

DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF – LIFELONG LEARNING & CULTURE CRITERIA

In order to qualify for Discretionary Rate Relief your organisation must meet all of the following criteria.

The total budget available for Discretionary Rate Relief is cash limited. If the total relief assessed exceeds the available budget, all payments will be reduced proportionately.

1. Your organisation must be working in one of the following areas:
 - Sport and Active Leisure
 - Arts and Culture
 - Heritage
 - Parks & Open Spaces (including allotments)
 - Children's play and young people's leisure
 - Events and festivals that contribute to a vibrant and cosmopolitan city culture

2. Your organisation must be undertaking activities that contribute to one or more of our key outcome areas:
 - **Making York More Eventful** - More York residents and visitors will enjoy participating in, and taking the lead in cultural events and activities.
 - **Engagement in Learning** – More people will be supported into learning by providing opportunities for everyone to be part of a creative learning community, particularly focusing on the most disadvantaged.
 - **Being Healthy** – More residents will enjoy the good physical and mental health that comes from increased participation in active lifestyles.
 - **Supporting Stronger Communities** – Local communities will be supported to direct their own cultural activities and to take ownership of well maintained public spaces. Access will be open to all and we will enhance the quality of life of individuals and communities.
 - **Developing a Vibrant Cultural Infrastructure** – Residents will enjoy an increasingly thriving cultural sector and the economic benefits that flow from it.

3. Your organisations must be non-profit making. If your organisation is a sports club it must be either a registered charity or a registered Community Amateur Sports Club (CASCs).

4. The level of your organisation's revenue reserves must not be in excess of:
 - 10 times the amount of the rates payable (after any mandatory relief is deducted), or
 - £10,000(whichever is the higher).

In assessing the level of reserves for this purpose, the assessment will be restricted to “free“ reserves which are available in reasonably liquid form (e.g. not tied up in facilities) and are not required to meet legal requirements.

Higher reserves may be allowed if:

- your organisation can demonstrate that they are being kept for a specific, acceptable, development project, or
- you have charitable status and your organisation's reserve policy meets the requirement of the Charity Commission or
- it will be unable to pay the rates without putting its financial viability at risk.

5. Your organisation’s activities must actively increase participation amongst one or more of our target groups:

- People with mental ill health, learning difficulties, physical or sensory impairments
- Young people in care or living in transient families, young parents, young people who are bullied, and those who have low skills or are not in education, employment or training
- Older people, particularly those living alone
- Rough sleepers, homeless people
- Carers
- People from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities, including asylum seekers, and travellers
- People on low incomes

6. Your organisation must have a formally adopted Equality and Diversity policy covering gender, disability, faith and religion, race, age, and sexual orientation. Furthermore, you must be able to demonstrate that you are implementing your policy through carrying out equality impact assessments. Membership must be open to all sections of the community. Organisations that require new members to be nominated by existing members will not be eligible for DRR.

7. Any fees charged by your organisation must be consistent with promoting participation and equality of opportunity. Fees must be affordable. (“Affordable” will be interpreted as not being so expensive as to inhibit participation by the wider community). Where, of necessity, a high level of fees is charged, for example in the form of an annual membership subscription, DRR will only be awarded if the organisation can demonstrate that it has taken measures to address affordability through:

- appropriate remissions for target groups, and
- payment schemes that allow fees to be paid over the course of the year, and
- schemes to encourage potential participants to try the activity at a modest cost before having to commit to the full fees

8. Your organisation must be primarily for the benefit of people who live or work in York, (i.e. at least 80% of users fall in this category). Theatres and Museums

whose services are aimed at a wider audience and who do not meet this 80% threshold will be given assistance on a sliding scale based on the percentage of York users over the last 12 months.

Organisations who do not meet the 80% threshold may be given up to 100% relief if they provide discounts for YorkCard holders in respect of their core services (as a minimum in line with the level of discount that the Council itself applies). This provision will not apply to any organisation that already receives grant funding from the Council which assists the organisation in providing YorkCard discounts.