u3a Guide

How to guide: Setting up Facebook

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to explain **why** and how people might set up a personal Facebook account, a u3a Group or u3a Page.

Your experiences of using this guide are of vital importance. **Please send your suggestions for improvement to feedback@u3a.org.uk**

Why might we consider using Facebook ?

- Of all internet users in the UK, 78% use Facebook[1].

- 40 million UK users A MONTH use Facebook. 52% female, 48% male.

- Every day, the average UK user spends 1 hour 50 minutes on social media

And with lockdown, this has increased. A Facebook group can enable people to exchange ideas in "real time." It's more interactive and less static than a website, and can make information-sharing faster and easier. You can quickly let people know what's going on, and gather ideas and opinions fast. It might make your u3a more democratic!

There is a growing number of Facebook features which could save your u3a time and money – notably Facebook Rooms, a free, unlimited-time videoconference service open to all, even those who don't use Facebook as well as 360degree photos and Advertising.

Many people use a Facebook site (which is free) rather than set up a website: ideally they should be complementary, the web for fixed information and Facebook for discussion and for highlighting ideas and opportunities.

Many people are prejudiced against Facebook. Some perceive it as risky – they fear that their data may be stolen - and some feel that it becomes clogged with trivia, such as people posting pictures of their meals or their dogs. This guide shows how data breaches may be avoided, and how you can "set the tone" of your Group to avoid its content becoming inappropriate.

Facebook has its own controls and offers controls to your Group (or Page) administrators – these are the people who moderate posts and ultimately control your Group or Page. For example, administrators can prevent people from posting in your Facebook group if their contributions are inappropriate.

Facebook itself polices content so that people are prevented from posting potentially offensive images or language. A colleague of mine on a Life Drawing group forgot this and was startled to have her Facebook account suspended for a week when she posted a frontal drawing of a nude figure, deemed "inappropriate." We have to be careful!

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[1] *2020 figures from Digital 2020: Global Digital Overview Report, Hootsuite: available via Slideshare*

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Author: Jean Jackson

Setting up a personal Facebook account: why?

Facebook -

- lets me to share my news and opinions with others (Facebook Friends), easily

- can connect me with others who share my interests – search for relevant groups

- offers FREE (and easy) audio calls to others on Facebook

- offers FREE, easy and unlimited-time videoconference calls with other people – who don't have to have Facebook accounts

- offers a growing portfolio of "extras" that are free of charge and linked together

- can protect my private information and restrict who sees it.

Setting up a personal Facebook account: how?

1.   Open Facebook and tap Create New Account. Tap Get Started.

2.   Follow the on-screen instructions.

       Enter your first and last name, date of birth and gender.

*Note that if you are concerned about giving this info, you do not have to be truthful, **but** you will need to remember what you said if you need to reset your account for any reason.*

3.   EITHER enter your mobile phone number, OR tap Use your email address.

4.   Create a password that you'll remember.

This is the main way of keeping your account safe, so ideally don't use the same password as you do on another site. Keep it safe and confidential.

5.   Tap **Sign Up**.

6.   Go to your Facebook site, click **Create Post** at the top of the page, write something

7.   Click **Post** and it's uploaded.

8.   Start looking for people you know on Facebook, invite them to connect with you.

9.   Search for groups that you might want to join e.g. photography, science etc.

N.B. If you "follow" a group, you are notified of updates. To do that, go to the group's Facebook page, look below the main picture, and click "follow." You can always turn it off!

Note that there is a size limit on photos and videos (usually 12MB) so if they won't upload, make them smaller and try again. Google "how to reduce size of images".

N.B. The size is the space that they take up, not their actual size on the screen.

How to make your Facebook account even more secure

You can enable "two-factor security", i.e. sign in with something you know (your password), and something you have— usually your mobile phone. Facebook calls this "login approvals." Once it's activated, after you enter your password, Facebook sends a code to

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your phone that you type into the site, to confirm that it's you. That way, if someone found out your password, they still couldn't log in as you without also having your phone.

To enable Login Approvals, go to **Settings > Security > Login Approvals**. Tick the box next to "**Require a login code to access my account from unknown browsers**

Should we set up a Page or a Group? What type?

For your u3a, you may choose to set up a Facebook Group or a Facebook Page.

A **Page** is open to anyone; it's a bit like an advertising poster. You may want to set up a Page for an event that you wish non-members to attend, such as u3a Day. It can be linked to a Group. You can close the Page after the event's taken place.

If you choose to start a **group**, there are 2 types: open or closed. **Closed** means you have to ask to join it, and actually become a member of it. **Open**, as its name suggests, means that anyone can see what's posted in the groups, and can contribute to it. Both have advantages; anyone can contribute to an open group, while only members can contribute to and see a closed one.

People often prefer to err on the side of caution and set up a closed group. This may be a mistake if you wish to attract new members. Nothing confidential should be discussed in a public Facebook group – so why not make it open, to attract non-members? You can always close it later if you want to – your Administrator simply clicks a button to change the Group's status.

You can also set up **Secret or Hidden groups**, that can't even be found by search – people have to be invited to join, and the only way you can find them is to have the link. If you want to discuss secret stuff on Facebook (?) then that's the way to do it.

How to set up a Facebook Page

Log in to your Facebook account, click the dropdown arrow in the top right corner and select the "Create Page" option. You can create as many Pages as you like.

How to set up a Facebook Group

- Decide on the group's name and its privacy setting

- Have your web logo ready. It will appear small, so just load a plain u3a logo, no text.

- You need an excellent rectangular header-image that represents your group. It should be about 1,640pixels wide and 856pixels high. Resize it in Publisher or Paint.

- Have at least 2 people who are prepared to be administrators. Ideally at least one needs to be a PC user rather than a mobile phone or iPad user – then they can more easily resize images for example.

If you make the group open, your Admins will have little to do. If it's closed, then they will have to allow people to be join. If you want them to approve posts before they are published, you are giving them even more work. Try an open group – if open-ness proves

to be a problem, then you can change your group into a closed one. Even in an open group, your Admins can stop people from posting on the group if their posts are inappropriate: they can take away their permission.

Your Admins need very little training; Facebook is designed to be easy to use and there is a lot of help. BUT if you have an admin who's good with <u>images</u>, that's ideal.

<u>Changing the header image</u> immediately makes the page look up to date. Just click on the image, and load another in its place. Use the header to advertise events – so if an Admin knows how to create posters and then save them as a rectangular jpeg, that's very useful. Easy when you know how!

So, once you've decided what you want to create, go to Facebook and -

- Click on "Group" under the "CREATE" section at the bottom of the left sidebar
- Fill out your Facebook Group's info. ...name etc
- Add or invite friends and promote your Facebook Group. ...
- Link it to your Facebook Page if you have one.

*N.B. It's possible **with permission** to import email addresses and instantly populate your Facebook group but people generally prefer to "opt in."*

Getting your Facebook group going

You need a reason for people to visit and contribute to the group. Once the group is established, and especially if it's large (over 1000 users), it can "run itself" but most groups need a plan to make them successful. Only about 10% of your group members may contribute – many people prefer to read what others say rather than give their views.

<u>Some ideas for getting a new Facebook group going:</u>

- Have some content ready, so that there's something for people to engage with or react to right away. This will set the tone of the group. What kind of things will you discuss/include?
- All the committee members and as many other members as possible join asap. Ask your Admins to invite as many people as possible.
- Set up **regular** events or updates, at the same time, at least weekly to start with – these could be interviews, conversation-starters, advertisements for events etc.
- People prefer live events, although you can offer a replay: your monthly meeting might be run via Facebook or a replay of it could be posted there.

See other How To guides:

"*Getting and website and social media traffic and keeping it*"

"*Measuring the effectiveness of your digital media*"

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