

RESEARCH COUNCIL TRAVEL, SUBSISTENCE AND EXPENSES POLICY

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Policy statement

The Research Council may require staff to travel on official business, and will reimburse claimants for the costs of travelling. The preferred purchasing route for travel services is through the Research Council's appointed agents, who will be paid directly. Travel and subsistence claims, as all Research Council expenditure, are met from public funds, and attract public attention therefore it is imperative that there is full compliance with this policy and that claims are processed in a consistent and effective manner. All those travelling on Research Council business, and making claims under this policy are expected to recognise their obligations to consider whether the trip is necessary, to consider alternative, cheaper options, and to make claims only in respect of costs properly incurred. Claimants should be aware that travel and expenses claims may be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act (see section 13).

In line with the Research Council commitment to environmental sustainability, claimants are encouraged to consider and try to minimise environmental impact of journeys made on behalf of the Research Council (see section 4.3)

This document incorporates the policy for travel on Research Council business, including related aspects such as overnight accommodation. The purpose is to achieve travellers' service requirements in the most convenient and cost-effective manner. The Research Council will reimburse the actual additional costs necessarily incurred by claimants when they are away from home or their normal place of work on Research Council business.

This policy applies to all Research Council employees of a permanent and temporary nature. It may also apply to non Research Council employees such as visitors, agency staff, and students. For advice on the application of the Policy contact the Research Council HR team.

The Travel, Subsistence, and Expenses policy has been agreed with the Trade Union Side and complies with statutory legislation and HM Revenue & Customs requirements.

The UK Shared Business Services (UK SBS) provides HR Services across the Research Councils. However some employees are deployed at establishments/facilities/ships that do not access services from SBS. In these cases references to the SBS or System will not apply and employees should refer to their Research Council HR team for assistance.

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1. Principles

- 1.1 The objectives of the Research Council Travel, Subsistence, and Expenses policy are:
- To reimburse claimants promptly for expenses properly incurred on Research Council business;
 - To obtain maximum value for money from the Research Council's expenditure on travel and subsistence, within Government policy and taking account of the safety and wellbeing of employees and environmental considerations.
 - To ensure that the Research Council's expenditure on travel and subsistence represents only the necessary and reasonable costs incurred by or on behalf of those who are properly engaged on Research Council business;
 - To minimise the cost of administering this expenditure, especially indirect costs represented by the time spent by claimants on making travel arrangements and submitting claims for reimbursement of expenses;
- 1.2 All expenses processed through the Research Council accounts will be treated as if they were paid for by public funds irrespective of the actual source of funds.
- 1.3 The reimbursement of expenses is normally on a receipted actual basis (within the maximum limits stipulated in Appendix 2 or, in the case of overseas expenses, within the maximum limits set by the HMRC's benchmark [scale rate payments](#)). (See 1.9 for exceptions).
- 1.4 Reimbursement of expenses is regulated by the rules set out by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) and therefore this policy complies with those requirements.
- 1.5 Some of the provisions detailed within this policy are subject to tax in line with HMRC rules. Expenses paid to employees that are considered taxable will be reimbursed with the monthly salary payment and will be subject to Income Tax and National Insurance contributions. If an expense is reimbursed to a non-Research Council employee that is considered taxable, the Research Council will notify the HMRC and the tax due will need to be paid to HMRC by the claimant.
- 1.6 Expenses will only be reimbursed if they are claimed in line with this policy.
- 1.7 The cost of travel between home and the normal place of work is the responsibility of the claimant, and will not normally be reimbursed.
- 1.8 Expense claims are not to be used to purchase equipment, materials or services that should be bought through the normal procurement process e.g. computers, phones.
- 1.9 The Research Council recognises that in exceptional circumstances (e.g. emergency situations, inability to obtain a receipt, travelling in certain countries abroad) a claimant may have to deviate from the Research Council's policy. In relation to travel abroad it should be discussed and agreed in advance whether claiming the HMRC daily rate would be more appropriate.

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- 1.10 Individual claims must be approved and may be checked for compliance with the requirements of this policy.
- 1.11 Localised policies that override the Research Council Travel, Subsistence, and Expenses policy are not permissible.

2. Definition of terms

2.1 Travel

- 2.1.1 The terms of this policy cover short visits away from the vicinity of the employee's usual place of work for up to a maximum of 30 working days on Research Council business. For visits lasting for more than 30 working days, please refer to section 8.1.
- 2.1.2 Also excluded is daily travel to and from an establishment or home visits at weekends when the employee is working on secondment.

2.2 Subsistence

- 2.2.1 The actual necessary and reasonable cost of meals and/or accommodation incurred by those engaged on official Research Council business, whilst away from the employee's normal place of work or other establishment where it has been agreed they will work for a fixed period.

2.3 Claimant

- 2.3.1 A person making a claim within the provisions of this policy.

2.4 Authorising manager

- 2.4.1 An individual appointed by the Director or his/her nominee will authorise all claims and provide justification where policy limits are non-compliant.

3. Claim forms

3.1 Research Council employees

- 3.1.1 Research Council employees should submit their expenses via the System.

3.2 Non- Research Council employees

- 3.2.1 Non-Research Council employees must submit their expenses claims on a **Non Employee Expenses Claim Form** which is available on the System or accessed through the Research Council HR or Finance teams.

3.3 Interview expenses

- 3.3.1 The Research Council may offer to pay applicants' expenses to travel by the most economic route to the interview venue at the manager/units discretion. Interview related expenses should be claimed in line with this policy.

- 3.3.2 Applicants must submit their expenses claims on a **Non Employee Expenses Claim Form**. (see 3.2.1 above)

4. Travel claims

4.1 Travel approval

- 4.1.1 All travel must be approved by the authorising manager prior to being booked and undertaken.
- 4.1.2 Establishments will have their own local arrangements for giving permission to travel on official Research Council business but in each case approval needs to be given by the authorising manager in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

4.2 Mode of travel

- 4.2.1 Claimants should use the recommended service for booking travel.
- 4.2.2 Claimants may choose their own form of transport subject to the overriding consideration of value for money, although the Research Council's preference is for employees to use public transport or, where that is not practicable, to use Research Council-owned vehicles or self-drive hire cars (where these are better value for money than using privately owned vehicles - see section 4.6 on insurance requirements). It is recognised that a combination of modes of travel may need to be used for particular journeys.
- 4.2.3 The use of taxis may be justified in certain circumstances (see paragraph 4.11).

4.3 Environmental impact of travel

- 4.3.1 Before booking travel claimants should consider whether the trip is necessary or whether teleconferencing or video conferencing offer a viable alternative.
- 4.3.2 When arranging travel, the Research Council encourages claimants to use the mode of travel that results in the least environmental impact, as carbon dioxide from transport, particularly from air and road travel, is a key contributor to climate change.
- 4.3.3 Where choosing a more environmentally friendly mode of travel results in an increase in costs, the employee must raise this in advance of making any bookings, with their authorising manager.

4.4 Public transport - Class of travel

- 4.4.1 Claimants are normally expected to travel standard class by train and economy class by air. All claimants should actively seek value for money where it is practical and feasible.
- 4.4.2 Claimants should refer to section 4.5 below regarding first class travel.
- 4.4.3 All air travel should be booked through the Research Council's recommended service.

4.4.4 All rail travel should be booked through Research Council's recommended service.

4.4.5 It is recognised that this may not be possible at short notice or when the claimant is away from the office. In these circumstances the claimant may purchase the ticket and recharge the cost.

4.5 Exclusion of first class travel

4.5.1 Research Council employees and other claimants are not permitted to travel by first class on any form of transport including air and rail. This exclusion also applies to business class air travel.

4.5.2 Alternatives to first class travel must be sought in all but exceptional circumstances.

4.5.3 Exceptions to this include where a claimant with a medical condition clearly requires first class rail travel or an employee requires a single berth sleeper cabin. The claimant must seek authorisation from their Director or appropriate authorising manager prior to booking these.

4.5.4 Travellers are welcome to upgrade from standard to premium economy, business or first class at their own expense (or use of personal reward miles) but the Research Council can only cover the cost of the standard fare.

4.6 Privately owned vehicles

4.6.1 When undertaking a journey on Research Council business the driver is responsible for ensuring the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition. There is no obligation or expectation that privately owned vehicles should be used.

4.6.2 Claimants must ensure they comply with the provisions of the Research Council's Driving and Use of Vehicles at Work policy/guidance, which provides an effective system of controlling the risk to employees who drive on Research Council business.

4.6.3 When using their own vehicle, claimants must ensure that it is licensed, appropriately insured (see section 4.7 and Appendix 1) and has a valid MOT certificate. Provided the insurance and ownership requirements are satisfied, claimants may use privately owned motor vehicles and claim the appropriate mileage allowance rate (see Appendix 2) except when:

- there is suitable Research Council provided transport readily available; or
- there is room for another passenger in another vehicle which is to be used for an official journey over the same route at about the same time;
- public transport is better value for money.

4.7 Insurance and ownership requirements

4.7.1 Claimants who use their own vehicles on Research Council business are required to take out insurance cover for business use of the vehicle. It is a legal requirement that any vehicle user must be insured against liability in respect of any third party. It is the individual's personal responsibility to ensure that they fulfil the insurance and

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ownership requirements for using a private motor vehicle on official business. These are set out in Appendix 1.

4.7.2 Claimants are reminded that failure to adhere to these requirements is a disciplinary offence.

4.7.3 The formal undertaking (Appendix 1a) must be completed and handed to the designated person at the permanent place of work before any claimant first uses their private motor vehicle on official business.

4.8 Mileage allowances

4.8.1 Payment for using a privately owned vehicle(s) on official business will be by one of the ways set out below:

- a) The HMRC's approved rates for payment of mileage allowances will be made for journeys when it is of benefit to the Research Council for an individual's private car/motorcycle to be used;
- b) Payment of a bicycle allowance for journeys when an individual uses a privately owned bicycle.

4.8.2 The allowances above are not subject to income tax or National Insurance contributions.

4.8.3 Details of the current rates of the allowances are set out at Appendix 2.

4.8.4 The Research Council will only pay the HMRC approved mileage rate for the appropriate journey. These rates are subject to change by HMRC and such changes will be actioned by the Research Council at the time they are made.

4.9 Passenger supplement

4.9.1 A passenger supplement per passenger per business mile, may be claimed in conjunction with the mileage allowances in 4.8 in respect of each official passenger carried whose fare would otherwise be payable from Research Council funds.

4.9.2 The current passenger supplement rate is listed in Appendix 2 of this document.

4.10 Parking, congestion charges, tolls, ferries and other driving-related penalties

4.10.1 Reasonable expenses incurred on parking, congestion charges, tolls and ferries may be claimed in respect of journeys which qualify for the mileage allowances in section 4.8 above. Receipts or other documentary evidence should be submitted as part of the claim.

4.10.2 Charges for overnight parking will be paid only when subsistence expenses are payable for the night(s) in question.

4.10.3 Should an employee be liable for clamping or other parking / congestion charge penalty (e.g. because a meeting over runs or due to non-payment of a congestion charge) then reimbursement of the charge will not be made. Similarly, reimbursements will not be made to an employee who receives a fine or other

financial penalty relating to an offence committed whilst driving on Research Council business (e.g. for speeding or for using a hand held mobile phone or similar device). Given the possible impact on the Council's vehicle insurance premium, employees are required to notify the Research Council of any such offences and penalties.

4.11 Taxis and self-drive car hire

4.11.1 It is recognised that the use of taxis can be in the interest of the Research Council (e.g. when the journey by public transport would be considerably longer and more difficult or if an employee has very heavy luggage, etc.).

4.11.2 Claimants who would find public transport impractical or inconvenient (e.g. claimants with disabilities) or those who would perceive themselves to be at higher risk should be reimbursed the cost of taxis. A receipt must be provided which must include journey details and dates.

4.11.3 Claimants should use the Research Council's recommended service for booking a hire car and may claim for the cost of the fuel for that specific journey.

4.12 Concessionary travel for additional or late attendances at work

4.12.1 The cost of travel between home and the normal place of work is the responsibility of the employee, and will not normally be reimbursed.

4.12.2 However, the cost of any extra (i.e. above that normally occurred in a working day) travelling expenses will be reimbursed if an employee is, for Research Council work reasons, obliged to:

- a) return to the place of work at the weekend, for Research Council work reasons;
- b) return to the place of work again in the evening after already having travelled home from work earlier in the day;
- c) exceptionally remain late in the evening;
- d) return to the place of work on a public or privilege holiday.

4.12.3 When a day off is taken in lieu of having worked at the weekend, or on a public or privilege holiday, the normal daily travelling cost will not be reimbursed for the time at work since travelling costs will not have been incurred on the day off.

4.12.4 Claimants are not eligible for payment if:

- a) they are attending as part of a regular rostered commitment; or
- b) they are in receipt of shift allowance which takes account of irregular attendance or hours.

4.12.5 Payment for such extra travel between home and place of work is normally subject to income tax (exception - see paragraph 4.12.2). Claims must therefore be made using the Research Council's arrangements for claiming taxable expenses.

4.12.6 However, claimants obliged to finish work after 2100 hours on an infrequent and irregular basis will be reimbursed necessary additional expenses, e.g. for taxi or hire

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car, of travel home tax free under the terms of the relevant HMRC concession. Detailed advice as to whether or not the concession can be applied can be obtained from the Payroll Manager at the UK SBS.

4.12.7 For the purposes of this concession, the requirements which should be met are:

- a) late working is regarded by the HMRC as frequent if it occurs on more than 60 occasions in a tax year;
- b) late working is regarded by the HMRC as regular if there is a predictable pattern.

4.13 During a public transport emergency

4.13.1 During a public transport emergency, claimants who are required to attend work and who thereby incur extra unavoidable travelling expenses will be reimbursed tax free under the terms of the relevant HMRC concession. Detailed advice as to whether or not the concession can be applied can be obtained from the UK SBS Payroll Manager.

4.14 Loyalty points awarded by airlines, hotel chains etc.

4.14.1 Claimants may not specify a particular supplier solely to gain Air Miles or any other loyalty points.

4.14.2 Air Miles or Loyalty Points which are accrued to an individual as a result of official travel on behalf of the Research Council must only be used to offset the costs of future official journeys, and not for personal use.

4.14.3 The Research Council will not reimburse claims where private Air Miles or Loyalty Points have been used for Research Council travel and the cash equivalent is sought upon redemption.

4.14.4 Where use of a personal credit card for payment attracts benefits associated with the card these are not covered by this section, but the overriding factor in choice of travel remains value for money.

5. Accommodation

5.1 Overnight accommodation – standards

5.1.1 When overnight accommodation is required it is normally expected that claimants at all levels will obtain accommodation which meets the standards set out in Appendix 3 at the most economical rate available.

5.1.2 Appendix 2 provides the maximum normal limits for accommodation rates in the UK. Where, in exceptional circumstances, these rates need to be exceeded this should be approved by the authorising manager prior to booking.

5.1.3 A guide for overseas accommodation rates is available from the HMRC and these rates should be taken into account when booking accommodation.

5.2 Overnight accommodation - choice of hotels

- 5.2.1 The Research Council expects claimants to use hotels at which discounts have been negotiated or to use centralised booking arrangements where these are available.
- 5.2.2 However, the preference of individual claimants in their choice of hotel will be respected subject to the overriding consideration of value for money.
- 5.2.3 Where such "discounted" accommodation is known to be available, reimbursement for bed and breakfast will be restricted to the amount that would have been spent if that accommodation had been used.
- 5.2.4 Flexibility may be applied in certain circumstances and claimants should discuss this with their authorising manager in advance, for example when:
- discounted accommodation is not available
 - claimants have disabilities
 - there are other practical needs e.g. where an employee travelling alone may incur extra accommodation costs through safety and security need.
- 5.2.5 Employees may stay with friends or family, as an alternative to hotel accommodation (see Appendix 2).

5.3 Overnight accommodation - hotel costs

- 5.3.1 Subject to the restrictions set out in section 5.2 the actual costs incurred will be reimbursed.

6. Other subsistence

6.1 Day subsistence (meals and beverages)

- 6.1.1 Claimants may claim the reasonable costs of meals taken in the course of business travel provided that they are:
- a) Absent from their normal place of work or other agreed place of work for a fixed period (e.g. if on secondment for a fixed period) for more than five hours; or
 - b) Exceptionally, are required to work until 20.00 hours or later in addition to normal day duty (but are not staying away from home overnight). However, in these circumstances payment will be liable to income tax and claims must therefore be made using the Research Council's arrangements for claiming taxable expenses.
- 6.1.2 Meals should be of a reasonable cost and standard. Appendix 2 provides the maximum normal limits for meals expenses in the UK. This limit is inclusive of additional extras including tips. Where, in exceptional circumstances, these rates need to be exceeded this should be approved by the authorising manager.
- 6.1.3 Reimbursement will not be made to claimants:

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- a) working after 20:00 at their normal place of work if they work night duty instead of day duty;
- b) working after 20:00 at their normal place of work, whose conditions of service require them to work at night, or to be on call at night, in addition to normal day duty;
- c) who are in receipt of an accommodation allowance (see section 8.1) unless eligible because of absence from the place of work at which they are on an extended visit;
- d) where the place visited is five miles or less by the most direct route from their normal place of work or other agreed place of work for a fixed period.

6.1.4 On the occasions where it is necessary for claimants to stay overnight in a hotel, the Research Council will reimburse the cost of a reasonable evening meal within the limits listed in Appendix 2.

6.1.5 Reimbursement will not be made where a suitable meal is provided e.g. full board is provided.

6.1.6 Authorising managers may not authorise a claim for a meal (or similar) covering several people if they themselves were one of the party.

6.2 Tips and alcoholic beverages

6.2.1 Tips or discretionary service charges not exceeding 10% of the total bill will be reimbursed where such payment is included in the receipt, and are included in the limits of Appendix 2.

6.2.2 Expenditure on alcoholic beverages will only be reimbursed when drinks are taken with a meal, and are included in the limits of Appendix 2.

6.3 Personal Incidental Expenses (PIE)

6.3.1 Claimants required to stay overnight on Research Council business may claim a flat-rate Personal Incidental Expenses allowance to cover incidental out of pocket expenses.

6.3.2 When full board is included in the cost of the overnight stay, no subsistence will be reimbursed but a limited Personal Incidental Expenses will still be payable.

6.3.3 The current Personal Incidental Expenses allowance is listed in Appendix 2.

7. Specific provisions for overseas travel

7.1 Visa fees for overseas travel

7.1.1 Claimants required to travel overseas on Research Council business will be reimbursed the cost of visa fees when necessary for the travel on production of a receipt.

7.2 Exchange rates

- 7.2.1 Where expenditure has been incurred in a foreign currency the claimant should use the exchange rate prevailing at the time that they purchased the currency, or incurred the expenditure to calculate the cost in British pounds. This calculation must be accompanied by supporting paperwork e.g. a receipt for changing currency, credit card statement.
- 7.2.2 Where there is no evidence of the specific exchange rate (as in paragraph 7.2.1) then the expense claim should be made in the currency of the receipt.

7.3 Currency exchange commission

- 7.3.1 Claimants required to travel overseas on Research Council business will be reimbursed the cost of currency exchange commission when accompanied by a receipt/documentary evidence.

7.4 Immunisation and inoculations for overseas travel

- 7.4.1 Claimants required to travel overseas on Research Council business will be reimbursed the cost of any immunisation treatments required for the travel on production of receipts provided that the travel has been approved and the employee does not foresee any reason why they would not be able to travel overseas at the required time.
- 7.4.2 If the appointed Research Council Occupational Health Service is able to provide the immunisation treatment, claimants can be treated by the Service at no cost to the individual.

7.5 Support from other bodies

- 7.5.1 An employee may, subject to the approval of his/her Director, or their nominee, apply to another body for expenses for attendance at overseas conferences.
- 7.5.2 Where such approval has been obtained, this may be stated in the application to the other body.
- 7.5.3 Claimants may not claim the same expenses from the Research Council and another body.
- 7.5.4 There are occasions where the Research Council buys a ticket for travel for a claimant and/or reimburses the claimant for the expenses, pending payment to the claimant by a third party. In these circumstances the claimant is obligated to repay the Research Council at the earliest opportunity. Failure to repay expenses which have been met by the Research Council and are then reimbursed by a third party may constitute fraud in line with section 9.3 of this policy.

7.6 Overseas travel insurance

- 7.6.1 Claimants (including non-Research Council employees) travelling overseas on approved Research Council business are usually covered by the Research Council Group Travel Insurance Scheme. If employees have any reason to suspect that they may not be covered by the Scheme, they should get in touch with their Research Council HR or Finance team.
- 7.6.2 The scheme covers personal accident, disablement and medical expenses as well as personal baggage, loss of money, cancellation, travel delays, passport indemnity, personal liability and legal expenses up to certain limits. All claimants must keep receipts if they want to claim any of these costs back.
- 7.6.3 Claimants will be given details of the policy and a card with all the contact details before they travel (this will be issued by local administration).
- 7.6.4 The Research Council will not reimburse the cost of any additional insurance cover claimants wish to take out, for personal travel/holiday before or after their Research Council business trip.
- 7.6.5 The insurance policy only covers claimants on authorised Research Council business. Full details of the insurance scheme are available from the Research Council Finance or HR team.

8. Other expenses

8.1 Visits lasting more than 30 working days

- 8.1.1. When a visit from the normal place of work extends beyond 30 working days the arrangements described above will be replaced by a specially determined package.
- 8.1.2 The Director will determine this package in consultation with the Research Council HR lead and the Finance team at the SBS.
- 8.1.3 The Director (or nominee), with the SBS, will also determine the arrangements for the reimbursement of living costs, accommodation and other related costs. Normally, the employee will be expected to move into self-catering accommodation.

8.2 Other non-travel related expenditure

- 8.2.1 In line with the principles of this policy expense claims are not to be used to purchase equipment, materials or services that should be bought through the normal procurement process e.g. computers, phones.
- 8.2.2 In exceptional circumstances (e.g. emergency situations) a claimant may, in the interests of research, need to purchase equipment and reclaim this via the expenses claim process. Such exceptional claims must be accompanied by an explanatory note from the Director or nominee.
- 8.2.3 Reimbursement will be permitted if the explanation is accepted and the claim approved by the Director.

8.3 Extension of business trip for personal reasons (including personal research)

- 8.3.1 An employee must use the normal holiday application process using the System when applying for an extension of a business trip for personal reasons.
- 8.3.2 Incremental costs relating to extension must be paid for personally. It must be clearly demonstrated that Research Council business was the primary purpose of the visit. Leave records should be appropriately completed.
- 8.3.3 The Research Council insurance does not cover claimants for the additional days of any extension of a business trip for personal reasons.
- 8.3.4 Should the time spent on personal business in any one trip exceed seven days the claimant must contact the Payroll team at the UK SBS for guidance on the taxation position of any reimbursement made by the Research Council.

8.4 Family travel

- 8.4.1 The Research Council will not meet any costs relating to the accompanying spouse/partner or family member of an employee travelling on Research Council business.
- 8.4.2 Where spouses or companions accompany Research Council employees, the costs must be separated appropriately e.g. if a single room costs £70 and a twin/double £100, the £30 difference must be deducted from the claim (or refunded to the Research Council, if paid initially via the Research Council's travel agent).

8.5 Miscellaneous travel related expenses

- 8.5.1 Consideration will be given to the reimbursement of other travel related expenses not covered elsewhere in this policy.

9. How to claim reimbursement

9.1 Claiming expenses and receipts

- 9.1.1 Claims for the reimbursement of expenses from the Research Council employees must be submitted via Employee Self Service on Oracle, using the "iExpenses User" responsibility, or where the employee does not have access to the System, via local arrangements.
- 9.1.2 Following submission of the claim, receipts must be sent to UK SBS. Receipts should be individually attached to the claim form and put into an envelope marked with claimant's name, Council and claim reference. Claimants are advised to keep a scanned copy or photocopy of the receipts submitted.
- 9.1.3 Small items of incidental expenditure, up to £5 total per day, can be claimed without a receipt if not available.
- 9.1.4 All expenditure over £5 must be accounted for with receipts. Reimbursement for items over £5 without receipts will only be met in exceptional circumstances. In each

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case the claimant should contact the Payroll Manager at the UK SBS to establish whether any tax liability will apply.

- 9.1.5 Any claims without receipts should be supported by evidence, if available. Claims should not be approved unless the authorising manager is satisfied that the expenditure was incurred wholly, exclusively and necessarily in the performance of the duties of the claimant's role in the Research Council.
- 9.1.6 Such claims will be referred to the Payroll team at the UK SBS, to adjudicate on the taxation position and to determine how reimbursement should be made. These claims may be deemed taxable through the PAYE system and tax will therefore be deducted from the claim.
- 9.1.7 Expense claims against transactions on credit card statements must be supported by individual original receipts.
- 9.1.9 Where a claimant incurs expenses when working at an establishment that is different from the one they are employed at, the claimant should claim expenses from their employing establishment.

9.2 Time limit for claims/reimbursement

- 9.2.1 Expenses claims should be submitted for payment within 60 days of the expense being incurred. Properly-completed and authorised claims will normally be paid within three working days.
- 9.2.2 If, exceptionally, this proves to be impossible, the claim form should be accompanied by a brief note explaining the circumstances.

9.3 False/Fraudulent claims

- 9.3.1 All claimants are responsible for completing claims accurately.
- 9.3.2 Any attempt to claim expenses in breach of the Research Council Travel, Subsistence, and Expenses policy or to assist another work colleague to breach the Research Council Travel, Subsistence, and Expenses policy will be considered a serious disciplinary offence and will be dealt with under the Research Council Disciplinary policy.

9.4 Travel/subsistence advances

- 9.4.1 The Research Council's processes are designed to ensure that an employee is not materially out of pocket for a significant period when travelling on business. For this reason, advance payment to cover anticipated costs of travel and subsistence will only be made in exceptional circumstances e.g. an extended period of overseas travel. In such cases, claimants can make an application for a travel and subsistence advance payment prior to travel, provided they have no reason to believe they will not be able to carry out such travel.
- 9.4.2 The amount advanced will be determined by the Research Council on a case-by-case basis; in all cases, it will be less than 100% of the anticipated travel and subsistence costs.

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- 9.4.3 Applications can be made on the appropriate form in the System.
- 9.4.5 Advances should be ordered in time for the trip but not significantly prior to the trip.
- 9.4.6 The authorised advance will be paid into the claimant's bank account
- 9.4.7 After returning from travel the claimant should submit an expense claim and their receipts via the normal process, specifying the amount that they had already been advanced.
- 9.4.8 Any overpayment will need to be reimbursed to the Research Council by the claimant.

9.5 Reimbursement of cancellation charges

- 9.5.1 Where a claimant has unavoidably to cancel travel/accommodation plans and cancellation charges are incurred these will be reimbursed by the Research Council if the following conditions are met: 1) claims are accompanied by supporting documentation, and 2) the authorising manager is satisfied that cancelling the travel/accommodation was unavoidable.
- 9.5.2 The claimant is expected to assist the Research Council in recovering costs from the Research Council Group Travel Insurance scheme.

9.6 Claimants leaving the Research Council

- 9.6.1 All expenses claims must be authorised and submitted to the SBS prior to the claimant's last working day with the Research Council. Claims received after this date will not be processed.

10. Claimants with disabilities

- 10.1 It is recognised that claimants with disabilities may have extra needs when travelling and staying in hotel accommodation. Therefore, as part of the Research Council's Equalities and Diversity policy, claimants with disabilities who incur extra cost for facilities for the disabled will be reimbursed; these costs must be stated within the claim.
- 10.2 Claimants with disabilities should not suffer inconvenience resulting from the failure to apply discretion and flexibility. Where a claimant with a disability requires a mode of travel or accommodation which, although is more expensive for the Research Council, they consider to be a more practical and convenient method of transport for them, the claimant should raise this with their authorising manager for discussion in advance of making any bookings. Once the authorising manager has given their approval, the employee can make arrangements and will be reimbursed for the cost for the agreed mode of transport and accommodation.
- 10.3 The insurance and ownership requirements in Appendix 1 must be met when using a private vehicle.

11. Application of the procedures

- 11.1 The aim of this policy is for fair and effective application of the procedures. All reasonable expenditure will be reimbursed and it is therefore important that all those who authorise claims share a consistent interpretation of what constitutes "reasonable".

12. Appeals

- 12.1 Research Council employees who consider that their claim or circumstances have not been considered or authorised fairly may follow the Research Council grievance procedure as a method of appeal against decisions taken. However, claimants are encouraged, in the first instance, to seek advice and guidance on their concerns from their Research Council HR team.

13. Disclosure of information relating to expenses claimed

- 13.1 From time to time the Research Council may be required to publish information relating to expenses claimed from the Research Council by employees and non-Research Council employees, for instance in response to a Freedom of Information request.
- 13.2 In such cases the Research Council would normally release information at an aggregate or summary level.
- 13.3 Where a request involves the expenses of Directors, other senior managers and others who it may be possible to identify from the data, those involved will, wherever possible, be given the opportunity to comment in advance on the information likely to be released.
- 13.4 In any other instances where the public interest may favour disclosure the individuals affected would, wherever possible, be given the opportunity to comment on any information likely to be released.
- 13.5 Where copies of receipts or invoices are requested these will be made available as appropriate, taking into account any issues relating to personal data.

14. Review of policy

- 14.1 This policy will be regularly reviewed to incorporate any legislation changes. The TU may request that a policy is reviewed.

RESEARCH COUNCIL TRAVEL, SUBSISTENCE AND EXPENSES POLICY

15. Amendment history

Version	Date	Comments/Changes
V2.0	November 2014	Para 1.3 Further clarification provided and reference made to HMRC who set overseas benchmark scale rates and not the Foreign and Commonwealth Office
V2.0	November 2014	Para 5.1.3 reference made to HMRC and not the Foreign and Commonwealth Office
V2.0	November 2014	Para 1.9 Final sentence removed, employees should refer to para 2.4
V2.0	November 2014	Para 7.2.2 Final sentence removed as the calculation of the exchange rate by UKSBS does not happen in practice.
V2.0	November 2014	Para 7.2.3 removed as the entering of claims onto the system is not policy related.
V2.0	November 2014	New Para 8.5 relating to miscellaneous travel related expenses
V2.0	November 2014	Appendix 2, Section 1 providing clarification that all rates include all expenses incurred in the use of a vehicle including fuel
V3.0	01 August 2015	Para 1.10 amended to confirm that all claims must be approved
V3.0	01 August 2015	Para 2.4.1 amended to confirm that all claims will be authorisation

INSURANCE AND OWNERSHIP REQUIREMENTS TO BE FULFILLED BY CLAIMANTS USING THEIR PRIVATE MOTOR VEHICLES ON RESEARCH COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. Principles

Whilst using their private vehicle on Research Council business (or travelling as an official passenger in another claimant's vehicle) an employee is deemed to be in the course of their duty for the purpose of the injury benefit provisions of the Research Council Injury Benefits Scheme. Details of this scheme can be found in the Research Council Pension Scheme Rule Book.

They are also covered by the Social Security Act 1975, subject to the decision of the Statutory Authorities in a particular case.

In other respects provision for injury or death due to accident while using a private motor vehicle on official business is the claimant's own responsibility.

2. Insurance

All claimants using their private motor vehicles on Research Council business must satisfy the following insurance conditions:

- a) they must have a valid motor insurance policy for the vehicle which insures the holder against liability in respect of any third party;
- b) the insurance policy must include a clause permitting the owner to use the vehicle for business purposes. If the vehicle is not owned by the claimant, the insurance policy should specifically cover the use of the vehicle on Research Council business

3. Ownership

To qualify for motor mileage allowance(s) the following will be regarded as the employee's private vehicle:

- a) a vehicle owned or being bought on hire purchase and registered in the claimant's name;
- b) a vehicle hired by the claimant under a long term contract i.e. for at least a year;
- c) a vehicle registered in the name of the employee's partner provided that:
 - the normal insurance requirements (see 2 above) are fulfilled and the insurance specifically covers the use of the vehicle by the claimant on Research Council business
 - the vehicle is available for use by the claimant on Research Council business whenever required and, for cars only, to carry official passengers.

4. Formal undertaking

Before first using a private motor vehicle on official business every claimant must give a written undertaking by signing the declaration at Appendix 1a that he or she knows and understands the insurance requirements; that he or she is covered accordingly; and that he or she will immediately notify his or her Director (or nominee) of any change in insurance cover which results in less than the rules require.

Appendix 1a - Formal undertaking letter

To: The (Insert Name) Research Council

I have received and read a copy of the 'Insurance and ownership requirements to be fulfilled by claimants using their private motor vehicles on Research Council business' section of the Research Council's Travel and Subsistence Policy (Appendix 1).

I understand and accept these requirements as governing the use of my motor vehicle(s) on official Research Council business and, in agreeing to comply with them, undertake to ensure that I am adequately insured and to advise my Director (or nominee) immediately of any change which means that the insurance falls short of what is required, under the Research Council Travel, Subsistence and Expenses Policy.

Signed.....

Date.....

Location.....

Expenses allowances with effect from 1 January 2014**1. Mileage allowances for the use of privately owned vehicles (section 4.8)**

HM Revenue & Custom Mileage rates will be reviewed annually.

	First 10,000 business miles in tax year	Each business mile over 10,000 in the tax year
Cars and vans	45p	25p
Motorcycles	24p	24p
Bicycles	20p	20p

The above rates include all expenses incurred in the use of a vehicle including fuel.

2. Passenger Supplement – cars and vans (section 4.10)

Per passenger per business mile for carrying fellow employees in a car or van on journeys which are also work journeys for them.	5p
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3. Maximum accommodation rates in the UK (section 5.1)

London and Edinburgh (including breakfast)	Maximum £170 inc VAT per night
Elsewhere in the UK (including breakfast)	Maximum £120 inc VAT per night
Staying with friends or relatives *	Flat rate £25 per night

* this taxable allowance should be claimed via the taxable expenses claim process

4. Maximum meals expenses in the UK (section 6.1)

Total per day for lunch and evening meal	£40 inc VAT
Breakfast meal limit (where not included in B&B tariff)	£7.50 inc VAT
Lunch meal limit	£15 inc VAT
Evening meal limit	£25 inc VAT

5. Personal Incidental Expenses (section 6.3)

Per 24 hour period	£5 inc VAT
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Overnight accommodation standards

STANDARDS OF OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION NORMALLY EXPECTED BY RESEARCH COUNCIL CLAIMANTS ON SHORT VISITS

1. Single occupancy rooms with:
 - en suite facilities (shower or bath)
 - TV
 - tea/coffee making facilities
 - a telephone in the room
 - internet access in the room is desirable; costs will be reimbursed provided that there is a demonstrable business need
2. There should be adequate space and where it is necessary to work in the room, facilities (light, writing surface, telephone, etc.) for doing this.
3. The accommodation should have satisfactory personal security arrangements and adequate emergency procedures.
4. Restaurant facilities should be available either on the premises or locally, offering full breakfast and a reasonably priced menu for lunch and dinner.
5. Extras such as newspapers, room service, mini-bar, film/DVD hire should be met by the claimant - please note this list is not exhaustive.

Please note:

Claimants with special requirements, e.g. for managing a disability or complying with a religious obligation, are asked to ensure that these needs will be able to be met before any overnight accommodation is booked. In case of difficulty please contact your Research Council HR team. Any personal information provided in these circumstances would, of course, be treated as confidential.