



FINANCIAL POLICY

for Whitby Whaler u3a

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

All charities are required to determine their 'Internal Controls' for running the charity, one of these being the Financial Controls, or Financial Policy.

2. Trustees' financial responsibilities

The Trustees of Whitby Whaler u3a 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.

Trustees are jointly responsible for keeping full financial records. These include those of the u3a and all groups, sub- groups etc 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 available to all Trustees on their election/appointment to the committee and available to all 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 Whitby Whaler u3a and operated by the Trustees.
- New accounts may only be opened by a decision of the Trustees, which must be minuted.
- Changes to the Bank mandate may only be made by a decision of the Trustees, which must be minuted.
- The authorised signatories are the Secretary, Treasurer and Social Treasurer.
- All cheques must be signed by two authorised 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 the cheque or authorising an internet transfer. The signatory should sign the document to confirm approval.
- All bank statements should be sent / accessible to the Treasurer directly.
- Blank cheques will never be issued.
- Blank cheques will never be signed by one signatory for a second to complete later.
- Whenever practical two people should be involved in counting cash receipts.

3.2 Online Banking

Where online operation of the bank accounts is in place only Trustees approved by the committee will have access to the facility. The security of the online system is in line with the arrangements offered by HSBC and in accordance with the mandated approval limits.

3.3 Payment by Bank cards

- Operation of the online banking service is under the control of the Treasurer who has full access rights and is responsible for assigning the appropriate delegate rights, as agreed by the committee and in accordance with the bank mandate.
- All payments are authorised in accordance with the bank mandate.
- Access to the online accounts may be via a card reader or personal password and access code.
- The issue of any bank debit or credit card in the name of Whitby Whaler u3a will be approved and minuted by the Committee. The Treasurer is the sole holder of any cards issued.
- The use of any card overrides the dual control aspect of the payment authorisation process, but is permitted, where agreed in advance in recognition that online purchases for certain goods and services represents the most effective and, in some cases, the only method of completing purchase (e.g. theatre tickets)

Whitby Whaler u3a holds 1 business debit card held by the Treasurer. All transactions made using the card appear immediately on the appropriate bank account (subject to the timescales for electronic banking transactions) and are subject to review by the nominated officers. All such payments must be supported by an invoice or receipt made out to Whitby Whaler u3.

3.4 Personal debit or credit cards

The use of personal debit or credit cards for group activities needs to be discouraged and closely managed. Permission must be sought from the committee where a group feels that there is no other viable way to make payment.

Prior approval must be given by the committee for equipment and other items to be purchased for the use of Whitby Whaler u3a or specific group(s). In these circumstances, it may be appropriate for a member to purchase the equipment themselves, after approval from the committee, and then claim the cost as a personal expense claim.

All invoices must be issued in the name of Whitby Whaler u3.

4. Groups' finances

Groups should aim to be self-financing and can collect such sums of money as the group members and convenor deem to be necessary to undertake their activities in line with Group Financial Guidelines.

4.1 Receipts

Sums collected are to be paid to the Treasurer – quarterly payment should show a monthly breakdown of financial activity. To manage the handover of cash and cheques to be paid into Whitby Whaler u3a bank account the committee have agreed that :

- Bank paying in slips will not be given for this purpose
- Convenors may pay sums due by issuing their own cheque or paying online through their own bank account.
- No expenses can be deducted from money collected. The gross amount must be paid to the Treasurer.

4.2 Payments

The Treasurer will inform relevant group convenors as to the approved process for payments relating to:

- When a trip is organised by and paid through the u3a or paid directly by the members to the trip organiser.
- That payment for venues, coaches, tutors, speakers etc must be paid by the u3a.

Outside speakers should be asked to state their fees and any travel costs at the time of booking and a cheque obtained from the Treasurer.

Where the committee has agreed the use of a paid tutor, they must provide evidence of their self-employment status and invoice the u3a as agreed.

The Treasurer will monitor the income and expenditure of groups and report to the committee. Convenors need to provide regular information, as agreed, to the Treasurer. Where groups do not comply then the committee will review as to whether the group is legitimately operating in line with the insurance and financial requirements.

4.3 Social activities

Events such as theatre trips, visits or educational days out must be charged at cost. The costs paid by members must cover all expenses. The organiser of an event must not benefit from any discount (e.g. free place) offered by the organisation providing the event. The value of free places must be shared out among all participants to 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.

4.4 Payments to other charities

In line with charity law, a u3a cannot raise funds for another charity that does not have similar charitable objectives. Whitby Whaler 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.

5. Expenses policy

- Expenses incurred by the volunteers who are involved with running the u3a will be reimbursed.
- Expense claims must be submitted with receipts.
- Expense claims will be authorised by the Chair/Secretary/Treasurer and no committee member should authorise their own claim.
- Expenses will include – with committee approval – attendance at the Trust’s AGM and Conference or national/ regional workshops – Network meetings. Overnight accommodation requires committee approval.

All claims need to be made on the appropriate form copies to be available on the website, Coffee Social mornings and included in Leader’s Pack, 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 re-claimed (with receipts) but parking or other fines will not be allowed.

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

6. Membership Fees and membership of more than one u3a

The membership fee is reviewed on an annual basis. Whitby Whaler is committed to keeping the membership subscription as low as possible to ensure that the u3a remains accessible to all members.

7. Asset register

An asset register is maintained and held on file by the Treasurer. The record of all assets is fully written including their initial purchase price, date of purchase, estimated nominal value and location.

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

8. Reserves

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

Social account activities are excluded from this figure as these activities are inflated by high cost activities such as theatre visits and days out and are entirely self- financing.

Policy review date

March 2025