

Committee Etiquette Best Practice Guidelines

Being a member of the Cheltenham u3a Committee brings with it a formality that isn't a part of the groups. Committee meeting etiquette should reflect the desired culture and expectations of our u3a. By setting the "Etiquette Rules" for our committee it is hoped that our culture will be maintained and our expectations met.

Committee members are expected to always be prepared, punctual, and polite - this is the basis for any meeting.

Regardless of a formal or relaxed approach, committee meetings are structured to respect the time of those attending. Meetings are expected to start and end at the time given. Topics are often chosen in order of importance and side conversations discouraged so that discussion can be completed in a timely manner.

Etiquette guidelines for committee members include:

- Respect the Chair and the other members of the committee.
- Do not interrupt one another during the meeting. Be calm and patient.
- Remember that diversity of opinion is good for our committee!!
- Never talk about committee internal discussions with non-committee outside of the meeting.
- Helping newer members understand the necessity to assess the atmosphere and situation and act accordingly is important.
- Don't read email or text during the meetings. Mobile devices are not to be placed on the conference table or checked during meetings. (In fact, it is best to turn them off and put them away).
- Emails and texts relating to committee matters must be considered in terms of what is stated and how it will be interpreted by the e-mail recipients. They should only be sent to committee members. But, in case they are passed on to the members, consider how they will be perceived.
- E-mails should not contain members personal details. E-mails should be sent via BEACON or by using "blind copying" to ensure the anonymity of the addressees (unless permission has been given to use their e-mail addresses).
- Be aware of the impact of what you say in the committee meetings. Always consider the feelings of other members of the committee and remember that what is said is reflected in the committee meeting minutes which will be available to members of the u3a.
- If there are points of conflict between committee members outside of the meetings then consider discussing the issue via telephone or face-to-face (rather than e-mail or text).
- Keep questions and comments during a meeting focused and on point.
- **Everyone's input is important, so keep time in mind!**

Using committee meeting etiquette to efficiently and respectfully fulfil this obligation will set a tradition of right action and integrity for the committee.