

U3A Southern Highlands Policy on Other Course Costs

Rationale

There has been regular feedback from members about extra charges levied by some Course Leaders, including concern over the level and purpose of some charges. In some cases these charges are lumped together with tea break costs. Many of our members are on limited income payments and are not able to afford significant additional costs for courses, particularly when these costs are not advertised in advance. U3A Southern Highlands believes that Course Leaders should not be out of pocket for necessary course presentation costs, unless they choose to be.

The Policy

From Term 2, 2015 the following guidelines shall apply;

1. Additional course costs, except for tea break and specialised venue costs as described later, must be included in the Wise Owl, and should be optional for course members.

2. Tea Break Costs

The amount to be collected shall be determined by the Course Assistant in accordance with the published guidelines and will be collected directly by them for disbursement to the Tea Break Assistant. The Tea Break cost may include a small additional amount for a modest gift for the Course Leader.

Tea break costs will not generally be advertised in the Wise Owl and shall not be included in any Other Course Costs published in the Wise Owl.

3. Other Course Costs

Other Course Costs are necessary costs incurred by the Course Leader or costs for the Course that are not related to provision of Tea Break provisions or a modest gift for the Course Leader, both of which are collected by the Course Assistant. The Course Assistant may collect the charge for Other Course Costs but will keep the monies separate. The following general criteria shall apply.

- a. Photocopying/Notes

The provision of explanatory notes or information can enhance a course or be useful in retaining knowledge after a course is finished. However, not all members will benefit from additional notes, and some cannot afford the additional costs, if cost for photocopying is charged by the Course Leader. The following guidelines will apply:

- i. Course Leaders, at their discretion, sometimes provide occasional photocopies of information or printed notes to all members of a course for no charge, and nothing in this policy shall prevent this practice from continuing.
- ii. Where charges are to apply for the provision of photocopies of information or printed notes, the cost is to be predetermined by the Course Leader, agreed by the Course Coordinator and advertised in the Wise Owl.
- iii. Payment for photocopies of information or printed notes shall be optional and members of a Course may elect not to receive such photocopies or handouts.
- iv. Course Leaders should consider providing electronic copies of course information by email to Course members.

b. Venue Costs

- i. Where a Course involves access to a specialised venue to enhance the Course, such as a museum or historic house, any entrance fees shall be included in the Wise Owl.
- ii. Members shall have the option of not taking part in that part of the Course and therefore not incurring the entrance fee.
- iii. Where the complete Course takes place in a specialised venue, which has an entrance fee, the entrance fee shall be included in the Wise Owl and will be mandatory for all enrolled members of the course.

c. Other Costs

- i. Where a Course needs to include a cost other than the types mentioned above, the Course Leader will discuss these with the Course Coordinator to determine how this is best handled. All discussion and agreement on the final approach to cost recovery shall be finalised prior to the printing of the Wise Owl.