

P3A

PAPHOS THIRD AGE

Group Leaders' Handbook

P3A would not exist without Group Leaders prepared to give their time and commitment in return for a challenging and rewarding experience

This document is designed to help ease the way, as a guideline and a point of reference.

The Group Co-ordinator and Committee are here to help and support you at any time. We wish you every success with starting your new Group, or running an existing one.

1. STARTING A GROUP

Starting a new Group can be a very satisfying activity, but if it is to be a success, it needs a bit of thought and planning.

All Groups are different and evolve over time to suit both members and leader, but initial planning can really pay dividends. Decide what your new Group is going to do and how it will run. Some questions to ask yourself:

- Is it similar to a Group that already exists? If so, how will your Group be different?
- Will the Group Leader lead the meetings with contributions from members of the Group e.g. a discussion Group?
- Will your members lead and make presentations to the rest of the Group?
- Is it a Group where everyone will take part in a particular activity? For example, making something or playing a game;
- Will everyone in the Group share in the learning experience, such as studying a language?
- Will members need special skills, say speaking a language other than English or the ability to play a musical instrument or game to a certain standard?
- Will all your members be at the same level of knowledge or ability? Will some will be beginners and others experienced? If so, decide which level you are aiming at, or be prepared to run more than one Group for different levels of ability. There is nothing wrong with setting up a Group aimed at a particular level;
- Will members need their own special equipment? Is this readily available in Cyprus? Is it costly?
- Will you need projectors or microphones? The P3A has a good stock of equipment for you to borrow;
- How often do you plan to meet? Weekly, fortnightly or monthly? Will it meet on an irregular basis? During the day or in the evening?
- Will the Group meet for a limited duration, or will it be an ongoing Group?

- Where will you meet? In members' homes, in a restaurant or somewhere else? The Group Co-Ordinator can help you identify a suitable venue;
- How many people are you hoping to attract? Why do you think there are enough people who share your interest?

2. SETTING UP A GROUP

1. Naming your new Group

The name of your new Group is going to give potential members an idea what your Group is about and at what level. If your Group is say "Jive Dance", is this aimed at complete novices or experienced dancers.? Name it appropriately.

2. Meet with the Group Co-ordinator

The Group Co-Ordinator is there to help your new Group be a success and help you hone your ideas. The first step is to send a summary of your proposed Group to the Group Coordinator. Please include the Group title, how you intend to run the Group and a general outline of what you would like to achieve.

Think about the pointers in Section 1 and your answers to these points.

The Group Co-Ordinator will arrange to meet up with you and talk through your idea, and suggest any changes or refinements to your idea.

3. Spread the Word!

The Group Coordinator will organize an email to be sent to all P3A members and also pass this information to the Editor of Ad-Lib magazine for inclusion in the next edition. They will also arrange for an announcement to be made on the P3A Facebook page.

Think how you want to present your new Group to our members and what you want to say on your e-mail and Facebook post announcing your new Group. This your chance to sell your idea! Tell them what your Group is going to do, and why they will want to join it.

Don't forget word of mouth – tell your friends and acquaintances about your plans.

Once your Group has some members and is set to go ahead, a group page can be created on the P3A website, <http://paphos3rdage.org> . The website officer will be glad to set this up for you. (For contact details see the Committee page).

It's a good idea to look at what some other groups have chosen to show on their pages. Basic essentials are obviously the day, time, place and contact details for anyone interested, plus a short description of the Group's activity. But you can also have photos or other images, and whatever information you would like to advertise the Group

4. Inaugural meeting

Once you have advertised your Group, you will hopefully have a list of interested members. Why not hold an inaugural meeting, to agree the venue, time, date, duration and aims of the Group?

Find a suitable day for most people and be aware of possible clashes with other Groups. Does morning or afternoon make any difference to your activities? Don't forget though that other Groups meet at popular times like Monday or Tuesday mornings, so why not look at a time when fewer existing Groups meet? Agree how long each meeting will last, allowing time for a break if it is going to last more than say 90 minutes.

You won't be able to please all your members, but don't worry about that. Once they hear how great your Group is, they'll join your Group instead!

Think about the size and location of the premises you choose in relation to the Group and the proximity to most of the members you are hoping to attract. Private homes may be suitable for small numbers. Consider car parking facilities.

5. Costs

How much will it cost to be a member of your Group? Factor in the cost of the venue, whether you have to pay extra for refreshments, air con or heating, plus the cost of any materials you have to produce.

Don't forget that although you should not be out of pocket, P3A rules do prevent you from running a Group for personal profit, as a business venture or to promote a business venture.

6. Records

At Appendix 3 of this document is a Group leaders' participation list for completion at the first meeting. List the name, membership number, email and phone number of all participants. A copy should be sent to the Membership Secretary for checking with the membership database.

7. Size

Group sizes will vary but the general experience is that at least six people are needed to be viable. Discussion Groups tend to get out of hand or divisive if they have more than 12 participants. If necessary, set up a waiting list.

3. RUNNING A GROUP

Now comes the exciting bit, running your Group! Congratulations on setting up your new Group - or taking over responsibility for a current Group. You will find it both challenging and rewarding and we hope you enjoy the experience. If you need any support or advice please contact the Group Coordinator.

It's your Group and you run it as you wish, but here are some pointers, based upon P3A's 10 years of experience.

I. Suggested Ground Rules

Each Group is different, but some Groups may benefit from a few, simple ground rules, agreed by the members, especially w. You may want to agree:

- Start and finish on time
- Ensure everybody feels welcome
- Nothing anybody says or does is "wrong" or "stupid"
- Do not allow anybody to criticise or rebuke another member or a speaker. If you think they are wrong, tell them privately

Groups where members are exchanging views may need some extra ground rules

- Value everything that is said – agree to disagree
- Encourage everybody to contribute, acknowledging that some people are happier listening or watching
- Respect people's privacy and right to have a different view to you;
- Never report what somebody said on social media

II. Planning your Meetings

Welcome and introduce any new members to the Group. Outline the format of the meeting.

If you have asked for contributions from Group members make sure that all members are given an opportunity to present their contribution. People might be disappointed if they feel excluded. But others may be happy to take a 'back seat' and listen to or watch more gregarious members.

Variety in the format of sessions is stimulating but it may be wise to build new approaches on what is already familiar.

Consider members' needs if they are hard of hearing, partially sighted, or require assistance. Build up confidence within the Group and encourage a supportive environment.

III. How to Achieve Your Aims

This obviously depends upon the nature of your Group.

Remember what your Group intends to achieve. Is it to learn a new skill, learn about a new subject, have a discussion, or just to enjoy yourself in good company?

What level of expertise do you expect your members to have? Are you pitching the content or activities at the right level?

Check with your members whether you are doing what they expect. Look out for hints and non-verbal signals.

IV. Discussion Groups

If yours is a Group which encourages discussion of a topic, remember that you, the Group Leader, is the catalyst and is responsible for producing the right atmosphere in which Group members can express their views and opinions with confidence.

There are many ways of organising Group discussions. Each Group leader will have a personal way of working and each Group will probably evolve a style that suits members best. Whether the discussion is held in a formal or informal basis, best practice suggests that the Leader should:

- ✓ Try to keep the discussion to the point unless an interesting related issue is being aired;
- ✓ Even if a discussion has digressed, if the members as a whole are enjoying the new topic, allow it to run before gently bringing the discussion back on track;
- ✓ Ensure that all members have the opportunity to speak, but don't force a member if they are reluctant;
- ✓ Ensure that the whole Group pays attention. Try to prevent any side conversations – this is a discourtesy to other people
- ✓ Ensure all opinions are valued and respected, even if people differ in their views.
- ✓ Be aware that although some members may have more experience than others in the activity / subject. Everybody should be free to participate
- ✓ End on a high note and sum up the outcome of the discussion. If appropriate, ask each member what they have learned from the session.

V. Disputes

Unfortunately, there will occasionally be clashes within a Group. As Group Leader, it is for you to try to defuse any disputes between the members and if necessary, privately make the individual aware and inform him or her of the matters of concern and give the member the opportunity to respond.

Consider whether it may be possible to tactfully suggest that the member may be not suited to the Group – for example, that their experience, knowledge or level of ability is different to the rest of the Group.

If the unacceptable behaviour continues and the problem persists, the Group Leader has the right, as a last resort, to exclude the member. The Committee must be informed of the decision via the Group Coordinator, and the excluded member has the right to appeal to the Committee.

In the event of theft or other criminal offence there is an automatic right to exclude the offender and report the offence. Please contact the Group Coordinator immediately who will inform the Committee.

4. INTRODUCING AN EXISTING GROUP

The P3A always welcomes the opportunity to bring on board existing Groups that are aligned with the P3A's broad objectives. Given the onerous rules imposed by Cypriot legislation, some external Groups may wish to benefit from the advantages joining P3A brings, but we must ask potential third party Groups to observe the following:

- ✓ The majority of members of the Group must agree to become a P3A Group;
- ✓ All members must agree to become full members of the P3A and comply with our Articles of Association;
- ✓ The Group must either add the "P3A" name to their Group, or acknowledge in all communication and advertising that they are a part of the P3A;
- ✓ If the Group's activities are similar to those of a subsisting P3A Group e.g. walking, cookery or a particular pastime, they must discuss with the relevant Group Leader(s) whether the two Groups could usefully merge, or how they will mutually support and co-operate with each other. The Group Co-ordinator must be satisfied on this point;
- ✓ We will welcome members participating fully in the broad range of P3A activities.

5. FINANCE

All P3A Groups should be self-supporting in their regular activities, such as paying for venues, speakers, materials, etc. If a Group finds itself in financial difficulties, the P3A Treasurer will be happy to offer guidance.

The Committee will however offer loans or grants for one off expenditure such as the purchase of equipment, exhibitions, etc. Groups should in the first instance contact the Treasurer or the Groups' Co-ordinator.

Best practice is that Groups should keep a simple account of their income and expenditure, unless the Group does not retain a float or working balance. If a Group finds itself with a surplus, it should either be returned to the Group by say a free meeting, or passed to the Treasurer.

Please note that the following are not permitted:

I. Running a Group for personal gain

Group Leaders and other members of the Group are entitled to be reimbursed by the Group for reasonable out of pocket expenses, such as materials. The reimbursement of mileage or travel expenses is discouraged.

To comply with Cypriot law, Group Leaders may **not** profit from or retain for their personal use any surplus funds. This does not apply if they are providing professional or other services on an arm's length customer / supplier basis, in the normal course of business, to or via the P3A committee.

II. Giving money to charity

P3A and its component Groups are specifically prohibited by Cypriot law from giving money to charity.

If a Group wish to give money to charity, excluding funds accumulated by the Group, they must do so on an individual, personal basis from their own, personal funds, and dissociated from the P3A.

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In order to support our compliance with Cypriot law, all Groups, except those for which participation involves no payment to the Group – for example a Walking or Dining Group - must keep a basic record of income, expenditure and cash held on behalf of the Group.

If a Group, including a newly formed Group, has any financial transactions, then once a quarter, the Group Leader should send to the Treasurer a report of the funds held by the Group, in the format:

This email is in relation to the *Group Name* Group. Our financial position at *Quarter Ended* was as follows:

Opening balance in hand on <i>Previous Quarter</i>	€
Add: Total receipts for the quarter just ended	€
Less: total expenses for the quarter just ended	€
Balance in hand at quarter end	€

If a Group has no financial transactions, then at the end of the first reporting Quarter after the Group was formed, a one off report stating this must be sent to the Treasurer in the format:

This email is in relation to the *Group Name* Group. As at *Quarter Ended*, we had no cash as, under normal circumstances, we do not have any financial transactions.

No further report is required, unless the position changes, when quarterly reports as above must be made.

6. CONTINUITY

Every year, P3A loses established Groups because the Group Leader is unable or unwilling to continue. Although the Groups Co-ordinator will help retiring Group Leaders find a replacement, it will be helpful if Groups plan how to continue.

You may want to ask somebody to be a Joint or Assistant Leader. How you divide responsibilities is up to you, but some Group Leaders find it useful to have somebody to discuss the Group with, and to lead a meeting if the Group Leader has another commitment, is unwell or is on holiday.

7. HEALTH & SAFETY

Participation in all P3A activities is solely at the members' risk, and without any liability on the part of the P3A, its officers, Group Leaders or Members, however caused. **Everybody** participating in a P3A activity must act responsibly towards their own and others' safety and welfare.

If an accident occurs during a meeting or activity, please complete an accident report form and have it signed by the relevant parties. A copy of the form is in Appendix 2 of this document. Upon completion, please keep a copy and send the original to the Group Coordinator. It is imperative that no admission of liability is made.

Where an activity is undertaken which requires physical effort (e.g. sport) or takes place in the open air, or takes place outside a house or a professional establishment such as a hotel or restaurant, participants, including the Group Leader, **must** complete a disclaimer, a copy of which can be found in Appendix 1 of this document, before they participate in a Group activity for the first time. The original disclaimer must be sent to the Membership Secretary. If the member declines to sign the disclaimer, they **must** be excluded from the activity.

8. GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Although membership of Groups is intended for P3A members, we welcome non-members joining our Groups. We suggest that they be allowed to participate in the first meeting at the same cost as P3A members, but thereafter, if they do not join the P3A, best practice is to charge non-members an additional meeting fee of €2, to encourage them to join P3A.

Please keep a record of members who belong to your Group, including their P3A membership number. A copy of your membership / circulation list should be sent to the Membership Secretary at least once a year to confirm that your members have paid their subscription.

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If a non P3A member of your Group wishes to join, either ask them to complete a membership application together with their €10 first year membership fee, or direct them to the website <http://paphos3rdage.org/join-us> to download and print the application form. This should then be completed and sent to the Membership Secretary:

1. Leave the form and €10 in a sealed envelope in one of the four P3A mailboxes. These are located:

- a. Inside ANGELIKA RESTAURANT, Chlorakas
- b. Outside the lecture room at the DROUSHIA HEIGHTS HOTEL
- c. Inside the OLIVE TREE TAVERNA, Polemi.
- d. Mailbox 275 at the KAMARES CLUB

2. Send the form and €10 by post to the following address:

Paphos Third Age
Mailbox 275
PO Box 60156
Kamares Club
8101 Paphos

When received, the Membership Secretary will then send the new member an email welcoming them to the P3A and advising them of their new membership number.

The membership year now runs from 1 September to 31 August. In line with previous years, any new member joining between 1 May and 31st August will not be required to pay a further subscription in September of that year.

If any Group Leader collects a form and joining fee, they should contact the Membership Secretary to let him know where the form and money has been deposited. If a Group Leader is unable to use one of the 4 post boxes, the Membership Secretary will arrange with you to collect the completed application form and joining fee whenever it is mutually convenient.

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When the annual subscriptions renewals are due, the Membership Secretary will contact you and request that you collect subscriptions on their behalf from your members at the relevant meetings. You can request new membership card labels for the year which you can then distribute to the members who have paid you personally.

The collected annual subscriptions, with a list of those who have paid, should then be passed to the Membership Secretary.

Please remember that most members attend more than one Group and may have paid their subscription to another Group Leader.

As a Group Leader, running a Group on 1 September, you will not be required to pay an annual renewal fee for yourself. You can also nominate one assistant to be exempt paying the renewal fee.

Waiting lists

If a Group is full, please notify the Group Coordinator, who will put this information on to the P3A website. If you have any enquiries from prospective members, please keep a record of their details and when a vacancy occurs, invite them to join the Group.

Please consider holding extra meetings to accommodate more Group members or suggest that members of your current Group to set up a second Group, perhaps in another location.

First aid

Group Leaders should identify any qualified first aiders in their Group. This is essential for meetings involving outdoor excursions. Funds are available for the purchase of first aid kits or for professional First Aid training.

Equipment

Unless there is prior agreement by the Committee, equipment owned by P3A is only available for use by the Group Leaders and only in connection with P3A activities. Please advise the Group Coordinator immediately if any equipment that you use is damaged or missing.

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Communications

Communication in P3A is normally by email. When you send an email to your Group you must use the Bcc option to protect P3A members' confidentiality. If a member does not have access to email, please consider how that member can be communicated with.

<http://paphos3rdage.org/>

P3A

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Appendix 1

Disclaimer

I agree that I am personally responsible for the state of my own health and fitness and I understand that outdoor activities can be physically taxing. Also, I understand and accept that some of the activities may take place in areas that are inaccessible to vehicles should rescue or recovery of an ill or injured person be required.

I understand that if I have a known medical condition or allergy, or take regular medication, then I am responsible for carrying information about this with me at each outdoor activity. This information would only be divulged to medical personnel in the case of an emergency.

When taking part in organised outdoor excursions, I agree it is my responsibility to ensure I wear suitable clothing and footwear and sufficient liquids to drink.

Participation in any P3A activity is undertaken entirely at my own risk and I acknowledge that neither the P3A nor the Group Leader can be held responsible for any injuries or mishaps arising.

Signed:

Print Name:

Mobile No:

Home No:

In an Emergency Telephone:

..... (name + number)

Appendix 2

Accident Report Form

To be sent immediately to the Groups' Co-Ordinator

Name of injured party/address/telephone no:/email	
Name/address/telephone no:/email of others involved:	
Date/time of accident:	Location:
Nature of accident/circumstances:	
Injury details/property damage:	
Name/address/telephone no:/email of person causing injury/damage:	
Names/addresses/telephone no:/email of witnesses:	
Action taken:	
Details of any specialised assistance required at the time:	
Details of any medical advice sought afterwards:	
Group Leader name & Contact Details:	
Signed:	Injured Party
Signed.....	Group Leader
Dated:	

Appendix 3 Participation List

Group Name:

Name	Membership No.*	E-Mail	Mobile

** If known, please*

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<i>Version</i>	<i>Date Issued</i>	<i>Summary</i>
2021/01	02/10/21	Quarterly reporting added to Section 5 Numbering of sub paragraphs amended to Roman numerals