

WHITWORTH AND DISTRICT U3A FINANCIAL AND RESERVES POLICY

1) RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees of Whitworth 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 the interest 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 given to all trustees on their election/appointment to the committee and made available to members on the website. The policy will be kept under review and revised as necessary.

2) BANKING

a. Bank Accounts

- All bank accounts are in the name of Whitworth 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 Treasurer, plus up to four other designated members of the Executive Committee.

All cheques must be signed by two signatories

The signatories are responsible for examining the payment documentation (purchase invoice etc.) prior to signing the cheque or authorising an internet transfer.

• All bank statements must be sent to the Treasurer directly.

• Blank cheques pre-signed by one signatory, may be provided to a second signatory, where a specific requirement is clear but the exact details are to be confirmed (e.g. for a speaker at a General Meeting).

• Blank cheques will not, otherwise, be issued without suitable reason.

• Whenever practical two people should be involved in counting cash receipts.

b. Online Banking

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. The use of online banking overrides the dual control aspect of the payment authorisation process, but is permitted, where agreed in advance. The security of the online system is in line with the arrangements offered by Barclays Bank and in accordance with its mandated approval limits.

c. Personal Debit or Credit Cards

Prior approval must be given by the committee for equipment and other items to be purchased for the use of Whitworth u3a or specific interest groups. In these circumstances, it may often be appropriate for a member to purchase the equipment themselves and then claim the cost as a personal expense claim. All invoices should be requested to be issued in the name of Whitworth u3a wherever possible.

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 the u3a. Groups are permitted to make any expenditure from their group funds deemed necessary by the group members. The Treasurer, Group 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 trustees, 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.

Group leaders should not operate bank accounts in the name of their groups, nor should they hold Group Funds in their personal bank accounts. If a group leader needs assistance in managing the group finances, they can consult with the Treasurer or other Executive Officer.

4) PAID TUTORS

Whitworth u3a believes in the 'self-help' and 'peer-to-peer' learning models of the u3a movement. It does not encourage the use of paid tutors by Groups.

Should a Group feel there is a need for outside expertise, it is strongly recommended that the Group limit itself to the use of occasional and ad-hoc speakers, who may be paid a one-off fee, as is the case for speakers for General Meetings. If a Group wishes to use a tutor on a regular basis, it must demonstrate to the Executive Committee that any agreement with such a tutor meets appropriate criteria regarding:

- The tutor's self employed status
- The tutor's public liability insurance
- The contract is for services only, and is only payable on delivery
- The Group is able to fund these services The tutor's NI number, Unique Tax Reference in respect of self-employment, and copies of professional qualifications must be filed with the Executive Committee

5) GROUP & SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Ticket purchase for events

Where the U3A purchases tickets for an event on behalf of members the organiser must ensure all members wishing to attend have paid the full ticket

cost to the u3a prior to the u3a purchasing tickets. Examples of such events are theatre trips, garden visits, social evenings involving meals etc.

Event organisers should note if tickets are purchased without first collecting members money in the event of the member not attending ,the organiser, and not the u3a, will be responsible for any loss incurred. Exceptions to this rule may be agreed by the Treasurer to a total value of £500 per event. Above this value the purchase must be agreed by the committee or tickets only purchased on behalf of members who have paid in full.

When an organiser receives cash from a member to protect the interests of both the member and organiser a written receipt should be given. The u3a will provide organisers with receipt books.

Ticket refunds

The trustees should ensure a fair and equitable policy on refunds for ticketed events to protect the interests of event participants, group leaders, organisers and the u3a. Examples of such events are theatre trips and social outings. To obtain a refund a member should:

1. Inform the organiser as to why the member is unable to attend
2. In the event of being unable to attend an event the ticket may be passed to another U3A member. The cost being a private matter between those members
3. Provided the U3A does not incur a financial loss a full refund for non-attendance will be given
4. If the U3A is able to obtain a full or partial refund this will be passed to the member
5. If the U3A incurs a financial loss no refund will be possible

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 should also normally 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, or from Whitworth u3a

general funds, if the Executive Committee approves this. As all u3a members offer their services free to the movement, the organiser(s) must not get any pecuniary reward for organising an event.

Organisers of any trips must ensure that the trip is covered by appropriate insurance. Travel for day trips that are open to all members are covered by u3a Insurance. Travel and accommodation for Study Group overnight trips, that are open to Study Group members only, are covered by u3a Insurance. Holidays that are open to all members are not covered by u3a Insurance. It should be noted that u3as are exempt from the Package and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018 provided that

- The arrangements cover a period of less than 24 hours
 - The packages are occasional, are not-for-profit, and are for members only
- Occasional is defined as not more than 10 trips per annum.

7) MEMBERSHIP FEES & MEMBERS OF OTHER U3As

The membership fee is reviewed on an annual basis. Whitworth u3a is committed to keeping the membership subscription as low as possible to ensure that the u3a remains accessible to all members. Members of other u3as may join Whitworth u3a at a reduced subscription ie they do not pay the capitation fee element.

8) PAYMENTS TO OTHER CHARITIES

In line with charity law, a u3a cannot raise funds for another charity that does not have similar charitable objectives. Whitworth u3a will make payments to speakers who have indicated that they intend to donate their fee to a specific charity, but will not make the payment direct to their nominated charity.

9) EXPENSES POLICY

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. Expense claims will be reimbursed by the Treasurer. Significant expenditure and purchases (e.g. new equipment) must be authorised by the executive committee in advance. No committee member should authorise their own expenses claim. Expenses will include – with 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. The committee may award ad-hoc contributions towards Group or individual expenses before these are incurred: in such cases, which will be recorded in the Executive Committee minutes, the Treasurer may release these amounts prior to receiving any receipts, but the group or individual should make every effort to supply supporting documentation promptly.

10) 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, for all items over a value of £100, excepting those designated as consumables. Whitworth u3a operates a receipts and payments reporting system, in which all assets are fully written off against receipts in the year of purchase. An inventory check of the assets is done biennially.

11) RESERVES

Whitworth u3a aims to keep a level of reserves that will cover 6 months of regular operating activity. This is considered by the committee a reasonable level for this type of charity. Group activities are excluded from this figure as their activities can be inflated by high-cost activities such as theatre visits and days out, and also because they are entirely self financing

13) GIFT AID & HM REVENUE

Whitworth u3a plans to utilise the HM Revenue tax refund scheme known as Gift Aid once Charity status is achieved. In order to comply with HM Revenue rules for this scheme, Whitworth u3a Trustees will ensure that:

- Valid declarations are obtained from members when they pay their membership fees
- These declarations are retained for a period of 6 years
- Correspondence regarding Gift Aid to and from HM Revenue and the Charities Commission is retained indefinitely

- The correct format and wording for the declaration is checked each year, and changed where required, on the membership forms
- Declarations are updated when members change addresses
- Members' names are recorded in full
- There is a process whereby members can request and receive receipts detailing their membership fees and the Gift Aid claimed on this by Whitworth u3a (noted that higher rate taxpayers are entitled to request this information)