

<b>Financial Policy</b>	Date 15/08/2021
Ref tba	Review <b>00/00/00</b>

# u3a Saffron Walden Financial Policy

## 1. Document control

### 1.1. Approval

Date approved	<b>00/00/00</b>
Approved by	<b>0</b>

### 1.2. Version history

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Change summary</b>
1	15/08/2021	Steve Messenger	0
1.1	19/12/2021	Steve Messenger	Small amendments based on feedback

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. Purpose

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

A Financial Policy may simply be a documentation of the current unwritten procedures of a U3A, from which a more detailed policy may evolve.

Where applicable “Trustees” includes Board of Trustees /Board of Directors or committee members.

### 2.2. Scope

Relevant to all members of u3a Saffron Walden.

### 2.3. Related documentation

U3A-KMS-DOC-033 Financial matters

## 3. Trustees’ financial responsibilities

The trustees of u3a Saffron Walden 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.

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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.

## 4. Banking

### 4.1. Bank accounts

- All bank accounts are in the name of *u3a Saffron Walden* 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 determined by the trustees, but must include at least the Treasurer and the Chairperson. This responsibility cannot be delegated.
- 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 the cheque or authorising an internet transfer.
- All bank statements must be sent to the Treasurer directly.
- Blank cheques should not be issued. Where there is no choice, at least two of the trustees must have approved the decision.
- Whenever practical two people should be involved in counting cash receipts.

### 4.2. Online banking

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

Normally, only the Treasurer will undertake on-line banking. In exceptional circumstances, another named trustee may have to perform on-line transactions (for instance, urgent transactions during holidays, illness etc.). The use of on-line banking to pay creditors overrides the dual control aspect of the payment authorisation process, but is permitted, provided that the on-line banking transactions are vetted regularly and often by a member of the trustees, probably the chairperson.

### 4.3. 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 varies from bank to bank and may be via a card reader and personal access card or by logging on to the bank system with a personal password and access code. The issue of any bank debit or credit card in the

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name of u3a Saffron Walden must be approved by the committee. The use of these cards 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 the purchase (e.g. theatre tickets). The committee will predetermine the spending limits for any card: the limit may be per transaction, per day or per month.

At present, u3a Saffron Walden holds zero business debit/credit cards. Any future cards will be held by the Treasurer. All transactions made using these cards appear immediately on the appropriate bank account (subject to the timescales for electronic banking transactions) and are subject to review by the nominated officers through the online banking service. All such payments must be supported by an invoice or receipt made out to u3a Saffron Walden.

#### **4.4. Personal debit or credit cards**

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

Prior approval must be given by the committee for equipment and other items to be purchased for the use of u3a Saffron Walden 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.

All invoices must be issued in the name of u3a Saffron Walden.

### **5. 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 deemed necessary by the group members and the group leadership and can withdraw money on request from the ringfenced funds held by the U3A on their behalf, as appropriate. 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.

#### **5.1. Receipts**

To manage the handover of cash and cheques to be paid into the u3a Saffron Walden bank account the committee has decided that:

- Bank paying in slips will not be given to group leaders for this purpose.
- Group leaders may not pay sums due by issuing their own cheque or paying online through their own bank account.
- Where applicable receipts will need to be given to group leaders or acknowledged by email.
- Where net sums are being paid over this needs to be fully demonstrated to the Treasurer.

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- Cash held back for cash flow purposes will be within the U3A's approved limits (they will vary by activity).
- Receipt cheques should be forwarded to the Treasurer for banking. These should be accompanied by a Receipts form and, a Payments log detailing who has paid what.

## 5.2. Payments

The committee will inform relevant group leaders 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.
- When payments may be deducted from activity revenue:
  - Venues
  - Coaches
  - Tutors
  - Speakers
  - Other
- When payment for venues, coaches, tutors, speakers etc must be paid by the U3A.

Normally, the Treasurer will require a Payment Request form together with details of the payment to be made, including the amount, to whom and why.

Outside speakers should be asked to state their fees and any travel costs at the time of booking. Speaker payment will be made by the Treasurer on receipt of an invoice from the speaker.

Where the committee has agreed the use of a paid tutor, the tutor must provide evidence of their self-employed status and invoice the U3A as agreed.

The 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 committee will review as to whether the group is legitimately operating in line with the insurance and financial requirements.

## 5.3. 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, and may contain a contingency of up to **5%**, but as little as possible, to cover unforeseen costs.

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.

In a financial year, there must be no more than 10 trips that involve an overnight stay. This is to ensure that u3a Saffron Walden is compliant with current regulations.

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#### **5.4. Payments to other charities**

In line with charity law, a U3A cannot raise funds for another charity that does not have similar charitable objectives. u3a Saffron Walden 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.

### **6. Expenses policy**

The expenses policy is covered in the separate document "Expenses Policy".

### **7. Membership Fees and membership of more than one U3A**

The membership fee is reviewed on an annual basis. u3a Saffron Walden is committed to keeping the membership subscription as low as possible to ensure that the U3A remains accessible to all members.

For U3A members who can evidence membership of another U3A, u3a Saffron Walden will reduce the cost of membership by the amount that is paid to the Trust for each member.

### **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**

u3a Saffron Walden 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.

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.