

Expenses Policy

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1. General principles and guideline

The principle of the Expenses Policy is to ensure that employees continue to be reimbursed for all necessary expenditure reasonably incurred in the performance of their duties. The basis of expense claims will be actual expenditure up to limits as specified in this policy; limits will be reviewed annually.

Managers and staff should note that authorising managers have no authority to vary this policy; claims for items not allowed under the policy will be rejected. Staff should note that if they pay for expenses incurred by another individual, any deductions from their claim for non-compliance with policy would be their responsibility.

1.1. Timeliness of submission

Expenses should be submitted as soon as possible after they have been incurred. All expense claims should be submitted no later than 3 months since being incurred. The Trust are not liable for any claims submitted after this time.

1.2. Submission of Expenses

Expenses should be submitted to the finance officer (after having them authorised by your line manager) as soon as possible, using the official expenses claim form (email finance@mowbrayeducation.org for a copy, or download from www.mowbrayeducation.org/staff). Finance will then receive and process the claim, any queries with the expenses form will be emailed back to the employee with details of the query.

Please ensure that when submitting your claim, you include ALL receipts relating to the claim. Any additional paperwork that supports your claim should also be included. Once processed, this will be included and paid on the next monthly BACs run.

Petty cash should NOT be used to re-imburse expenses.

1.3. Receipts

Receipts must accompany all claims, where possible. Credit card slips or statements will not be accepted as evidence of business expenditure. A VAT receipt must include the name and address of the retailer, the retailer's VAT registration number, the date of the purchase, details of what goods or services have been purchased and the VAT inclusive value of those goods or services in sterling.

In the case of lost receipts, written evidence of the claim should be authorised by the appropriate manager. The Trust reserve the right not to pay expenses without a supporting valid receipt.

1.4. Authorisation of expenses

All expense claims must be authorised by a more senior manager who is familiar with your work schedule and, ideally, did not attend any event being claimed for. Authorising managers must ensure they are happy with the claim or reject it for correction or further information.

Advice can be sought from the Headteacher or the Chief Financial Officer.

2. Travel (including air, rail and ferry)

2.1. Alternatives to travelling and mode of travel

Wherever practicable, audio conference facilities and video conference facilities should be considered as an alternative to travelling.

2.2. Rail travel

First class rail travel is only permitted where it can be demonstrated that it is the cheapest ticketing option compared to equivalent standard fare like for like tickets.

Significant savings can be obtained by booking in advance and specifying outward and/or return journeys at time of booking.

2.3. Air travel

MET travellers should use the lowest cost means of travel and fare. Significant savings can be obtained by specifying outward and/or return journeys at time of booking. Some airlines will also allow changes to fixed tickets for an additional charge and this may be cheaper than buying a flexible ticket. Fully flexible tickets should only be requested when necessary.

2.4. Personal travel linked to MET business

Personal travel as part of a business trip is discouraged, and in any event only allowed where such travel reduces the cost of business travel to MET e.g., staying a Saturday night to take advantage of a lower cost fare. Where additional costs are incurred, e.g., Saturday night in a hotel, the individual employee must meet these.

Adequate private travel insurance must be held.

Weekend accommodation will be paid where the traveller is unable to return home as part of a longer business trip.

2.5. Travel with a spouse or partner

If a spouse or partner who is not involved in MET business accompanies a member of staff, the traveller must bear any additional costs incurred relating to their spouse/partner. It is not permitted to downgrade the travel or accommodation booked in order to fund travel costs for a companion.

2.6. Frequent traveller schemes and personal incentives

Membership of a frequent traveller scheme must not deflect from using the most cost-effective option presented. MET will not reimburse frequent traveller membership fees.

3. Transport

3.1. Buses and public transport

When travelling, public transport should be used adhering to government safety guidelines.

3.2. Minicabs and black taxis

Taxi fares may be claimed when travelling in an unknown location, where the saving in time is important or where there are issues surrounding personal safety. A limit of 20 miles per trip should be placed on taxi journeys.

A destination must be specified for all bookings. Travel by minicab or taxi is not ordinarily appropriate for journeys where the expected fare is likely to be over £25. Black taxis are more expensive than minicabs and they should only be booked as a last resort. Where taxis are hailed the cost can be recovered through an expense claim.

3.3. Journeys between home and normal place of work

You are expected to meet the full cost of all journeys between your home and your normal place of work.

3.4. Journeys between home and temporary place of work

If you can demonstrate that your journey from home to a temporary base (or vice versa) incurs excess travel costs, the excess costs will be reimbursed. Full details of the excess costs must be provided on your expense claim.

4. Driving (including mileage rates and hire cars)

4.1. Mileage

When driving on MET business, provided it is further from your home to your temporary destination than it is from your home to your normal place of work, you can claim the lower of the distance:

- from your home to your temporary destination; or
- from your normal place of work to the temporary destination.

4.2. Driver's responsibility

It is your responsibility to ensure that you comply with your Motor Vehicle Insurance Policy before driving a private vehicle on MET business and that it is insured for Business Use. MET accepts no liability for loss of, or damage to, vehicles being used on MET business. Tax relief may be available when using your own vehicle for work; please view the HM Revenue & Customs guide on using your own vehicle for work.

All drivers must note that any parking, road traffic fines, congestion fines or penalties incurred are their personal responsibility and will not be reimbursed by the Trust.

It is the responsibility of drivers to ensure the road worthiness of their vehicle and that the vehicle meets all the requirements of the Road Traffic Act.

4.3. Mileage rates

Mileage should be claimed at the HMRC Travel – Mileage and Fuel Allowance Approved rates, (correct at Jan 2023):

From 2011 onwards	Car & Vans	Motorcycle	Bike
Up to 10,000 miles	45p	24p	20p
Over 10,000 miles	25p	24p	20p

You should complete the expenses form keeping a running total of the business mileage claimed in the nominated field.

4.4. Hiring a vehicle

Vehicles should only be rented for business purposes where it is cost effective and when public transportation and minicabs are impractical, more expensive or not available. The class of vehicle booked should be the minimum size and specification necessary to allow duties to be performed.

4.5. Fuel for hire cars

The cost of fuel used on business when hiring a car can be reimbursed by submitting an appropriate receipt. Hire vehicles should be returned with the agreed level of fuel, as hire companies charge inflated rates for refuelling.

4.6. Parking

Reasonable car parking costs while on business will be met so long as a valid receipt is provided.

4.7. Tolls and congestion charges

Necessary road and bridge toll costs will be met, including the congestion charge where there is a genuine business need to incur it, and receipts can be provided. No tolls or congestion charges can be claimed for travel between home and work.

4.8. Fines

The individual must pay any fines, including parking tickets, incurred whilst using a hired vehicle for any motoring offences, promptly. Failure to do so will result in the cost of the fine and administration fee being recovered directly from the driver. MET will not meet the cost of fines incurred by individual for motoring or parking offenses while on MET business.

5. Overnight accommodation

5.1. Accommodation Rates

If you must stay away from base overnight, MET will pay for the cost of a standard room with bathroom facilities.

The cost of the room should not normally exceed the following limits. These limits will be the maximum claimable, with receipts to be submitted.

5.1.1. Overnight stay outside of London (and other similar destinations)

	Cost per night (ex VAT)	Cost per night (Inc VAT)
Room Only	£75	£90
Bed and Breakfast	£85	£102

5.1.2. Overnight stay in London (and other similar high cost destinations)

	Cost per night (ex VAT)	Cost per night (Inc VAT)
Room Only	£100	£120
Bed and Breakfast	£110	£132

5.2. Private accommodation

In circumstances where it is economical for MET, a line manager may authorise in advance, where you are more than 40 miles from home, for staff to stay in private accommodation, with family or friends. An allowance of £20 without a receipt may be claimed for this.

6. Meals

6.1. Meals whilst away overnight

When necessarily away from base overnight, MET will reimburse the actual cost of relevant meals on presentation of receipts, up to the limits (including VAT and service) below. These limits take account of the fact that staff would normally incur a domestic cost for meals in any case:

Meal	Limit (incl. VAT & Service)
Breakfast	£5
Lunch	£10
Dinner	£25

If certain meals have been provided for you, (i.e. breakfast included in the accommodation charge or location catering provided for lunch) only the other meals may be claimed.

6.2. Group meals

If one member of a team pays a bill on behalf of other members of staff, details of the reason, location, names and number of staff must be shown on the expenses claim. Claiming shares of joint expenses is not permitted under any circumstances. Claims cannot exceed the number of staff multiplied by the relevant per head cost for the type of meal.

6.3. Gratuities

Gratuities are treated as discretionary costs by the Inland Revenue. As such, any reimbursement is treated as a taxable benefit and, therefore, gratuities will not be reimbursed.

Service charges included within the overall cost of the meal are acceptable and will be reimbursed as part of the usual expenses claim..

7. Business phone calls

When you use your own home or mobile phone on MET business, the cost of itemised business calls will be met on production of an itemised bill. MET, irrespective of whether these include a certain amount of free call time, will pay no rental charges. HM Revenue & Customs will only allow MET to reimburse the business call costs.

MET will not meet the cost of phone cards for pay as you go mobiles.

MET will meet the cost of business calls from a callbox or hotel room, provided details of the call, including the length and to whom, are included on the expense claim.

8. Working Base

All employees will have a designated work base. This will be your normal place of work. If you are required to travel as a normal part of your work your designated work base may be your home or MET premises close to your home. Your designated work place will be confirmed to you in writing.

When travelling on business for MET by car, directly from or to your home, you must deduct the home to work base mileage from your mileage claim, an HMRC requirement.

When traveling on business for MET by public transport, directly from or to your home, you must deduct the home to work public transport rate published by HMRC, from the cost of your travel claim.

Home to work base mileage, in the event of a dispute, will be based on Google Maps.

8.1.1. Example 1

Employee lives 25 miles from their normal place of work. They travel directly from home to a MET sponsored academy to provide curriculum support. They return the same evening directly to home. The sponsored academy is 55 miles from their home and 40 miles from their normal work place.

In their expenses claim they claim 2x55 miles for the round trip to the sponsored academy, minus 2x25 miles for their normal home to work mileage. They claim therefore $(2 \times 55) - (2 \times 25) = 60$ miles.

Had the employee simply travelled from their work base to the sponsored academy they would have claimed $2 \times 40 = 80$ miles. As they are driving rather than using public transport, they must also check that their actual mileage minus home to work mileage is less miles than travelling directly from their place of work, as they must only claim the lower mileage.

For their first 10,000 business miles claimed during the current tax year, they can claim those miles at 45p per mile. After 10,000 miles have been claimed in the current tax year, the miles are claimed at 25p per mile.

8.1.2. Example 2

Employee lives 25 miles from their normal place of work. They travel to their work base before travelling on to a MET sponsored academy to provide curriculum support. They return the same evening directly to home. The sponsored academy is 55 miles from their home and 40 miles from their work base.

In their expenses claim for the outward journey they simply claim the work base to sponsored academy mileage = 40 miles. On the return journey they travelled directly to their home. For the return leg they need to claim the sponsored academy to home mileage minus the home to work base mileage 55-25=30 miles. Their total mileage claim will therefore be 40+30=70 miles.

8.1.3. Example 3

Employee lives 25 miles from their normal place of work. They travel directly from home to a MET sponsored academy to provide curriculum support, by public transport. They return the same evening directly to home. The return public transport fare was £22.

In their expenses claim they can claim the £22 public transport fare. However, because they have travelled directly from home, they must first deduct the value of the home to work travel. In this case the home to work cost is calculated based on the current HMRC public transport rate of 25p per mile. The value of the home to work journey is 25p x 50 miles (return trip) = £12.50.

Their expenses claim will therefore be: Actual cost – Value of Home to Work Journey

£22.00 - £12.50 = £9.50

8.2. Contractors & Visitors

Entitlement to claim expenses, for contractors and subcontractors, will normally be set out in the contractual relationship. Where an entitlement exists but no specific levels have been set out in a formal contract, then the rates and principles set out in this policy for employees will also apply to contractors.

When invoicing for reimbursement of expenses, contractors must also include copies of receipts and timesheets to support the invoice.

Where line managers have authorised payments for visitor travel (e.g. an author giving a free talk to pupils but claiming costs of travel), a specific visitors expense claim form is available from the Finance Team.

9. Hospitality & Gifts

Hospitality (refreshments or meals) may be provided for college meetings or when entertaining, for business purposes, a person or organisation from outside the academy. Normally this will be provided in house but on occasions external providers may be necessary. When external providers are used receipts identifying the VAT element must be provided.

Whilst hospitality is an accepted courtesy of a business relationship, the recipient should not allow a position to be reached whereby its acceptance might be deemed to have influenced a decision or lead to potential allegations of conflict of interest.

The cost of hospitality must always be authorised in advance by the Headteacher or suitable senior manager. It should be appropriate and meet best value principles.

Gifts to contacts, in the course of business, should ordinarily be school specific, or Mowbray Education Trust promotional merchandise.

Gifts to staff from school funds are permissible where the reward is for exceptional endeavours (which should be normally reflected in appraisals) or for reasons where such gifts would be normal practice. Cost should be considered and not more than £50.

Employees should be aware that such gifts are likely to be treated as a benefit in kind by HMRC and therefore taxable.

Anything that is cash, or cash equivalent must be taxed as earnings.

Gifts connected with an employee's welfare, e.g. flowers when ill, or for bereavement, or to celebrate a family event are not likely to be taxable, but advice should be sought.

Substantial gifts (>£25) received from organisations or individuals should be declared to the Head Teacher and entered onto the Gifts Register, maintained by the Finance Officer.

10. Log of Changes to Document

Date	Version	Page	Change	Who:
Feb 17	V1.0	Original document		SM
June 17	V1.0	Throughout	Minor adjustments following Audit Committee review	SM
Sep 18	V1.0	Throughout	SBM replaced with Finance Officer	SC
Sep 18	V1.0	5	Removed the following – First class rail travel is only permitted where the authorising line manager considers that the need for a working environment, use of portable computer equipment for example, is justified given the length of journey, nature of journey and cost of journey. Replaced with First Class rail travel is only permitted where it can be demonstrated that it is the cheapest ticketing option compared	SC
Sept 19	V1.0	All pages	Annual Review – Addition on front page of version control panel and reformatting for policy consistency – no content changes made.	CFO/Assistant Operations Manager
Sept 19	V1.0	All pages	Annual approval – only change made to reduce overnight stay allowances in London (page 9).	MET Audit Committee
Dec 2020	V1.0	All pages	Grammatical changes made, does not affect content.	Interim CFO.
Dec 2020	V2.0	Page 3 Page 3 Page 6 Page 7 Page 7	Approved with following changes; Sec. 1.2 (2 nd para) – reword to be clearer. Sec. 1.3 – clarity on lost receipts process. Sec. 3.1 – Added Govt safety guidelines. Sec. 4.1 – reword to be clearer. Sec. 4.3 – date changed to 2019.	Trust Board (MC)
Dec 2021	V3.0	Page 3	Removed ‘However, it costs a certain amount to process any claim, so claimants should endeavour not to submit claims for less than £20, unless they represent the total of expenses in a three-month period.’	Interim CFO

Dec 2021	V3.0	Page 3	Added 'All expense claim should be submitted no later than 3 months since being incurred. The Trust are not liable for any claims submitted after this time.'	Interim CFO
Dec 2021	V3.0	Page 7	Mileage rate date updated	Interim CFO
Jan 2023	V3.0	Whole document	<p>Car travel section updated to refer to responsibility for paying fines and also for maintaining car to acceptable driving standard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awful table colours changed - Mileage rates updated. - Meal rates changed <p>8.2 updated for new visitor expenses form.</p> <p>6.3 Gratuities section added.</p>	COO