

Payment and thank you policy for co-production

Buttle UK offers thank you vouchers and payment to young people and family members involved in our co-production work. We do this to:

- show that we value people's time, expertise and skills.
- provide an equal standing for everyone involved.
- remove financial barriers to taking part.

This policy covers:

- the basics you can expect from Buttle UK.
- who we offer payment and thank you vouchers to.
- what we offer payment and thank you vouchers for.
- when and how we give people thank you vouchers.
- when and how we pay people involved in our co-production activities.
- expenses and other costs we can cover.
- how payment might affect personal tax and benefits.

The basics

Whether or not you are being paid for your time, it is important you feel your contribution is valued and taken seriously. Some ways we might do this include:

- A sincere verbal 'thank you' in person, by message or via a card or letter in the post.
- A 'thank you' or celebration event.
- Certificates of appreciation/participation.
- Providing references for employment or education based on contributions made.
- Sharing the final outputs or outcomes of a project.
- Sharing feedback, impact and changes made as a result of the work.
- Sharing learning, training or work experience opportunities, either with Buttle UK or with our partners.
- Paying for travel to and attendance at events or conferences.
- Paying for formal training courses and development opportunities.

Who do we offer payment and thank you vouchers to?

We offer payment and thank you vouchers to young people and family members who take part in our co-production activities in their own time. We do not pay professionals for their time, as we assume they will be taking part through their paid employment.

We cannot generally offer payment to people who do not have the right to live or work in the UK. However, we can thank them for their work in the ways described above.

Accepting payment is voluntary – you can choose not to be paid.

What will we offer payment and vouchers for?

Buttle UK will offer payment and thank you vouchers for co-production activities when:

- they take a lot of time and commitment.
- they use people's experience and expertise.
- payment does not create a conflict of interest.

Examples where we will offer payment and thank you vouchers include:

- attending sessions (for example, online and in person meetings).
- writing or contributing to a blog or other publication.
- working with us to deliver training or a workshop.
- planning sessions or activities with us.
- taking part in a recruitment panel.
- preparation and follow-up time before and/or after activities.

Before an activity starts, we will be clear whether payment or thank you vouchers are available.

We will not pay people to take part in our research. This may create ethical issues. We may offer vouchers as a thank you, if this is appropriate.

We also won't pay people or offer vouchers to take part in our fundraising or media events. This may create a conflict of interest. However, we will cover reasonable expenses.

Thank you vouchers

For shorter, one-off activities, we offer a voucher as a thank you for taking part. Examples include attending a one-off meeting, writing a blog, or helping to plan a short activity.

If you receive a voucher as a thank you, the value will depend on the activity. We will tell you what the value is before you agree to take part.

We use GiftPay or similar providers to send our thank you vouchers. These vouchers can be spent in lots of different shops. You can spend your voucher in one shop or split the value over different shops, if you like.

The staff member leading your activity will arrange for your thank you voucher to be sent to you by email or text within a week of the activity ending.

Receiving payment

We treat people who take part in longer, ongoing projects as if they are self-employed and therefore responsible for their own tax affairs. This means you will be paid an agreed rate or amount directly into your bank account. We have benchmarked people's participation in our work and, in most cases, your time will be paid gross at the [London Living Wage rate](#).

If you are being paid, you will need to sign an agreement before you start a project. This will include an idea of the amount of time you are likely to spend on a project.

To be paid, you will need to complete a Payment Request Form to be agreed with the Buttle staff member leading on the project. This tells us how many hours you worked and what (if any) reasonable expenses you need repaying.

Once the form is sent to us, our Finance team will process the payment. This can take up to two weeks. We pay people directly into their bank account via a bank transfer, so you will need to provide bank details in your name.

Impact on personal tax and benefits

If you are paid by us, it may affect your personal tax and benefits.

It is your responsibility to find out how any payments may affect your benefits (including pension) and liability for tax and National Insurance. It is also your responsibility to tell your benefits advisor and HMRC about any payments, if needed.

If you receive benefits, we strongly advise you to speak to a benefits advisor before accepting any payment from us. This includes receiving vouchers. We can provide a letter to show benefit advisors, if needed.

If you earn more than £1,000 in a tax year (6th April to 5th April) through self-employment, you will need to register as self-employed with HMRC and complete a tax return for the year. This includes **all** earnings, not just what you receive from Buttle UK. If you earn £1,000 with Buttle UK in a year, we will ask for your HMRC reference number to prove that you have registered as self-employed.

You can choose not to be paid if this will affect your personal tax or benefits, or for any other reason. We can recognise your work with us in other ways, for example by paying for you to attend events or go on training courses.

If you are unsure about any of this, speak to the Buttle UK staff member who is leading the project you are working on. They may be able to share more information and signpost to further advice, if needed.

Expenses and other costs

For all co-production activities, we will cover any reasonable expenses, such as travel, food and hotels.

For us to repay any expenses, you will need to send us evidence of the cost, for example, receipts, travel tickets and invoices for childcare or, where that is not possible, photos of evidence of payment.

We don't want money to be a barrier to taking part. Where appropriate, we can discuss covering other costs, such as childcare, Wi-Fi or additional support, on a one-to-one basis.

Where possible, we will cover costs upfront, so you are not out of pocket. If you need to buy something and claim your money back, please check first that we will cover the cost.

Further information

For further information about payment for our co-production work, please contact:

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