

SHARED PRACTICE GUIDE 010 – Zoom Guide for Participants **Rev 02-1**

1. Introduction

Shared practice guides (SPG) are a vehicle to share knowledge between the U3As in the London area. They are created by collating knowledge and experiences from those U3As. They are only a guide – what worked for one U3A might not work for your U3A. If in your experience something is wrong or you disagree with something, please write in to allow an update to be created and published. It's hoped these Guides will grow over time with more shared experiences.

2. Scope

This particular SPG addresses the aspect of **how to join** an online meeting using the 'Zoom' software.

3. Background

During the Coronavirus crisis and UK government national guidance a number of normal U3A activities have had to be curtailed or cancelled. One way to try to keep offering activities to members is to move some groups online.

4. Introduction to Zoom

This guide is to help U3A members use Zoom for discussion groups without physical meetings. **It is suggested that you read this guide before taking part, being a participant, in a Zoom meeting.**

5. About Zoom

Zoom is a computer application that enables people who are in different locations to 'meet' together face to face. The meetings are set up and managed by the **Host**, who will usually be the Coordinator but can be another member of the group.

Members other than the **Host** are **Participants** who join the meeting by clicking on a link or using the Meeting ID in an email sent to them by the **Host**.

6. Setting Up and Using Zoom as a Participant

a) Joining a meeting

If you are always just going to be a Participant then you do not need to create a Zoom account nor do you need to download the Zoom App.

The **Host** will set up the meeting probably for the time the group usually meets and will send you an invitation email with the information you need to join the meeting

i) This first method does not require you to log into Zoom. It may not work with MACs using Safari or with Tablets. In that case use ii) below

- Click on the link in the **Host's** invitation email to you.
- A launch screen will appear
- Click on the browser link in the launch screen

- A message Open Zoom.us will appear. Click on the box on the bottom right of this message and you will enter the meeting
- A message 'Joining with Computer Audio' will appear
- The first time you join a Zoom meeting, below the message, there is an option to automatically join with computer audio every time you join a meeting, with a small box beside it
- Click on the box
- Then Click on Join with Computer Audio

ii) Alternative method for joining a meeting

- Copy the Meeting ID in the **Host's** invitation email to you
- Enter Zoom into your Safari or other search engine/ browser
- It may open directly into the meeting.
- If it doesn't and opens a dialogue page: Click on Join a Meeting at the top of the Zoom screen,
- Paste in the Meeting ID
- Click on Join
- A message asking you to allow it to launch zoom.us will appear.
- Click on Allow and you will enter the meeting
- The first time you join a Zoom meeting, below the message, there is an option to automatically join with computer audio every time you join a meeting, with a small box beside it
- Click on the box
- Then Click on Join with Computer Audio

iii) There are sometimes other issues that you might encounter for the initial set up- and joining for the first time. All the configuration issues (hardware or software) can't be covered here. If you are having problems then contact your local U3As Zoom Administrator (possibly your webmaster).

One particular issue is regarding Android tablets. You may get a prompt ("Allow apps to access the microphone") from Zoom asking for permission to use the Microphone. Accept this request.

iv) There are two version of Zoom – a 'Basic' free plan and a subscription 'Pro' plan. As a participant you do not need to have either, only the Host needs the account. But if you are taking part in a meeting being hosted on the Basic account, then you need to be aware that meetings automatically end after 40 minutes. When the automatic closure happens, then just re-join the meeting as you did originally using the link or the Meeting ID in the Hosts invitation email. You will then have another 40 minutes.

b) Participating in the meeting

Once you are in a meeting there are a number of useful tools, which can be used to help the meeting go smoothly.

On PC, laptop, a Mac or a tablet click on the bottom of the screen and on an iPad tap on the top. On some tablets and smartphone these commands are at the top of your screen. You will see some icons and options.

There are two icons on the left of the screen:

- The microphone
- The camera

If there is line through these they are switched off. Click on them to turn them on.

During the meeting, if there is background noise, which would be distracting to other participants click on the microphone to turn it off. But remember to click it on again when you want to speak.

To the Right there are several tools, including **Participants**. When you click or tap on **Participants**, a list of the meetings participants appears in a panel on the screen. At the bottom of the screen is a **Hand Up** button. In some groups the **Host** may have decided to use this tool to manage the discussion and will ask you to click/tap on the **Hand Up** button to indicate you would like to speak. The panel on the **Host's** screen has a list of members who want to speak and will tell you when it is your turn. If the Host hasn't selected this option then just raise your hand when you want to speak.

c) Ending the meeting:

At the end of the meeting or if you wish to leave it at any time, click on "Leave meeting".

7. Phoning

While it is generally recommended that Zoom is used via the internet (for strength of signal) it is possible to use Zoom via a phone (by landline or from a mobile phone). While you are logging in there is the option of "Join with Computer" or "Join with Phone". If you don't have an internet connection you can use the phone option. The instructions for dialling into a Zoom meeting are:

1. Call one of the 5 UK numbers provided:

+44 330 088 5830

+44 131 460 1196

+44 203 481 5240

+44 208 080 6591

+44 208 080 6592

2. Enter your Meeting ID followed by #, which is also the number at the end of the link to join a Zoom meeting

3. Enter your participant ID followed by #.

Step 3 can be minimised to just # if the meeting has been setup not to require a password.

More details can be found at [Joining-a-meeting-by-phone](#)

8. Privacy & Hacking Risk

You may have read articles recently regarding the lack of privacy or the risk of 'Zoom bombing' (ie when your meeting is hacked & other material is streamed to the meeting). Each Member needs to ultimately decide if he / she wants to take this (low) additional risk by using Zoom. However you need to consider this in the wider sense – the use of any internet program, system, platform carries risk. So what is the scale of this extra risk? We would suggest it's low. But each Member needs to teach his / her own conclusion.

9. General Comments

We've had some feedback already and this is added here:

- Participants should sit with light illuminating the face, not with the back to the window.
- It helps to sit at a table with the tablet etc. on a stable surface.

- As a Participant it's good practice to lift a hand when you want to speak, the Host can then become a sort of chairperson (assuming the Host has not switched on the 'Hands Up' tool – see 3b).
- If you are multiple Participants in the same location (eg each with a personal tablet) you need to be far apart (eg separate rooms) to avoid audio 'feedback' (interference).
- You need to be on wifi (internet). You'll need a strong signal.
- If you use 'Gallery View' (top right) during the meeting rather than 'Speaker View,' you will see all Participants in a bigger format. Try it!

10. No Camera or Microphone

If you don't have a laptop or other device with integrated camera and microphone there are ways round this apparent limitation.

You don't need a camera - audio only is possible. Even for folks with camera capability they can choose to "sign on just with audio" Particularly useful if one is still in their pyjamas! As a Participant it will be just the process as described above to join a meeting - you just click on the link in the invite. A dialogue box then comes up saying 'sign on with computer audio only?' & you just click on that to accept.

You can of course buy a separate webcam and plug it in via your USB port. Most are fairly easy to install and will lead you through loading the provided software as well.

But another way around above is to use your smartphone if you have one. You can use Zoom on a desktop which doesn't have a camera or microphone. Join the meeting through your desktop but then in addition then phone into the meeting (the phone numbers to use come with the invitation or see above). So then you can use the audio of the phone and the others can see you through the phone camera, while you can watch the others on the large screen of the desk top.

One way or another you can be part of that online Group meeting!!

11. Change Name

Once you have joined the meeting it will be very helpful to the Host and other members if your displayed name (bottom left of your thumbnail image) is accurate. If you prefer a level of anonymity perhaps use your first name and an initial in lieu of surname. This is particularly important if you want to raise a question and for attendance records.

To change your name click on "Participants", find your name (should be at top) and select option to "Rename". Or you can click on top right of your thumbnail image and then 'Rename'.

12. Reference Material

There is a vast amount of further information online to assist with Zoom. There are also now Third Age Trust produced guides (that then carry links to further information). You can access their guides [here](#).

13. Feedback and Contact Point

If you feel any of the above is unclear or if you think something should be added please give us feedback. Send comments to: webmaster.londonregionu3a@gmail.com

If you need support in use of this guide, if you get stuck at any stage, we can offer support. Please use your U3As local support but if you don't know that is please contact: webmaster.londonregionu3a@gmail.com and we will figure out the best way to help you.