

## SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS

### Guidelines for Staff Expenses

The university expenses policy is available at: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/finance/for-staff/staff-expenses>.

These additional guidelines provide further clarification as to how the policy is implemented within the School of Informatics. They do not override university policy.

### **Exchange rates**

1. University policy states: *Foreign currency will be reimbursed in sterling using the nearest applicable exchange rate to the date that the expenses were incurred.*
2. The School will apply the above policy, however it is usually acceptable to use a single exchange rate to cover the period of a claim.
3. Any charges for money exchange (eg credit card or bank fees) may be claimed if evidence is provided.

### **Staff travel on university business**

1. All travel should be pre-approved by the budget holder. In the case of research grants, the budget holder is usually the Principal Investigator (PI).
2. First class rail travel is permissible for journeys of over two hours, if work is required to undertaken on the journey. Sleepers should always be first class. Otherwise, standard/economy travel should be utilised.
3. Where return trip costs are more than £300, the university's appointed travel agent should be used for bookings. An exception may be made where 'best value' may be obtained by, for example, booking direct with an airline.
4. Admin support offices will assist in obtaining costs and making bookings.

### **Meals and subsistence**

1. Costs will vary depending on location.
2. University guidance is around **£40** for dinner while away from Edinburgh. This should be more than sufficient for most (but not necessarily all) destinations.
3. University policy is that **alcohol costs will not be reimbursed**. The School does not have the discretion to vary this policy.
4. Local receipts must be provided for all expenses incurred (including for items costing less than £5, where practical). Credit card/bank statements on their own are not sufficient as they do not provide the detail needed for the authorised signatory to sign-off the claim.
5. The concession of up to £5 per day for minor expenses without receipts is intended to cover actual expenditure where it is not practicable to obtain a receipt. It is not a daily allowance.
6. Note that for EU grants the submission of local receipts for every transaction is essential. Without a receipt auditors are likely to remove the charge from the grant.
7. Any disallowed expenses costs will be charged to the relevant Institute G account.

### **Entertaining and hospitality for guests and external contacts**

1. This should follow the guidance of around **£40** per head for a meal. In addition, reasonable alcohol will be reimbursed and the School guideline is up to **£10** per head.
2. Local receipts must be provided.
3. A list of **ALL** people attending the meal (including organisation/company details) must be included with the claim.

**Missing receipts**

Local receipts must be provided for every item over £5 on the claim. If a receipt has been lost then the authorised signatory will look at this on a case by case basis but be aware that costs without receipts may be stripped out of the claim. The final decision rests with the authorised signatory.

**Timing limit on the submission of expenses claims**

Claims should be submitted as soon as is practicable. This should be normally within two months of the expenditure. Claims submitted after closure of a grant or similar funding will not be allowable.

*Approved by Strategy Committee 24 February 2016*