

Dear colleagues,

At the AGS Business Meeting at the Newcastle conference this year, members agreed to a rise in membership subscriptions. With membership fees due at the end of November, we now kindly ask current AGS members to update your standing order with the bank. This is most easily done via online banking, but we are happy to supply a form on paper to anyone who needs it. These are the new annual membership rates:

Members in full-time, open-ended posts: £40 / €48

Members in part-time and early-career posts (below JNCHES Grade 7 or equivalent): £25 / €30

Retired members: £25 / €30

Postgraduate members (one-off fee for the duration of PG registration): £20 / €24

Subscriptions are the Association's only form of regular income. They support the AGS's travel and publication grants to postgraduates and the annual conference, at which postgraduate attendance is especially heavily subsidised, as well as the committee's expenses in representing German Studies in the UK. Averaged over 2014 and 2015, the last years for which there are complete accounts, 57% of AGS's expenditure out of subscriptions and reserves was on its conferences, 26% on grants, and 18% on other expenses (travel, website, subscriptions e.g. to UCML, bank fees). Setting this expenditure against income from membership fees, the Association was close to breaking even, making an insignificant loss over the two years.

The Committee's view, supported by the Newcastle meeting, is that alongside a developing interface with German in schools and, in the UK, the 'Think German' Networks, postgraduate support is of the highest priority for the association. By raising membership subscriptions, we aim to strengthen the support offered to postgraduates by increasing the size and/or number of grants available, whilst keeping the Association on a sustainable financial footing. Contributions specifically earmarked for postgraduate support over and above the annual fee are also very welcome, and we propose to publicise donors' names with their consent; please get in touch if you should like to arrange this.

At the same time as increasing the membership fee, we will also seek to register AGS as a charity in the UK to increase our financial efficiency. For UK taxpayers, membership fees are tax-deductible (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/professional-bodies-approved-for-tax-relief-list-3/approved-professional-organisations-and-learned-societies>, where AGS is currently still listed under its old name, the Conference of University Teachers of German).

We also welcome new members at any time: the AGS is the biggest professional association for university-level German Studies in Great Britain and Ireland, and the larger our membership, the more we can do together to represent and support the subject at a crucial moment. Further details are on the website: http://www.ags.ac.uk/?page_id=215. We remain very grateful to members paying their

subscriptions in Euros for bearing with us when we had to set up a new Irish bank account; anyone who is yet to reinstate their Euro membership payments is, likewise, invited simply to get in touch.

With thanks and best wishes, on behalf of the AGS committee,

Dora Osborne (Secretary)
Steffan Davies (Treasurer)