



Policy for Travel Reimbursement

Issued By: Finance and Investment Committee

Approved By: Board of Directors

Effective Date: May.1/16

Purpose

This policy outlines how King's University College shall reimburse Staff, Administration or Faculty members for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred during the course of carrying out matters of research and/or the business of the University. This policy applies to all travel using King's University College funding.

King's University College is considered a Designated Broader Public Sector organization and is required to comply with the directives issued under the authority of the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act http://www.mgs.gov.on.ca/en/Spotlight2/STDPROD_098139.html.

A "reasonable expense" is deemed to be based on sound judgment and moderation. Any expenses that do not meet the test of legal, ethical, or public perception of appropriateness will be denied. These procedures have been developed with the help of University subject-matter experts and are intended to address the most common travel-related situations. Travellers should contact Financial Services when confronted with a situation not addressed in this document.

As with all University expenses, travel expenses may be the subject of review by a member of the Finance Department, UWO Internal Audit, External Auditor, external funding agency or government auditors.

Key Principles

When making travel arrangements, "value for money" considerations must be paramount. Careful consideration of costs, mode of travel, travelling time and convenience will realize the most economical and effective use of all resources.

Public funding is to be used prudently and responsibly with a focus on accountability and transparency. All requests for reimbursement must provide an explanation of the nature of the University business along with the date(s) and place of the event.

Responsibilities

The *Finance Department* is responsible for maintaining appropriate accounting and policy controls as part of its accountability and Due Diligence reporting to the Board of Directors

The *Claimant* is responsible for ensuring that claims for reimbursement are accurate; conform to the University's Travel Policy and with applicable granting agency guidelines, whichever imposes greater restriction. The claimant must also certify that expenses paid by the University **do not include items of a personal nature**. It is the claimant's responsibility to incur reasonable expenses and to claim for reimbursement of actual out-of-pocket expenses for university business, as supported by original itemized receipts.

Original itemized receipts must support all expense reimbursement claim items. Credit card receipts, debit card slips and cancelled cheques are not acceptable original receipts as they do not provide sufficient details on amounts expended.

Receipts are important for income tax purposes. The Canada Revenue Agency considers all amounts paid to individuals without receipts to be income to the individual and, therefore, taxable.

The *Authorized Approving Budget Unit Head (BUH) or Department Chair (DC) and Academic Dean* is responsible for ensuring that claims are for legitimate University related activities or a relevant research-related activity. Finance Office will be responsible to ensure that claims are within the conditions of the Policy for Travel and are being charged to an appropriate account.

Authorization

*****All Travel & Conference Expenses must be preapproved by your Department Chair and the Academic Dean prior to incurring any related expenses.***

The following authorizations are required to request a reimbursement of travel expenses:

- The signature of the Claimant/Traveler.
- The signature of the authorized BUH or DC and Academic Dean (Research Grants must be approved by the Academic Dean).

*****All completed Travel & Conference Expense Forms with itemized receipts must be signed by the Academic Dean prior to forwarding to Accounts Payable for reimbursement.***

Timeline

Travel expenses can be reimbursed only by submitting a properly completed and approved travel and conference claim form. This form, accompanied by original itemized documents, must be submitted to the Finance Office within the fiscal year in which the trip occurred.

Reimbursement of expenses does not, in itself, constitute ultimate approval and reimbursement may be subject to subsequent audit adjustment.

***** All year end expenses are due in Accounts Payable by Apr.30th to qualify for reimbursement in the fiscal year the expenses (Travel and Conference) occur. If Apr. 30th falls on a weekend the expenses are due the following business day.*** Please contact Accounts Payable in advance if you are travelling on Apr.30th and have limited access to forward the expenses to the Finance Office.

Eligible Travel Expenses

Air Travel

Because significant savings can be realized by making reservations in advance, all employees should plan their travel at least 14 days prior to departure, if possible. Travelers are expected to book economy air fare when making travel reservations.

The purchase of airline tickets can be reimbursed as soon as the cost has been incurred, i.e. there is no need to wait until the travel has been completed.

Travelers must ensure that they maintain appropriate documentation to justify the cost effectiveness of their travel arrangements. If an employee upgrades to a first class flight, the economy flight printout must be submitted with the first class flight receipt. The flight cost would then be reimbursed at the lowest available cost (i.e. economy class).

Please see 'Personal Travel Combined with Business Travel' below for additional examples related to appropriate documentation.

Business class international air travel may be **pre-approved in writing** by the Principal for continuous air travel exceeding nine hours or if special circumstances so warrant (i.e. a medical certificate). Continuous air travel starts at the scheduled departure time and ends with the arrival at the destination. The approval documentation regarding the request for business class travel must be submitted with the travel expense claim form.

No reimbursements can be claimed for air tickets purchased with frequent flyer points, as the University will only reimburse for out of pocket expenses.

Financial penalties which apply to changes and cancellations of non-refundable tickets are reimbursed if the change is made for University business, rather than for personal reasons or if special circumstances so warrant. It is the responsibility of the traveler to pursue credit for any unused refundable tickets.

Rail Travel

All train travel is expected to be at the best value for money consideration. While a boarding pass is preferred as confirmation of travel, an electronic receipt will be accepted.

If reservations must be cancelled, it is the responsibility of the traveler to make sure that the cancellation is made in advance so that "no show" charges will not be incurred.

Personal Travel Combined with Business Travel

When personal travel is combined with business travel, the employee will be reimbursed for only the business portion of the trip at the lowest available fare.

Where the allocation of business versus personal travel is not clearly evident, e.g. a multi-destination airline ticket where one or more of the destinations is for personal travel, then an airfare quote for the 'business portion only', taken at the same time as the actual airline booking, should be provided to the approver. The airfare quote for the business portion of the trip will be the reimbursable amount, if this amount is lower.

For example:

A staff member plans to attend a conference in Calgary and, at the end of the conference fly to Vancouver for some personal time off. When booking the travel arrangements, the staff member will:

1. Obtain a quote for the Toronto-Calgary-Toronto flight. This is the 'business' portion of the trip;
2. Book the travel arrangements for the Toronto-Calgary-Vancouver-Toronto flight segments.

When submitting the request for reimbursement, the original invoice for the cost of the airfare booked (see item 2) should be submitted along with the quote for the 'business' portion obtained (see item 1). The quote for the 'business' portion would be the reimbursable amount unless the actual amount paid for the entire trip (see 1) was less.

It is the responsibility of the approver to ensure that the quote and the actual invoice are comparable and represent the same booking conditions, i.e. both amounts were obtained on the same day.

It is strongly recommended that travel arrangements where personal travel is combined with business travel are brought to the attention of the approver prior to booking the travel.

Accommodations

Reimbursement for hotels, motels and other lodging will be limited to the basic University or Government rate for single occupancy, standard room accommodation. It is expected that Claimants will always request the most favorable terms such as University or other special rates and, particularly in Canada, those negotiated by the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO). These rates are available from the CAUBO website <https://www.caubo.ca/discover-caubo/member-discounts/>.

If a partner accompanies the traveller, the amount to be claimed by the traveller should only be the most economical room rate for a single occupant – any excess room charges to accommodate the partner are not allowable.

If reservations must be cancelled, it is the responsibility of the traveler to make sure that the cancellation is made in advance so that "no show" charges will not be incurred.

Gratuitous Accommodations

The University recognizes that gratuitous accommodation assists the traveler and the University in maintaining low travel expenses. The intent of this allowance is to reduce hotel costs by encouraging the traveler to lodge with family or friends when possible. The maximum reimbursable rate is \$30 per night, when traveling on approved University business. The claim must state the name and address of individuals accommodating your stay and include receipts for any out of pocket expenditures related to the gratuitous accommodation (meals, small gifts).

The \$30 per night is not a per diem and can be accumulated up to three nights (\$90 gift or meal). Please contact the Finance Office prior to travel if your length of stay exceeds three nights.

Insurance

Full-time employees are covered for health insurance travel outside Canada under existing insurance coverage. Please confirm with payroll and benefits prior to travel bookings.

If a private vehicle is used on approved College business, the owner must ensure that his/her personal automobile insurance is adequate because College insurance is not the primary payer for non-owned automobiles. A minimum of \$1,000,000 third party liability is recommended.

Travel by Private Vehicle

It is recommended that a personally owned vehicle be used only for short journeys where this constitutes the most economical and effective means of transportation considering all factors such as costs, time constraints, itinerary, etc.

The person or organization visited, and the purpose of the trip, must be provided with the expense claim for a personally owned vehicle.

Travel by private vehicle will be reimbursed at the CRA's travel beyond 5,000km rate. This rate is posted on the CRA website. <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/bsnss/tpcs/pyrll/bnfts/tmbl/lwnc/nntx-eng.html>

Use of a private vehicle should be limited to those trips where no suitable public transportation is available or where a private vehicle is more economical (approx. 500km round trip i.e. London to Toronto or London to Windsor). Gas receipts will not be reimbursed while travelling in a personal vehicle.

NOTE: When a private vehicle is used on College business for convenience or other personal reasons, and such expenses exceed the equivalent cost of available public transportation or rental vehicle, only the cost of such public transportation or rental will be reimbursed.

Rental Cars

Rental cars should be used when they provide the most economical form of transportation. In many cases a one-day vehicle rental is more economical than public transportation or the use of a private automobile. The standard size for vehicle rentals is a full size car.

Special rental rates have been negotiated with Enterprise Rent-A-Car and National Car Rental. Enterprise is best for local car rentals, while National is best for airport rentals. The negotiated rates can be found and booked using the following website specifically designed for King's rentals. If you have any issues with the website, please contact purchasing.

http://www.enterprise.com/car_rental/deeplinkmap.do?bid=028&refId=KINGSUNI

When a rental car is used for departmental purposes, a PO number is **required** as part of the booking process. If you require a PO number, please contact purchasing. When a rental car is being used for pdf/travel/personal purposes, a PO number is not required, but your personal credit card will be charged.

Gas receipts are to be submitted with the rental receipt for reimbursement. Kilometers are not reimbursed while using a rental car.

Travel Advances

Travel advances are not permitted except under rare and unusual circumstances.

In the event that a travel advance is absolutely necessary, approval must be granted by the VP of Finance. Within 10 days of your return you will be required to submit all relevant supporting documentation, a full reconciliation of expenses and any surplus cash to Accounts Payable in order to settle your outstanding account. If your expenses exceed the amount of the advance and your reconciliation reflects a deficit, you will be reimbursed the difference. Should you fail to meet the above requirements the advance will become a receivable to the College.

Meal Expenses

Per diems are not permitted under the Broader Public Sector (BPS) Accountability Act.

As per the BPS Accountability Act, original, itemized receipts are a mandatory requirement for all expenses. **Original, itemized receipts must be provided for all travel related expenses, including meals.**

The maximum meal allowance per day is \$50 CAD (\$50 USD or 50 Euro). These guidelines include gratuities and taxes. Expenses must be supported by original **itemized** receipts. If travelling to a location where receipts are not issued, the traveller is responsible to diarize all expenses on a spreadsheet. The claimant would be responsible to document why they are not able to provide the receipts, and preferably provide alternative documentation supporting the expenditure (i.e. a credit card bill if available).

Alcohol cannot be claimed and will not be reimbursed as part of a travel or meal expense.

It is strongly recommended that meals are not charged to hotel statements. Where necessary, if meals are charged to hotel statements, they will only be reimbursed if the **itemized** receipt is attached to the statement and submitted with the Travel Expense Report.

Meal costs that are not substantiated with a business purpose will not be reimbursed.

A credit or debit card receipt on its own is not acceptable and will be returned without reimbursement.

Personal Expenses

In most instances, personal expenses incurred on behalf of the Claimant, or the Claimant's colleagues, family, friends or relatives will not be reimbursed. All such expenses of a personal nature incurred on behalf of any individual, including clients or customers, must be clearly identified and either eliminated on the Expense Report or, if claimed, supported by an appropriate written explanation approved by the Dean or Budget Unit Head. Examples of personal expenses include, but are not limited to: flowers, in-room movie rentals, double occupancy room rates and meals when the second person is not on University business.

Hospitality

As a Broader Public Sector (BPS) organization, King's University is guided by the BPS Expenses Directive. The full BPS Expenses directive can be found at:
http://www.mgs.gov.on.ca/en/Spotlight2/STDPROD_098139.html

Expenses for a group can only be claimed by the most senior person present – expenses cannot be claimed by an individual that are incurred by his/her approver (e.g. A BUH who reports to the Academic Dean cannot submit a claim that includes the cost of the Dean's lunch even if they were at the same event, with the result that the Dean would thereby approve his/her own expenses).

Business Meals

Business meals are defined as an expense for meals where student(s), staff and faculty and/or other external parties are present for the purpose of conducting substantial and bona fide business on behalf of the University. Individuals must exercise fiscal responsibility when choosing restaurants. High-end establishments must be avoided unless circumstances dictate that such a choice is appropriate, such as when conducting University business with a major donor or foreign dignitary. Meal costs that are not substantiated with a business purpose will not be reimbursed.

There must be clear documentation as to the business purpose of the meeting/event, the date and place of the entertainment, the names of the attendees and the business relationship of the persons entertained.

Original itemized receipts must be provided. Credit or debit card receipts on their own are not acceptable and will be returned without reimbursement.

Internal Meetings/Staff/Student Events

In-house staff meetings and events involving only King's University employees and students are not considered business entertainment. Provision of coffee or other refreshments at departmental meetings or education sessions can be approved at the department/Faculty level in accordance with regular department/Faculty operations.

It is recognised that in limited circumstances meetings involving only King's University employees will occur over meals. These expenditures will only be reimbursed if pre-approved by a Department Head, Academic Dean or Vice-Principal. Alcohol expenses will not be reimbursed.

The Claimant is responsible for ensuring that claims for reimbursement are accurate, conform with University policy and, where applicable, research funding agency rules, contain any required written pre-approvals, and that all expenditures are supported by original itemized receipts.

The Approver is an individual at least one administrative level above the claimant (e.g. A BUH's expense must be approved by the Academic Dean). The Approver is responsible for ensuring that all claims are for University related activities. Finance Office will be responsible to ensure that claims have required supporting documentation, are within the conditions of the University Policy and are being charged to an appropriate account. Approvers cannot approve their own expenses.

When a situation arises and discretion needs to be exercised, approvers should consider whether the request is:

- ✓ Able to stand up to the scrutiny by the auditors and members of the public
- ✓ Properly explained and documented
- ✓ Fair and equitable
- ✓ Reasonable
- ✓ Appropriate

Ineligible Expenses

Inclusive but not limited to:

- Any expenses related to accompanying travel companions
- Expenses related to maintenance or cleaning of private residences
- Pet care expenses
- Non-business or personal related expenses
- Parking fines and other traffic fines
- Library fines
- Personal travel insurance (coverage is already provided by the College benefit package)
- Insurance coverage for privately owned vehicles
- Expenses for the repairs of privately owned vehicles
- Expenses related to damages to uninsured rental cars and privately owned vehicles
- Interest charges levied on overdue invoices or credit card statements
- Unnecessary stopovers
- Lost or stolen items
- Meals included in another reimbursable item (e.g. conference fee, transportation charge, accommodation)
- Passports
- Toiletry Articles

Travel Policy Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are passports an eligible expense?

No. Passports are a personal document and in most cases are used by individuals for personal travel.

2. I want to keep my original receipts, can I just send in photocopies with my claim?

Credit card receipts/statements and photocopies are **not** eligible as proof of expense. If you require your original receipts back please indicate this and they will be stamped (“spoiled”), dated, and initialed and sent back to you after your claim has been reviewed.

3. I’m using my own vehicle to travel to Toronto; do I claim the mileage and the gas?

For a personal vehicle, only mileage can be claimed. When renting a vehicle, claim the gas purchased for the rental vehicle.

4. I have receipts from travel two years ago; can I be reimbursed for them?

Travel expense claims should be submitted within sixty days following completion of each trip. Expenses that do not fall within the fiscal year they took place will not be reimbursed.

5. A faculty member indicated that there are a number of areas of the world (e.g. Thailand, China) where a number of restaurants do not issue receipts - everything is done on a cash basis with no documentation. What would we do in this case?

In this case, the claimant would be responsible to document why they are not able to provide receipts, and preferably provide alternative documentation supporting the expenditure (i.e. a credit card bill if available). If a high number of expenditures have been incurred without receipts, the approver would then be responsible to diarize all expenses on a spreadsheet and perform appropriate due diligence on this matter prior to signing off on the claim.

6. Why is my claim adjusted?

Below are some reasons why your claim may be adjusted. The list is not exhaustive.

- Your claim is adjusted for any expense where you did not include an original itemized receipt.
- Photocopies or Credit Card receipts are ineligible.
- Your claim is adjusted for any meal (grocery) expenses that exceeded the \$50 per day allowable.
- Your claim is adjusted to remove alcohol expenses.
- Your claim is adjusted to support the most economical form of transportation.
- Your claim is adjusted for personal/ineligible expenses.
- You did not attach a copy of the credit card bill used for expenses to provide the accurate exchange. The Bank of Canada rate would be the default rate used when calculating the exchange in Finance.

7. When do I get reimbursed for travel expenses?

Expenses are reimbursed on or about the 15th and 30th of every month via direct deposit to your bank account. Requests must be received in Accounts Payable at least 5 full business days prior to the reimbursement dates in order to be processed in time. Requests received after the deadline will be processed on the next cycle.

8. If I travel with students who are assisting in research related business, can I have a meal expense reimbursed through my Travel/PDF fund?

Yes, a meal purchased for students that are assisting with research related work can be submitted for reimbursement. A Meals/Hospitality form must be attached to the itemized receipt and expense form.

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