



# Tudor Grange Academies Trust

## Expenses Policy

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## Contents

1	Introduction .....	3
2	Authorisation procedures .....	3
3	Car mileage .....	4
4	Insurance.....	5
5	Public transport.....	5
6	Rail travel .....	5
7	Subsistence allowance (daily and overnight).....	5
8	Entertaining.....	6
9	Foreign visits (this could include ski trips, cultural trips, return exchange visits) .....	6
10	Academy journeys undertaken in one day .....	6
11	Telephone calls and IT related expenses .....	6
12	Interview expenses .....	7
13	Expenses claimable .....	7
14	Expenses not claimable.....	7
15	Staff benefits.....	7
16	Cash advances.....	7
17	Spectacles for Display Screen Equipment users .....	8
18	Training courses .....	8
19	Car parking.....	8
20	Hired vehicles.....	8
21	Professional subscriptions and membership of professional bodies .....	9

## **1 Introduction**

The principles of this policy are:

- 1.1 To ensure staff are reimbursed on a timely basis for all reasonable expenses incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively in the course of the Trust's business.
- 1.2 That staff should not incur any personal financial benefit through their employment with the Trust other than their agreed salary. Any breach of this principle may lead to disciplinary action.
- 1.3 To ensure staff are aware that only by complying with the Policy can an academy make reimbursements of expenses without deduction of tax.
- 1.4 The Trust recognises there are situations where an employee may be entitled to benefits in addition to their salary. This Policy sets out the relevant provisions in this regard.
- 1.5 To ensure the Trust complies with its legal and tax obligations.
- 1.6 To ensure staff are aware that public relations and perceptions require the Trust not only has a rigorous, effective and transparent staff expenses policy in place, but also that no misleading or unfortunate impression can be created in the application of this Policy. Accordingly, the Internal Auditors will be requested to carry out periodic reviews of the application of this Policy.
- 1.7 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Trust is the Accounting Officer of the Trust and is accountable to Parliament for regulatory compliance of the Trust, i.e. ensuring that public funds are used for their intended purpose. The CEO is therefore ultimately responsible for the application of this Policy and responsible for delegation of authoritative responsibility in respect of this Policy.
- 1.8 The expenses claims procedure ensures that the Trust manages this part of its financial transactions with due diligence. This Policy and procedure are mandatory for all staff. They provide guidance to all individuals claiming reimbursement of travel, subsistence or other expenses incurred in connection with Trust business.
- 1.9 The Policy applies to Members, Trustees, Governors, full and part-time members of staff, agency staff working for the Trust, other temporary staff, and volunteers.

## **2 Authorisation procedures**

- 2.1 Payments to members of staff for personal expenditure (e.g. mileage, subsistence etc.) must be made using a travel and expenses claim form. This form must not be used by an individual to reclaim the costs of equipment, which should be ordered using the requisition/purchase ordering system and paid for upon receipt of an invoice.
- 2.2 The procedures for reimbursement of expenses incurred by staff while engaged on academy business are set out below. All staff wishing to claim expenses should pay particular attention to these procedures, which also include mileage, and subsistence rates.
- 2.3 Original supporting documentation (e.g. receipts, proof of stay, and other supporting information) must be attached to the travel and expenses claim form.
- 2.4 Before any expenses are paid, they will require approval and authorisation. The Principal will approve all travel claims relating to academy staff and the CEO will authorise all travel claims

relating to central staff, Principals and Trust Board members. Claims which are not authorised in compliance with these procedures will not be processed and will be returned unpaid.

- 2.5 Payment will be made via payroll except for some expenses relating to exchange visits, foreign visits, academy journeys undertaken in one day, and governors' expenses. Refer to the appropriate section below for details of how these expenses can be reclaimed.
- 2.6 If a member of staff attempts to submit a false claim this will be treated as a serious offence which may lead to disciplinary action and a referral to the police.

### **3 Car mileage**

- 3.1 Members of staff who have to use their own private car on Trust business must seek prior authorisation to do so from their Line Manager.
- 3.2 They should ensure that their insurance cover extends to business use and the insurer should, if necessary, be asked to endorse the certificate of insurance to confirm that driving in the performance of the Trust's business is covered by the insurance policy.
- 3.3 Before travelling, staff members 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.
- 3.4 The Trust will only fund the cost of mileage within England and Wales.
- 3.5 Staff authorised to use their own car on Trust business must claim on the expenses form obtainable from the Finance Office.
- 3.6 With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022, the Trust policy is to reimburse all mileage at £0.45 per mile.
- 3.7 Normally mileage claims will be paid only for journeys which start and end at the academy, or from home to the destination, whichever is the shorter distance. If travelling directly from or to home the normal mileage which would have been travelled from home to the academy should be deducted from the total mileage claim for the journey. Total mileage should ideally be confirmed by the attachment of a printout from a route planning application.

Example: Peter lives in Bromsgrove and his permanent workplace is at TGA Redditch. He has to attend a curriculum meeting at TGA Worcester.

Peter's normal commute from home to his workplace is 7 miles. The distance from Peter's home to TGA Worcester is 15 miles. He deducts the mileage of his normal commute from the total, and submits a claim for 8 miles.

- 3.8 Full details of all journeys including the date, reason for the journey, starting point and destination should be entered on the travel and expenses claim form.
- 3.9 The Trust will not, under any circumstances, reimburse parking or speeding fines.

**Note:** No income tax or National Insurance 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 to HMRC.

## **4 Insurance**

- 4.1 As the Trust does not provide car insurance cover for staff using their own vehicles, staff are required to confirm that they have taken out personal car insurance with an appropriate extension to cover use in connection with academy business.
- 4.2 The mileage rates payable by the academy include an element to defray the cost of insurance as well as vehicle depreciation, fuel, etc.

## **5 Public transport**

- 5.1 Wherever possible employees should travel by train or bus, or car share when making the same journey.
- 5.2 Where staff use public transport, reimbursement will be on a receipts basis, provided the expenses are reasonable.

## **6 Rail travel**

- 6.1 Wherever possible employees should travel by train at 2nd class passenger rate. Staff may choose to travel at 1st class public transport, but they will only be reimbursed the cost of 2nd class travel.
- 6.2 The academy is only liable for the costs relating to a member of staff's travel. Any accompanying persons will be responsible for their own costs. The exception to this is where their attendance is required as a representative of the Trust/academy and in such circumstances, prior approval must be obtained from the CEO/Principal.

## **7 Subsistence allowance (daily and overnight)**

- 7.1 The subsistence rates listed below, at paragraph 7.5, represent the maximum permissible rates available.
- 7.2 Where staff travel on academy business and an overnight stay is necessary, an overnight subsistence allowance may be claimed. The academy will reimburse the reasonable costs of accommodation, food and drink when supported by receipts.
- 7.3 The academy will only bear the cost of accommodation required for business purposes and will not meet the costs of any extensions to a stay for personal reasons or for accommodation provided to a spouse or other family members.
- 7.4 Members of staff should note that items of a personal nature, such as alcoholic drinks, mini-bars, video hire, etc. will not be reimbursed by the academy and these should be deducted from any bills submitted for reimbursement.
- 7.5 Subsistence rates:

Subsistence may only be claimed if an overnight stay is involved, this must reflect the actual cost of meals/beverage up to a maximum of:

- Breakfast £ 6.50
- Lunch £ 8.00
- Dinner £12.00
- Overnight Stay (B&B) £70.00

## **8 Entertaining**

- 8.1 The general principle regarding the reimbursement of entertainment expenditure is that staff members will be reimbursed reasonable entertaining costs for themselves and guests where guests are present for a professional purpose, their presence is considered to be beneficial to the academy and where prior approval from has been granted.
- 8.2 Expenses for entertaining will only be reimbursed for staff who have a valid reason for being present. An appropriate cost for entertaining is considered to be £15 per head for lunch and £25.00 for dinner, to include gratuities. No alcoholic purchase will be reimbursed.
- 8.3 It is stressed that no reimbursement of entertaining expenses will be made unless the above guidelines are followed. In addition, it should be noted that under no circumstances will the academy contribute to the cost of entertaining when only members of staff are involved.
- 8.4 The following information should be included on/with expense claim forms regarding entertaining expenditure:
- names of attendees;
  - the organisation they represent;
  - the purpose of the entertainment (e.g. negotiation of contract);
  - appropriate receipts.

## **9 Foreign visits (this could include ski trips, cultural trips, return exchange visits)**

- 9.1 Whilst abroad a maximum of £10.00 per day per person may be claimed for additional expenses such as coffee, tea etc. Receipts are not required.
- 9.2 If staying with a foreign family, up to £20.00 may be spent on gifts for that family.
- 9.3 Receipts are required for this.

## **10 Academy journeys undertaken in one day**

- 10.1 For one-day visits in this country, each member of staff may claim up to a maximum of £7.00 as an allowance for additional expenses such as coffee, tea etc. Receipts are not required for this.

## **11 Telephone calls and IT related expenses**

- 11.1 Staff required to make business calls using 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.
- 11.2 In all cases provision of top-up cards for Pay as you Go services are not permitted because HMRC regulations cannot be met. The Trust will not reimburse staff for personal broadband or internet connections as the Trust cannot demonstrate sole and exclusive business use to satisfy HMRC guidelines.
- 11.3 The Trust recognises there will be exceptional cases where it is an absolute necessity for staff to work from home, using a dedicated 3G or 4G internet dongle. In these circumstances the Trust will arrange for direct provision of the service, following approval by the CEO/Principal.

## **12 Interview expenses**

- 12.1 Expenses will be paid to the successful candidate only and will be reimbursed in the first month's salary unless requested otherwise.
- 12.2 Please note that for candidates travelling from abroad travel expenses will only be paid from the first point of arrival in England and, in exceptional circumstances, one night's bed and breakfast accommodation will also be paid.

## **13 Expenses claimable**

- 13.1 The following expenses are those permitted to be claimed by staff:
- subsistence (breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea, hotel B&B) – only claimable on an overnight stay and must reflect the actual cost up to a maximum (see 7.5 above);
  - public transport (trains, buses, ferries);
  - taxis;
  - airfare (internal flights only, as long as overall this is the cheapest option for the full journey, proof of which will be required);
  - car parking;
  - congestion charges;
  - toll charges;
  - telephone calls;
  - interview expenses for the successful candidate;
  - eye tests for Display Screen Equipment (DSE) users.

## **14 Expenses not claimable**

- 14.1 The following expenses are those not permitted to be claimed by staff:
- employees acting as agents for the academy – where an employee pays for any goods and services which are not specifically consumed by the employee then the reimbursement should be made via accounts payable;
  - relocation expenses;
  - parking and speeding fines.

## **15 Staff benefits**

- 15.1 There are certain staff benefits which have been agreed with the Trust Board, and are made in addition to salary:
- free breakfast and/or lunch for working on staff training days when the academy kitchen is closed (maximum cost of £5.00 per person);
  - free tea and coffee in the staff room.

## **16 Cash advances**

- 16.1 Members of staff who are about to do extended work or to embark on extended travel on behalf of the Trust, and who will be required to incur expenditure while on the trip or doing business for the Trust may claim a cash advance.
- 16.2 For all cash advances the following criteria apply:

- only the CEO/Principal can authorise cash advances;
- requests for cash advances should be made well in advance of the work or travel to allow for payment before the travel/work date;
- claimants must state:
  - that it is an advance;
  - how much is required;
  - the purpose for which this is required;
  - the planned dates of travel/work.
- the requirement for authorisation for cash advances is the same as for other expenses claims;
- within 21 days of completing the work or returning from the travel, claimants must submit a completed expenses claim form and/or reimburse the advance to the Finance Office.

## **17 Spectacles for Display Screen Equipment users**

- 17.1 Members of staff required to operate DSE in order to carry out their duties will receive appropriate training to do so.
- 17.2 The Trust may issue a voucher to eligible members of staff wishing to have an eye test. The voucher can be redeemed at any Specsavers store and will enable staff to receive an eye test and if necessary, corrective basic eyewear. Should an employee wish to upgrade to more expensive frames then the voucher value (£49) can be redeemed against the higher cost.
- 17.3 Members of staff should refer to the trust DSE Eyewear policy for scheme eligibility and further detail.

## **18 Training courses**

- 18.1 The Trust provides training courses to enable employees to improve their effectiveness at work.
- 18.2 All costs and expenses of in-house training courses are borne by the Trust/academy.
- 18.3 Where it is necessary for 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.
- 18.4 The Trust will also meet the cost of external courses where the training leads to the acquisition or improvement of knowledge, skills or personal qualities which are likely to prove useful in staff performing the current or potential duties of their employment.
- 18.5 Training courses for which the Trust will pay, must be authorised by the appropriate line manager with the agreement of the CEO/Principal, before the training takes place. A request may be refused, but in these cases a reason will be given.

## **19 Car parking**

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

## **20 Hired vehicles**

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



## **21 Professional subscriptions and membership of professional bodies**

- 21.1 Professional subscriptions for members of staff are the personal responsibility of individual members of staff. No reimbursement will normally be provided by the Trust for such costs, although individual staff members may be able to claim tax relief for these costs either through their tax code or on their own tax self-assessment returns.
- 21.2 However, if there are benefits to the Trust through being a member of an organisation, payment may be allowed but this must be agreed, prior to the expense being incurred, by the Principal.