



Travel, Subsistence & Expenses Policy

Purpose:	The Travel, Subsistence & Expenses Policy presents a set of guidelines and procedures to be applied when authorising or undertaking travel on behalf of DkIT. This also extends to expenses incurred in carrying out Institute functions.
Circulation:	This document is available for all staff and Governing Body Members (including subcommittee members) to review and will be published on the Institute's website.
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Policy Owner:	Vice President for Finance and Corporate Affairs
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Revision History

Revision Number	Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Reference
1	26 March 2025	Amendment to Clause “Expenses incurred by an employee while working in another public body”	Page 11
2	22 October 2025	Amendment to Air Travel – Long haul travel – ability to avail of Premium Economy or Business Class subject to certain conditions being met and approvals received <u>Inclusion of section on Climate Action Fund - “Offset the climate effects of official air travel”</u> along with carbon calculator	Pages 9 & 10

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Purpose and scope

This policy is based on Circular letters, regulations and guidelines issued from time to time by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (“DPER”), Revenue or such other Government Departments/Authorities authorised to issue such Circulars and/or regulations. Refer to Appendix 1.

The purpose of this document is to set out the Institute’s policy to reimburse employees, post graduate students, relevant external parties and Governing Body members for travel, subsistence and expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties while temporarily away from their normal place of work.

The policy aims to ensure that staff, post graduate students, relevant external parties and Governing Body Members are fairly reimbursed for travelling and other out of pocket expenses, whilst achieving the best value for money. It should be noted that all claims are open to audit by the Institute’s internal and external auditors, Revenue Commissioners and research funding agencies.

Budget Holders have overall responsibility for adherence to the travel and subsistence budget allocation annually. Claimants should be advised that only essential travel is undertaken and that the number of employees or post graduate students on any official journey is kept to the absolute minimum. All Claimants must not claim from more than one state body for the same journey.

Compliance

Compliance with the Travel, Subsistence & Expenses Policy is periodically checked by the Finance Office irrespective of the level of authorisation on a claim. Non-compliance should be brought to the attention of the relevant Budget Holder, and direct Senior Executive Manager, in the first instance in addition to being brought to the attention of the Vice President for Finance and Corporate Affairs. A note of all instances of non-compliance identified and approved exceptions will be held on record for additional review.

Environmental responsibility

For environmental reasons, staff are encouraged to consider alternatives to travel, particularly air travel, and to consider alternatives such as Teams calls, telephone conferencing etc. Travel should be taken via the shortest practicable route and by the most economically practicable mode of travel.

Budgets & Prior approval

As part of the annual budgeting process, Budget Holders should be cognisant of travel, subsistence or business expenses anticipated to be incurred by their team in the budget year. Whilst it is not always practicable to be cognisant of all possible travel and subsistence expenditure that might arise during the year, it is the responsibility of the Budget Holder to ensure there is sufficient budget in place to cover the cost of any claim under this policy.

In advance of any international travel, subsistence or business expenses, all employees are required to obtain prior approval from their direct line manager. It is expected that both managers and employees discuss this prior approval process for international travel at a local level.

For international travel it is important the Office of the Vice-President of Finance and Corporate Affairs is made aware of any extended foreign trips (anything in excess of 2 weeks) to ensure sufficient travel insurance is in place. Furthermore all staff and students should consider the security status, as noted by the Department of Foreign Affairs, prior to foreign travel. Travel to any country classified as anything other than “Normal Precautions” should be approved by the relevant member of the Executive Board along with advising the

Office of the Vice President for Finance and Corporate Affairs. A list of travel advice is available at [Travel Advice By Destination | Department of Foreign Affairs | Ireland.ie](#).

Approval

The approval of travel, subsistence and business expenses should be received from one of the following:

Person Travelling

President
Member of the Executive Board
Head of Department
Central Service Managers (Head of Function)
All other staff assigned to a department
All functional area staff
Staff travelling on non-departmental budgets
Post Graduate Students
Governing Body Members
Relevant External Parties

Authorisation

Any Vice-President
President
Relevant Head of School
Relevant Vice President
Head of Department
Centre Service Manager (Head of Function)
Relevant Budget Holder
Relevant Budget Holder
Secretary to the Governing Body
Relevant Budget Holder

Submission of travel & expense claim for staff and students with access to the Core Portal

Claims in respect of travel and/or expenses must be submitted through the Core Portal not later than 60 days of the expense being incurred. Only digital (aka soft) copies of supporting documentation are required as supporting documentation and these should be uploaded to the Core Portal. Please note a hardcopy approval form is not required to be completed by employees or students who have access to the Core Portal, subject to the guidance in the next paragraph.

It is important claimants confirm with the relevant Budget Holder whether or not original copies should be retained; this is especially relevant when travel, subsistence or expenses are being incurred as part of project or research activities. It is the responsibility of the Budget Holder to determine the requirement for original copies of receipts to be retained, or indeed any other specific requirements of that funder. Claims where hardcopies are required will also need to be processed via the Core Portal with digital copies uploaded to the portal (i.e., a duplicate process is required using Appendixes 3 & 4).

The various aspects of the Core Portal claim process must be accurately and fully completed. Digital / PDF copies of receipts should be uploaded to the Core Portal for review by the Budget Holder. Every claim must show verifiable and authentic details of purchase and proof of payment to allow the approver and any internal, external or Revenue auditor understand the nature of the claim. Credit card receipts are not sufficient i.e. the supporting invoice or detailed receipt is required.

It is the ultimate responsibility of the relevant approver to ensure that all claims comply with this policy and Revenue guidelines and that **all documentation to support the claim has been submitted**. Incorrect or incomplete expense claims must be returned to the Claimant, together with review comments for rework and resubmission.

Claimants who do not have access to the Core Portal should refer to page 10 of this policy.

Late submission of travel & expense claims

Where claims are submitted after the 60 day timeframe, the Vice President/Head of School/Budget Holder responsible must not approve the claim without receiving email approval from the Vice President for Finance and Corporate Affairs to do so. Claims must not be authorised for payment in the absence of such

correspondence. The Institute reserves the right to return unpaid any claim submitted after the 60 day timeframe or any claim that is non-compliant with this policy.

Travel & subsistence allowances

Allowances are paid in respect of motor travel (per kilometer), subsistence (for absences longer than 5 hours) and other vouched out of pocket expenses. Different rates of subsistence are payable depending on whether the employee is on official business in Ireland (domestic subsistence rates) or abroad (foreign subsistence rates). The rates paid will be those as issued in the latest DPER circular. Current rates for domestic and foreign travel and subsistence are available to view on the Core Portal.

Motor expenses

Circular 11/82 provides that when travelling, employees must make every effort to use public transport.

However, an employee may use their own private vehicle on Institute business provided that

- (a) no suitable public transport is available
- (b) public transport is available only at equal or greater expense
- (c) the use of public transport would result in the loss of official time which it is necessary to avoid.

Insurance declaration

Employees who use their own vehicle for official Institute business, must ensure that the correct level of insurance is in place for that purpose. The onus is on the employee to ensure that business travel or limited work related use is adequately covered under their own insurance policy. By submitting a Travel, Subsistence & Expense Claim Form, the Claimant is confirming that they understand and have obtained the relevant insurance and that DkIT has no liability for any loss or damage resulting from the use of their vehicle.

When completing the travel claim on the Core Portal, a declaration is also made at submission stage that the claimant's insurance provision is correct.

Calculation of distances for motor allowances

Where an employee is authorised to use their private motor vehicle, they will be paid allowances calculated by reference to the distance travelling in any year and the cc (engine size) of their vehicle.

When claiming mileage, the 'lesser of home or headquarters' rule must be observed at all times (See Revenue Guidelines). For example, an employee living in Newry and travelling directly to Dublin must claim mileage from headquarters i.e. DkIT. An employee living in Swords and travelling directly to Dublin must claim mileage from home i.e. Swords.

Mileage should be calculated on the distance between two locations based on the AA Roadwatch website or Google Maps and supporting documentation should be used as evidence of calculations when submitting a claim for mileage. A screenshot of the journey planner should be taken, identifying the number of kilometres, and uploaded to the Core Portal.

Subsistence allowances

Subsistence allowances are paid for time spent away from your usual place of work and they relate to expenses incurred in respect of accommodation and meals. In any one claim, expenses for subsistence should be based

on subsistence rates or on actual receipts (to a maximum value of the subsistence rates) but not a combination of both.

Subsistence allowances are payable for absences of longer than 5 hours, longer than 10 hours or overnight (up to 24 hours) on official Institute business. Day allowances (5 hour and 10-hour rates) are not payable for an absence on official business that is within 8 kilometers of an employee's home or usual place of work.

With regards to conference/meeting attendance where meals are provided, the onus is on the Claimant to ensure that the 5-hour day allowance (1 meal) or the 10-hour day allowance (2 meals) is deducted from the overall subsistence received. This must be completed through the Core Portal, under the receipts screen, where it is possible to deduct allowances.

Overnight allowances (24 hours)

The overnight allowance covers the cost of accommodation and 3 meals. Overnight allowances are not applicable for travel within 100 kilometers of home or place of work. However, in exceptional circumstances, where a Budget Holder is satisfied that a need exists, overnight allowances may be paid for travel between 50 kilometers and 100 kilometers of home or work. The overnight allowance (24 hours) covers a period up to 24 hours from the time of departure as well as any further period not exceeding 5 hours.

Vouched Accommodation (VA) rate for Dublin

A Vouched Accommodation rate applies where an employee encounters difficulties in sourcing suitable accommodation in Dublin within the standard rate. In such cases, a Vouched Accommodation Rate will remain the vouched costs of accommodation up to a limit of the standard overnight rate plus the 2 meals/10 hour rate. Further information can be obtained from the Payroll Office.

Where an employee sources accommodation that exceeds the cost of the standard overnight rate or vouched accommodation rate, they will be solely responsible for meeting the additional accommodation expense.

Subsistence abroad

Subsistence while abroad will be paid according to the country rates issued by DPER. The most up to date rates are available to view on the Core Portal.

Please note that the recommended deductions for subsistence not incurred, as noted in the domestic subsistence section above, will also be applied for foreign trips. The rates used will be those applicable for the country in which subsistence is being claimed for.

Claimants whose receipts are in foreign currency will attach evidence of the exchange rate used (e.g. a credit card statement) or rates published on the website of the Central Bank of Ireland.

Please refer to the 'Prior approval' section for considerations before travelling abroad.

Reduced rates

Reduced overnight rates are payable after 14 consecutive nights away. Depending on the reason for the extended absence, a further 14 or 21 nights are payable at a reduced rate. Further information can be obtained from the Payroll Office.

Advance payments

In cases of large expenditure on foreign travel, advances may be obtained for a maximum of 80% of the anticipated expenditure. It is strongly recommended that advance notice of 10 working days be given to the Payroll Office to ensure timely payment. All applications for travel advances must be approved by the Budget Holder in advance and forwarded directly to the Payroll Office.

In instances where advance payment has been made, a final claim form and supporting documentation for the entire trip must be submitted within two weeks on the Core Portal from the return by date, showing the advance claimed and the balance due for reimbursement. The Institute will recoup any advance payment from net wage payments.

Other travel expenses

Claims for all items, excluding subsistence allowances, must be accompanied by receipt, and uploaded to the Core Portal. Receipts should clearly identify the expenditure that is being claimed. Credit and debit card receipts are not acceptable if they do not detail what was purchased. Taxis should only be used where no other suitable form of public transport is available.

Payments directly to suppliers

Certain expenses such as accommodation, flights, and conference fees can be paid directly to the supplier through the normal procurement process of the Institute.

- Accommodation Costs

In instances where the Institute has paid the accommodation in advance, the costs should not be included in your claim on the Core Portal nor should subsistence be claimed. However, it may be appropriate that the employee claim additional costs for meals with supporting receipts.

If accommodation has been provided as part of a conference/business trip and is being paid for by DkIT or the conference organiser, then any extra costs incurred by an employee such as accommodation upgrade or the booking of alternative accommodation will not be reimbursed by the Institute.

Every effort should be made by staff to ensure hotel costs are not extravagant. In general, 3 or 4 star hotels should be used.

- Air Travel

All flights are to be booked via the Purchase Order Process with the OGP chosen supplier. The Procurement Department can be contacted to obtain details of the current OGP supplier. Staff should always be aware that air travel is a high-impact activity for a consumer which increases their carbon footprint. Therefore, all alternative travel options should be considered before booking a flight. If air travel is deemed essential, then the following must be implemented

It is the policy of the Institute to obtain the most economical airline tickets available.

All short haul flights booked must be economy class.

Long haul travel is defined as any single non-stop flight over 8 hours flying time or total travel time of more than 14 hours (including connections) where no better itinerary is possible. Premium Economy tickets for such flights may only be procured in the following circumstances:

- Where claimants will be required to commence work immediately upon arrival. This should be avoided where possible and recovery time should be planned in the itinerary. (Claimants who are travelling for the purpose of attending events should normally travel economy class).
- Where special medical circumstances arise, claimants should discuss their requirements with the relevant senior manager prior to booking their flight.
- Premium Economy tickets may be procured for such long-haul flights, subject to availability of budget and approval of the relevant member of the Executive Board / President as appropriate.

If Business class is sought, it requires the prior approval of the President and if the President is travelling the prior approval of the Governing Body Chair. Please note that as previously stipulated, the above is dependent on pre-approval having been sought and sanctioned for any trip expense.

The additional cost to the Institute of Premium Economy or Business Class must not exceed more than 3 times the cost of the lowest fare option otherwise prior approval is required from the President.

Any upgrades to premium economy/Business class outside this exception will be at the claimant's own expense.

The Institute will not cover the cost of first-class flights.

Climate Action Fund - "Offset the climate effects of official air travel"

In January 2020, in Circular 01/2020: Procedures for Offsetting the Emissions Associated with Official Air Travel, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform introduced the requirement for all Departments and Offices to record, monitor and value the emissions associated with official air travel usage in their Department/Office and, no later than February of the following year, make a payment to the Fund Manager of the Climate Action Fund for these emissions. This ensures that the price Departments are required to pay will go towards boosting the level of climate change mitigation taking place in Ireland.

Specifically, this Circular requires all Departments and Offices, from 1 January 2020, to:

- Record the carbon emissions associated with all official air travel (in tonnes).
- Value these emissions based on the prevailing rate of Ireland's domestic Carbon Tax in the year the travel took place.

Pay an amount equivalent to the travel emissions impact into the Climate Action Fund.

- Rail Travel
Rail Travel at home or abroad should be in standard class.
- Conference Fees
Where possible, payment of conference registration fees should be paid directly by the Institute in advance of the event through the normal procurement process.

Receipted items

Out of pocket expenses and other minor misc. items may be refunded to staff on submission of a validly approved claim with receipts uploaded. The reason for the purchase of such items should be stated clearly on the claim. Only allowable expenditure can be claimed and expenditure of a personal nature is not permitted. However, items purchased should be minor in nature and generally not those that are procured via the normal procurement process on Agresso or via the Petty Cash Reimbursement System. Please refer to the Institute's Petty Cash Policy for further information.

Expenses incurred by an employee while working in another public body

All travel, subsistence and expenses for work which is completed on behalf of the Institute by a staff member, student or an external stakeholder e.g., Interview Board member, External Examiner, etc., should be claimed directly from the Institute. Where an Institute staff member completes work for/in another Third Level Institution or public body, they will claim from that body directly.

Hospitality

Whilst recognising the importance of hospitality, it is prudent to apply limits and restrictions to ensure that it is applied, when necessary, is not excessive and provides value for money. The Institute has a Gift & Hospitality Policy to ensure that costs are not excessive and are only provided where necessary. Please refer to this document for further information.

Non-Reimbursable expenses

The list below is not an exhaustive list of non-reimbursable expenses. If you require clarification on any items not included below, please contact the Finance or Payroll Office.

- Alcoholic beverages (further information can be found in the Hospitality Policy)
- Loss or damage to personal property outside what is recoverable under the Institute's insurance policy documents
- Upgrades to business or 1st class on flights or 1st class rail travel
- Private travel insurance (the Institute provides travel insurance to staff and students travelling on official Institute matters)
- Passport costs / passport renewal costs
- Lounge passes
- Fast track security passes
- Excessive airport car parking costs where alternatives were available
- Valet services
- Lost or stolen tickets, cash or personal property
- Fines for parking violations or speeding offences
- Late payments fees for toll bridge
- Repairs to personal vehicles used for work related purposes
- Accident insurance premiums and / or car insurance
- Costs resulting from failure to cancel transportation or hotel reservations
- In-room movie rentals, mini-bar or room service
- Dry cleaning
- Any travel costs for individuals not employed by the Institute who accompany an employee on an official business trip
- Tips and gratuities
- Suit/dress hire
- Child minding expenses
- Personal subscriptions or memberships
- Newspapers and periodicals
- Charitable donations made on behalf of the Institute
- Any expenses not deemed to be specifically for Institute business purposes

Submission of travel & expense claim for staff and students with no access to the Core Portal

There may be a small number of claimants who will not have access to the Core Portal (Governing Body Members, External Interview Members etc.). Claimants such as these should complete a Travel & Subsistence Form (refer to Appendix 3 and Appendix 4).

As above, claims in respect of travel and/or expenses must be submitted not later than 60 days of the expense being incurred. Digital (aka soft) copies of supporting documentation are acceptable as supporting documentation and these should be attached to the relevant Travel & Subsistence Form (again a softcopy is sufficient). Hardcopies of both the supporting documentation and Travel & Subsistence Forms is also acceptable. If hardcopies are being used the Payroll Office must be furnished with these before any claim is processed.

Again, it is important claimants confirm with the relevant Budget Holder if original copies should be retained; this is especially relevant when travel, subsistence or expenses are being incurred as part of project or research activities. It is the responsibility of the Budget Holder to determine the requirement for original copies of receipts to be retained, or indeed any other specific requirements of that funder.

All aspects of the Travel & Subsistence Form must be accurately and fully completed. Digital / PDF copies of receipts should be attached for review by the Budget Holder. Every claim must show verifiable and authentic details of purchase and proof of payment to allow the approver and any internal, external or Revenue auditor understand the nature of the claim. Credit card receipts are not sufficient i.e., the supporting invoice or detailed receipt is required. Completed forms should be furnish to the Budget Holder for review.

It is the responsibility of the relevant approver to ensure that all claims comply with this policy and Revenue guidelines and that all documentation to support the claim has been submitted. Incorrect or incomplete expense claims must be returned to the claimant, together with review comments for rework and resubmission.

All other aspects of this policy apply to Claimants with no access to the Core Portal.

Freedom of Information

Details of expenses payments to Institute staff may be released in response to requests received under Freedom of Information legislation.

Click on Link below for Policy and relevant forms.

[Travel, Subsistence and Expenses Policy | DkIT](#)

Appendix 1

Links to relevant circulars and regulations:

Travelling & Subsistence Regulations

<https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/finance/1982/11.pdf>

Subsistence Allowances

<https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/per/2015/05.pdf>

Domestic Subsistence Allowances

<https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/ccd8c-circular-17-2022-domestic-subsistence-allowances/>

Revised Motor Travel Rates

<https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/378ca-circular-16-2022-motor-travel-rates/>

Subsistence Allowances Abroad

<https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/2e47b22fd7d247599ff26287cff2e4f8/>

Foreign Travel Policy Guidelines

<https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/7651ecccb5c249a59ef3e6631950464b/>

Procedures for Offsetting the Emissions Associated with Official Air Travel

<https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-public-expenditure-infrastructure-public-service-reform-and-digitalisation/circulars/procedures-for-offsetting-the-emissions-associated-with-official-air-travel/>

[Tax treatment of the reimbursement of expenses of travel and subsistence to office holders and employees](#)

<https://www.revenue.ie/en/tax-professionals/tm/income-tax-capital-gains-tax-corporation-tax/part-05/05-01-06.pdf>

Please ensure to review the following website to ensure you are referencing the latest circular:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/circulars/>

Appendix 2

Check list for claimants

- Has pre-approval for the trip been sought for international travel?
- For domestic motor travel, have you confirmed with your insurance company that adequate insurance is in place on your policy?
- Is travel strictly necessary for Institute business?
- Have all alternatives to travel been considered?
- Will the expense claim be submitted within 60 days of travel?
- If not, has the late claim authorised by the Vice President for Finance and Corporate Affairs?
- Has the claim form and all necessary back up documents been uploaded on the Core Portal?
- Has the lesser of home or headquarters rule been observed for motor mileage claims?
- Has the AA Roadwatch website or Google Maps been referenced and submitted (screenshot) as backup for mileage claims?
- Has the 5 hour day allowance or the 10 hour day allowance been deducted from the subsistence claim where necessary?
- Where an advance payment has been received, is the final claim being made within 2 weeks of return?
- Have you claimed this expenditure from another public body? If so, do not submit this claim.
- Has the list of non-reimbursable expenses been checked before submitting expenses?
- Is the claim compliant with the Travel, Subsistence and Expenses Policy?