u3a

Brand Guidelines

Issue 3.0 December 2025







u3a is one of the largest membership organisations in the UK. Our members come together to learn for fun. Through u3a, members make friends and find community. To reflect this, our brand is joyful, bright and clean.



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Logotype

Our logo is clean and should be used in its simplest form, as a single colour. The logo strikes the right balance between feeling serious and grown up and having a friendly, approachable touch.

The u3a logo should only appear in a single colour – either dark blue on a white background, or white on a dark or light blue background.

There is also a black version of the logo to be used for black and white printing, for example on official documents.

The u3a logo should only be used as an image file and not recreated in text.

Pre-designed files of the logo, with the correct spacing, can be downloaded from the u3a Brand Shop - u3a-shop.co.uk

Hero logo



Logotype

In addition to our classic logo, we have two versions with our strapline ‘learn, laugh, live’.

The strapline version is available in a stacked format and in a horizontal format.

Variations





Logotype

When using the u3a logo, ensure that it is placed with white space around it. Ideally the white space should be an exclusion zone that matches the circles of the logo as shown to the right.

Our logo should not be used smaller than 20mm in width. When using our logo with the strapline, the 'learn, laugh, live' text should be no smaller than 12pt.

You can download our logo from the u3a Brand Shop - u3a-shop.co.uk

Spacing and size











Local versions of the u3a logo can be created. The u3a name can be placed to the right of or below the u3a logo. Longer names should appear across two lines.

No additional words should be added to this logo. The local u3a name should not be combined with our strapline ‘learn, laugh, live’.

The name must appear in DM Sans Bold.

This logo can be created by u3as on the u3a Brand Shop u3a-shop.co.uk

Horizontal version





Stacked version





Examples of local u3a logos.

u3a
Abergavenny

u3a
Donaghadee
and Ards Peninsula

u3a
Ayr

u3a
Bulkington, Nuneaton
and Bedworth

u3a Croydon

u3a Garforth, Kippax
and District

u3a Ross-on-Wye
and District

u3a
Hammersmith
and Fulham

u3a
Hull

u3a
Easter Ross
and Sutherland

u3a
Coventry

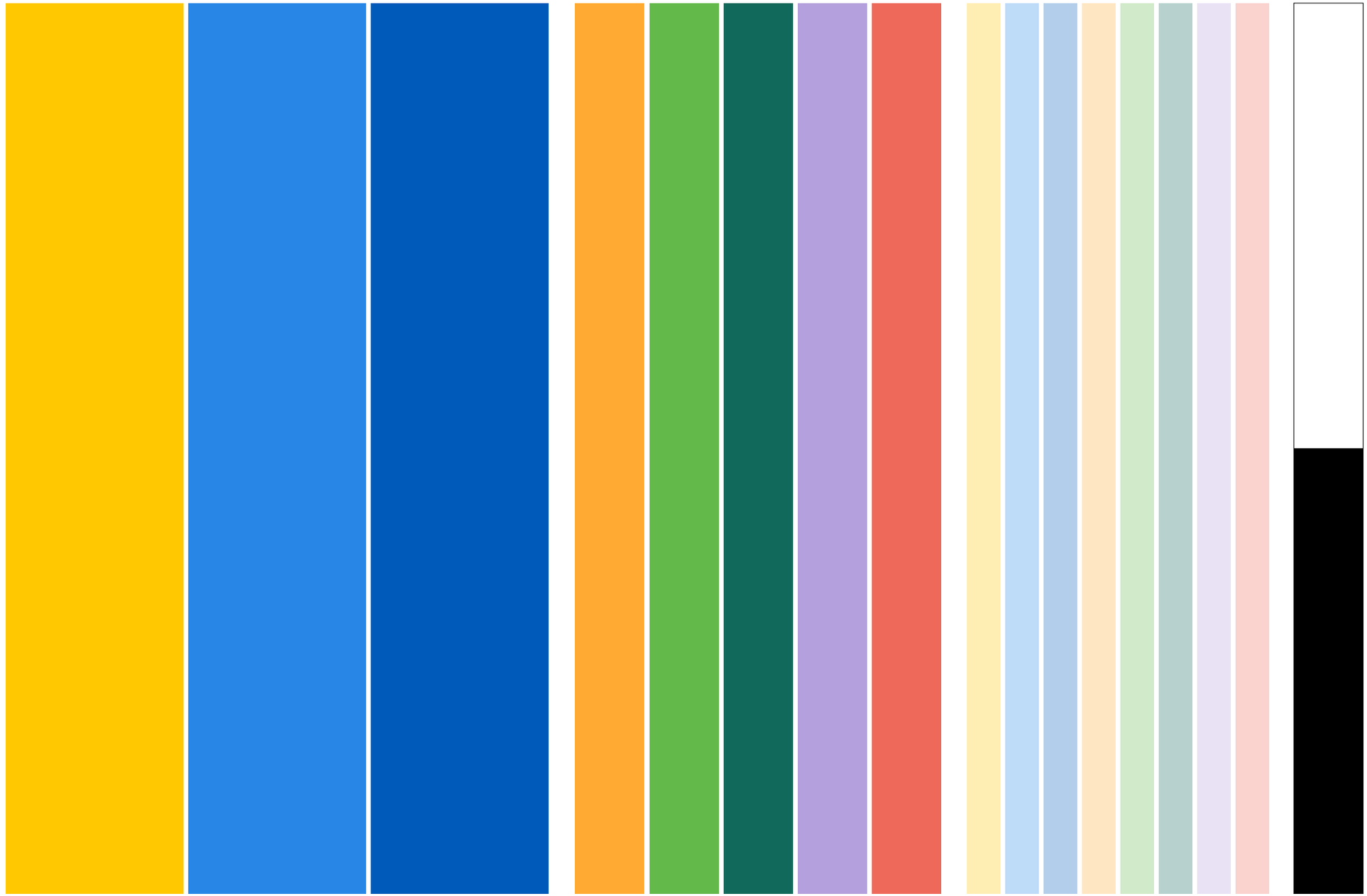
This page is an overview of the colours in our u3a colour palette. Use it as a visual guide for the range and proportion of colours to include when creating visual collateral.

Primary

Secondary

Tertiary

B&W



Blue and yellow are the core u3a colours. These colours have been chosen as they are fresh, fun and visually exciting.

These colours are key to the u3a visual identity. Yellow is primarily an accent colour, adding vitality to u3a designs without becoming overpowering.



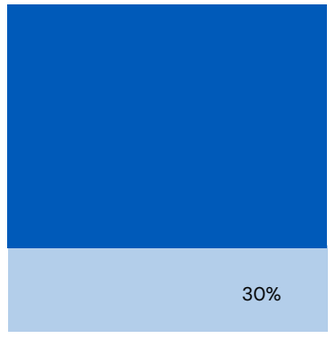
The colour breakdowns should always be used throughout the u3a brand.

Our secondary colours should only be used sparingly.

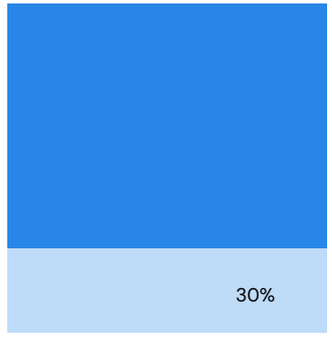
Keep these design principles in mind when creating publicity materials:

- Make use of white space and avoid large areas of black.
- Be sensitive when using the Dark Blue, so it doesn't become overpowering.
- Only use the secondary colours as highlights, page dividers or as part of a set.
- The block at the bottom of each colour shows our tertiary colours which can be used for backgrounds to add depth to designs.
- Avoid an excessive amount of different secondary and tertiary colours in one design.

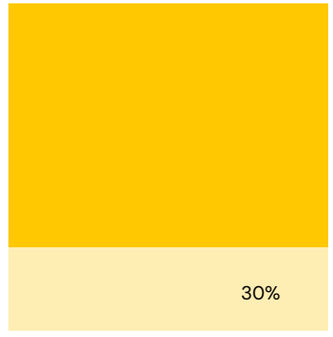
Primary



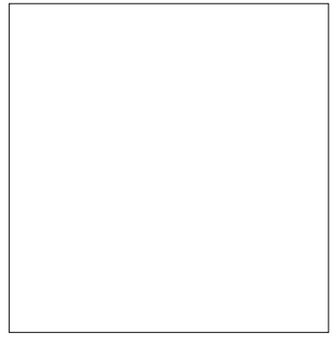
u3a Dark Blue
RGB r0 g90 b185
CMYK c92 m62 y0 k0
Pantone 2728 C
Web HEX #005ab8
RAL 5005



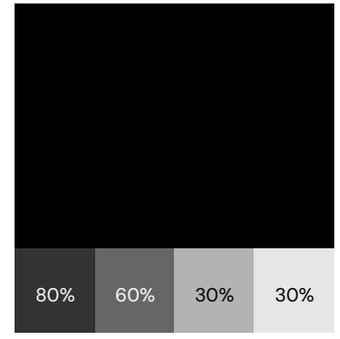
u3a Light Blue
RGB r40 g135 b230
CMYK c78 m36 y0 k0
Pantone 285 C
Web HEX #2886e6
RAL 5015



u3a Yellow
RGB r255 g200 b0
CMYK c0 m22 y92 k0
Pantone Yellow 012 C
Web HEX #ffc700
RAL 1021

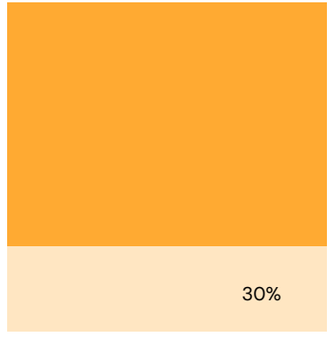


White
RGB r255 g255 b255
CMYK c0 m0 y0 k0
Pantone n/a
Web HEX #ffffff
RAL 903

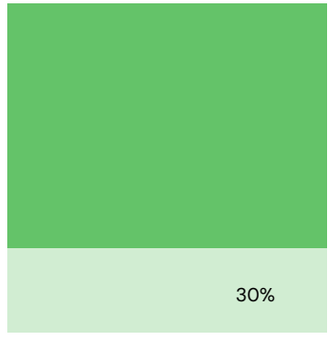


Black
RGB r0 g0 b0
CMYK c0 m0 y0 k100
Pantone Process Black C
Web HEX #000000
RAL 911

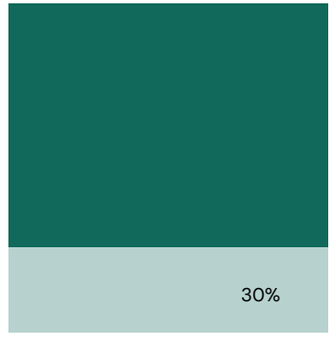
Secondary



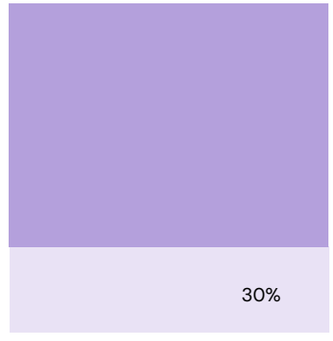
u3a Orange
RGB r255 g170 b50
CMYK c0 m40 y84 k0
Pantone 1365 C
Web HEX #ffaa31
RAL 1003



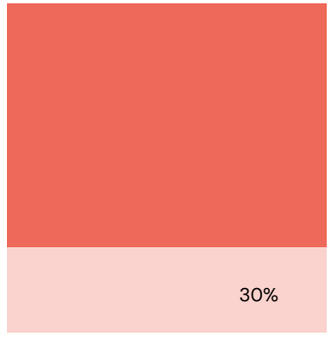
u3a Light Green
RGB r100 g195 b105
CMYK c62 m0 y73 k0
Pantone 7738 C
Web HEX #63c369
RAL 6018



u3a Forest Green
RGB r16 g105 b90
CMYK c86 m32 y64 k25
Pantone 568 C
Web HEX #10695a
RAL 6036



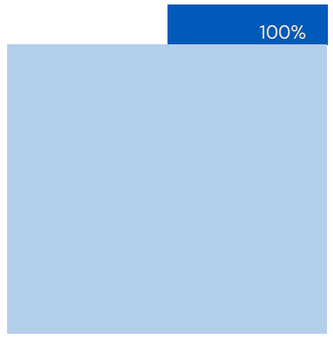
u3a Purple
RGB r180 g160 b220
CMYK c35 m40 y0 k0
Pantone 264 C
Web HEX #b49fdc
RAL 4005



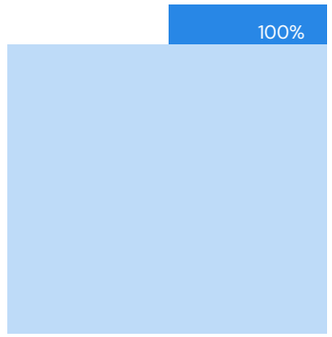
u3a Red
RGB r238 g105 b90
CMYK c0 m70 y60 k0
Pantone 7416 C
Web HEX #ee695a
RAL 3018

Our tertiary colours have been developed for use as backgrounds to add depth to designs. Always use black text on these background colours to ensure readability.

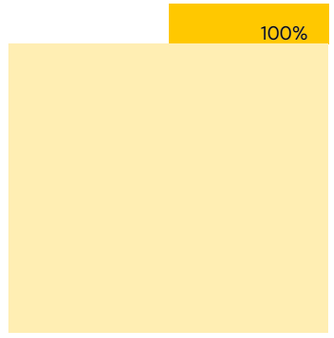
Tertiary



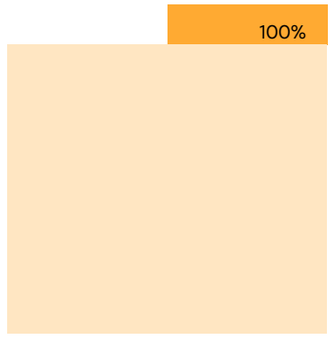
u3a Pastel Dark Blue
RGB r179 g206 b234
CMYK c28 m11 y1 k0
Pantone 277 C
Web HEX #b3ceea



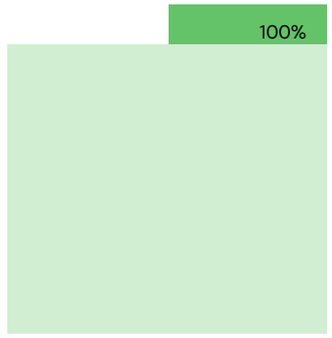
u3a Pastel Light Blue
RGB r190 g219 b248
CMYK c23 m6 y0 k0
Pantone 2707 C
Web HEX #bedbf8



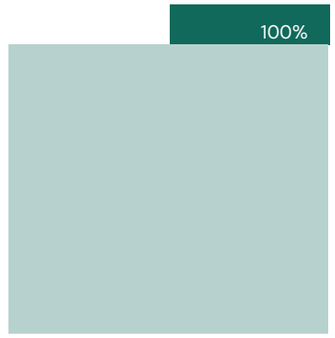
u3a Pastel Yellow
RGB r255 g238 b179
CMYK c1 m4 y35 k0
Pantone Yellow 7401 C
Web HEX #ffeeb3



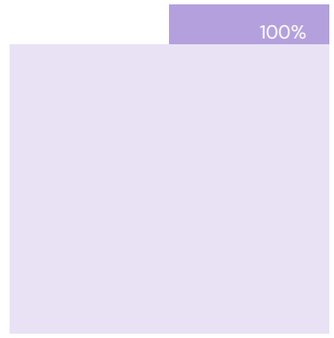
u3a Pastel Orange
RGB r255 g230 b194
CMYK c0 m10 y25 k0
Pantone 7506 C
Web HEX #ffe6c2



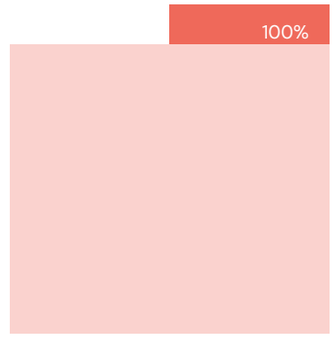
u3a Pastel Green
RGB r209 g237 b210
CMYK c18 m0 y21 k0
Pantone 7485 C
Web HEX #d1edd2



u3a Pastel Forest Green
RGB r182 g210 b206
CMYK c28 m7 y18 k0
Pantone 621 C
Web HEX #b7d2ce



u3a Pastel Purple
RGB r233 g226 b245
CMYK c7 m10 y0 k0
Pantone 7443 C
Web HEX #e9e2f5



u3a Pastel Red
RGB r250 g210 b206
CMYK c1 m20 y12 k0
Pantone 698 C
Web HEX #fad2ce

Ensure that text is legible by using contrasting colours. Contrast is best achieved with a light colour on a dark background, or a dark colour on a light one.

Avoid using yellow font, instead use yellow as an accent colour in shapes or lines. This ensures that text meets accessiblility guidelines.

Dark Blue on White

Black on White

Avoid

Yellow on White

White on Dark Blue

Avoid

Black on Dark Blue

Light Blue on Dark Blue

Yellow on Dark Blue

White on Light Blue

Black on Light Blue

Avoid

Yellow on Light Blue

Dark Blue on Light Blue

Black on Yellow

Avoid

White on Yellow

Light Blue on Yellow

Dark Blue on Yellow

DM Sans is the official u3a font. It's clean, modern and free to download from the internet or the u3a Brand Shop - u3a-shop.co.uk

DM Sans Regular is used for all body text and titles. Bold can be used to highlight key information within text.

We use 3 weights
Bold + Italic
Medium + Italic
Regular + *Italic*

The characters used to create the u3a logo are not part of the standard DM Sans font. This is why you see the difference between u3a (in written text) and u3ɑ (our logo)

When typing u3a it should appear as lower case. Upper case should only be used for official letters to your bank or if U3A is your official registered name.

For our Tone of Voice, see page 22

DM Sans

AaBbCcDdEeFf
GgHhIiJjKkLlMm
NnOoPpQqRrSsTt
UuVvWwXxYyZz
0123456789
#!@£$€%&*():;?•

Font weights

Bold
Medium
Regular
+
Italics

These are the recommended font sizes to use. Consider the font size that will be most appropriate for your audience.

Only use italics to distinguish certain words from others within body copy. For example, italics can be useful when referencing a publication e.g *u3a matters*. Italics should be used as little as possible.

Minimum body copy
10pt (leading 12pt)

Whatever you are passionate about, there's space to explore it at u3a.

There are more than 1,000 u3as across the UK where, at low cost, you can continue to learn new things, share your skills and have fun.

Whether you want to explore Plato, painting or pilates, once you join your local u3a, you can get involved in existing groups or start your own.

Suggested body copy where possible
14pt (leading 16pt)

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Large-print body copy
16pt (leading 18pt)

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There are more than 1,000 u3as across the UK where, at low cost, you can continue to learn new things, share your skills and have fun.

Minimum text size for footer information, page numbers and image credits 7pt (leading 8pt)

© 2025 u3a
Registered Charity 288007, Limited Company 1759471
Registered address: u3a Office The Third Age Trust, 156 Blackfriars Road, London, SE1 8EN

Photography
Image by: u3a member name

Large-poster copy
22pt (leading 24pt)

Whatever you are passionate about, there's space to explore it at u3a.

The examples shown here demonstrate how to use our DM Sans family of fonts.

For main headers on plain backgrounds we recommend using DM Sans Regular.

When image backgrounds are busier, DM Sans Bold should be used for better contrast.

For body copy use DM Sans Regular.



DM Sans Bold is better when backgrounds are lighter or busier as shown in the above image.

Font sizes used for our A4 poster

A4 poster Headline copy
DM Sans Regular
86pt (leading 76pt)

A4 poster Body copy
DM Sans Regular/Bold
22pt (leading 24pt)

A4 poster Website URL
DM Sans Regular
30pt



Our people are the most important asset to the u3a movement. The imagery we use should feel joyful, active, and make you want to be part of something great.



In the moment

Photography is all about capturing a moment in time. Our imagery shows connection and activity.

Our imagery showcases the joy of being a u3a member. Photos show members having fun and enjoying life.

Photographs should be authentic and candid, showcasing real u3a members and capturing genuine moments of connection and activity. Aim for genuine interactions and avoid shots that feel staged for the camera.

Consent must be obtained for any recognisable individuals in images you plan to share on websites and social media or in print. Photography consent forms can be downloaded from the u3a Brand Shop - u3a-shop.co.uk.

We provide a library of images on the u3a Brand Shop that u3as can use. These are available to two nominated members for each u3a. Members can be nominated as 'Brand Contacts' via the u3a Contact Details Portal











Shapes

Our brand shapes have been constructed from the negative space within the u3a logo.

The shapes help bring a unique quality to our layouts, adding pace and energy. They can also be used to house u3a photography.

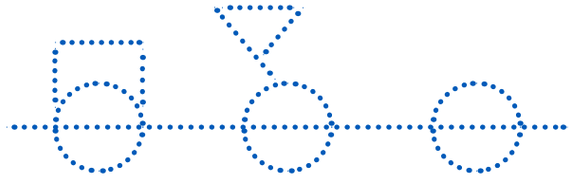
Logotype

u3a

Negative space



Construction



Shapes



Our shapes can be bold and striking to help our layouts feel fun and modern and to capture peoples attention

Placement of photographs should be considered and cropped to put u3a members at the centre.

Avoid cropping heads or using too many shapes in one go as this can make our layouts look busy and unconsidered.



Learn with others

Laugh with friends



Live for the moment



u3a tone of voice is conversational and friendly. When writing content, we keep members at the centre of the story. Our messaging showcases one movement, and the learning and fun members enjoy.

Having a clear voice is crucial for consistency of messaging and the development of our brand identity. It gives us a unique personality that is credible and trustworthy.

The way we talk is just as important as what we say, whether in person, in print or online. It conveys our personality as a movement and helps us speak in a single, powerful and distinctive voice.

When we all say the same things, and say them regularly, they will stick.
People will remember what we say and associate those words and ideas with u3a.

By having a consistent message we will reinforce the u3a brand, our mission and our values. We can make people think of u3a when they think of positive ageing - people having fun in later life, older adults being physically active and mentally alert, and the wonderful communities created by u3a members learning together.

To describe the u3a movement use the unique value proposition. Words from the value proposition appear prominently on our website home page and are referenced in our marketing campaigns.

Connect with others through the things you love at u3a. Our members, who have stepped away from full time work, learn together, make friends and have fun.

Messaging: Elevator pitch

To recruit people locally use the elevator pitch, a short memorable description of u3a benefits.

If you've stepped away from full time work, join your local u3a and connect with others through the things you love. Whether that's science, sport or something else, when you join an interest group at your local u3a you can learn together, make friends and have fun.

learn, laugh, live is our strapline. It differs from the value proposition as it does not make it clear what is being offered and to whom.

The strapline can be expanded to include other words to promote u3a and the u3a movement, for example:

"Join your local u3a to learn with others, laugh with friends and live for the moment."

Other words that we use to describe u3a and being part of the u3a movement:

community, connection, fun,
joy, joyful, friendship
learning together, learn from each other, sharing skills
interest groups, engaging learning activities
local, low cost, life-enhancing

Retirement messaging is useful when targeting content to a retired, semi-retired or recently retired audience.
This messaging enables us work with partner organisations who support people who are approaching retirement.

Examples that we use in headlines:

'Do something new in retirement with u3a'

Examples that we use in body text:

'Our members come together to learn for fun in retirement'

'Our members meet together in retirement to learn new things, share their skills and have fun'

Examples that we use as a call to action:

'Live your best life in retirement - join u3a'

Used at the end of a Press Release, a boilerplate briefly answers questions such as
What industry are you in?
What do you do?
Who do you work with?
When was your organisation founded?

When all u3as and the Trust use the same boilerplate it helps gain recognition as a UK wide movement.

Press release templates can be found on the u3a Brand Shop - u3a-shop.co.uk

u3a is one of the largest membership organisations in the UK. For over 40 years we've been bringing people together to make friends, learn from each other and have fun.

With over 1,000 u3as spread across the UK, u3a creates communities for those who have stepped away from full time work. Whether it's science, sport or something else, members can join existing interest groups or start their own. For a modest annual fee, members join their local u3a giving them access to national and local activities.

- u3a was previously known as the 'University of the Third Age', but this has now changed, please ensure that it is mentioned as u3a in any publications or broadcasts.
- u3a should always be referred to in lowercase.
- To read more go to the u3a website at u3a.org.uk.

Q. How do we answer the question, “What does u3a stand for?”

A: Instead of referring to what the letters stand for, instead talk about what u3a is: a volunteer-led charitable organisation where members join together in later life and retirement to learn new things and have fun.

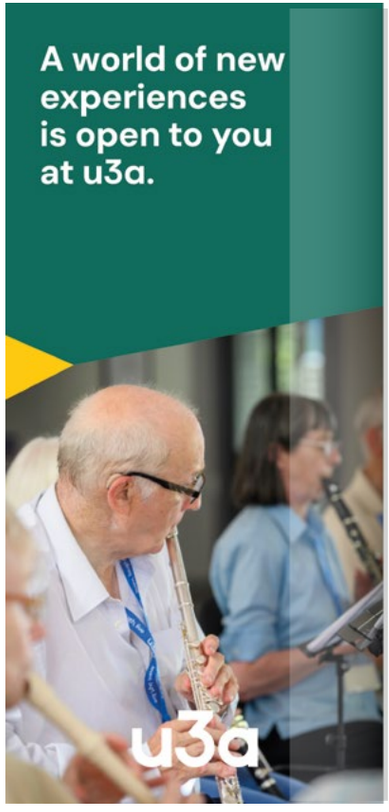
It is helpful to give examples of groups at your local u3a.
You can also reference words from our boilerplate (page 26) and elevator pitch (page 23).

Q. How do we talk about the age of our members?

A: We don't usually talk about the age of our members. Instead we say that u3a is open to everyone no longer working full time. We acknowledge that most of our members are people in later life, those who are retired and semi-retired, but say that there is no lower age limit.

The trifold leaflet is our hero product. The version below can be downloaded from the u3a Brand Shop.

Outer





Join us and find out more at
u3a.org.uk

u3a Office
info@u3a.org.uk / 020 8466 6139
@u3auk



Inner



u3a offers new experiences beyond the world of work.

Whether you want to explore Plato, painting or Pilates, once you join your local u3a, you can get involved in existing groups or start your own.

Each u3a has a range of interest groups, chosen and run by the members. We are a member-led movement - everyone at u3a volunteers their time and skills, making friends along the way.

Make the most of life - join u3a.



A4 Poster



A5 Leaflet



Contact

Logos and publicity materials are available on the u3a Brand Shop

For questions and help using these guidelines please email us at communications@u3a.org.uk

u3a Office
info@u3a.org.uk
020 8466 6139
156 Blackfriars Road,
London, SE1 8EN

u3a.org.uk