

STFC Expectations for Short-term Travel Claims for UK-PP

SJH 22/06/2012 – v2

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This note is written with an eye to overseas travel; nevertheless, similar principles will apply to UK travel.

In transferring Short-term Travel (STT) to the Universities, STFC anticipates that what is claimed will come under the procedures of each University, and these may differ from one University to another. Nevertheless, since STFC is providing the funds to support these Claims, the organisation has certain expectations as to how its money will be used and the appropriate level of reimbursement. What follows in this note is based on the rules for STFC Staff; STFC expects that University Staff will be treated in a comparable way.

While STFC has moved to *Actuals*,¹ if University systems allow the payment of *per diems*, these can be claimed, although it is expected that they will be in line with the previous scale of STFC allowed rates² (eg. 87 CHF/day for CERN).

It is expected that broadly, claims will adhere to the principles set out in the *Guidance for Travellers*:

http://www.stfc.ac.uk/PPD/resources/pdf/PP_Overseas_TS_Guidelines.pdf

and that claims for meals will be in-line with the *Indicative Maxima* provided by HMRC in:

<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/employers/wwsr-bench.pdf>

What follows does not attempt to replace the above, but high-light some of the issues.

The expectation is that people should not be out of pocket for business travel, but also that they will be responsible and conscious of the fact that they are using tax-payers' money. Travel money exists to cover people's expenses, not for them to take advantage. Common sense should always be applied by the Traveller and those approving Claims.

General

- Claims should be supported by receipts unless per diems are in place, as discussed above.
- If there is no receipt, the cost may be covered by the *Allowance* for unreceipted expenses (see below), else authorisation should be provided in the form of a supporting letter from a line-manager.
- Claims should be made within 3 months of return, after this period, late Claims should be discussed with the Budget Holder.

Travel

- It is expected that people will travel by the most economical means (with some common sense applied), taking into account all costs (eg. any additional nights in a hotel).
- If people need to take significantly more expensive transport for business reasons, this must be discussed with the Budget Holder.
- If people choose to use a more expensive option for personal reasons, they may claim for the cost of the least expensive option.

¹ The move to *Actuals* was ostensibly to harmonise systems across the research councils, and with some mind to increase accountability, but not to save money per se. Whether this is achieved is a point of debate. Nevertheless, while the hope is that travellers are not out of pocket, the change may reduce travel costs.

² These rates were set by an independent advisory body for use by STFC.

Meals

- People should take note of the *Indicative Maxima* and try to respect them.
- Nevertheless in some situations (especially in the UK – see App A), the maxima may be inadequate. In these circumstances, some measure of reasonableness should be applied.
- Where average costs are kept down (sandwiches eaten on shift day in, day out), some allowance may be made for occasional meals exceeding the *Indicative Maxima*.
- Travellers may wish to enjoy a glass of wine or beer with their meals. One or two glasses are acceptable; and it is expected that wine will be at the cheaper end of the spectrum. Should Travellers wish to enjoy more expensive wine, then they have a responsibility to pay for it themselves.

Since 2013, STFC has been in “Special Measures”. This means STFC staff are not able to claim for alcohol with meals.

Additional Expenses

- All expenses should be claimed on an *Actuals* basis (but see below).
- Claims on top of necessary transport costs, regular meals, occasional beverages and accommodation must be justified. Where *Allowances* may be claimed (see below), minor expenses should be covered by these.

Allowances

- UK and Overseas Travellers may claim £5 per night.
- UK and Overseas Travellers may claim up to £5 per day for actual expenses where they do not have a receipt – these should be itemised.

The note provides guidance with respect to STFC’s expectations. What is allowed in a given University should be discussed with those in authority. Significant departures from this guidance should be discussed with the appropriate Budget Holder and possibly STFC.

Appendix A – Indicative Maxima for Meals in UK

Breakfast (when not included as B&B)	£7.50
Lunch	£15.00
Supper	£25.00
Or Lunch & Supper combined	£40.00

Appendix B – Indicative Maxima for Meals in Geneva

Breakfast (when not included as B&B)	28.00 CHF
Lunch	40.00 CHF
Supper	69.00 CHF

It is expected that much of the time, travellers will attempt to save money by eating in the CERN restaurants.