

# HALESWORTH & DISTRICT U3A

## Finance Policy

### 1. Document control

Revised July 21

### 2. Trustees' financial responsibilities

The trustees of Halesworth & District U3A are also its Executive Committee and 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, Companies 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.

As trustees, committee members are jointly responsible for keeping full financial records for the U3A.

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

All committee members are expected to be familiar with this policy and it is made available to members on the website.

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

### 3. Banking

#### 3.1. Bank accounts

- All bank accounts are in the name of Halesworth & District U3A and operated by the trustees.
- New accounts may only be opened by a decision of the Committee, which must be minuted.
- Changes to the bank mandate may only be made by a decision of the Committee, which must be minuted.
- The authorised signatories are the Treasurer, Secretary and one or more other trustees as agreed by the Committee from time to time.
- All cheques must be signed by two signatories. Online payments must be authorised electronically by two signatories (see 3.2 below).
- The signatories are responsible for examining the cheque for accuracy and completeness.
- All bank statements must be sent to and kept by the Treasurer directly.
- Blank cheques will never be issued.
- Blank cheques will never be signed by one signatory for a second to complete later.

#### 3.2. Online banking

The Treasurer and Secretary have access to operate the bank account online and can make payments and transfers online as long as these are jointly authorised by 2 signatories.

### **3.3. Personal payments**

Prior approval must be given by the Committee for equipment and other items to be purchased for the use of Halesworth & District U3A. In these circumstances, it may be appropriate for a member to purchase the equipment themselves and then reclaim the cost through a personal expense claim.

## **4. Groups' finances**

Interest groups are expected to be self-financing once established.

Interest group coordinators should not get any pecuniary reward for organising group meetings or events.

Most interest groups operate informal cost-sharing arrangements, as agreed by members on an ad hoc basis. As formal accounting for small financial contributions made by members would involve a disproportionate administrative burden on group coordinators and event organisers, amounts of less than £20 are regarded as 'de minimus'. In these circumstances the u3a does not expect groups to keep formal accounts or to submit financial records to the Executive Committee.

Should an interest group's activities require larger contributions from its members on a regular basis, more formal records should be kept and reported to the Treasurer for incorporation in u3a's annual accounts.

Physical equipment owned by an interest group (rather than by an individual member) is regarded as belonging to the u3a and will therefore be included in the u3a's asset register.

## **5. Payments to speakers, other charities & organisations:**

### **5.1 Payments to other charities**

In line with charity law, a U3A cannot raise funds for or donate to another charity that does not have similar charitable objectives. The U3A may however pay for services from such organisations.

### **5.2 Payments to speakers**

Halesworth & District U3A will make payments to speakers who have indicated that they intend to donate their fee to a specific charity but not direct to their nominated charity unless that charity has similar charitable objectives to that of the U3A. Other outside speakers should be asked to state their fees and any travel costs at the time of booking and will be paid directly by the Treasurer by cheque or bank transfer.

### **5.3 Payments in relation to Social activities**

As all U3A members offer their services free to the movement, the organiser(s) of outings or social events must not get any pecuniary reward for organising an event. Payments relating to educational and social events and outings organised by Halesworth & District U3A which are open to all members will be paid by the Treasurer on receipt of an appropriate invoice. The cost to participating members and charges for non-members will be determined by the Committee.

## **6. Expenses policy**

Out of pocket expenses incurred by the members who are involved with running the U3A will be reimbursed by cheque or bank transfer. Expense claims must be submitted with receipts when available. Expense claims will be authorised by the Treasurer and another cheque signatory. No committee member should authorise their own claim. Expenses will include – with committee approval – attendance at the Third Age Trust's AGM and Conference or national/regional workshops.

All claims need to give 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. Where possible, cars should be shared. 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 and membership of more than one U3A**

The membership fee is reviewed on an annual basis. Halesworth & District U3A is committed to keeping the membership subscription as consistent and low as possible to ensure that the U3A remains accessible to all members. In exceptional circumstances the Chair and Treasurer may waive the fees, subject to annual review, This will be reported to the Committee without identifying the member concerned.

For U3A members who can evidence membership of another U3A, Halesworth & District U3A will reduce the cost of membership by the amount that is paid to the Third Age Trust for each member.

## **8. Asset register**

An asset register is maintained by an identified committee member, 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 by the Executive Committee at its first meeting following each AGM.

## **9. Reserves**

Halesworth & District U3A aims to keep a level of reserves that will cover at least 6 months of regular operating activity.