

Chichester U3A: Financial Guidelines

Introduction

The Trustees (i.e. the Committee) are accountable for all income and expenditure of the Chichester U3A and so all income and expenditure must comply with these guidelines or be expressly approved by the Trustees. There are a few limited cases, described below, which do not need to be recorded, but, in general, all income and expenditure must be recorded with supporting receipts/invoices, and reported to the Treasurer.

Any requests for expenditure not covered by these guidelines should be sent to the Treasurer or the Chair for consideration by the Committee. In addition, any future commitment by Interest Groups, such as for room hire, or event tickets, must be approved by the Treasurer or Group Coordinator (and if necessary the Committee) before any commitments which exceed £150 are made.

Any payments to Chichester U3A should be made by bank transfer (see: www.chichesteru3a.org.uk/pay-u3a for details). All invoices should be sent to treasurer@chichesteru3a.org.uk and will also be paid by bank transfer.

Interest Groups and Social Events

General Guidelines

Every group should ensure that it breaks even over a financial year (1 Apr - 31 Mar), and remains in credit. Group Leaders should deal with any accruing surpluses or deficits by adjusting the levy on group members to achieve break-even, and members of groups should be kept informed of their financial situation and any changes explained.

While individual Groups and Social Events are required to be self-funding, the Committee may from time to time fund individual groups, e.g. by supporting new group, or underwriting a particular event, such as the Xmas lunch where a deposit maybe required to hold a reservation. Such special cases require prior approval of the Committee.

Any excessive surplus – resulting perhaps from an established membership levy, can be dealt with by the Leader in any way that does not contravene Third Age Trust Guiding Principles. In this situation, as in all other matters, members of the group should be informed and/or consulted. Funds not returned to members and no longer required by the group (for example, when a group folds) will be returned to the Chichester U3A general funds.

Accrued deficits must be addressed immediately – any groups which hire premises must be able to cover the cost of the hire fee, including any future liability.

Incidental expenses: the Group Leader should also ensure that group funds cover incidental expenses, such as refreshment costs, photocopying, etc.

Personal credit/debit cards use is discouraged. Any such use is at the Group Leader's/Event Organiser's own risk.

Bank Accounts: Under no circumstances should an interest group open its own bank account; neither should members' money be held in a personal bank account.

Discounts and free places: No U3A member should benefit from any discount or incentive (e.g. a free place, discount or referral fee) offered by the organisation providing an event or service. The value of free places or other benefit should be shared amongst all participants.

Cancellations/Non-Attendance – in general, refunds are not given if the participant cancels or does not attend.

Chichester U3A is a charity and, as such, is bound by the rules of the Charity Commission, which are legally enforceable. In order to comply with Charity Commission rules, all officers in a charity (including Group Leaders/Event Organisers) are obliged to carry out certain functions in a prescribed way. Those few functions demanded by the Charity Commission are indicated in the following two sections in **bold**:

Handling members' money

1. For directions for how make payments to Chichester U3A refer to the webpage www.chichesteru3a.org.uk/pay-u3a/. This will ensure that the payer and purpose of the payment is clear (from the Reference), and the payments arrive to the correct bank account.
2. **No more than £100 in cash** belonging to your group should be kept at any given time. Any surplus cash, except a small amount required to meet short term expenditure, should be paid by bank transfer to Chichester U3A.
3. If a Group does not hire rooms, and has limited expenditure, the Group Leader (or other nominated person) can manage the funds in accordance with these guidelines.
4. With the exception of point 3. above, money collected at group meetings or events should be sent to the Treasurer as soon as possible after the meeting, using the process described in 1. above. Alternatively, individual members can make their payments directly using the same process.
5. All group bookings for venue hire charges **will** be paid by the Treasurer.
6. You **must** consult the Treasurer or Groups Coordinator before engaging the paid services of any tutor, trainer or teacher for your group.
7. Your group **must** not make any long-term financial agreements with any third party. **You must confer with the Treasurer or Groups Coordinator prior to making any commitment, including venue hire.**

Keeping records

- You **must** ensure an account is kept of the money received and paid out by the group, and any receipts and payment vouchers must be retained. If all payments are via the Treasurer then this information will be maintained by the Treasurer.
- You **must** ensure that an annual statement to 31 March is published to inform your group about its financial affairs, and to notify the group's income and expenditure to the Treasurer (or supply a nil return).
- The Committee reserves the right to see the group financial records at any time.

Items which do NOT need to be recorded

Car sharing

If members travel together by car to attend meetings or to go on visits, a contribution to the driver toward the cost of travel is welcome. Members should agree any such contributions between themselves. There is no need to keep a record of such payments.

Groups that meet in members' homes

If a group meets in members' homes, it is suggested that each attendee makes a small contribution to the host to cover the cost of providing refreshments. There is no need to keep a record of such payments.

Group participants' individual expenses

Sometimes groups meet at a venue, such as a leisure centre, which charges an entrance fee, or the participant pays an external organisation for an activity (e.g. cinema entrance, tenpin bowling). Provided

that these payments are paid by the individual participants and remain the sole responsibility of the participants, then these payments do not need to be recorded or reported.

Administrative and Travel Expenses

Admin Expenses

Administrative expenses of individual groups or events should be funded and recorded by the group itself.

For other U3A activities, general expenses for stationary, postage, printer ink etc., where the expense is less than £100 should be claimed using the expense form and sent to the Treasurer together with the receipt/invoice for each item claimed. Expenses of over £100 require pre-approval by the Committee.

Travel Expenses

Members should be able to satisfy themselves that they could justify to a fellow member any claim they make for payment of expenses, if challenged. As a charity, it is not appropriate to provide the more generous amounts of allowances for expenses that are sometimes available in business. It is expected that members should keep their expense claims to a minimum (without being out of pocket).

Travel expenses will be covered for members attending meetings of the U3A (e.g. Regional Coordinator meetings). Other meetings attended by members in an official capacity on behalf of Chichester U3A and any other costs incurred in carrying out volunteer work on behalf of U3A shall be paid at the discretion of the committee. Only in exceptional circumstances would the Committee consider refunding travel expenses incurred in the Chichester area.

Car use

Travel by car is acceptable where it is more efficient and economical than the use of public transport. For example, where there is no appropriate public transport, where there are significant files/equipment to be transported; or where there are time and cost savings involved.

Where a private car is used for U3A business, members should be certain that their car is covered for 'permitted use' within the terms of their insurance policy.

It is the expectation of the Chichester U3A that where practicable, car sharing will apply.

The current car mileage rate for motor car is 25p (max. 500 miles).