

VISITING SPEAKER EXPENSES POLICY

Approved: February 2024

Proposed implementation: From 1 April 2024

This policy sets out the rules and key principles in relation to the incurring, claiming, approving, and processing of expenses for Visiting Speakers, as defined under the College's External Events & Speakers Policy.

As a charitable organisation the College has an obligation to ensure all funds are spent in a reasonable and cost-effective manner. This policy is designed to ensure clarity and consistency of application across the College.

In addition, processed claims must also comply with:

- research sponsors' or funding bodies' terms and conditions where they are more prescriptive than those of the College;
- tax legislation; and
- the College's insurance requirements to ensure that the College maintains its duty of care to the public.

Scope

- This policy applies to Visiting Speakers incurring expenses as part of their interaction with the College where reimbursement has been agreed in advance. The policy applies to reimbursements of actual costs incurred or a daily allowance if agreed.
- Specifically excluded are all College employees, Fellows and students.
- This policy applies to all College funds, regardless of source.

Roles and responsibilities

- This policy is owned by the Bursar on behalf of the Finance Committee
- Visiting Speaker expense claims can be authorised by authorised staff and Fellows, in line with the College's delegated authority arrangements and pre-existing authorisation levels.
- It is the responsibility of External Event Organisers (as defined by the College's External Events and Speakers Policy) to communicate clearly with individuals prior to their engagement with the College as a Visiting Speaker regarding:
 - This policy, with emphasis on the key principles
 - What is or is not claimable
 - Rates and spending limits
 - Required proof of expenditure, e.g., receipts, ticket
 - Procedure for claiming
- Approvers must ensure they have sufficient authority/permission to approve all items within the claim (i.e., under their institution Delegated Authority document), and declare any potential conflicts of interest as per their institution's policy.
- Claimants must ensure that all information is accurate, appropriate and in accordance with the guidance provided.

Key principles

All expenses must be incurred in accordance with the following five key principles.

1. Best use of College funds

- Expenses are only to be incurred and reclaimed by non-employees, where:
 - the expenditure is the best way of achieving the proposed objectives;

- appropriate prior authorisation has been given;
- they comply with research sponsors' and funding bodies' terms and conditions if these are more prescriptive than this policy; and
- it is not possible or practical for the College to pay for the goods or services directly.

2. Evidence of expenditure

Only actual and evidenced costs are reclaimable. Receipts are the principal evidence of expenditure and, if available from a supplier, must be provided. If a receipt is not available, alternative evidence will be required.

3. Business purposes only

Expenses may only be reimbursed where the costs are directly associated with, or have arisen because of, the visit to the College. The College will not reimburse any interest charges or other penalties incurred.

4. Value for money

The College's resources are to be used responsibly and all claims must represent value for money regarding:

Safety and security

Visiting Speakers should expect to travel and be accommodated in safety with reasonable comfort. When considering whether an expense is appropriate factors such as location, time, and duration, are relevant.

Cost-effectiveness

Visiting Speakers are expected to choose, and institutions expected to fund, the appropriate cost option where it is consistent with the University's principles and policies on safety, security, and sustainability.

Sustainability

Visiting Speakers are encouraged to consider environmental impacts and recognise that this may result in using a more expensive form of travel. Typically, this will involve an election to travel by public transport in preference to car or short haul flight(s).

5. Reimbursement, not reward

- The purpose of the policy is to reimburse individuals for legitimate expenses incurred. Any costs that lead to them, their family or friends gaining a financial or other material benefit will not be reimbursed.
- Individuals must not claim reimbursement for expenses from the College where they are expecting to be reimbursed by another party, for example, a sponsor or conference organiser, or their own employer. They may claim the difference between the total allowable spend and what the third party is prepared to pay.

Submission of expense claims

- All claims must be submitted to the individual who invited the Visiting Speaker and use the systems or forms approved by the Finance Department.
- Visiting Speaker claims and personal bank account details must be submitted within 1 month of date of the expenditure incurred unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- Expense claims will be paid into the individual's personal bank account when the next monthly payment run is administered by the College. Where the individual wishes their expenses to be

paid into their workplace bank account, the workplace must raise an invoice for these costs to the College.

- Staff and Fellows can expedite the processing of Visiting Speaker expenses by providing the appropriate budget code with the speaker's expense claim.

Application of this policy

- Any deviations from the policy must adhere to the key principles and be authorised by the Bursar. A record of the extenuating circumstances must be kept for audit purposes.
- Serious and intentional breaches of this policy may be considered fraudulent and result in formal proceedings.
- Failure to adhere to this policy may result in reimbursement being delayed or refused.

Travel

- Before committing to reimbursement of travel expenses for Visiting Speakers, External Event Organisers must consider whether the purpose can be achieved without needing to travel. Virtual meetings can offer an efficient (in terms of both time and cost) and sustainable alternative to physical travel. In cases where travel is required, it must be approved in advance.
- Public transport should be used, if appropriate, for journeys as it is often the most cost-effective and sustainable means of travel within urban areas and to/from airports. Alternatives to flying (e.g., train or ferry) are encouraged wherever possible and practical to do so. Train travel should be prioritised over air travel to and from European destinations, including all those served by Eurostar, particularly when travel time is within six hours to or from a London terminal.
- Cost effectiveness of travel needs to be considered before engaging a Visiting Speaker. For example: frequency, speed, and the convenience of stops. For longer journeys within the UK, the time and cost should be factored, including accommodation and subsistence, as well as the environmental impact when compared to car and air options.
- Where circumstances allow, Visiting Speakers should be encouraged to purchase tickets in advance for travel at off-peak times if the College is not purchasing these directly.
- Where approved, reimbursement is for mileage actually incurred, using the most direct route.
- Travel costs relating to partners, any other family members, chaperones, or carers are not normally paid except where their presence is in the furtherance of College business. Examples of when costs for an individual's accompanying person are acceptable:
 - They have some special skill or qualification associated with the individual's visit to the College, although not necessarily full time, e.g., where the companion is a linguist and acts as an interpreter at business meetings;
 - The individual has requirements that mean they are unable to travel alone.

Accommodation

- Overnight accommodation should only be provided where the individual cannot reasonably be expected to make a return journey on the same day.
- Where possible, accommodation should be booked with the College and, where a room in College is not available, booked and paid directly by the College.

Subsistence

The College does not ordinarily reimburse subsistence expenses or pay a subsistence allowance for Visiting Speakers. Provision of refreshments and, where appropriate, meals is the responsibility of the External Event Organisers and are ordinarily arranged with the College's Conferencing & Catering Department.