



TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE POLICY

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This Policy is subject to the published Equality Information, in line with the Equality Duty 2011 and is underpinned by the Christian beliefs and values of our Academy Trust.

2. Background

- 2.1 The aim of the Travel and Subsistence Policy (the policy) is to ensure that the conditions of service relating to the reimbursement of travelling and subsistence expenditure are correctly and consistently applied throughout the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust (PDET).

3. General principles

- 3.1 PDET supports the principle that employees must be fully reimbursed for properly authorised travelling and subsistence expenses, incurred whilst on academy business. However, the Policy is not intended to over compensate employees and individuals have a responsibility to ensure not only that claims are reasonable, but also that the claims are reimbursement of expenditure incurred. Employees should, therefore, be aware that, in addition to being a good employer, PDET has financial responsibilities as a publicly funded education charity. In plain terms, no one should be out of pocket, or using sub-standard accommodation and subsistence, but situations which warrant payment of expenses are not intended to result in a profit for the claimant.
- 3.2 PDET's expenditure on travelling and subsistence must be carefully controlled and monitored and the most cost-effective means of travel and subsistence should be used, wherever possible, except in emergencies or in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.3 Comprehensive, well documented, systems must be established within academies to ensure that all travelling and subsistence claims are pre-authorised and properly checked, recorded and monitored, so that they may be easily audited when required.
- 3.4 All claims for subsistence, mileage and reimbursement of other travel expenditure should contain sufficient detail to enable them to be easily and precisely monitored and audited. Receipts must be obtained.
- 3.5 Headteachers have delegated authority to approve travel and subsistence claims, subject to their being satisfied that the criteria for eligibility has been met.

4. Headteachers' responsibilities

- 4.1 Headteachers must give consideration to what expenditure would normally be incurred and, where possible, guidance should be given to employees before they incur expenditure. If there is no apparent additional expenditure, or no apparent reason for not following normal meal arrangements, payment may be refused, after due clarification with the employee.
- 4.2 In authorising claims, Headteachers are accepting that additional expense was incurred or that the reasons given for the expenditure were unavoidable.
- 4.3 In determining whether additional expenditure was unavoidable, Headteachers should consider whether the employee could have followed normal meal arrangements.
- 4.4 The need for any clarification should not unduly delay the processing of claims for subsistence expenses.

5. Employees' responsibilities

- 5.1 Employees are responsible for ensuring that all the necessary approvals have been obtained, procedures have been followed and documentation has been fully completed, in accordance with procedures, prior to the event for which the claim is being submitted.
- 5.2 Failure to do so may result in non-payment of the expenses.
- 5.3 An explanation of the reasons for making the claim must be provided, together with receipts.
- 5.4 Claims can only be made if more money has been spent on a meal than would normally have been spent. Once it has been established that there has been additional expenditure, the full cost of the meal will be reimbursed, subject to the agreement of the Headteacher that the expenditure was reasonable.
- 5.5 Employees are responsible for certifying that additional expenditure has been incurred and, if so, for producing appropriate receipts. Expenditure on meals which have to be taken on trains will normally be considered as reasonable.
- 5.6 Employees making claims for travel and subsistence should use the Travel & Subsistence Expenses Claim form available from each academy office. These claims will be reimbursed in the employee's salary. Expenses claim forms are to be submitted promptly at the end of each month, for payment at the end of the following month.

6. Travelling – general

- 6.1 In the case of mileage claims full details of each trip are required so that individual journeys may be checked if necessary.
- 6.2 Mileage is paid at 45 pence per mile. This figure will be reviewed and the policy updated whenever necessary.
- 6.3 In the interests of economy, all modes of transport should be considered. For example, if there are a number of employees travelling to one venue at the same time, car share is likely to be the most economical mode of transport. Alternatively, it may be more cost effective to hire a minibus or coach, in some circumstances, than to pay for public transport or to submit a claim for mileage.
- 6.4 In general, all travelling undertaken must be via the most economical route at the lowest possible expense to the academy, other than in exceptional circumstances when authorised by the Headteacher, or in unforeseen or emergency situations.
- 6.5 To determine whether it would be advantageous, the following criteria should be used:-
 - 6.5.1 Financial savings – involves comparing the cost of paying mileage allowances with costs of rail fare, additional bus or taxi fares and any extra subsistence payable that would not have been necessary if the journey had been undertaken by car, eg overnight accommodation and subsistence.
 - 6.5.2 Accessibility of venue – whether it is possible to undertake the full journey by public transport.
 - 6.5.3 Additional time spent in the office – for example, where the use of a car means an employee can spend substantially more time in the office and the Headteacher considers that to be beneficial.
 - 6.5.4 Transportation of equipment etc. – where heavy equipment is being carried and it would be unreasonable to expect employees to use public transport.
- 6.6 Subsistence expenses, car parking fees and bridge / road tolls are payable in addition to mileage allowances, providing vouchers / receipts are obtained and submitted with the claim.

7. Meal expenses

In order to qualify for payment of meal expenses, claimants must meet all of the following criteria:

7.1 Normal Meal Arrangements

- 7.1.1 Normally, employees will take their meals at their place of work, at their departmental headquarters, at home or another establishment.
- 7.1.2 In all posts, employees establish 'normal meal arrangements' and no employee should be claiming subsistence expenses on a daily basis as a matter of routine, ie if it is normal to eat in a restaurant or canteen, the employee is following his / her normal meal arrangements and therefore cannot claim subsistence. Where their normal arrangements are not possible, due to carrying out official duties, with the authority of their Headteacher, a claim for subsistence expenses may be made. The timing of a normal lunch period has no direct bearing on the entitlement to subsistence expenses. It is the nature of the meal and where it is taken that constitutes 'normal meal arrangements'.
- 7.1.3 Employees who are working overtime, and who are being paid enhanced rates for doing so, will not normally be entitled to subsistence expenses, in addition.

7.2 Additional expenditure

- 7.2.1 There must have been additional expenditure. **All claims for subsistence must be accompanied by supporting receipts and must not include alcoholic drinks or tips.**
- 7.2.2 Service charges which are incorporated into the receipt will be payable.

7.3 Unavoidable expenditure

- 7.3.1 Any additional expenditure claimed must have been unavoidable. In some circumstances claims for subsistence can be reduced by organising work in such a way that the necessity to deviate from normal meal arrangements is avoided.

7.4 Guideline rates for individual meals are stated below:

- Breakfast – £5.00
- Lunch – £7.50
- Evening meal – £15.00

- 7.5 These figures will be reviewed and the policy updated whenever necessary. Receipts must be obtained for all meals and the actual cost will be reimbursed, subject to the Headteacher agreeing that the expenditure was reasonable. Headteachers will have the discretion to approve claims which exceed the guidelines shown, providing there is evidence to show that the claimant has good reason for the additional expenditure.

8. Overnight provision

- 8.1 Overnight stays should be booked and paid for in advance through each academy office.
- 8.2 If employees wish to take meals at a hotel, they may do so provided that a receipt / invoice / itemised bill is obtained to allow any re-imbusement to be claimed. The Headteacher must satisfy him/herself about the reasonableness of the claim for meals.
- 8.3 Where necessary, for reasons of safety, employees may take meals in their hotel, even where a meal could be obtained more cheaply elsewhere.
- 8.4 Where meals are taken outside the hotel, receipts / invoices / itemised bills must be obtained.
- 8.5 Private entertainment expenses will not be met by PDET; these are a matter for the employee.
- 8.6 Incidental expenses such as taxis to and from a conference centre, one private telephone call per night, of reasonable duration, and morning tea / coffee will be refunded by PDET. Receipts / invoices / itemised bills must be obtained.
- 8.7 The Inland Revenue requires staff incurring such expenses without receipts to keep a detailed record of their spending in support of their claim as otherwise, a taxable benefit will arise.

9. Public Transport

- 9.1 Where public transport is being used, this should normally be booked in advance, giving as much notice as possible.
- 9.2 Travel on public transport should always be in standard accommodation. All train tickets for any journey should be ordered in advance by the academy office.

10. Hire cars

- 10.1 Hire cars should be used where it would be more economical to do so and should be booked in advance through the academy office. Hire car users receive only the cost of the hire car fuel.

11. Car insurance

- 11.1 Employees using their own cars are personally responsible for ensuring that they have suitable insurance cover. **The motor insurance document should be endorsed to the effect that they are covered “for use on the employer’s**

business” and that the insurer will cover the use of a personal private vehicle for transporting academy children. Any charge levied by the employee’s insurers for such additional cover will be the employee’s responsibility.

11.2 Random checks will be carried out to ensure that insurance documents comply with this policy.

12. Travelling to a venue directly from home

12.1 Employees who are travelling directly from home to a venue that is not their normal place of work may claim the lower of:

- the total mileage for the journey
- the total mileage from the employee’s normal place of work to that destination

12.2 Employees who are reporting to work before and after the journey may claim the full mileage (from office to venue and return).

13. Where car mileage is not the most economical but the employee wishes to travel by car

13.1 Where the Headteacher decides that it would be more economical for a car user to travel by public transport, the employee may, if he / she wishes to do so, travel by car and claim the standard public transport fare, subject to the insurance requirements referred to above. If passengers are being carried, the driver may claim one (only) additional standard public transport fare. In both cases the fare claimed should be the lowest possible fare available for the specific journey, taking into account day returns and other special offers. This must be confirmed through the rail enquiry service.

13.2 Normal subsistence and car parking fees may also be claimed whilst out of town on academy business.

14. Journeys undertaken outside normal working hours

14.1 Where the Headteacher requires an employee to attend his / her place of work, or other venue, outside of normal working hours, the payment of car mileage allowance from home to office and return journeys will be approved for:

- second and subsequent home to office and return journeys on a normal working day and
- all home to office and return journeys on other days

14.2 All journeys involving home to office mileage will be subject to income tax.

15. Advance of cash

- 15.1 Employees who are required to work away from their home and normal place of work for prolonged periods may incur substantial expenditure. This should be a very rare occurrence but a facility exists for obtaining an advance on production of a memorandum from the Headteacher.
- 15.2 The cash advance is signed for by the applicant and is deducted from the final claim.
- 15.3 It is important, therefore, that a detailed claim is submitted as soon as possible after the duty has been carried out so that the expenditure can be checked and allocated to the appropriate budget.

16. Duties outside the United Kingdom

- 16.1 Employees engaged on duties outside the United Kingdom will be subject to the same principles for travel and subsistence as those within the UK; that is, actual expenditure will be reimbursed on production of receipts providing that the expenses claimed are reasonable.
- 16.2 Telephone calls should be made from public phone facilities, where possible.
- 16.3 Employees are advised to obtain phone cards and obtain receipts. Academy mobile phones are not to be used for personal calls to the UK.
- 16.4 Where necessary, for reasons of safety, employees may take meals in their hotels, even where a meal could be obtained more cheaply elsewhere.

17. Disputes

- 17.1 In the event of alleged unfair treatment and/or disputes involving the amount of subsistence and / or travel to be reimbursed, representations should be made, in writing, to the academy Headteacher. If the issue is still not resolved, employees must use PDET's Grievance Policy to progress the matter.