

## Code of Conduct Oban u3a

All u3a members are expected to conduct themselves in line with the u3a Movement's Guiding Principles and agree under the Oban u3a constitution to abide by any membership conditions properly imposed by the u3a Committee. Specifically:

- Members are expected to know, follow and promote the principles of the u3a movement at every opportunity
- Members must always act in the best interests of Oban u3a and the u3a movement, uphold its reputation and never do anything which could bring their own, another u3a or the u3a movement into disrepute or expose it to undue risk
- Members are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect at all times
- Members are expected to use Oban u3a's resources responsibly and only to further its stated charitable objectives/purposes
- Members are expected to reflect the current organisational policy of Oban u3a, regardless of whether it conflicts with their personal views
- Members are expected to abide by Oban u3a's procedures and practices

## Principles of the u3a

The u3a movement is non-religious and non-political. Each u3a is independent, and largely makes its own rules within these national principles. Membership of a u3a is open to all in their third age, which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full time employment has ceased. Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a u3a. Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join a u3a can do so.

## The Self-help Learning Principle

Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire; by the members, for the members. No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards. There is no distinction between the learners and the convenors; they are all u3a members.

## The Mutual Aid Principle

Each u3a is a mutual aid organisation, operationally independent but a member of The Third Age Trust, which requires adherence to the guiding principles of the u3a movement. No payments are made to members for services rendered to any u3a. Each u3a is self-funded with membership subscriptions and costs are kept as low as possible. Outside financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the u3a movement.

## Interest Groups

Within the u3a principles and any Oban u3a guidance, convenors and group members are largely free to run their groups as they wish. As a general principle, it is good to involve as many members as possible in the running of the group.

All members of a group should agree to respect the principles of the u3a and agree to the purposes of the interest group they attend. Members should respect the wishes and expectations of the whole group and discuss, establish and abide by basic ground rules for group activity.

Membership of a group is restricted to people holding a current Oban u3a subscription. Where an agreement with another u3a has been reached, members from that u3a may attend specific groups. Individuals may be admitted if a person's membership has not been renewed within a 3-month 'grace period' during which the person is still covered by the u3a's insurance.

The needs of every member of a group should be met as far as is reasonably possible, with reference to the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#) and the members' health and capability. Any problems, issues, disagreements or unacceptable behaviour should be discussed with the Groups Convenor if it cannot be resolved within the group. In the event that a complaint from a member or members about an issue, disagreement or unacceptable behaviour cannot be resolved at that level it should be raised under the [Complaints Policy and Processes](#).

## Breaches of the Code of Conduct

Any breach or suspected breach of this code of conduct by a member or trustee shall be dealt with under the [Complaints Policy and Processes](#). This procedure is intended to ensure any issues are dealt with promptly, fairly and consistently. All parties are encouraged to take a problem-solving approach to achieve resolution.

March 2024

To be reviewed annually by Oban u3a committee.

*This revised version is based on the previous Code of Conduct for Members (approved by the Executive Committee on Sept 2020) and the National u3a guidance April 2023. It is compatible with the guidance in the [Handbook for Conveners](#).*

Reviewed:

June 2025