

Financial Regulations V11 – 2025/26 Financial Year:

1 MONITORING:

1.1 Financial Controls:

Trustees will conduct an annual review of the internal financial controls at the start of each financial year.

1.2 Monitoring Activities:

Annual income and expenditure budgets will be prepared and presented to the trustees for approval.

An updated current and forecasted annual budget statement will be circulated to trustees prior to every meeting.

1.3 Internal Audit:

The financial information provided at each trustee meeting should include details of the charity's financial position and performance. The financial information should be sent to each trustee before each meeting and will typically include:

- the latest management accounts
- an updated budget for the current and next financial year
- details of closing bank balances.

The meeting should set aside a specific time within the agenda to discuss financial matters and allow the trustees to raise any issues of concern.

1.4 Trustee's responsibilities:

All trustees are responsible for the following,

- keeping 'sufficient' accounting records to explain all transactions and show the charity's financial position;
- preparing an annual report and statutory accounts meeting legal requirements;
- considering the need for a reserves policy, managing the level of reserves held and the disclosure of any reserves policy in the Trustees' Annual Report;
- formally approving the Trustees' Annual Report and accounts;
- ensuring that accounts are subjected to any external scrutiny required by law or by the charity's governing document;
- ensuring that the Trustees' Annual Report, accounts and annual return are filed on time with the commission where filing is required by law and if the charity is a company, also filed with Companies House;
- meeting requests from the public for copies of the charity's most recent trustees' annual report and accounts;
- safeguarding the assets of the charity and ensuring proper application of resources;
- taking steps for the prevention and detection of bribery, fraud, financial abuse and other irregularities; and
- new trustees are given a copy of the latest accounts on appointment.

1.5 Managing the risks of financial crime and abuse:

All known or suspected crimes or abuse should be reported to the Treasurer or Chair of Trustees. They will then, in turn raise the issue with the remaining Trustees, as appropriate, and agree on a way of investigating it.

All volunteers and musicians contracted on behalf of Musical Connections should be given adequate training to ensure they are familiar with all financial controls and know what action to take if they suspect criminal financial abuse.

If trustees know or suspect an individual is misusing the charity for their own purposes or misappropriating charitable funds, they should take immediate and appropriate action to resolve the issue.

The Project Manager and Treasurer should have suitable security on all their devices/computers used for the work of Musical Connections.

All data held by musicians contracted on behalf of Musical Connections and its trustees must be accessed, stored, and used to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (May 2018).

If it is known or suspected that Musical Connections is a victim of financial crime, this should always be reported to the police and the commission immediately under the serious incident reporting regime.

2 INCOME:

2.1 Income received in the post:

All incoming cheques and cash should be recorded immediately on the correct paperwork, stating the amount, payee and purpose/reason for the donation.

All cash and cheques received in the post should be held securely and banked as soon as practically possible.

2.2 Income from sessions, public collections and fundraising events:

Session Fees:

All cash income received at sessions must be put into an empty collection box by the participant rather than given to the musician. The collection box should be opened and counted by two people and the cash record for the session completed. The musician is then responsible for the safe management of the cash / associated cash record until it is handed over to the Project Manager and banked.

Public Collections:

Trustees must ensure that any public collections comply with the various statutory regulations, e.g. licence arrangements must be made in advance with the local authority.

All collection boxes should be individually numbered and sealed before each unique use so that it is transparent if they have been opened before they are returned.

The Project Manager should record the issue to the user and return to Musical Connections.

At least two people are involved in the handling and recording of all the monies received.

Fundraising Events:

Records for each fundraising event should be kept in sufficient detail to identify gross receipts and costs incurred.

For all events where there is a ticket income, ensure that:

- all tickets are pre-numbered;
- a record is kept of all people who have been issued with tickets to sell and the ticket numbers that have been allocated to each person;
- a record is kept of which tickets have been sold;
- all money from tickets and any unsold tickets are collected; and
- a reconciliation is made of receipts against tickets sold.

At least two people are involved in the handling and recording of all the monies received.

All income:

Money will be banked, and bank paying in receipts, cheque books, session registers, and a diary of payments received will be provided to the Treasurer for reconciliation purposes.

If appropriate, all collection boxes should be regularly opened and the contents counted.

Cash collected is banked by Musical Connections as soon as possible without the deduction of any expenses.

2.3 Trading Income: e.g. from training courses, session donations

Establish a pricing structure for sessions and training undertaken with commercial companies and external partners. This should be reviewed annually to ensure it is still relevant and the appropriate costs are being recovered. See Appendix 1 for current prices.

Invoice terms should be 28 days, with an additional two reminders of 10 days each. The Project Manager will be responsible for raising invoices and will reconcile payments against cash received for outstanding invoices. BACS payments should be encouraged, and if not, cheques. Cash will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and by mutual agreement of both partners. As there are unlikely to be many invoices, those that remain unpaid will be discussed with the Chair, and a case-by-case approach will be agreed upon.

Trustees to regularly review trading activities to ensure that they fall within tax exemptions.

2.4 Banking and custody procedures:

All cheques and cash receipts should be promptly recorded in the accounting records and on the banking reconciliation sheet.

All cheques and cash should be banked regularly and promptly. Paying in receipts should be kept and attached to the banking reconciliation sheet and supplied each half term to the Treasurer. Cheques and cash not banked on the day of the receipt should be placed in a safe or locked cash box.

The insurance cover for Musical Connections should cover cash in transit and cash held by the musicians on behalf of Musical Connections.

2.5 Checks on income records:

All records of cash, debit card payments, and cheques received should be checked against bank paying in slips or counterfoils.

All bank paying in slips or counterfoils with the bank statements, both in terms of amount banked and date of credit.

Transfers, donations from charitable giving webpages, debit cards or other direct payments into the bank are identified and verified against supporting paperwork.

The Treasurer should make these checks as a person who was not concerned with the original recording of the transactions.

2.6 Cash Donations Made in Person to Musical Connections

A cash donation may be given to a musician at an event or session over £10. The musician should provide the donor with a numbered receipt from their triplicate receipt book if this occurs. This receipt should record the donor's name and address or email.

The money and a duplicate copy of the receipt should then be given to the Project Manager along with their session takings.

At this time, the Project Manager will

- use the receipt to send a formal acknowledgement letter or email to the donor to acknowledge their donation
- record the donation on the Bank Reconciliation sheet and attach a copy of the receipt.

3 PURCHASES AND PAYMENTS:

3.1 Expenditure:

The Project Manager can authorise payments up to £500 for items already agreed by Trustees in the budget plan, excluding taxi invoices. Any item not included within the budget plan or for an amount over £500 would need approval from one trustee and an audit trail kept.

Where a new payee needs setting up on the account to enable online payments, if the order is for more than £100, then the written approval of one of the trustees is required.

Orders for goods placed should always be consistent with the agreed budget plans, which the Treasurer / Chair of Trustees should authorise.

The Project Manager will ensure invoices received are checked against orders confirming the price paid and the receipt of the goods or services ordered.

3.2 Payments by Debit Card:

All cards should be kept securely in locked cash boxes when not in use.

A policy for debit cards is appended to these regulations (Appendix 2 – Policy for the Use of Musical Connections Debit Cards).

All debit cards should be cancelled and destroyed if the individual ceases to work for Musical Connections or if the authorisation of the card's use is withdrawn.

Ensure all debit card expenditure is supported by a voucher and/or invoice and recorded and analysed in the accounting records.

These statements must be used to record and analyse transactions in the accounting records and are matched with supporting vouchers and/or invoices provided to or obtained by holders of the cards.

Periodic use of cards should be monitored to ensure consistent use with set policies.

3.3 Payments by Direct Debit, Standing Order or BACS:

No standing orders should be set up in the Musical Connections bank account.

All direct debits should be reviewed annually to ensure they are still valid.

Authorised individuals can only undertake payments by BACS provided the expenditure has been properly authorised and incurred by Musical Connections.

All BACS payments should be recorded in the accounting records.

3.4 Cash Payments:

Cash payments must be kept to an absolute minimum. Supporting documentation for all cash payments must be kept.

Cash withdrawals from the bank account should be reviewed for authorisation and correctness by the Treasurer or Chair of Trustees, as someone other than the person who withdrew the cash.

Musical Connections will no longer operate a petty cash system. Any items needed should be bought using the charity debit cards, and receipts should be kept. If there are any items bought by a musician using cash, then these should be claimed back on their monthly invoices.

3.5 Checks on expenditure records:

The Treasurer must check all expenditure is accurate and accords with bank statements. The treasurer should investigate discrepancies between payments made and the original invoice or payment record. If it cannot be explained, it should be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

An external check will be made annually as part of the independent examination of the accounts.

4 ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS:

4.1 Assets:

A list or register of all assets should be maintained and regularly updated by the Project Manager, whether purchased by or donated to Musical Connections. This record should show the cost (or value) of the asset and provide sufficient detail to enable an asset and its location to be identified.

Occasional inspections of a sample of the charity's assets should be undertaken to ensure that they exist, remain in good repair and are being put to appropriate use.

Any disposal of assets must be properly authorised and recorded in accounting records and the list/register.

All assets valued over £500 must be insured.

4.2 Controls over cash held on deposit:

Bank statements should be received regularly, and the Treasurer must undertake bank reconciliations every month.

The bank account must be operated in accordance with the agreement with NatWest bank and not used for any money transfers for the private benefit of individuals or third parties under any circumstances.

A list of all bank accounts is kept securely and reviewed for dormant accounts which should be closed.

The whole trustees' body should authorise the opening and closing of bank accounts.

Third parties should not be allowed to open bank accounts in Musical Connection's name or use the bank account to receive or transfer money.

4.3 **Electronic Banking:**

The Project Manager and Treasurer's computers must be kept secure with up-to-date anti-virus and spyware software and a personal firewall.

Any login details and passwords should be changed instantly should a signatory on the account leave Musical Connections.

All trustees and musicians must be made aware of the need to ensure that Musical Connections' security details (including password and PIN) are not compromised.

A list of all persons (trustees and musicians) approved to have access to the online banking should be maintained.

An audit trail of all electronic banking transactions should be kept in the same way as other payment types detailed above.

All persons using online banking should be trained in using the system.

Reviewed and Approved on the:	Trustees Meeting 14 th May, 2025
Approved by Chair:	Steven Burkeman
Treasurer:	Jo Farrington
Project Manager:	Charlotte Yandell / Abigail Hall

NB: The website copy of this policy does not include the appendices. For further details on these, please email enquiries@musicalconnections.org.uk