



Expenses Policy

Tees Valley Education Trust

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Name of originator/author:	J. Wilson
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	SCOPE	3
3	AUTHORISATION OF EXPENSES	3
4	WHO CAN AUTHORISE PAYMENT	3
5	CLAIMING EXPENSES	4
6	PAYMENTS DIRECT TO EXTERNAL SUPPLIERS	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
7	PETTY CASH.....	4
8	ENTERTAINMENT.....	5
9	OUT OF POCKET EXPENSES.....	5
10	SUBSISTENCE	5
11	TRAINING COURSES	5
12	TRAVELLING EXPENSES.....	6
13	CAR PARKING.....	6
14	HOTEL ACCOMMODATION	6
15	USING YOUR OWN CAR ON BUSINESS	6
16	UNIFORMS	7
17	PROFESSIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS.....	7
18	TELEPHONE CALLS AND IT RELATED EXPENSES.....	7

1 INTRODUCTION

This procedure provides guidance to all individuals claiming reimbursement of travel, subsistence or other expenses incurred in connection with Trust/academy business.

2 SCOPE

This procedure is mandatory for all staff. Failure to comply with this procedure may result in disciplinary action.

The policy applies to all expenditure, regardless of funding source, and covers all personal business expenses irrespective of the payment method, applying equally to credit card transactions, petty cash purchases, purchase invoices and individual expense claims. The policy reflects the need to manage our activities efficiently, keeping bureaucracy to a minimum, while complying with tax and other statutory obligations.

3 AUTHORISATION OF EXPENSES

All expenses must be authorised and no claimant may authorise their own claim. By authorising transactions, the authoriser is confirming that the costs have been incurred and incurred necessarily for the purposes of the Trust/academy business, that there is sufficient budget to cover the expense and that supporting documentation, such as a receipt, is presented.

4 WHO CAN AUTHORISE PAYMENT

- Claims by individual members of support or teaching staff shall be authorised by the Head Teacher.
- Claims made by administrative staff shall be authorised by the Head Teacher or Director for Finance, Resources and Operations (DFRO).
- Claims made by the Head Teacher or DFRO shall be authorised by the CEO.
- Claims made by the CEO should be authorised by the Trust Board Chair.
- Claims made by Trustees shall be authorised by the CEO/DFRO.

All Claims should be submitted and authorised within three months of incurring the costs to ensure budgets are managed.

Any amendments made to forms should be initialled by the claimant and the individual authorising them.

Authorised forms should be forwarded promptly to the ABM or DFRO once they have been completed to ensure timely payment.

Any attempt to submit a false claim form will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

The Trust may, at its discretion, allow members of staff to use the Trust credit card. The normal procedures for reclaiming business expenditure, as set out in this policy, will also apply to credit card expenditure.

5 CLAIMING EXPENSES

In order to comply with HM Revenue & Customs requirements expenses reimbursed will only be made on production of receipts or invoices, except in the limited instances specified below in which expenses are reimbursed by the way of fixed rate allowances for which receipts are not required.

Claims can only be made for the actual cost of expenses incurred wholly, exclusively and necessarily in the performance of academy business. Ordinarily a claimant should only claim travel costs for themselves. Where a claim is made for multiple costs, all others including designations should be listed. Claimants are expected to minimise costs without impairing the efficiency of the academy/Trust.

All claims must be supported by receipts in order for expense payments to be made. Non-attachment of receipts will mean that the item(s) may be disallowed from the claim. Mileage claims do not require receipts unless fuel is being claimed for.

Expenses incurred on behalf of the Trust/ academy are to be recorded in detail on expense claim forms. These forms must be supported by receipts.

Claimants must sign the declaration on the claim form, and the form must be authorised under the procedures described under “authorisation of expense claims”.

The form should be submitted within three months from the end of the month in which the expense is incurred. Staff should submit their claim to the relevant person (see section 4). Please note, however, that individuals are encouraged, where appropriate, to submit expense claims on a monthly basis.

Discretion may be allowed in the case of late submission of expenses claims for staff where legitimate explanations exist for delays by your line manager.

6 PETTY CASH

Petty cash is only used for small items of actual expenditure and must be prior approved by the Headteacher/Budget holder. The maximum amount which may be claimed in respect of any item through the petty cash system is £25.

Any item claimed on petty cash voucher must be incurred for Trust/academy business only. An appropriate description, detailing the purpose for which the expense was incurred must be provided on the Petty Cash Reimbursement Form. All claims must be signed by an authorised signatory in accordance with the Trust’s Scheme of Delegation. An itemised receipt must also be attached to the form for each item of expenditure.

The following items are not allowable through Petty Cash or expenses claims, however this is not an exhaustive list and approval must be sought from the DFRO as the items may be considered Benefits In Kind:

- Cash Advances
- Birthday, retirement and other types of cards
- Flowers, gifts or vouchers
- Christmas presents
- Alcohol
- Any other miscellaneous items which are not for business use.

7 ENTERTAINMENT

Necessary costs of entertaining business contacts will be reimbursed on production of receipts. For this purpose, “business contacts” do not include other employees of the Trust. The claim form must record the names of the people in attendance at such meals, their organisation and the purpose of the meeting.

Costs that are incidental to business entertainment costs (for example, the cost of a taxi to a restaurant where a contact or customer is to be entertained), should be described as business entertainment on the expense claim for (and not, for example, claimed under “Travel”).

It should be noted that where practicable, all entertainment expenditure must be authorised by the CEO before it is incurred.

8 OUT OF POCKET EXPENSES

Employees may claim the cost of small out of pocket business expenses as described under section 3 above where it is not normally possible to obtain receipts. Examples of such expenses are parking meters (but not fines), tube tickets, bridge toll charges and telephone calls from public call boxes. Where it is possible, receipts should be retained and attached to claims. Claims must be limited to the actual amount of expense incurred and not claimed as a round sum allowance. All items claimed should be itemised and described as fully as possible on the claim form.

9 SUBSISTENCE

If the Trust/ academy requires an individual to travel, they are entitled to claim the cost of meals taken en route. Only the costs of meals taken in the course of business journeys will be borne by the Trust/academy in the circumstances described below.

Provided that an employee is more than five miles away from both their home and usual workplace and absent from each for a period of more than 5 hours spanning the normal lunchtime, lunch can be purchased up to the value of £5.00. Receipts must be retained and presented along with a claim.

Provided that an employee is more than five miles away from both their home and usual workplace and absent from each for a period of more than 10 hours spanning the normal mealtimes, food can be purchased up to the value of £20.00. Receipts must be retained and presented along with a claim.

10 TRAINING COURSES

The Trust provides training courses to enable employees to improve their effectiveness at work. The Trust organises training courses in-house and the costs of these courses are borne by the Trust or academies. Where it is necessary for a member of staff to travel to attend such courses, any travel and subsistence expenses incurred may be claimed as business expenses under the rules indicated in this policy.

Additionally, at its discretion, the Trust/academies will bear the cost of external training courses. The Trust/academies may agree to meet the cost of courses where the training leads to the acquisition or improvement

of knowledge, skills or personal qualities which are likely to prove useful to employees in carrying out the duties of their employment, or which better qualify them to undertake the duties of another employment within the Trust/academies in due course.

11 TRAVELLING EXPENSES

All travel for business purposes should be booked through the academy offices, where possible.

Employees who need to travel by air should travel at tourist or economy class. Business class is permitted on any long-haul flight in excess of 7 hours, where there is no rest period between landing and working. Approval must be sought from the Trust Board in advance of travel being booked.

Where possible, train tickets should be booked in advance through the academy offices. Best value does not always mean the cheapest ticket and consideration should be given to the journey time, the proximity of the station to the person's home etc since this can increase overall costs significantly. 1st class tickets should not be purchased unless they are available at similar costs to standard class tickets or the journey is longer than 2hrs and the person is required to work during the journey.

Details of any rail/flight/bus/taxi costs for which reimbursement is sought should be claimed on a staff expenses claim form, as for other public transport expenses.

12 CAR PARKING

Parking costs incurred in the course of business travel may be claimed via the expenses system, but the costs of parking otherwise at the normal place of work may not be claimed.

13 HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

When you are travelling on business you should obtain accommodation in a reasonable quality hotel (the Trust defines a 'reasonable quality hotel' as being one of up to 3* standard). However if a reduced rate for 4* or above can be obtained and would be the equivalent to a 3* price or if there is no other accommodation available at 3* then this would be acceptable. The Trust will bear the cost of the room, evening meal and breakfast. Where meals are not taken in the hotel, separate restaurant receipts should be obtained or alternatively you may charge only the room cost to the hotel bill and claim all other meal and incidental costs by way of the subsistence allowance under the rules described in section 11 above.

14 USING YOUR OWN CAR ON BUSINESS

All Trust/academy staff who wish to use their own car for work purposes must have 'business use' on their insurance policy. Employees claiming travel expenses for using their own vehicle must not smoke (including the use of e-cigarettes) during these journeys (see No Smoking Policy).

Before travelling, individuals are required to compare standard class public transport costs, and, if cheaper and practical, should opt for rail travel when a direct rail service is available.

For agreed journeys, employees will be reimbursed at the rate of 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles in any tax year (6th April – 5th April), dropping thereafter to 25p per mile. Employees can claim 5p per passenger per business mile for carrying fellow employees in a car or van on journeys which are also work journeys for them. If you are authorised to use your own car on Trust business you should claim following the procedure described below.

Full details of the journey, including date, reason for journey, starting points and destinations, should be shown in the appropriate columns of the staff expenses claim form.

No tax or NIC liability arises in respect of mileage claimed for the use of the employee's own car under the above rules and details need not be reported in personal tax returns.

Should an employee choose to use a motorcycle for business travel, then an allowance of 24p per mile may be claimed. Employees should ensure that they have appropriate insurance arrangements in place for the use of a motorcycle for business purposes.

The cost of fuel used for business purposes in cars and vans hired by the Trust/academy should be entered on the staff expenses claim form under travel.

15 UNIFORMS

The Trust will provide uniforms for some employees up to the value of £75. The provision of clothing will be arranged by the Trust. Costs may not be claimed by way of reimbursement in cash.

The Trust logo will be imprinted/stitched into or otherwise permanently attached to all clothing provided.

16 PROFESSIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Personal professional subscriptions for employees are the personal responsibility of individual members of staff. No reimbursement shall be provided for such costs, although individual staff members may be able to claim tax relief for such costs either through their tax code or on their own tax self-assessment returns. However, if there are benefits to the Trust as a whole, by being a member of an organisation, payment may be allowable. This must be agreed, prior to the expense being incurred, by the CEO.

17 TELEPHONE CALLS AND IT RELATED EXPENSES

Home and telephone calls – employees that are required to make business calls on their home or mobile telephones must attach the appropriate bill to the staff expenses claim form with the relevant business calls highlighted and only these will be reimbursed. If they are away on business overnight and need to make essential personal calls see section 11.

In all cases, provision of top up cards for Pay as you Go services are not permitted as HM Revenue & Customs rules cannot be met.

Broadband and Internet Connections – The Trust will not reimburse staff for broadband or internet connections as the Trust cannot demonstrate sole and exclusive business use to satisfy HM Revenue and Customs guidelines.

18 COSTS OF HOMEWORKING

This Homeworking Policy applies only during Emerging Infectious Diseases (EID). It applies to those who have to work from home during the EID either because of Government guidance or because the Trust has made the decision to ask employees to work from home to prevent the spread of infection and safeguard the health and safety of its employees.

The costs of electricity, water, heating, telephone, broadband and other utilities will not be covered by the Trust. These costs will remain the employee's responsibility. However, the Trust will contribute £6 a week towards the added costs for the employee 'required' to work from home. This will be paid via payroll with the employee's salary, once the staff expense form has been completed and signed by both the employee and manager. Claims must be made in advance of the following months payroll deadline e.g. June's claim must be submitted by 5th July.

Refer to the temporary home working policy.