



Aberdeen Universities Branch

Financial Rules

March 2014 (v1.2)

1. Financial Management

- 1.1. A current account with Unity Trust Bank as per UNISON rule H4.2, for income and expenditure will be opened in the name of the Branch. If deemed necessary, further accounts may be opened for specific needs (welfare/disputes) by agreement of the Branch Committee.
- 1.2. The operation of these accounts will be the responsibility of the Branch Treasurer.
- 1.3. All signatories for approval of expenditure, including the Branch Treasurer should be nominated and approved at the Branch AGM and minuted as such.
- 1.4. In line with UNISON Rule G2.2.8 the Branch Treasurer shall maintain records of its financial transactions, assets and liabilities using the national online branch accounting system (OLBA).
- 1.5. The Branch Treasurer will report to the Branch Committee on a regular basis and will produce an audited statement of accounts to the Branch AGM.
- 1.6. The Branch Treasurer will deposit excess Branch funds in an appropriate account in the Branch name, using the approved signatories, and inform the Branch as part of the regular report.

2. Branch Expenditure

- 2.1. Each cheque payment will be signed by a minimum of two persons from the list of authorised signatories. Similarly, each online bank transfer shall be approved by a minimum of two persons from the list of authorised signatories. In both cases one of those persons should be the Branch Treasurer (except in an emergency situation as agreed and minuted at a Branch Committee meeting).
- 2.2. The approval of the Branch Committee must be sought for attendance at any Conference or Meeting which will incur expenditure for the Branch. Approval of the named person(s) will be recorded in the appropriate minute of the Branch Committee.
- 2.3. If expenditure is required before the next meeting of the branch committee, approval may be sought via email circular to the branch committee. The decision should then be recorded at the next formal meeting.

- 2.4. All expenditure incurred on behalf of the Branch must be approved by the Branch Committee, e.g., purchase of mobile phones, computers, gifts, etc. This approval and the estimated cost of such items will be detailed in the relevant minute of the Branch Committee.
- 2.5. General expenditure should be paid by branch cheque, or online bank transfer.
- 2.6. Where individuals make payments on behalf of the branch, they will be reimbursed by bank transfer (or cheque) on production of the appropriate receipt or invoice, and after completing the relevant branch expenses claim form.

3. Branch Income

All monies collected in the name of the Branch must be paid into the Branch account by the Branch Treasurer.

4. Inventory

The Branch Treasurer will keep a record/inventory of all fixed assets owned by the Branch. This record will include the location of the item and the Officer/steward responsible for its use and safekeeping.

5. Branch Officer/Steward Expenses

- 5.1. Branch officers and Stewards are entitled to be reimbursed for expenditure incurred whilst carrying out their duties, attending meetings and/or conferences on behalf of the Branch.
- 5.2. All claims for travel and subsistence or other branch expenses should be made on the appropriate branch claim form and submitted to the branch treasurer for processing.
- 5.3. No Branch Officer or Steward should be disenfranchised from Branch activity because of financial constraint. Therefore, travel and subsistence allowances may be paid in advance where necessary.
- 5.4. The Branch wishes to encourage the widest possible participation in the Branch Committee and is concerned to ensure members who have carer responsibilities are not debarred from involvement because of the need to meet child or dependant care costs.
- 5.5. The Branch will, therefore, provide a crèche and/or carers expenses in addition to normal travel and subsistence in order to facilitate attendance at Branch activities, conferences and meetings.

- 5.6. Elected Branch auditors will be paid an audit fee at the discretion of the branch and not an honorarium.
- 5.7. Travel and subsistence allowances will be based on the rates agreed by Scottish Council. These rates may change from time to time. Any change to the national rates will be brought to the branch committee or branch AGM for approval. The current rates in force will be published on the branch website, and are also available on request from the branch treasurer.
- 5.8. Travel and subsistence allowances cannot be increased above the Scottish Council rate as they are agreed at a national level with the Inland Revenue and would be liable to tax if they were higher.

5.9. Travel

- 5.9.1. Travel should be claimed at second class rail or bus fare.
- 5.9.2. Private transport should only be claimed with the prior approval of the Branch Secretary or the Branch Treasurer.
- 5.9.3. Taxi fares should be claimed with the approval of the Branch Secretary or Branch Treasurer where public transport is not reasonably available.

5.10. Subsistence

- 5.10.1. Where members are required to attend meetings, conferences or events on business which has been approved by the branch committee (see 2.2), they shall be reimbursed in line with the agreed and approved subsistence rates.
- 5.10.2. The subsistence rates are subject to the annual approval of the branch AGM.
- 5.10.3. A separate overnight out of pocket expenses allowance will also be paid for residential courses and conferences. The rate for this is subject to approval at the branch AGM and will be published on the branch website along with the travel and subsistence rates. It will also be available on request from the branch treasurer.

5.11. Carers Allowance

- 5.11.1. A carers allowance may be claimed for dependant children, dependant relatives/partners where additional costs are incurred when undertaking branch business.
- 5.11.2. The carers allowance rate is subject to approval of the

branch AGM. The current rates in force will be published on the branch website, and are also available on request from the branch treasurer.

- 5.11.3. A partner fulfilling the role of the carer will not be paid for such duties.

6. Honoraria

- 6.1. Honoraria will be paid if there are sufficient Branch funds available after all other commitments. It is a discretionary one off payment in recognition of the voluntary work undertaken by a branch officer in the preceding year.
- 6.2. The Branch Committee can recommend the amounts payable but no payments will be made until approved by a quorate AGM.
- 6.3. The total amount of any honoraria paid should not exceed 10% of the annual branch funding.
- 6.4. Payment of honoraria must be carried out through the approved national honoraria process which ensures requirements for tax payments to the Inland Revenue are followed.

7. Industrial Action Fund

- 7.1. The branch will maintain an Industrial Action Fund in line with the UNISON Scheme for branch Industrial Action Funds.
- 7.2. The industrial action fund may be used:
 - 7.2.1. To provide supplementary strike benefit to members who are experiencing hardship as a result of engaging in strike or other industrial action, where that dispute has been approved by National Executive Council or the General Secretary in accordance with UNISON Rule O – Industrial Action.
 - 7.2.2. To make other payments for expenses directly related to an authorised dispute.
- 7.3. Payments from the Industrial Action fund will be in accordance with national guidance using criteria agreed by the Branch Committee for each dispute.

8. Amendments

Amendments to Branch Financial Rules are subject to the same conditions as described in Branch Rule 14.