



STAFF EXPENSES POLICY

Approved By: Trust Board
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1. POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish clear guidelines and procedures for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by staff members on behalf of the Trust.

This policy aims to ensure that all staff expenses are necessary, reasonable, and comply with the Trust's financial regulations.

By providing a structured approach to managing expenses, the policy helps maintain financial integrity, promotes transparency, and ensures that the Trust's resources are used effectively to support its educational objectives

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This Staff Expenses Policy is developed in compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook, issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), ensuring that all claims for expenses are handled transparently, consistently, and within the financial governance framework of the Trust.

The policy aligns with HMRC guidelines on allowable expenses, ensuring that reimbursements are made in accordance with tax regulations and that no undue financial burden is placed on staff or the Trust. It also reflects best practice to ensure accountability, fairness, and value for money in relation to expenses incurred during Trust-related activities.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Trust Board: The Trust Board holds overall accountability for ensuring proper financial management across the Trust. The Board approves the Staff Expenses Policy and any significant amendments.

Finance Committee: The Finance Committee is tasked with reviewing the Staff Expenses Policy and recommending it to the Trust Board for approval. The committee also monitors compliance with the policy and assesses performance in relation to set objectives.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO): The CEO is accountable for the implementation of the Staff Expenses Policy and ensuring that all activities are aligned with the Trust's strategic goals.

Chief Financial Officer (CFO): The CFO, in collaboration with the wider Finance Team, is responsible for managing the Trust's financial operations, including the oversight of staff expense claims, ensuring they align with cash flow forecasts and maintaining strong financial relationships.

All Staff: All staff are responsible for submitting accurate and timely expense claims in line with the Policy. Staff must ensure that all claims are supported by appropriate documentation and are necessary for their role.

4. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The Trust will reimburse expenses that are properly incurred in line with this policy.

Authorisation Requirements

Expenses that require prior authorisation are clearly outlined within this policy, including details on who is authorised to approve them. If an expense is not explicitly covered by this policy, approval must be obtained from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), or Headteacher before it is incurred. For the CEO, authorisation must be obtained from the Chair of Trust Board.

Expense Claim Submission

Expenses will only be reimbursed if the following conditions are met:

- **Submission Forms:** Claims must be submitted using the forms available from the GLT Staff Zone and must be authorised by a more senior member of staff typically your line manager. Claims by the CEO must be authorised by the CFO, or the Chair of Trust Board where the expense is not covered by this policy.
- **Timely Submission:** Claims should be submitted as soon as possible, typically within one month of incurring the expense.
- **Supporting Documentation:** All claims must be supported by relevant documents such as VAT receipts, tickets, or credit/debit card slips.
- **Authorisation:** Where required, expenses must be authorised according to the instructions in force at the time the expense was incurred.

Payment of Claims

Authorised expenses that comply with this policy will be reimbursed directly into your bank or building society account, similar to salary payments.

Purchase of Classroom Equipment and Sundries

Classroom equipment and sundries should be purchased through the requisition/purchase ordering system and paid for directly by the Trust. Expenses for such purchases should not be claimed under this policy unless explicitly authorised as above.

Mileage Allowances

Claims for mileage allowances will only be processed if the correct procedure for authorising the use of personal vehicles for Trust or school business has been followed (see below).

Specific Restrictions on Alcohol Purchases

The Department for Education considers the purchase of alcohol as 'irregular expenditure.' Consequently, the Trust will not purchase alcohol nor reimburse any expenses for purchases involving alcohol.

5. TRAVEL EXPENSE GUIDANCE

Reimbursement of Travel Costs

The Trust will reimburse reasonable travel costs incurred for Trust or school business. Staff should choose the most economical mode of travel whenever practicable. The following types of travel are not considered business travel and are therefore not eligible for reimbursement:

- **Home to Work Travel:** Travel between your home and your normal place of work, as defined in your contract of employment.
- **Personal Travel:** Travel primarily undertaken for personal purposes.
- **Equivalent to Commute:** Travel that, although undertaken on behalf of the Trust or school, is similar to or equivalent to your regular commute from home to your normal place of work.

Normal Place of Work and Cross-Trust Travel

Your contract of employment will specify your normal place and days of work. It may also state that you are required to travel between schools within the Trust. This staff expenses policy applies to travel between different Trust schools when such travel would result in additional costs compared to your normal commute.

Cross-Trust Responsibilities

For employees with responsibilities across the Trust, the point of reference for travel expenses is the registered office of the Trust at Nonsuch High School for Girls, or your normal office location as stated in your contract. If travel to another Trust school is similar to or equivalent to your usual commute, then those travel expenses may not be claimed.

6. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Trains

You will only be reimbursed for the cost of standard class travel unless expressly authorised by the CEO or CFO. A receipt should be obtained for submission with an expense claim form.

Taxis

You should not take a taxi when there is public transport that would not greatly increase your journey time. However, when this is not the case, or the number of staff travelling together make it cost effective to do so, you can travel by taxi. A receipt should be obtained for submission with an expense claim form.

Air Travel

Air travel If you are required to travel by air in the course of your duties, you should discuss travel arrangements with the CEO, CFO or Headteacher in advance. Where possible, arrangements will be made by the Trust or school on your behalf, but where this is not possible you will be advised of the documentation that you will need to submit to reclaim expenses

7. CARS

Mileage Allowance

If authorised to use your car for business travel and it is cost-effective, you can claim a mileage allowance based on the current rates authorised by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). The current rate is 45 pence per mile for the first 10,000 miles, which does not attract tax or National Insurance. You can obtain up-to-date mileage rates from the Finance Team.

Claiming Mileage

Mileage claims should reflect the additional cost of travel to a temporary place of work. To calculate your claim, deduct the mileage you would normally incur for travel from home to your usual place of work from the total journey mileage. A calculation sheet is provided on the Expense Claim Form.

Parking Costs

You can claim reimbursement for necessary parking costs incurred during business travel. Claims must be supported by receipts or display tickets.

Your Responsibilities

It is your responsibility to ensure that your vehicle is in good working order and is insured for business travel. The Trust cannot accept liability for uninsured losses; therefore, you must ensure that your insurance cover is adequate. The Trust will not reimburse any additional insurance premium incurred or the cost of breakdown cover or recovery.

Passenger Payments and Car Sharing

If you carry another employee in your car during a business journey, you are entitled to claim a passenger payment of up to 5p per mile, which is tax-free under HMRC guidelines.

Charges, Penalties and Fines

The Trust will not reimburse any penalty fares or parking fines incurred while travelling on Trust or school business. This includes charges linked to a personal vehicle such as congestion charges or ULEZ.

8. ACCOMMODATION AND OVERNIGHT EXPENSES

Accommodation Arrangements

If you need to stay overnight for work, discuss accommodation arrangements in advance with the CEO, CFO or Headteacher. Whenever possible, the Trust or school will arrange appropriate accommodation on your behalf. If prior arrangements cannot be made, you will be informed of the documentation required to reclaim your expenses.

Reimbursement of Overnight Expenses

For overnight stays, the Trust will reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses not included in the cost of accommodation, provided they are supported by receipts. Reimbursements are as follows:

- Breakfast: Up to £7.50 per day.
- Lunch: Including non-alcoholic drinks, up to £10 per day.
- Evening Meal: Including non-alcoholic drinks, up to £20.00 per day.
- Total for All Meals on the Same Day: Up to £37.50.

Daytime Course/Conference Expenses

If you attend a daytime course or conference, the Trust will reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses not included in the cost of accommodation, provided they are supported by receipts. Reimbursements are as follows:

- Breakfast: Up to £7.50 per day.
- Lunch: Including non-alcoholic drinks, up to £10 per day.