



Sedbergh International Summer School

BUSINESS TRAVEL & EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY	
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This policy provides guidance and limits for all travel & entertainment, and will reflect our collective responsibility to conduct business in a responsible manner.

It is not possible to accommodate every conceivable situation so staff are required not only to adhere to the terms in this policy, but also to exercise judgement to ensure that all claims made are considered reasonable.

This policy is designed to:

- Ensure all employees have a clear and consistent understanding of procedures for business travel and expenses.
- Ensure all employees obtain prior authorisation to travel from line managers.
- Ensure employees are reimbursed for all reasonable business travel and entertainment expenses.
- Provide employees who travel with a reasonable level of service and comfort.
- Ensure travel costs and expenses have been incurred in the most cost effective way.

Responsibility

The employee travelling must obtain authorisation from their Line Manager or above in advance of making any travel arrangements, and is responsible for complying with the School Travel Policy.

The manager who approves and signs expense claims is responsible for their accuracy.

The School will reimburse employees for all reasonable and necessary expenses while traveling on authorized company business or entertaining business clients.

The School assumes no obligation to reimburse employees for expenses that are not in compliance with this policy.

Employees who do not comply with this policy may be subject to delay or withholding of reimbursement, and/or disciplinary action.

Documentation Requirements

Authorisation must be sought in advance of the trip or expense. This is ideally in written form, however during the busy Summer School period this may be obtained verbally from the Course Director or Operations Director.

Employees must file expense reports no later than 30 days following the completion of the trip or of incurring the expense.

Business related meal and entertainment expenses will only be reimbursed if they are:

- Supported by VAT receipts and credit card slips where necessary.
- Submitted with names of the individuals present and their positions whenever practical.
- Submitted with an expense claim form.
- Fully completed and appropriately authorised.
- Claimed in line with this policy and within 90 days.

Employees must submit the following documentation with their Expense Form:

- Air/Rail – passenger receipt.
- Hotel – hotel invoice or other proof of payment.
- Car Rental – credit card receipt or rental agency invoice.
- Taxi – receipt and journey details.
- Entertainment – credit card receipt or till receipt.
- Meals – credit card receipt or till receipts.

Where expenses are paid for a group of employees, the most senior should pay and make the claim, noting the names of the other employees in attendance.

The School expects the employee to use professional judgement when consuming alcoholic beverages during business functions and to act responsibly and avoid excess.

When a receipt is not available, a full explanation of the expense and the reason for the missing receipt is required. Actual bills/receipts must be submitted whenever possible. It is often possible to ask for an email receipt – to save time, ask for these to be sent to iss@sedberghschool.org.

Disregard for company policy or altering of receipts may result in disciplinary action.

Air Travel

Air travel reservations should be made in such a manner as to secure the best available fare.

When travelling by air:

- Employees are expected to use the lowest logical airfare available.

- Flights should, where possible, be booked well in advance - fully flexible fares should only be selected where there is a business need to do so.
- Employees are expected to use non-direct flights when the savings are substantial.
- Obtain Bursar or Second Master approval for all international travel.
- All air travel should be Economy Class unless the Business class ticket is less or the same price, OR the flight is more than 10 hours and the approval of the Bursar has been obtained.

Upgrades for Air Travel

Upgrades for air travel are not reimbursable. If an employee wishes to upgrade, it is done at the employee's expense.

Airline promotions/Loyalty schemes

Promotions such as free economy tickets with a business class ticket should be considered if they can reduce the overall travel costs. If it is not possible to take advantage of such offers for business use, and if there are not cost implications, such offers may be used for private benefit.

Staff may accrue Airmiles for their own personal use where there is no alternative benefit available to the School as confirmed by Eton Travel.

Cancellations

When a trip is cancelled after the ticket has been issued, the employee should inquire about using the same ticket for future travel.

Lost / Stolen Airline Tickets

Immediately upon discovery of a lost/stolen ticket, the traveller must report the loss to the travel agent/issuing authority who will file the lost ticket application OR fill out a lost ticket application at the airline ticket counter.

Airport Parking

When parking at an airport is part of business travel, it is expected that employees will utilize Long Term parking lots. Short Term parking fees will not be reimbursed.

Rail Travel

Rail travel should be standard class unless there is a clear business need to upgrade, or unless first class travel is available at no additional cost. First class travel must be approved by your line manager prior to booking.

Taxis

Where taxis provide the most appropriate means of travel, receipts must be submitted, and journey details included on the claim form.

Sustenance

If School business requires an overnight stay away from home, reasonable expenses will be reimbursed:

- Hotel bills as below
- Food and beverages to a maximum of £50 per day (expenses actually incurred)

When travelling to overseas destinations where food and accommodation are considerably higher than the UK, the Bursar can agree higher spend limits.

Staff Hotels and Accommodation (with the exception of the Headmaster, Chairman and Governors)

Hotel reservations should be made at the best available rate, and in line with the suggested maximums as below:

UK hotels	£100 per night excluding breakfast
London & Overseas hotels	£150 per night excluding breakfast

Where higher rates are required, these must be agreed in advance with the Course Director as above.

Overseas Travel Risk Assessment

Where an employee travels to a destination where there may be credible risks to personal safety, it may be necessary to take relevant precautions in order to mitigate such risks.

You should always research the country/city you are visiting and consider the risks and specific issues relevant to your trip.

Prior to travel, all employees should read the Travel Planning tips & Risk Assessment guidance at Appendix A, and access the FCO website at:

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/> for local updates.

Heads of Department/Line Managers and the staff travelling must have fully considered any potential risks in advance, in order to be able to make an informed judgement on whether or not to travel, and to be aware of the steps to take in an emergency.

Bribery Act 2010

The Act is concerned with bribery. Very generally, this is defined as giving someone a financial or other advantage to encourage that person to perform their functions or activities improperly or to reward that person for having already done so. So this could cover seeking to influence a decision-maker by giving some kind of extra benefit to that decision-maker rather than by what can legitimately be offered as part of a tender process. The Act is not concerned with fraud, theft, books and record offences, Companies Act offences, money laundering offences or competition law.

All staff must familiarise themselves with The Bribery Act 2010: Checklist in the School policies directory prior to travel, and all gifts or hospitality valued in excess of £50 must be recorded in the School's hospitality register.

For international travel simple internet searches can help assess and mitigate potential risks, and advice can be sought from UK diplomatic posts or the UK Trade and Investment website: www.ukti.gov.uk.

Due diligence must be exercised in the selection of overseas agents and business partners. If the potential risk is assessed as low, checks can be done by making enquiries with trusted business contacts and via local chambers of commerce. Where the risk is perceived to be higher, the partner should provide a CV, financial statements or accounts, and other references.

Hospitality or promotional expenditure that is reasonable and proportionate to the business in hand does not contravene the Act.

Car Rental

Employees may rent a car to get to their destination when driving is more cost effective than airline or rail travel. Employees may rent a car at their destination when it is less expensive than other transportation modes such as taxis, airport shuttles, or when entertaining customers. When plans change, employees are responsible for revising previously made reservations.

When picking up a rental car, check with the rental agent for any promotional rates, last-minutes specials or free upgrades. At the time of rental, inspect the car and be sure that any damage found is noted on the contract before the vehicle is accepted.

Employees must reserve a car in the compact category unless:

- An upgrade is available at no extra cost
- Two or more colleagues are travelling together
- Entertaining customers
- Cars in the authorized category are not available
- Transporting excess baggage required for business.

Entertainment Expenses: Entertaining Customers

Entertainment expenses include events such as theatre and sporting events, whereby a business discussion takes place during, immediately before, or immediately after the event.

Approval for reimbursement of entertainment expenses can only be granted by department heads on receipt of the completed expense claim form, and will only be granted if the:

- Person entertained has a potential or actual business relationship with Sedbergh.
- Expenditure directly precedes, includes or follows a business discussion that would benefit the School.

Miscellaneous Expenses

Miscellaneous expenses are those that do not fit into the previous categories, but are directly business related and therefore reimbursable with the completed claim form, examples of which are below:

- Office services (ie faxes, copies, overnight delivery / postage)
- Currency conversion fees
- Business gifts of reasonable value with prior management approval
- Laundry / Dry Cleaning / Suit Pressing for trips exceeding 3 days

The following are examples of items that would not be reimbursable under this policy:

- Airline club / Country club membership dues
- Parking tickets or other fines
- Excess baggage charges for non-business items
- Expenses for travel incurred by companions or family members
- Expenses related to vacation or personal days while on a business trip, other than sustenance
- Loss or theft of personal funds or property
- Avoidable cancellation charges for hotel or car service
- Rental car upgrades
- Repairs due to accidents
- Excessive mini-bar charges

Appendix A

Travel Planning Tips & Risk Assessment Guidance

1. **Check whether there are any a special occasions** such as public holidays/local elections/political conferences/major sporting events in the destinations you are travelling to. As well as affecting prices, hotel availability and traffic, security may be heightened and the likelihood of terrorist attacks can increase.
2. **Make three copies of your itinerary, passport & visa.** Pack one copy separately from the originals, leave one with your office and one with your emergency contact person. Please note: many countries will require you to carry your passport/id at all times. Having another copy in your luggage will help if your originals are lost/stolen/confiscated.
3. **Email any important documents to yourself** - if you lose your memory stick or your laptop gets stolen, you can still access your email in the hotel Business Centre. Make a list of contacts before you leave the country.
4. **Use hotels you know and trust, or are recommended.** Reputable hotels are not just for comfort, they have higher security standards and good medical emergency procedures.
5. **If you are travelling to a country you have not been to before - do some research.** While you may have been to a neighbouring country, there will be differences and country-specific issues to consider. Visit the [FCO website](#) – Travel and living abroad for advice.
6. **Budget airlines can be a false economy.** By the time you use the add-ons (luggage, meals etc.) the cost could end up the same as regular airlines.
7. **Check the medical provision and insurance cover before you go.** Although you will be covered by School insurance, there may be specific requirements by country. Ensure you have the details of the school policy with you.
8. **If on medication.** When carrying own medication, take a copy of your prescription with you and note the generic names. If you have any doubt about the legality of a certain drug in a country, consult the embassy or consulate of that country first. Keep medicines in their original containers. If a medication is unusual, carry a letter from your doctor attesting to your need to take the drug. Take enough medication for the duration of your trip plus 7 days (for emergencies).
9. **Take a photo of your luggage on your phone** – if it goes missing you can show the image to the baggage desk people at the airport, making it easier to find it for you.

Risk	Measures to be taken
Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be aware of credit card fraud – do not allow cards to be taken out of your sight - Never resist a mugger - Do not wear expensive jewellery - Ensure that your office & emergency contact person have copies of your itinerary & passport/visa - Make yourself aware of any common scams and think about how to react if you are approached - Use the safe in your hotel room and use the security chain while you are in your room - Ensure you have the numbers required to cancel credit cards and travellers cheques - Do not carry all money and cards together
Terrorism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be fully aware of the current security situation in the cities you are visiting - Ensure you follow the recommendations for local transport (below) - Check dates of trip against public holidays etc.
Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be fully aware of the current security situation in the cities you are visiting
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid all demonstrations - Prepare an alternate travel plan if strikes are anticipated - Check dates of trip against local elections, major sporting events and public holidays
Kidnap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain a low public profile - Do not publicise your itinerary, but notify your family and colleagues of your movements as much as possible - Be alert to suspicious persons, vehicles and activity, particularly in the vicinity of your accommodation - Pre-programme your mobile phone to the emergency services.
Infrastructure	<p style="margin-left: 20px;">Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrange a hotel transfer or reliable local contact to collect you from the airport on arrival - Use hotel cars or recommended taxi companies - Be aware of road conditions, especially when travelling outside of main cities - If driving yourself, ensure that you have the correct insurance, licence and permits and are fully aware of local driving regulations - If using local buses, be wary of the roadworthiness of the vehicle and safeguard your belongings and wear your seat belt, even if the locals do not

Risk	Measures to be taken
<p>Medical capabilities</p> <p>Contaminated food</p> <p>Contaminated water & drinking water</p> <p>Utilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check for medical advice and capabilities overseas from school insurers - Ensure you pack a sufficient amount of any prescribed medication for your trip plus 7 days extra
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eat only recently prepared food that has been thoroughly cooked - Drink sufficient liquids to prevent dehydration - Busier restaurants may be safer as they are more likely to serve freshly cooked food
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drink bottled water only - Use bottled water to brush your teeth - Avoid ice in drinks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check compatibility of all electrical equipment being taken - Pack sufficient torches, batteries and travel plugs - Charge your mobile phone daily
<p>Natural Risks</p> <p>Natural disasters</p> <p>Contact with insects</p>	<p>Climate conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be aware of the weather forecasts for the dates of your trip and pack appropriate clothing - Use high-factor sunscreen and carry a bottle of water in hot conditions - Avoid strenuous activity during the hottest part of the day
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask your hotel reception for emergency procedures - Make a note of the contact details for the local British High Commission/Embassy - Ensure that your office & emergency contact person have copies of your itinerary & passport/ visa
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that you have the required inoculations before travelling - Consult your GP for malaria advice where necessary
<p>Cultural Risks</p> <p>Legal differences</p>	<p>Local Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that you are aware of and respect local religious restrictions and festivals - Dress appropriately at all times - Be aware of causing offence when taking photographs of local people and DO NOT take photographs near police or military establishments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be aware of any local laws that are different to the UK (see Local Culture section on FCO country page) - Take a copy of your prescription in your hand luggage (some medications which are legal in the UK are not legal overseas – check the embassy website of the country being visited) - Ensure that you have all the required up-to-date permits