The University of the Third Age originated in France in 1972 and has spread around the world. It came to the UK in 1982.  
It is a university in the older, original sense of people coming together for the pleasure of learning and sharing knowledge. There are no examinations and the only qualification for joining is a desire to learn and/or teach with others who have similar interests.

Kingston University of the Third Age caters for retired or semi-retired people and it is run as a voluntary, self-help organisation. It was formed in 1991 and has a membership of 850. Kingston U3A is one of some 800 autonomous U3As in the UK.

For a more in depth description of the national U3A and its history and organisation follow the link:-

<http://www.u3a.org.uk/>