



EAST GRINSTEAD u3a FINANCIAL POLICY

1. Trustees Financial Responsibilities

The East Grinstead u3a is a charity and is required to comply with the requirements of HM Charity Commissioners in all financial respects. Charity number: 1084934.

1.1 The Trustees of East Grinstead 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).
- 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

2.1 Bank accounts

- All bank accounts are in the name of East Grinstead 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 Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and other Trustees as agreed by the Executive Committee. 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 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.

2.2 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 CAF Bank, or such other bank as shall be subsequently appointed and in accordance with the mandated approval limits.

2.3 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 delegated 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 name of East Grinstead u3a will 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. 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 East Grinstead u3a.

2.4 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 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 East Grinstead u3a 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 East Grinstead u3a.

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 deemed necessary by the group members and the group leadership and can withdraw money on request from any ringfenced funds held by the u3a on their behalf, as appropriate.

The Treasurer, Groups Co-ordinator and Group Leader(s) need to agree what records they need to keep of the group's 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.
- Allow group leaders to maintain cash floats.

3.1 Receipts

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

- Bank paying in slips will not be given to group leaders for this purpose.
- Group leaders may 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.
- Cash held back for cash flow purposes will be within the u3a's approved limits (they may vary by activity).

3.2 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.

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

Where the committee has agreed the use of a paid tutor, or other specialist, such as a conductor or rehearsal pianist, they 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.

3.3 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.

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.

Guidelines for group leaders and other visit organisers are attached in Appendix A.

3.4 Cancellations and refunds procedure

- 3.4.1 The organiser of any event should ensure that the tickets are priced so that there is neither an underspend nor an overspend and must include provision for all likely expenses.
- 3.4.2 East Grinstead u3a should not suffer any loss nor seek to make any profit from any event unless it is specifically agreed beforehand. It should not profit from a member's inability to attend an event.
- 3.4.3 A member should not suffer a loss, unless that is unavoidable, but must pay for any expenses that have been incurred prior to giving notice of cancellation.
- 3.4.4 The organiser of the event will advise members of the date any deposit (if appropriate) must be paid. If not paid by this date it will be assumed the member no longer wishes to attend and their place may be offered to someone on the waiting list or there will be a reduction in numbers attending.
- 3.4.5 Similarly, payment of the final amount should also be paid by the specified date and if not received by this date will result in their place being offered to another member. If no replacement can be found it may result in loss of any deposit paid.
- 3.4.6 As soon as a member is aware that they cannot attend an event, they must immediately inform the organiser.
- 3.4.7 As a first stage either the member involved, or the event organiser should endeavour to sell on the cost of the event to another member.
- 3.4.8 If a cancellation cannot be avoided, then:
 - Transport Costs – if sufficient members are left on the trip to cover the cost at the same price to them, then a refund of the transport element will be made. However, if the cancellation would mean an increased cost to those still going, then all or part of the increased cost will be forfeited by the cancelling member.
 - Ticket/event costs – if the ticket or event costs cannot be negotiated down (due to the cancellation) payment will be expected and/or no refunds given unless a u3a replacement is found.
- 3.4.9 In the event of a dispute, the decision of the Chair and Treasurer acting together will be final.
- 3.4.10 Members should ensure that their own holiday and cancellation insurance is in place to cover any holidays taken through the u3a.

3.5 Payments to other charities

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

4. 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 authorised by the executive committee 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.

All claims need to be made on the appropriate form giving sufficient detail as to the nature of the expense. Receipts must be attached to the claim.

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.

5. Membership fees and membership of more than one u3a

The membership fee is reviewed on an annual basis. East Grinstead u3a 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 East Grinstead u3a will reduce the cost of membership by the amount that is paid to the Trust for each member.

6. Asset Register

An asset register is maintained by the Secretary 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.

7. Reserves

East Grinstead u3a aims to keep a level of reserves that will cover six 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.

This policy was adopted: August 2024

Review Date: August 2026

Appendix A

Guidelines for Managing and Financing Group Bookings for Group Outings

These guidelines apply to the managing and financing of EGu3a group outings. It is acknowledged that matters may be simplified in those instances where members pay a venue individually at and on the day of, an outing.

Item 7 refers to insurance considerations.

1. An announcement of a proposed outing shall include a firm date by which members' responses are required.
2. Based on the likely level of support, a budget for the outing is to be prepared from which its viability may be assessed.
3. The outing organiser shall provide members with clear instructions, including latest dates, for payment. All such payments shall be credited to the EG u3a bank account.
4. All payments to the venue or supplier shall be made directly by EG u3a via the treasurer. Only in exceptional circumstances and with agreement of the treasurer, shall an organiser make a personal payment to a venue or supplier on behalf of EGu3a.
5. A venue's or supplier's invoice must be provided on which terms and conditions for payments (how much and when) are stated.
6. A venue's or supplier's Invoice shall not be paid until all members' corresponding payments have been credited to the EG u3a bank account.
7. Guest participants who are not members of EG u3a are not covered by the u3a third party liability insurance and **must not** be included in group booking. This would be an opportunity to encourage membership of EG u3a.