



## C3: Your Coordinating Team

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## 1. Organising your Coordinating Team

If your group handles money and delivers services and activities, you must have a **Coordinating Team** that meets regularly to review your finances, plan services and activities, and make decisions.

Your **Coordinating Team** shares responsibility for ensuring that the services and activities provided by your group reflect our 'charitable objects', and that all MS Society funds and assets under its control are used solely for this purpose.



See [A4: Our legal identity, policies and rules](#) for our charitable objects.

Your **Coordinating Team** must include a [Group Coordinator](#), a [Finance Volunteer](#) and a minimum of one other volunteer.

You can invite other group volunteers to join your **Coordinating Team** as part of their role, but they are not required to do so.

### Online Recruitment

**Online Recruitment** enables your group to manage the entire recruitment process online, from tailoring your advertisement and promoting your vacancy, to confirming a successful candidate in a role.



To request your [Online Recruitment](#) account, log in or get support, see [Using Online Recruitment](#) on our volunteer website, or ask the [Volunteering Team](#) for help.

## 1.1. Coordinating Team restrictions

Members of your [Coordinating Team](#) must all be aged 18 or over.

No more than two members of a family can join your [Coordinating Team](#), and your [Group Coordinator](#) and [Finance Volunteer](#) must not be related. This is to ensure that your group's finances and activities are coordinated independently.

Most volunteer roles can be shared, provided all the tasks are covered. However, your group must not split either the [Group Coordinator](#) or [Finance Volunteer](#) role between more than two people. This is to ensure the volunteers taking on these roles have adequate oversight of the tasks they share.



See [C1: Volunteering with us](#) for guidance on recruiting, supporting and recognising your volunteers.

## 1.2. Named service teams

Your [Coordinating Team](#) may set up one or more named service teams to take responsibility for developing specific services and activities. For example, you may set up a 'seated exercise team'.

All named service teams are accountable to the [Coordinating Team](#) and a representative should attend team meetings regularly to report on, and review the service or activity they are responsible for.

# 2. Making decisions

## 2.1. Team meetings

Your [Coordinating Team](#) must hold a minimum of four team meetings per year to discuss matters that arise and make decisions on behalf of your group. You may choose to meet more frequently, or to use [MS Society email](#) to discuss matters between meetings.

### Discussion between meetings

[MS Society email](#) enables your [Coordinating Team](#) to enjoy secure, GDPR compliant discussion between team meetings. You can circulate meeting agendas, share documents for comment, and make decisions.

## Using MS Society email

If you hold one of these roles, we expect you to use **MS Society email** when you represent us:

- [Group Coordinator](#)
- [Administration Volunteer](#)
- [Lead Support Volunteer](#)
- [Finance Volunteer](#)
- [Communications Volunteer](#)
- [Support Volunteer](#)

Regardless of the volunteer role you hold, you must also use **MS Society email** whenever you represent us in these ways:

- Handling personal data by email
- Acting as an account signatory on your group's cash pooling account
- Communicating with external organisations or people by email on our behalf

If you are a **Coordinating Team** member who doesn't meet any of these criteria, you can still request an **MS Society email** address.

We will ask you to complete **Data protection for GDPR eLearning** before we set up your **MS Society email** account.



To request your individual **MS Society email** account, log in or get support, see [Using MS Society Email](#) on our volunteer website, or ask the **Supporter Care Team** for help.

It is important that you involve all members of the **Coordinating Team** in key discussions and reach decisions by consensus. If you can't reach a consensus, the **Group Coordinator** should decide.

Any decision made by your **Coordinating Team** via **MS Society email** must be agreed by all **Coordinating Team** members (including those who have decided not to request an **MS Society email** account at this time). You must record this agreement in meeting notes before the decision can be actioned.

Individual volunteers do not have the authority to conduct business on behalf of your group unless they have the agreement of the **Coordinating Team**. This agreement must be recorded in meeting notes.

## Decision making considerations

We expect your **Coordinating Team** to make decisions in line with our organisational values, policies, rules and group requirements.

See our rules for volunteers and volunteer-led groups, or ask your **Local Networks Officer** (LNO) for help:

- [Appendix 3: MS Society rules for groups](#)
- [Appendix 4: MS Society financial rules for groups](#)
- [Appendix 5: Code of Fundraising Practice in summary](#)

## 2.2. Reviewing your group's accounts

Ideally monthly and at least once a quarter, your **Finance Volunteer** must provide a report on group finances to enable them to be reviewed during team meetings.

Your **Finance Volunteer** should present a **Receipts and Payments Report** from **Online Accounting** along with any additional information your **Coordinating Team** will need to understand group finances. This should include details of money raised and costs incurred at each fundraising event. It should also cover any major differences between your group's actual income and expenditure, and those in your plans and budgets.

Here are some questions your **Coordinating Team** should consider when reviewing your group's accounts:

- Are we using the funds we hold to meet the needs of everyone affected by MS in the area?
- If donors could see the receipts and payments account, would they feel that the money they had given was being used effectively and wisely?
- Are we raising enough money to sustain the services and activities that we provide at the moment?
- Are we building up excess funds that should be used to meet the needs of people affected by MS?
- Could our group contribute to UK-wide services such as our research programme, the **MS Helpline** or our national grant funds?



See [B4: Managing your finances](#) for more on your **Coordinating Team's** financial responsibilities.

## 2.3. Involving people affected by MS

We expect your **Coordinating Team** to involve people affected by MS in decision making and encourage them to play an active role in planning services and activities. Your group must make sure all planning and consultation opportunities are fully accessible to people affected by MS.



See [B6: Planning and delivering quality services and activities](#) for guidance on accessibility.

## 2.4. Employing staff

A small number of MS Society groups employ staff, but we do not recommend that your group does so. Employing staff involves taking on significant legal obligations and large amounts of additional administration.

Your group must not create new employment positions. We will only support you to recruit existing roles.

### Paying for services

If your **Coordinating Team** plans to pay an individual or organisation to provide a service, you should have a written agreement that sets out the expectations of everyone involved.

We expect your group to use our Service Level Agreement (SLA) template to set this up.



See [B6: Planning and delivering quality services and activities](#) for our guidance on setting up an SLA.

An SLA must not be used to engage a person to carry out an administrative or organisational function for your group that is being fulfilled elsewhere by one or more recognised MS Society group volunteer roles.



See our full list of recognised [Group Roles](#) on the volunteer website.

## 3. Keeping records

### 3.1. Team meeting actions

We recommend that you circulate an agenda before your team meetings so that everyone is clear about what is to be discussed and can prepare for the meeting.

#### Sample team meeting agenda

- Actions taken and matters arising since the last meeting
- Discussion about services and activities provided by your group
- A review of the group's financial accounts and fundraising progress

Team meetings do not need formal minutes, but we recommend that you maintain and circulate a list of actions agreed so everyone is clear about what is expected of them before the next team meeting.

### 3.2. Online Accounting

If your group handles money, we expect you to use our [Online Accounting](#) system to report on your financial transactions.

All members of your [Coordinating Team](#) can have access to [Online Accounting](#) and can use it to produce a range of reports that can be exported in PDF or Excel format for review during or between team meetings.



To set up [Online Accounting](#), log in or get support, see [Using Online Accounting](#) on our volunteer website, or ask the [Finance Support Team](#) for help.

## 4. Dealing with concerns

The decisions made by your [Coordinating Team](#) should be informed by our local priorities and the needs of your MS community.

We do not expect you to experience difficulties, but if an issue occurs, you must follow our process for dealing with problems.



See [A3: Our values and how we deal with problems](#) for our process and policies for dealing with concerns.

We have two additional policies to address concerns that may be raised about your decision making process.

## 4.1. Conflicts of interest

A 'conflict of interest' is any situation in which personal interests, or the loyalty you owe to another person or organisation, could influence, or appear to influence, a decision you are involved in making.

We all share a responsibility for declaring any conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest, and ensuring that we do not take part in discussions or decisions made on that subject.



See our [Conflicts of Interest Policy](#) on the volunteer website, or ask the [Supporter Care Team](#) to send you a printed copy.

## 4.2. Accepting gifts and hospitality

These are our guidelines for accepting gifts or hospitality given or offered by a company, organisation or person:

- Small gifts from companies or people up to a value of £25 such as stationery, mugs, books, flowers and chocolate may be accepted, but they must be declared to your [Coordinating Team](#) to prevent a conflict of interest from arising.
- Cash, gift vouchers, paid holidays and use of company flats or facilities must be refused under all circumstances.

Contact your LNO if you are concerned about a conflict of interest, or for guidance on whether you should accept a gift or offer of hospitality.



See [Appendix 2: Sources of support](#) for staff contact details.

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