

Expenses Policy

Expenses, Benefits, Hospitality and Gifts

With effect from 14.08.23

Amended 01.04.24

Approved by University Executive Board on February 2024

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the University's policy on expenses, benefits, hospitality and gifts. The document sets out areas of expenditure that will be funded by the University and identifies areas of expenditure where restrictions are in place or where reimbursement will not be made.

Before incurring any expenditure on behalf of the University it is the responsibility of the claimant to ensure they have read this policy and have understood the nature of what can be claimed as a legitimate expense.

Scope

These regulations apply to the University, its subsidiaries and branches, both in the UK and elsewhere, (the "University Group") except where the relevant decision-making body (normally the Board of Directors of the subsidiary company) has indicated otherwise. The main body of this document is the general policy which is applicable across all entities within the University Group. For expenditure incurred by members of staff who are employed by the University's overseas subsidiaries and branches please also refer to the specific international variations outlined in the appendices and to the specific contractual agreements with individuals.

Note that thresholds and limits given in £ Sterling should be converted to the local currency where appropriate.

The regulations set out in this policy apply to all members of staff of the University who incur expenditure on behalf of the University, its subsidiaries and branches, regardless of the method of payment. These regulations also apply to any non-employees (Campus job workers, students and visitors) who are entitled to claim reimbursement from the University for expenditure incurred on behalf of the University, its subsidiaries and branches. However this does NOT include requests from consultants or contractors for payment for goods or services provided to the University. These must be paid on invoice, processed through the correct procurement procedure; such payments must not be submitted as an expense claim.

The regulations apply regardless of the source of funding for the expenditure. All expenditure is coded to a project, and all projects are University funds (including SDAs); so adherence to these regulations is mandatory. Failure to comply with these regulations may be regarded as a disciplinary offence.

These regulations must be read alongside related policies that operate in conjunction with this policy, including the Financial Regulations, Finance Manual and Procurement Policy.

If you have any queries relating to these policies, or issues that you consider are not covered in this document, you should refer the matter in the first instance to the Head of Transactional Services then to your Head of School, Function or equivalent.

All expenditure must be supported by an itemised receipt.

In exceptional circumstances where it is not possible to obtain a receipt the expenditure must be approved by Head of School or Function. Payment of these items will only be considered for small values and will only be reimbursed at the discretion of the Finance department.

The University reserves the right to make changes to these policies from time to time in accordance with current employment law legislation. Employees will be notified of any amendments via the Finance Website

The latest version is always available on the Finance website & the Expenses portal in Unit 4 BusinessWorld (Agresso).

CONTENTS

1	Providing Hospitality	5
1.1	Background	5
1.2	Giving Hospitality to Visitors/Business Entertaining.....	5
1.3	Giving Hospitality to Staff / Entertaining Staff.....	7
2	Providing Gifts	8
2.1	Long Service Awards	8
2.2	Reward scheme vouchers	8
2.3	Giving Gifts to Staff is not permitted	8
2.4	Giving Prizes to Staff is a taxable benefit.....	8
2.5	Giving Gifts to Others.....	8
2.6	Making Donations – ONLY with prior approval.....	9
3	Receiving Personal Gifts and Hospitality from third parties	9
3.1	Receiving Hospitality.....	9
3.2	Receiving Gifts.....	10
3.3	Gifts and Hospitality Register.....	11
4	Travel Expenses : Travel, Accommodation and Subsistence	11
4.1	Purpose	11
4.2	Scope.....	12
	General rules.....	12
4.3	Travel by Car	12
4.4	Business travel between UoR campuses.....	14
4.5	Pool vehicles	14
4.6	Accommodation.....	15

4.7	Subsistence	15
4.8	Fines and Penalties	16
4.9	Congestion Charge and Road tolls	16
4.10	International mobile phone calls on University phones.....	16
5	Subscriptions to Professional Associations	17
6	Uniforms and work-wear.....	17
7	E-books and other electronic literature	17
8	Home-working and use of Telephones.....	18
8.1	Home-working	18
8.2	Computer Equipment.....	18
8.3	Home telephones.....	18
8.4	Mobile phones	18
8.5	Personal Use of the University's telephone system	19
8.6	Office Equipment & Furniture.....	20
9	Relocation expenses	20
9.1	General.....	20
10	Healthcare	20
10.1	Eye tests and spectacles for Display Screen Equipment ('DSE') users.....	20
10.2	Medical examinations.....	21
10.3	Medical insurance or treatment whilst travelling overseas on University business	22
11	Reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses	22
11.1	Basic principles	22
11.2	Ownership	23
11.3	Expense claim procedure	23
11.4	Expenses incurred in foreign currencies.....	24
11.5	Advances.....	24
12	Childcare	25
12.1	Additional Childcare costs	25
	Appendix 1 Variations that apply in Finland (branch).....	26
	Appendix 2 Variations that apply in Germany (subsidiary).....	27
	Appendix 3 Variations that apply in Malaysia (subsidiary)	28
	Appendix 4 Minimum layout for a Gifts and Hospitality Register	30
	Appendix 5 Hospitality Approval Form.....	31

1 Providing Hospitality

1.1 Background

You must undertake the provision and receipt of hospitality in a way that is appropriate to the University's position; you must not risk any damage to the University's reputation, in particular its status as a charity in receipt of public funds.

You must always consider your personal position, the University's position and any tax implications. You should always consider how a situation, however well intended, would appear to external scrutiny. Hospitality is a sensitive area and you are asked to observe the spirit as well as the letter of this policy.

Hospitality must also be dealt with within the framework of the relevant tax regime. All expenditure must be 'wholly and exclusively for the purposes of the trade'. Failure to adhere to this may result in tax demands on the individual and on the University.

1.2 Giving Hospitality to Visitors/Business Entertaining

It may be appropriate for you to provide hospitality, e.g. lunch or dinner, for visitors where there is a 'valid business reason'. Examples of this would include providing hospitality for external examiners, visiting lecturers, external contributors to research seminars and visiting business contacts with whom the University either has or is seeking to develop a relationship.

The general rules on hospitality are that you must ensure that:

- There should be more external representatives (visitors & students) than staff at any single event. If there are more members of staff than representatives receiving hospitality then this may result in a taxable benefit in kind for the members of staff involved and for the University. If there is a tax liability, the University is obliged to declare the matter to the relevant tax authority. When there are more employees than external guests the University will pay on a 1 employee to 1 external ratio
- Wherever possible all hospitality should take place on the University premises. University catering should always be considered before entertaining off campus and in all circumstances a reasonable value per head should be considered. If you have not utilised the University's own services you may gain advice from the Procurement Department then provide the reason, evidence and gain approval, from your Head of School/Function.
- In the exceptional circumstances the entertainment provided is not on a University campus the maximum limit available per head is £30 including a meal and drinks. If there is a requirement or special circumstances to exceed this value, approval must be gained from the Vice-Chancellor, Director of Finance or member of UEB before the entertainment is arranged. Evidence of this approval must be provided when making a claim.
- All hospitality taking place on University premises must be provided by the University's own Catering, Hotel and Conference Services (CHCS) department. This

includes the provision of all refreshments, food and for licensing purposes, alcohol. CHCS will endeavour to meet all requirements, however if they are unable, they will source on your behalf via a contracted supplier. For food safety reasons no staff outside of the CHCS team should purchase, deliver or prepare food items for hospitality events. For the avoidance of doubt, staff should not contact or make any direct arrangements with external hospitality providers for hospitality delivered on University premises.

- Although the University does not prohibit the purchase of alcohol it should be at a reasonable cost (house wine or equivalent), and not involve excessive quantity (up to half bottle per person). Alcohol should only be purchased in conjunction with the provision of food during a meal.
- No alcohol is allowed to be expended against any UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funded projects

You must ensure that the following information is clear on the claim:

- The name(s) of attendees, noting whether they are staff or visitors, and, if they are visitors, the organization which each represents.
- The purpose of the entertainment; the 'valid business reason'.
- If you have not used the University's own services please explain the valid business case and get prior approval from the VC, Director of Finance or UEB member. .

Partners of University representatives should not be present unless visitors' partners are also being entertained, and only then on an exceptional basis. Approval for partners to be present must be sought in advance from your Head of School or Function.

If the hospitality takes place in a restaurant then any tips added to the cost of the meal must be reasonable, up to a maximum of 15% of the cost. If the restaurant has already levied a service charge, then no tip should be given. When several University staff entertain visitors, the bill should normally be met by the most senior member of staff present.

Student Events:

Student entertainment is permitted for formal events i.e. graduation & conferences, with staff present where appropriate and required, provided that the majority present at the function are students. The type of catering should be appropriate to the nature of the student event. As with all hospitality provided, the University's own catering facilities must be utilised, and only in exceptional circumstances should external catering be used. A valid business case must be provided and approved by Head of School or Function & Procurement if using external suppliers.

1.3 Giving Hospitality to Staff / Entertaining Staff

Any hospitality where all or the majority of attendees are University staff **MUST** take place on University premises. There are two kinds of hospitality:

1.3.1 Business hospitality

The University can provide modest on-campus hospitality to staff where there is a valid business reason. This mainly occurs as:

- Refreshments during a meeting at the workplace:
The provision of tea and coffee for business meetings is permitted, provided it is a formal meeting and minutes are taken.
- Working lunches
Modest working lunches for formal minuted meetings are permitted where the timing and duration of the meeting unavoidably prevents attendees from having their normal personal lunchbreak.

Note that tea, coffee, biscuits etc. for staff not in connection with a business event as defined above is a personal expense and must not be charged to University funds.

Note that business hospitality of the sort described above must not include alcohol.

1.3.2 Other staff hospitality (exceptional)

For the University to provide hospitality to members of staff without a valid business reason would normally result in a personal tax liability for the individual(s) involved, which the University will be obliged to declare to the relevant tax authority. Exceptions to this would be out-of-the-ordinary, infrequent special celebrations to which all staff are invited.

Modest claims in respect of, for example, retirement celebrations are permitted, provided prior written approval of the Head of School or Function or equivalent has been obtained. Expenditure must not exceed £10 per head per event. Such events must not take place on a regular basis and total expenditure must not exceed £35 per head per annum within each area. Note that this exception does NOT apply to any routine celebrations, for example birthdays and Christmas.

Where hospitality is provided and members of staff are included, you must ensure that the paperwork clearly shows:

- the reason for the entertaining,

- the nature of the entertaining and
- the names of the attendees, indicating clearly which are members of staff.

The paperwork must be attached to the line item within the online claim.

2 Providing Gifts

2.1 Long Service Awards

In recognition of 21 years continuous service to the University staff receive a Long Service Award, normally in the form of a £200 voucher. Receipt of such a gift under the Long Service Award scheme is a special case in some countries, including the UK, and does not generate a personal tax liability in those countries. HR have full responsibility of organising this reward.

2.2 Reward scheme vouchers

The University has a performance reward scheme in which vouchers are awarded for excellence. These voucher payments are a taxable benefit and must be recorded and accounted for as such. The University will meet the tax costs arising from these awards. They are administered through Human Resources (HR) who liaise with Finance in order that the tax is included on the University's HMRC account. Reward scheme vouchers do not generate a personal tax liability for the individual.

2.3 Giving Gifts to Staff is not permitted

All other gifts to staff are personal costs and must not be funded by the University; giving such a gift would risk conferring a taxable benefit on the recipient. Examples of personal gifts include gifts to mark occasions (birthdays, weddings, exam successes etc.). These cannot be classified as business costs and must be paid for personally.

2.4 Giving Prizes to Staff is a taxable benefit

Note that the giving of competition prizes to staff will incur a tax liability (even if the University has not paid for the prize).

2.5 Giving Gifts to Others

The University's standard policy is not to offer any gifts to customers, suppliers, students or clients unless these are an integral part of the University's service and available to the general public. An exception can be made in the case of a gift of a low value, wherever possible incorporating the University logo, to a visitor who, for cultural reasons, would normally consider such a gift an essential courtesy. The provision of meal vouchers for registered students at the University when assisting with Open Day visits does not constitute a gift.

2.6 Making Donations – ONLY with prior approval

Donations from University funds of any kind to individuals or organisations, including to registered charities, must not be made without the prior approval of the Director of Finance in the UK or the Board of Directors for subsidiary companies. Paperwork must be provided as evidence of approval, if processed by a claim please attach to the line item, if you are expecting to receive an invoice please provide the approver the evidence of approval when creating the requisition. Such items would be on an exceptional basis only and would require to be separately disclosed in the relevant published financial statements.

3 Receiving Personal Gifts and Hospitality from third parties

3.1 Receiving Hospitality

Where you are offered hospitality in the form of a meal or refreshments in connection with a meeting or event organised with an outside party, University policy is that you can accept, provided the hospitality is reasonable in relation to the event. You must ensure issues of actual or alleged improper influence have been fully considered.

All other offers of hospitality should normally be refused. In particular:

- i) hospitality offered as an alternative for fees for work done must be refused. If you accept it may give rise to a taxable benefit which must be declared to the relevant tax authority, and which will incur a tax liability;
- ii) substantial offers, (value greater than £50), of invitations to social functions, overseas travel or the provision of accommodation outside the purpose and duration of business must be refused;
- iii) inducements to either do something or not do something which could affect the contractual position between the University and a potential supplier or customer of goods or services must be refused.

In the case of iii) above, any such approach by a potential or current supplier or customer should be reported to the University Secretary, the Director of Internal Audit Services and the Director of Procurement immediately.

For i) and ii) above, if you believe such an arrangement should be accepted in the best interests of the University, you should seek prior approval from the Vice-Chancellor before accepting. However, requests of this kind will normally be refused as not being in the University's best interests. In any case the details must be entered into the Gifts and Hospitality Register and may give rise to a tax liability.

Where hospitality is accepted, anything valued greater than £50 must be approved in advance by the Head of School or Function, and for senior managers by their line

manager. The approval must be written and recorded, verbal approval is not sufficient. This approval must be kept with the registers. See Appendix 6 for the Approval Form. The Register must be maintained and kept by the School and be available for review either by Finance, Internal & External Audit

3.2 Receiving Gifts

With regard to receiving gifts, in some business sectors it is normal business practice for organisations to provide small, low value gifts (pens, paperweights, calendars, diaries and so on) incorporating their name or logo for their customers. It is reasonable to accept such gifts.

You should decline all other gifts valued greater than £15, including seasonal gifts from contractors and suppliers. You should return unsolicited gifts with a note explaining that it is University policy not to accept gifts of this kind. If the gift was anonymous or return could cause offence then the item(s) must be donated to a local registered charity.

You should be familiar with the University's Bribery Act 2010, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/23/contents> to which that policy makes reference. It's up to the individual to ensure the hospitality or gift they are receiving is compliant and is not adverse to government legislation

Staff should also be aware of the University's [Public Interest Disclosure \('Whistleblowing'\) Policy and Procedures](http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/office-of-the-university-secretary/gov-PublicInterestDisclosurePolicy201718.pdf), <http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/office-of-the-university-secretary/gov-PublicInterestDisclosurePolicy201718.pdf>. This enables any concerns which are in the public interest to be reported to the whistleblowing hotline 0118 378 6353

There are exceptional circumstances where small gifts could be accepted:

- i) where the refusal of a gift would cause offence to the organisation or individual offering the gift and thus damage the University's reputation. If you are in any doubt please consult your Head of School or Function or equivalent who, if in doubt, should consult the University Secretary;
- ii) gifts from students can only be accepted if, in consultation with your Head of School or Function or equivalent, you can clearly show that the proposed gift is not, nor can it be construed as, a bribe. All gifts from students valued in excess of £5.00 should be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register.

All gifts/hospitality with a value in excess of £15.00 (apart from those from students, see above) which are offered should be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register, regardless of whether they were accepted. See Appendix 5 for the form layout. Each department is responsible for maintaining their own register and ensuring it is available for review by Finance, Internal & External Audit

Staff should note that accepting a gift may give rise to a taxable benefit which, when declared to the relevant tax authority, may incur a personal tax liability. The Procurement Department will seek confirmation from suppliers of the offers of gifts and hospitality that they have made to employees of the University.

3.3 Gifts and Hospitality Register

See Appendix 4 and Appendix 5

If gifts or hospitality are offered to you the details must be recorded in Gifts and Hospitality Register. Each School and Function must maintain such a register.

This register should normally be held by the Head of School or Function or equivalent, and they should review and sign it regularly, at minimum annually. It should record details of all gifts or hospitality offered, including whether it was accepted, plus an estimate of the cost of the gift or hospitality received and a justification if it was accepted.

This register must be kept up-to-date at all times.

The register must be submitted to the University Secretary according to a timetable prescribed by the University Secretary. The minimum return will be on an annual basis.

The register must always be available for inspection by the Director of Internal Audit Services or nominated representative at any time.

A minimum data set layout of a Gifts and Hospitality Register is given at Appendix 4 and the Approval Form template is at Appendix 5.

If you any clarification as to what should be recorded into the Gift register please contact the Head of Governance

4 Travel Expenses : Travel, Accommodation and Subsistence

4.1 Purpose

- To ensure that staff and students have access to centrally defined and mandated financial rules and guidance that should be used when booking travel and accommodation requirements
- To ensure that the purchase and use of all travel and accommodation for the University's legitimate business purposes is correctly assessed, authorised and managed.

- To ensure all expenditure is properly evidenced by a receipt or other supporting documents and approved by the relevant management
- Means and class of travel are determined by the Travel policy which can be found on the following webpage
<https://www.reading.ac.uk/procurement/insurance/business-travel>

4.2 Scope

This policy applies to all members of University staff and persons who are required to travel on University business. This includes persons undertaking work on part funded University of Reading projects and any work which the University would cover from a cost of travel and accommodation perspective.

General rules

Where travel tickets that have been booked are subsequently cancelled, creating a cancellation cost to the University, there must be a business case approved by the Head of School or Function to justify the expenditure.

Open return tickets are permitted where single onward and return tickets are more expensive than the open return.

Private travel, including commuting between home and work, is not funded by the University.

4.3 Travel by Car

4.3.1 Travel by Hire Car

Car rentals must only be used if this is the best value for money transport method for the business journey. Normally it will be better value for money to use a hire car where the mileage is in excess of 70 miles.

All car hire should be booked through the University's contracted car hire company. All overseas car hire should be booked through the University's contracted travel management company(s).

All vehicles hired must be at or below Group D category (Ford Focus or equivalent) or the lowest cost option available.

Note that in the event that a hire car is damaged by a person on University business, the financial impact must be dealt with through the insurance office and not submitted on a personal expense claim. First contact should be made by that person to the contracted hire car supplier to advise of the circumstance, then the University Insurance department needs to be informed

4.3.2 Travel using a personal vehicle

In the event that a person uses their own personal vehicle for a University business trip, the University will reimburse mileage costs. The rate to be applied depends on whether the vehicle is personally owned or leased as a company car through the University's salary exchange scheme, and it also depends on the miles travelled. Aside from the mileage rate, no personal vehicle related costs will be funded by the University.

The detailed mileage rates can be found on the website at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/finance/fcs-expenseclaimsform-open.aspx>

It is the driver's full responsibility to ensure that they have a valid driving licence, the vehicle has a valid MOT certificate as appropriate and it is properly insured for appropriate business use, including if applicable for passengers and business equipment.

Please note that you can only claim further allowances if the passenger(s) are employees of the University.

The allowable mileage that can be claimed would be the distance travelled minus your normal commuting distance. When submitting your claim you must provide your post code and the destination post codes of your entire trip to support the claimed mileage value. The outbound and inbound journey would be considered as one trip and should not be claimed separately.

E.g. employee commutes a total of 20 miles to & from their normal place of work. Employee is asked to travel to another location 12 miles in distance, 24 miles commute in total, employee may claim for 4 miles in mileage.

4.3.3 Travel between campuses

The University operates in a number of locations. In the UK, there are two main campuses within Reading and one in Henley. In addition there are University farms and other premises in the area. It is sometimes necessary for travel between these sites for business purposes, using either public transport or a personal vehicle.

If travelling by public transport, the cost of the ticket may be reclaimed. If travelling in your own vehicle, the University reimburses at a fixed number of miles for each defined inter-campus trip.

No travel from your University campus to your home or vice-versa is valid for a mileage claim.

The allocated number of miles for each defined trip can be found on the web at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/finance/fcs-expenseclaimsform-open.aspx>

Note that if your role for the University requires you to have more than one Normal Place of Work (for example you are based at more than one campus) travel between those sites is not reimbursable.

Note that the University does not make any reimbursements for intra-campus travel, e.g. travelling between the Whiteknights side and Earley Gate side of the Whiteknights campus.

4.4 Business travel between UoR campuses

Due to difficulty in use of direct public transport when travelling to and from UoR Greenlands campus, this journey may be undertaken by other means.

If travelling by public transport, the cost of the ticket may be reclaimed.

4.5 Pool vehicles

Pool cars and vans are not allocated to any one employee. You must comply at all times with the following conditions in respect of pool cars and vans (ALL of the conditions must be met):

- Pool cars and vans must be available to and actually used by more than one employee and must not ordinarily be used by one employee to the exclusion of other employees.
- Pool cars and vans must be used for business journeys only. Any private use (including home to work journeys after late working) must be merely incidental to its business use.
- Pool cars and vans must be kept overnight at the University's business premises. On occasions it may be necessary for you to keep the pool car or van overnight at your home, for example, where you will start a business journey very early the next day. On these occasions you must obtain permission in advance from the relevant line manager.
- A log of all mileage must be maintained by your department and be available for inspection by Finance, Internal & External Audit.

4.6 Accommodation

Hotel accommodation (both UK and overseas) should be booked via the Travel Management Company. As such no limits for a particular location are set, the Travel Management Company will offer suitable choice/s for the location/s requested.

The expectation is therefore that staff and students should not be claiming the costs of a hotel via the expenses system. If a hotel cost is claimed via an expenses claim the University has the right to refuse that part of the claim on the grounds of cost.

When a conference includes accommodation at a specific hotel which is included in the overall package and is within price per night limits this is a permissible exception to booking through a contracted Travel Management Company.

If a person on University business is required to stay away overnight and chooses to stay somewhere other than a hotel or equivalent (e.g. with friends or colleagues), the University will not reimburse any notional accommodation costs.

4.7 Subsistence

Subsistence must be based on actual expenditure and supported by appropriate receipts. As a general rule the University does not operate a per diem subsistence policy. Schools and Functions must not attempt to operate a local per diem policy as these will not be paid by the University. Also note that the hospitality and business entertaining regulations apply to all catering expenditure.

The University prohibits the purchase of alcohol for subsistence. If alcohol is purchased as part of a meal, only the food element can be claimed. Any claims including alcohol will be rejected

Any additional items beyond the limits set out below will be considered out of policy unless there is a clear business case that is approved by the Vice-Chancellor (for members of UEB) or Director of Finance for all staff.

4.7.1 Subsistence - day travel

For day business trips lasting less than 10 hours no food or other subsistence can be claimed.

For business trips lasting more than 10 hours, a subsistence claim for up to a maximum of £20 for food can be claimed on production of valid receipts.

4.7.2 Subsistence - overnight travel

Subsistence may be claimed up to the following limit on production of valid receipts:
Maximum £55 per day

Overseas subsistence claims may be claimed up to the following limit on production of valid receipts:
Maximum £50 per day.

4.8 Fines and Penalties

The University will not reimburse or meet the cost of any fines. This includes but not limited to parking, speeding, bus lane, congestion charge fines and library fines.

4.9 Congestion Charge and Road tolls

Where congestion charges or road tolls are incurred in the course of business travel in connection with the University, the cost of the congestion charge or toll will be reimbursed, provided a suitable receipt is submitted with the claim. Note that, in line with paragraph 4.10, any fines for non-payment of the charge are a personal cost and will not be reimbursed.

4.10 International mobile phone calls on University phones

Please see the University's mobile phone policy. Staff should check that they are on the correct tariff or that the most appropriate roaming tariff is added to their mobile phone before travel, to avoid unexpectedly large bills being incurred whilst abroad.

5 Subscriptions to Professional Associations

Where a member of staff is required to be a member of a professional organisation in order to fulfil their duties as required for their employment at the University, they may in some circumstances apply to have those fees reimbursed.

In order to minimise the risk of a tax liability, the individual should discuss the possibility of corporate membership with their line manager as the preferred option.

The cost of a personal subscription should be charged to the individual's Staff Development Account (SDA) where applicable. In other cases, it will be for the relevant budget holder to decide what subscriptions can appropriately be paid. Criteria for decisions should include maintenance and development of primary services, limitations of the current budget, and normal expectations for the group of professionals concerned, e.g. recruitment and retention issues.

If a budget holder takes the decision to approve a University payment of a subscription which incurs a tax charge, the tax charge will be met by the University on behalf of the individual and the cost will be charged to the same project code as the subscription.

In the UK, the tax authority publishes a list of approved professional bodies and their subscriptions are not subject to tax provided that membership is essential to your role at the University.

6 Uniforms and work-wear

Where a specific operational need exists, the University will issue uniforms and work-wear. This may be due to health and safety needs or if you will have a direct contact with the public and need to present a suitable image.

All uniforms must be clearly marked with a non-removable University logo and must not be worn for any non-University activities.

Your Line Manager should advise as to what uniform or work-wear is required for your role and what costs will be covered by the University.

7 E-books and other electronic literature

Where electronic books and similar are purchased using University funds, those items are the property of the University and must be available for the University to use. In the situation where the e-literature is downloaded to hardware, the hardware must be either the property of, or readily accessible to, the University.

8 Home-working and use of Telephones

8.1 Home-working

Employees official work location is stated in their employment contract and is normally on an University campus or other sites associated with the University (there are exceptions where employees have other contractual agreements)

The University makes no contribution to costs (e.g. internet access, heating and lighting) incurred when you work at home. The only exception is telephone costs as detailed in sections 8.3 & 8.4.

8.2 Computer Equipment

All Computer Hardware (including Peripherals, Printers, scanners etc) & Software must be purchased via DTS.

The University will not meet any costs for home printing and other computer consumables.

8.3 Home telephones

If you are required by the University as part of your employment duties to make business calls using your home telephone, you are entitled to claim reimbursement of such calls. You must keep adequate details of business calls to allow the University to check on the accuracy of claims made, and attach the original, itemised telephone bill to your expense claim form. The University will not reimburse the cost of any private calls. The University will not reimburse any part of rental of a home telephone.

Home telephones should only be used as an exception as the University provides telecommunication technology , MS Teams

8.4 Mobile phones

8.4.1 Provided by the University

The University will provide you with a mobile phone if a specific business need arises. The provision of a mobile phone will be in accordance with Procurement Policy rules, will be from an approved supplier and will be of a standard specification.

Staff should not attempt to reclaim the purchase of a mobile phone via an expense claim.

When a member of staff is provided with a University mobile phone they will be asked to opt for whether they want to use it for personal calls. For those who do not wish to use their phones for personal calls, their use of the phone will be monitored and spot checks will be carried out by Internal Audit in consultation with Line Managers to verify that no personal calls are made. If they are, then the arrangements set out below will come into operation.

For those staff who opt for personal call usage they will be asked to agree that a sum equivalent to 15% of the monthly cost of providing their mobile phone is deducted from payroll and reimbursed to the University. If and when an individual's monthly cost changes, e.g. because they have asked for a different tariff, the monthly deduction from payroll will be amended.

8.4.2 Personal mobile phones

If you use a personal mobile phone for business related calls you are entitled to claim reimbursement, provided that the following requirements are met.

- You must keep adequate details of business calls and provide original itemised phone bills when you reclaim to allow the University to confirm the accuracy of claims made.
- You are not entitled to claim for any or all of the monthly rental cost of your personal mobile phone **even when this includes inclusive minutes**.
- If business calls made are included within your normal line rental tariff, i.e. are made using inclusive minutes, then no reimbursement will be made as no additional cost has been incurred.
- If in addition to your normal tariff you are charged for call costs, then only the call costs relating to business phone calls will be reimbursed as per your itemised bill.

8.5 Personal Use of the University's telephone system

Reasonable personal use of the University's fixed line telephone system is acceptable; for example you may telephone home to warn of delays at work, and make any necessary changes to planned arrangements caused by such a delay. Excessive, regular use of the University telephone system for personal calls is not acceptable and may lead to further action..

Digital Technology Services regularly report details of call costs to budget-holders.

The cost of all personal non-UK calls must be reimbursed to the University. Payments can be made by bank transfer to the University, contact the Receipts Office for details.

8.6 Office Equipment & Furniture

As employees' normal place of work is at the University or University owned sites the University is not liable to purchase office furniture or equipment that may be utilised by an employee at home. Employees are advised to follow the ergonomic advice provided by the University to ensure they have comfort whilst they are working from home. Any Equipment or Furniture that has been purchased by the University for home use or has been removed from the office to home is still owned by the University.

9 Relocation expenses

9.1 General

The University has a policy with regard to the payment of relocation expenses on recruitment to a post at the University. For details of the policy, please see the link:

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/humanresources/Recruitment/humres-relocationassistance.aspx>

This policy specifically sets out the maximum amount of relocation expenses that can be agreed for roles at different levels within the organisation. Agreement to offer relocation expenses is approved by the Chair of the appointment panel in line with this Policy. The maximum amount of qualifying eligible expenses that may be reimbursed without being subject to UK tax or NIC is £8,000.

In accordance with HMRC rules, the University will only bear the expenses incurred by you, or provide benefits, during the tax year in which the relocation takes place or the following tax year.

For UEB level appointments only, relocation packages may be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

Relocation costs should not be submitted using the web based online expenses claim tool. A specific form is provided for relocation claims. Contact Human Resources for guidance who manage the Relocation Policy and associated claims.

10 Healthcare

10.1 Eye tests and spectacles for Display Screen Equipment ('DSE') users

- Eye tests

Eye examinations are available to all employees who are classified as 'a DSE user'. The University has ruled that anyone who uses DSE for more than an hour a day on most days is classified as a 'user' and eligible **to reclaim the cost of a basic eye examination**. This basic examination is to determine whether corrective spectacles are required for DSE work. The University will provide up to £25 of the cost of a basic eye examination, this can be claimed via the online expense claim form backed up with a receipt.

Prior to attending the eye examination you must obtain the Eye Test form, which is available on the University Health and Safety web site. Your line manager must authorise the funding of the eye test in advance.

Note that only the cost of the basic eye test is reimbursable. Any additional tests or extensions to the test are a personal cost and not reimbursed by the University. Also not reimbursed are any charges levied by the optician for certifying the form.

- Corrective spectacles

If corrective spectacles are required specifically for use with DSE the optician is required to certify that fact on the form. The certification is not just general short-sightedness; it is an eye defect specific to DSE use. If the optician certifies that the defect is DSE related, the University will contribute towards the cost of a pair of corrective spectacles for use with DSE up to a value of £55.

If spectacles are prescribed for other vision defects, the University will not contribute towards their cost.

More details on this subject can be found on the University's Health and Safety website.

10.2 Medical examinations

The University may require you to undergo routine medical health checks or medical screening ('medical examinations') on the following occasions:

- As part of pre-employment screening for employees joining the University.
- Annual medical screening for employees as notified by the University.
- Where the University requires a report on your medical health.

The University will arrange for any medical examinations and will pay the costs direct.

You should not pay the medical practitioner who provides the medical examination with a view to claiming reimbursement of your costs.

The University will be supplied directly with medical reports. You will be issued with a copy of the medical report.

The University will not pay for the costs of any treatment arising from any medical examination.

10.3 Medical insurance or treatment whilst travelling overseas on University business

The University will provide insurance for you against the cost of necessary medical treatment should you fall ill or suffer injury while on international travel in the performance of your employment duties.

In some cases this may incur a tax liability, you should always check with the Financial Tax Accountant and the Insurance Officer to clarify the administration that is required.

11 Reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses

11.1 Basic principles

Wherever possible you should avoid using personal funds by effective use of the University's ordering system or purchase card facility. If it is unavoidable that you incur out-of-pocket expenses when acting on behalf of the University, you may make a claim for reimbursement.

For members of staff, the University will make payment to the bank account details held for the payroll in the HR system. Payments to students will be made to the bank details provided in RISIS.

- You are eligible to apply for reimbursement of any expenses incurred **wholly**, **exclusively** and **necessarily** in the performance of your duties.
- You must not already have been reimbursed for these expenses from any other source, and if that subsequently occurs you must repay the University immediately.
- In the event of any discrepancies being identified subsequent to the payment of this claim, you must repay any overpayment immediately.
- The University will not reimburse any personal expenses.
- The University will not reimburse any fines, these are personal expenses.
- The University will not reimburse personal payment of supplier invoices.

- Reimbursement will only be on the basis of actual costs incurred, fully supported by original receipts from the suppliers. The University does not routinely accept credit card slips, credit card statements or photocopies of cheques as proof of purchase.
- In the case of train/tube tickets, if the original ticket has been retained by the transport provider then a receipt slip may be submitted, but this must be explained on the expense claim (or purchase card log).
- The onus is on all employees to spend the University's money wisely, appropriately and to maximum effect
- **Under no circumstances** are you permitted to submit an expense form on behalf of another person; expenses must be claimed by the person who has incurred the expenditure.
- Any attempt to submit a false expenses claim will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.
- The University reserves the right to refuse an expense claim, or will require personal repayment of purchase card or petty cash expenditure, if the University's policies have not been followed.
- You must not under any circumstances pass on your log in details to any other person to enter your expense claim utilising the online expenses facility

11.2 Ownership

All items purchased with University funds of any kind are and remain the property of the University. In the event that a member of staff leaves the University they must ensure that all such items remain with the University.

11.3 Expense claim procedure

All expense claims must be made using the appropriate means.

Student and visitor claims, when complete, should be sent to a University member of staff, using the latest version of the form on the Finance website and this must always be approved by a delegated authoriser.

Staff claims to be made utilising the Web based online Portal.

You are responsible for ensuring that all items on your claim are correct and in accordance with all relevant University and grant regulations, including this policy. In any instance where this is not the case, you must include full details on the claim form to explain the reasons.

Authorisers are required to ensure that there is sufficient information to check that the claim has been completed correctly, that items claimed were incurred wholly, exclusively and necessarily for business reasons and that they are an appropriate use of University funds.

Those staff processing expense claims will challenge any items that do not (or do not have sufficient support to show that they) adhere to University policies. If this occurs, either you or the authoriser is obliged to provide clarification.

Your claim together with all supporting documentation should be submitted as promptly as possible in order that the expenditure be reflected in the University's accounts. Any claims submitted over 6 months after date of the transaction will be referred to the Director of Finance and may not be paid.

Separate arrangements are in place for the authorisation of expense claims for the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Deans and Heads of Function.

11.4 Expenses incurred in foreign currencies

Where expenses are incurred in foreign currencies, the amounts should be shown in the currency in question and in the local currency equivalent. The rate of exchange to be used is the rate in force on the date of the transaction. The rate of exchange applied must be indicated on the expense form, this can be found on your bank statement (calculate via GBP versus currency spend), currency advice slip or via an exchange rate website .

11.5 Advances

On application, the University may provide you with an advance in respect of significant expenses that you will be incurring for the University in the course of your duties acting on behalf of the University e.g. an overseas field trip. The minimum amount advanced at any one time will not be less than £100; the maximum amount will generally not exceed £2,000 but you may apply for a larger advance if there is a valid reason. Advances greater than £2,000 must be approved by the Director of Finance

An advance must be cleared by submission of an appropriate expense claim form not later than four weeks after the date of your return . Any unused balance of the advance must be repaid promptly.

A further advance will not normally be provided until existing advances have been fully accounted for. Additional Advances must be approved by the Director of Finance

The University reserves the right to recover any uncleared advances from any monies owed or payable to you.

Advances, in total or in part, which have not been accounted for and which have not been repaid to the University will generate a personal tax liability.

12 Childcare

12.1 Additional Childcare costs

Childcare costs incurred by attending a training course or conference that occurs outside of normal working hours (costs that are additional to the routine everyday costs of childcare) can be claimed if the University has requested that you must attend such an event. Details of course attended must be provided and confirmation from your line manager that there was a business need for you to attend. Please attach to the line item in the claim.

Appendix 1 Variations that apply in Finland (branch)

Section	Notes
2.1 Long Service Awards	Awards given as vouchers or cash are a taxable benefit. If an award is given in the form of a gift, that is not taxable.
4.7 Subsistence	<p>Subsistence payments are not taxable up to the limits set by the Finnish tax regime. Therefore subsistence will be reimbursed at the local tax-exempt rate:</p> <p>Absence from their permanent workplace over 10h = EUR 39 over 6h = EUR 18</p> <p>There is also the tax-reduced lunch voucher scheme. Note that per diems are only tax free if the destination is located more than 15 kilometres away from either the employee's home or main place of work.</p> <p>Per diems are intended as a reimbursement to the employee for any meal costs that are higher than usual. For any day of travel, when the employee receives free meals, or meals included with the travel ticket, the maximum per diem is half the amount specified in the table below. 'Free meals' comprise two free meals in the case of full per diem, and one free meal in the case of partial per diem.</p>
5 Professional subscriptions	If the University funds personal professional subscriptions on behalf of an employee, that is a taxable benefit.
6 Uniforms and work-wear	Only work-wear that is specifically provided for health and safety reasons is tax-free. All other provision of work-wear is a taxable benefit.
9 Relocation	Compensation relating to buying or selling a home is a taxable benefit.

Appendix 2 Variations that apply in Germany (subsidiary)

Section	Notes
2.1 Long Service Awards	Such awards are a taxable benefit. The University will pay the tax.
4.7 Subsistence	<p>Subsistence payments are not taxable up to the limits set by the German tax regime. Therefore subsistence will be reimbursed at the local tax-exempt rate:</p> <p>Absence from their permanent workplace 24h absence = EUR 24 8h absence = EUR 12</p>
5 Professional subscriptions	If the Company pays an employee's personal professional subscription it is not deemed a taxable benefit provided that it is solely for business use.

Appendix 3 Variations that apply in Malaysia (subsidiary)

4.4 Temporary place of work for >24 months	This concept does not exist in Malaysian tax rules, therefore travel would be taxable.
4.5.4 Mileage rates	There are no fixed mileage rates in Malaysia; reimbursement must be on the basis of actual cost.
5 Professional subscriptions	If the Company pays an employee's personal professional subscription there is no taxable benefit provided that it is essential for business use.

Appendix 5 Hospitality Approval Form

This form must be completed and authorised BEFORE an event or hospitality valued at greater than £50 is accepted. This signed form must be retained with the Gift and Hospitality Register.

Name:

Job title:

Description of benefit or hospitality:
Justification for acceptance:

Approximate value (to be ascertained and agreed prior to sign off): £.....

Offered by (name of company/person):

Signature:	Date:
------------	-------

*Authorisation Signature:	Date:
Print Name	

* Authorisation must be by Head of School or Head of Function, or in the case of senior managers, their line manager. For example, HoS must be approved by their Dean, and Heads of Function must be approved by their Head of Service.

Your attention is drawn to the University's policies on such expenditure which can be found at <https://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/finance/FfinanceExpensesHospitalityPolicy.pdf>

