



Worcester Students' Union Subsistence Allowances & Expenses Policy

1. Purpose

Worcester Students' Union (WSU), as a responsible employer, will ensure that staff receive reasonable subsistence allowances and expenses to compensate for expenditure properly incurred in meeting the requirements of their work roles.

2. Scope & History

This policy covers all staff employed by WSU. This policy replaces the previous WSU Subsistence Allowances Policy (undated), which will be withdrawn from 1st May 2008.

3. Policy Outline – General Arrangements

Road transport is the fastest growing sources of greenhouse gas emissions, which cause climate change. By driving less we can all help fight the trend of global warming. Therefore, the policy of WSU is to discourage the use of private cars for work purposes and encourage the use of alternative options including walking, cycling and using public transport.

As a general principle, wherever practicable public transport should be used for transport to training courses, conferences and other work related events.

If the cost of journey is more cost effective by public transport taking into account the length and duration of the trip then the journey should not be undertaken by private car.

Where the cost of a journey is approximately the same by car or public transport the benefits of being able to work whilst travelling by public transport should be taken into account. Consequently the journey should not be undertaken by car.

Where rail travel is used for company purposes then WSU will only cover the cost of a Standard Class travel ticket unless otherwise authorised.

Staff should make use of advance purchase options available from the train companies' web sites to obtain the best value fare for the journey they are making.

When more than one member of staff is making the same journey and travel by road is the best option then car sharing is encouraged wherever this is practicable.

Any staff member using a private or rental vehicle for travelling on WSU business must be in possession of a valid driving license for the vehicle being used.

Any staff member using a private vehicle for WSU business is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and valid insurance for the vehicle is in place covering the journey(s) being made. Evidence of such insurance will be required in advance of travel.

Staff members who drive their own vehicle for business use must:

- Ensure their vehicle is taxed and has a valid MOT.
- Ensure their motor insurance policy includes business use cover for the amount and type of business mileage they undertake
- Ensure the vehicle is not used inappropriately (e.g. unsecured load carrying, or hazardous off-road access)

All drivers are strictly prohibited from using a hand-held mobile phone while driving a vehicle if this is for business purposes and they are claiming mileage for the trip. WSU will not pay any fines incurred by any employee caught using a mobile phone while driving.

If you need to make or take a phone call, you must stop in a safe, legal position (not a petrol station, where mobile phones must be switched off), switch off your engine, and only then make or take your call. Please note that it is illegal to make or take a call on a hand-held mobile phone in any other circumstances; even if you are stationary at traffic lights or road junctions you are deemed to be 'driving' the vehicle and will be in breach of the law.

The only mobile phones which can be used by WSU employees/minibus drivers are those fitted into a cradle, making them totally hands-free, or a Bluetooth model fitted with a headset. You should be aware however that even then you can be prosecuted for driving without due care and attention.

WSU will not pay any fines incurred by any employee caught using a mobile phone while driving or for any other traffic offence.

On occasions when employees stay away from home on WSU business the Union will cover the cost of accommodation and meals in line with the amounts outlined in section five of this policy. WSU will not cover the cost of accommodation and meals for any family member who may accompany the member of staff and therefore employees must ensure that any such costs are borne privately and do not get charged to WSU.

4. Reimbursement of Expenses

Journeys will only be reimbursed from WSU's business address at Henwick Grove, Worcester, WR2 6AJ or home address, whichever is the shortest journey.

Reimbursement for taxi fares, bus and train fares and other properly-incurred business expenses will be made at actual cost on provision of a bona-fide receipt.

In relation to attendance at conferences and training courses, if fees include accommodation and/or meals then no allowances for these items are to be claimed.

All employees must acquire prior approval from their line manager to incur expenditure on travel and accommodation.

Alcoholic drinks, private telephone calls, gratuities, newspapers and other items of a personal nature will not be reimbursed.

Only items of a very minor value will be reimbursed where no receipt is available providing that this is not a regular practice by the individual.

Receipts must not be altered, amended or changed in any way and must relate to the event/period for which the claim is being made.

An employee at any level of the organisation cannot authorise their own expenses/travel expenditure.

Claims for expenses/travel expenditure must be submitted on a 'Claim for Traveling Expenses and Subsistence' request form with details of the items being claimed. This form must be signed by the staff member submitting the claim and authorised by a manager at WSU, usually their own line manager.

5. Subsistence Allowances

The following are the maximum rates payable against VAT received expenditure:

Bed and Breakfast, £90 maximum outside London, £120 maximum within London. Note accommodation will normally be arranged by WSU and therefore no additional claims should be made.

Breakfast Allowance, maximum of £8. This cannot be claimed if overnight provision has been made including breakfast. Breakfast allowance can only be claimed if your journey commences prior to 07.00am.

Lunch Allowance, maximum of £10. This cannot be claimed if meeting or event includes the provision of lunch.

Dinner Allowance, maximum of £18 outside London, £24 maximum within London. Dinner allowance may only be claimed if you return home or to the office after 20.00pm.

Special Overnight Allowance, maximum £20. This can only be claimed where you choose to stay with colleagues, friends or relatives rather than in a hotel. This allowance is inclusive of meals and refreshments and can only be incurred with prior authority from your line manager.

6. Mileage Allowances

You must have approval from your line manager prior to making journeys by private car on WSU business, you and your line manager will determine whether public transport is a feasible and reasonable alternative to the use of a private motor vehicle.

For approved journeys mileage will be reimbursed at 40p per mile up to a maximum of 120 miles for any one return journey.

For cyclists a mileage rate of 20p per mile is applicable.

All return journeys in excess of 120 miles must either be undertaken in a rental vehicle or be authorised by the General Manager if a private vehicle is to be used.

Mileage above 4000 miles per annum will be reimbursed at a lower rate of 17p per mile.

The standard mileage rate of 40p per mile is the maximum allowed under current Inland Revenue limits (as at August 2007) without incurring an additional tax liability. This mileage rate includes any costs incurred for including business use of private insurance cover.

7. Implementation date

This policy will be implemented from 1st May 2008.

8. Provisions in other policies

Attention is drawn to the relevant sections of the disciplinary procedure concerning fraud, including the deliberate falsification of records. For the avoidance of doubt, a fraudulent claim for expenses would be considered as gross misconduct.

9. Responsibility

Responsibility for adhering to this policy rests with all staff at WSU. Managers have an additional responsibility for ensuring that expense claims are checked prior to authorising. Overall responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and for ensuring that the policy is regularly reviewed and revised as necessary rests with the Finance Manager.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed every years with the next review due in May 2009.

Policy Produced: April 2008

Policy Update: Dec 2008

Policy Produced By: General Manager

Policy Approved By: Student Council, General Manager