

Information Sheet for New Members

U3A SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS Inc.

WELCOME!

1. How we run ourselves:

The management of your U3A is entrusted to a Management Committee which is elected every February at the Annual General Meeting. This Committee has twelve members, each of whom has a special set of responsibilities. These are the people you should contact about any issues you may have with your U3A. Contact details are listed in Newsletters, so it is worth keeping the latest Newsletter.

Many members carry out tasks on behalf of the Management Committee. These people are very important in the running of a complex organisation and they often bring special skills to this. So, even if you are not a 'committee' person, there may be really important ways in which you can help your U3A to run and we urge you to consider this.

2. Courses and enrolments:

The principal purpose of U3A is to provide learning and teaching opportunities for members. With a few exceptions Courses are presented by members and you are encouraged to consider presenting a course yourself. Courses range from one-off events to classes which are held at regular intervals.

About a month before the start of each term you will be sent a newsletter which, as well as containing news, has details of the Courses for the coming Term. There will also be an Enrolment Form which you may use to request enrolment in courses. If, however, you have email we prefer you to enrol online.

3. Allocating you to courses:

Your enrolment preferences will be run through a computer program which allocates you to Courses according to your preferences, starting with your highest preference first and then moving to lower preferences so long as there are sufficient places available in Courses. When there are not enough places, the computer will randomise enrolment requests so as to give every member an equal chance of getting a place.

We cannot guarantee that there will be enough places in all Courses but we do guarantee that every member will get into at least one Course every term. After the computer processing, you will be advised by email (if you have an email address) or by mail whether you have been successful or unsuccessful with your enrolment requests.

You may be advised that you are on a Waiting List, in which case the computer program has given you priority in the event of a place becoming vacant in an over-enrolled course. Often, there will be vacancies in other courses after the enrolment program has been run and we will encourage members to contact Course Leaders to enquire about places still available after you have received your enrolment advices.

It is not necessary to enrol on the website but, because it saves a very great deal of cost and effort, we encourage you to do so using your member number and password to get access. The website has a facility whereby you can update your personal details and it provides you with up-to-date information about our U3A.

4. Paying for things:

Courses are free for members, but Course Leaders often ask their classes to make modest contributions toward materials, copying and / or refreshments. You will be advised in newsletters about these. These costs are paid to Course leaders, or Course Assistants, at the first class in each Course.

In a few cases, venue or hire costs may require us to levy up-front fees at the time of enrolment. When this happens, the fees must be paid to our U3A, by cheque or electronic funds transfer, before your enrolment request can be processed. Occasionally, you may need to join another organisation (such as Bowral District Art Society for art classes) or to buy a text book. All of these requirements will be advised in the Newsletters.

5. Attending Classes:

We request that you always wear your U3A Name Badge to all your courses as this helps both the Course Leaders and other members to make identification easier.

In fairness to Course Leaders who may put much effort into their Courses, and to other members whose enrolment may have missed out, please try to attend all classes once you have been accepted into a Course. Attendance sheets are kept, so you are asked to contact your Course Leader if you are unable to attend classes.

Money for refreshments, copying and the like (if any) will be collected at the first class, often by a person who has been asked to help as a Course Assistant (and who usually buys the tea and coffee) Course Leaders in larger Courses really welcome help of this kind and you are encouraged to offer your help with these things. Some of our venues require that chairs and tables are returned to a specified area at the end of the session, please help out with this as much as possible.

6. At the end of the year:

Your subscription covers membership for the current calendar year. Renewals for next year will open in December. As you must be 'paid-up' in order to enrol in courses you will be urged to renew before the end of the current year.

7. Contacting the Committee:

Contact details are listed in each issue of the *Wise Owl*. Committee Members including the Membership Officer may also be contacted by leaving messages on our telephone answering service (9990 6650), writing to P O Box 421 Bowral NSW 2576, or by sending an email to admin@sohiu3a.org.au

We hope you enjoy being a member of Southern Highlands U3A!