

Ealing u3a Financial Policy

1 Trustees' financial responsibilities

The trustees of Ealing u3a (that is, elected members of the executive committee) are responsible for:

- Safeguarding the assets of the charity.
- Identifying and managing the risk of loss, waste, theft or fraud.
- Ensuring the financial reporting is robust and of sufficient quality.
- Keeping financial records in accordance with the governing document and relevant legislation (e.g. Charities Acts etc).
- Preparing Annual Accounts in accordance with the governing document and relevant legislation.
- The accounts should show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the u3a.

Trustees are jointly responsible for keeping full financial records. These include those of the u3a and all the interest groups, where appropriate.

To enable the trustees to carry out these responsibilities, the financial procedures detailed below will be followed.

A copy of this policy will be given to all members of the executive committee (co-opted as well as elected) on joining the executive committee and made available on the website.

The policy will be kept under review and revised as necessary.

2 Banking

- All bank accounts are in the name of Ealing u3a.
- New bank accounts may only be opened by a decision of the executive committee, which must be minuted.
- Changes to the bank mandate may only be made by a decision of the executive committee, which must be minuted.
- The authorised signatories are the treasurer and either two current trustees or one current trustee and a former trustee.
- All bank transfers must be authorised by two signatories (apart from transfers between the current account and the savings account which need only one signatory).
- All cheques must be signed by two signatories.
- The signatories are responsible for examining the cheque for accuracy and completeness.

- The signatories are responsible for examining the payment documentation (purchase invoice etc.) prior to signing a cheque or authorising a bank transfer.
- All bank statements will be sent to the treasurer at Ealing Green Church.
- Blank cheques will never be issued.
- Blank cheques will never be signed by one signatory for a second to complete later.

3 Groups' finances

Interest groups are expected to be self-financing and can collect such sums of money as the group members and leadership deem to be necessary to undertake their activities. The funds of these groups belong to Ealing u3a. Groups are permitted to make any expenditure deemed necessary by the group members and the group leadership and can withdraw money on request from the ringfenced funds held by Ealing u3a on their behalf, as appropriate. The treasurer, groups co-ordinator and group leader(s) need to agree what records they need to keep of the groups transactions in order to:

- Allow the treasurer to keep accurate accounts for presentation to the AGM, for discussion with the executive committee and to meet regulatory requirements.
- Allow the group members to understand how their monies are being managed.
- Maintain transparency and trust for all concerned.
- Minimise the risk of error and potential loss of funds.
- Allow group leaders to maintain cash floats.

The executive committee (via the treasurer) will monitor the income and expenditure of the groups. Group leaders need to provide regular information, as agreed, to the treasurer. Where groups do not comply then the executive committee will review as to whether the group is legitimately operating in line with the insurance and financial requirements.

3.1 Social activities

Events such as theatre trips, visits or educational days out must be charged at cost and all participants pay appropriately. The costs paid by members must cover out-of-pocket expenses.

The organiser of an event must not benefit from any discount (e.g. a free place) offered by the organisation providing the event. The value of free places must be shared out among all participants to the event.

Out-of-pocket expenses can be paid to an organiser out of the money collected for the event. As all u3a members offer their services free to the movement, the organiser(s) must not get any pecuniary reward for organising an event.

For coach trips and holidays, the costs should be paid by the members going on them direct to the organising company, if necessary via the u3a member organising the trip or holiday.

4 Speaker fees and expenses

u3a members who give a talk to Ealing u3a cannot be given a fee for their talk, but may be given reasonable expenses if they come from outside Ealing.

Non u3a members can be given a fee for a talk to Ealing u3a plus reasonable expenses if appropriate. The maximum fee for a talk should be set by the executive committee and minuted. The amount of the fee should be agreed with the speaker at the time of booking.

If a speaker wants to donate their fee to a nominated charity then this needs to be recorded. The speaker should be asked to sign a declaration similar to the following:

SPEAKER PAYMENT

To Ealing u3a Please pay the fee/expenses due to me as speaker at your u3a on
..... to the following charity:
..... being a donation paid on my
behalf to that charity. Signed Date

Such a donation should be recorded in the accounts as 'speaker fee'.

5 Collections for other charities

In line with charity law, a u3a cannot donate funds to another charity that does not have similar charitable objectives. However, the executive committee has agreed that a collection may be made for another charity no more than once a term, three a year at most. Priority would be for a charity providing a speaker and asking for no fee. If a charity provides a speaker and asks for a set donation, a collection is not made in addition to that. Charities could be asked which they preferred.

Other requests, not linked to a speaker, should be made in writing (so that a reply stating the policy could be sent) and decided on by the executive committee. No charity would collect more than once a year, and if more than three charities approached Ealing u3a they would take turns.

Collections would be made in the hall at talks. When a collection is made, donations should be invited and members directed to a collection point in the hall, which members choose to approach themselves. Members should not be approached individually around the room or a collecting box passed along the rows.

The total collected for a charity should be given direct to the charity via a member's individual bank account, not via Ealing u3a's bank account.

6 Expenses policy

Prior approval must be given by the executive committee for equipment and other items to be purchased for the use of Ealing u3a or specific interest groups. In these circumstances,

it may be appropriate for a member to purchase the equipment themselves and then claim the cost as a personal expense claim.

Out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the volunteers who are involved with running the u3a will be reimbursed. Expense claims must be submitted with receipts. An expense claim for up to £100 should be approved by one executive committee member and an expense claim for more than £100 should be approved by two executive committee members. No executive committee member should approve their own claim. Expenses will include – with executive committee approval – attendance at the Trust's AGM and Conference or national/regional workshops.

All claims need to be made on the appropriate form (copies available from the treasurer) giving sufficient detail as to the nature of the expense.

Expense claims should reflect the cheapest travel option available. Travel by car will be reimbursed at the current HMRC approved rate for the actual mileage travelled. Car parking and congestion charges can be reclaimed (with receipts), but parking or other fines will not be allowed.

Overnight accommodation will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and will need the prior agreement of the executive committee.

7 Membership Fees

The membership fee is reviewed on an annual basis by the executive committee. Ealing u3a is committed to keeping the membership fee as low as possible to ensure that the u3a remains accessible to all.

The membership year is the calendar year. Subscriptions start in November for the following year. There is a reduced membership fee for new members joining from 1 July to 31 October.

Membership fees may be paid by bank transfer (preferred), cheque or cash. Ealing u3a does not have a card reader, because of the cost of card payments, our concentrated usage at renewal time, and the difficulty of a lump sum being deposited into the Ealing u3a bank account with no record of who has paid it.

There is no reduction in the cost of membership of Ealing u3a for a member of another u3a.

8 Asset register

An asset register is maintained by the treasurer which records all assets held including their initial purchase price, date of purchase, estimated nominal value and location.

It should be noted that under a receipts and payments reporting system, all assets are fully written off against receipts in the year of purchase. The register is reviewed annually.

9 Reserves

Ealing u3a aims to keep a level of reserves that will cover 12 months of regular operating activity. This is considered by the executive committee a reasonable level for this type of charity.

This policy was adopted by Ealing u3a on 10 January 2024

Policy Review date: January 2026