4.1. Employee supervisors, tutors and event coordinators shall ensure that employees and members are familiar with the emergency procedures relevant to the facility or venue of the work, class and/or event they are in. This will require a reminder to employees and members from time to time and shall at least take place whenever the class or event is in a new venue or facility.
- 4.2. Employee supervisors, tutors and event coordinators should know where the nearest first aid cabinet and/or facilities are located and how to access materials.
- 4.3. Members should be encouraged to carry with them medical information, including emergency contact numbers, to be accessed in the event of any emergency.
- 4.4. In the event of an emergency the employee's supervisor, tutor or event coordinator shall assume responsibility and take appropriate action in accordance with the seriousness of the emergency.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

PCUB A person conducting a business or undertaking (PCUB) is the main duty holder under the Workplace Health and Safety Act. They are usually the employer and may be a partnership, company, unincorporated body or association, a sub trader, a government department or statutory authority.

A volunteer organisation is a PCBU if it employs one or more paid workers. PCUB (U3A Sunshine Coast) will be referred to as the organisation or U3A in this document.

WH&S laws The Work Health and Safety Laws applicable to U3A Sunshine Coast include the:

- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011
- Codes of Practice

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- Any amendments to the above Acts and Regulations

Reasonable Care: This term describes the standard of care that workers, including volunteers, must meet. It means doing what a reasonable person would do in the circumstances having regard to things like:

- your knowledge
- your role
- your skills and resources available to you
- your qualifications
- the information you have, and
- the consequences to your health and safety and that of others of a failure to act in the circumstances

Volunteer: A person working without payment or reward

Worker: A worker is a person who carries out work for a PCUB in any capacity, including as a volunteer

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