



## Letter from the Chair

U3A Dunedin

25<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Greetings to you all

The Board met on the 25 March with a full agenda to work through. Following is a summary of the main topics discussed and the decisions made.

**Attendance policy for balloted courses:** There have been a couple of enquiries from members to the Course Convenor of the Series 1 balloted course about whether substitutions are possible for a balloted course. The current policy states that when a course has been subject to a ballot no casual attendees will be accepted and no substitutions can be allowed for non-attendees at one or more lectures.

The Board discussed this matter in depth and decided to retain the current policy, mindful that the policy needs to be clear and fair to all who applied.

The policy includes the clause that for full cancellations **before** a balloted course begins such vacancies are balloted (the members included in that ballot are those who missed out and who listed the course as their first choice). In such cases, a full refund of the course fee is given and the replacement attendee pays the full course fee.

If the course has **not** been subject to a ballot (and these are by far the majority), casual attendees are allowed if they meet any one of the following criteria:

- They are a member of U3A (New Zealand or International Membership). Casual charge \$15.00.
- If not U3A members, they must be accompanied by a current member. Casual charge applies.
- They are a professional colleague or family member of the presenter (no charge).
- They are presenters on the same course (no charge).

For the members who made enquiries, please accept this as a response on behalf of the Convenor.

We hope this clarifies the situation. For future reference we also plan to put a copy of the policy, amplifying some points, on the *FAQ* section of the website.

**First Aid Course:** Thank you to the Course Convenors of Series 1 for asking for interested volunteers to attend a First Aid course funded by U3A Dunedin (26 members volunteered). Graham Corbett will now contact the Red Cross to arrange the course, settle on a likely date and then be in touch with those who expressed an interest. A caveat - the Red Cross may impose a limit on course numbers.

**2025 Dates for Course Series:** The Programme Committee recommended the adoption of the proposed series dates and the Board has now approved them. They are:

Autumn: Tuesday, 25 March to Friday, 4 April

Winter: Tuesday, 20 May to Friday, 27 June

Spring: Tuesday, 12 August to Friday, 19 September

### **Parking for courses at the Leith Bowling Club:**

Concerns about the difficulty of finding a nearby park are not new, and they are understandable, particularly on cold, wet days. We discussed the good suggestion made by members that more efficient use could be made of the parking available on the Bowling Club side of the road if white lines were installed to indicate defined parking spaces. An enquiry has subsequently been made to the DCC to find out about the feasibility of this and whether the DCC would be responsible for the cost of the road marking.

**Finance:** It was good to hear that there has been a prompt response from people who attend an Interest Group and may have overlooked their current subscription. Thank you from the Board.

We were advised by the Treasurer that around 50 memberships may lapse at the end of March. It is always a regret to any organisation to see members leave. We very much hope that some may decide to reinstate their membership.

**New Members:** We have welcomed sixteen new members in the past month and look forward to their participation in U3A activities and courses.

### **Proposal to initiate the annual ‘University of Otago Dunedin U3A Lecture’:**

In the Memorandum of Understanding between U3A Dunedin and the University of Otago dated 1 February 2023 and signed by Professor Tony Ballantyne, Deputy Vice-Chancellor External Engagement, and Linda Kinniburgh, Chair of U3A Dunedin, there is a clause about an area of collaboration which relates to the joint establishment of an annual lecture by a senior University leader and/or researcher to be hosted by the University (with appropriate consultation with the U3A Board), exclusively for the membership of U3A.

The Board resolved to investigate and develop with the University the possibility of holding the Inaugural Lecture in the latter part of this year. An initial contact has now been made with the Office of External Engagement. We hope we will be able to bring you news of a positive outcome.

**Two Special Anniversaries this year:** 2024 marks the 30th anniversary of the founding of U3A Dunedin and the 20th anniversary of the first edition of *Forum*. The Board resolved to mark these two anniversaries and established a History sub-committee to work on a special edition of *Forum* to be published later this year. The sub-committee members are Linda Kinniburgh, Alan Jackson, Stuart Strachan, Doug Holborow and Bill Stanford with Barrie Peake as a co-opted member. The committee was given the power to co-opt more members.

Further information will follow once the plans on how to celebrate the 30th are finalised.

The meeting concluded with the Board expressing its appreciation to Andre Smith for his valued contributions to U3A as a Board member, Course Convenor and Interest Groups Convenor and its warm good wishes to both himself and his wife Suzanne for their return home to South Africa.

I hope you all enjoy a happy and peaceful Easter.

Best wishes,

Elizabeth Wilson  
*Chairperson 2024-2025*