



ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY

TRAVEL PROCEDURES

Introduction

The Travel procedures must be read in conjunction with the Travel policy and financial regulations and procedures.

They apply to all staff, students and visitors travelling for business on behalf of the university.

For this policy, standard 'Business' is the generic term used for activities associated with and agreed through the university such as lecturing, research work, work placements, visits, fieldwork, business, recruitment, training and conference attendance.

Each Faculty/Department has different structures in place for organising and booking travel, but they all need to ensure that they comply with the Travel policy and procedures.

Sustainability

University staff who have a management responsibility for approving travel must ensure that it is for legitimate business needs. These procedures support the delivery of the university's Sustainability policy and commitment to net zero targets. Ensuring sustainable travel is a part of this commitment.

At Aberystwyth University we encourage active travel. Walking and cycling to and around our campuses are encouraged for health and wellbeing, as well as for the environment. For those who are unable to walk or cycle to campus we promote the use of public transport and car sharing as a sustainable and affordable travel option.

When planning to travel consideration must be given to the carbon impact of potential travel options prior to booking. Choosing lower carbon travel options does not necessarily cost more or take longer. The carbon impact associated with travel should be considered when deciding the method of travel, with the lowest carbon method being the default choice.

Alternatives to travel must be considered prior to booking travel. Examples of alternatives include use of virtual collaboration tools (Teams, Zoom, or equivalent) as well as examining whether colleagues from across the university are attending the event and can conduct the same purpose.

- Minimise the number of journeys, combining meetings where possible.
- Trains are preferable for longer journeys but where driving is considered the only practical option, ensure all attendees car share.
- Air travel is not permissible for travel within Great Britain except for the exceptions listed in the travel policy and approved by the Head of Department (HoD).
- The lowest carbon option should be used subject to the principle of economy and reasonableness where it is practical to do so, even where costs may be higher. In practice, this means that in many cases, land-based travel rather than flying is the default option.
- If travel is being funded through a research grant, consider whether your original proposal could contain low/ zero travel price and full travel price options to give funders the opportunity to fund lower-carbon projects.

Emissions from different modes of transport per passenger per kilometre (2023)

Mode of transport	CO ₂ emissions (g)
International rail	4
Coach	27
Domestic rail	35
Car (four passengers)	43
Local bus (not London)	112
Car (one passenger)	170
Long-haul flight	176
Domestic flight	273

Travel Management Company

All travel and accommodation that is funded by the university must normally be booked through the university's Travel Management Company. This enables the university to make efficiencies where possible and assists us in managing and monitoring our travel policy, including our travel related carbon emissions. There are a few exceptions to this rule which are detailed in the Travel policy and throughout this document.

Air BnB are not approved by ATOL and therefore cannot be used.

Pre-trip approval

In addition to attaining the appropriate approval for the travel to be undertaken, all members of staff must record details of their travel on the Pobl Aber People system. The free text box should be used to record the exact location of the traveller, as well as the itinerary for the duration of the visit. This must be completed prior to departure. Travellers must also comply with any pre-trip approval rules documented in the Travel policy or issued by their own Faculty/Department.

The budget holder may reserve the right to refuse reimbursement of travel and subsistence claims if travellers have not sought the budget holder's permission to incur those expenses.

Research Grants

Externally funded research projects are considered to be university funded as they are given to us to manage, in line with our approved policies and procedures. When applying for research grants the applicant must ensure that they request adequate provision for travel and accommodation costs. This is not a permissible exception to the Travel Policy.

On rare occasions it may be unavoidable for the funder, or another partner organisation, to hold the travel funds and book the travel and accommodation on our behalf. On these occasions there is no need to use the approved travel supplier but we encourage against this.

However, a risk assessment is still required for any international travel and a specific activity risk assessment may be required for UK travel if the activity undertaken could be anticipated to be high risk (if in doubt consult HSE).

Self-funded travel

In exceptional circumstances where a staff member decides to fund their own travel and has had approval from their line manager, then the staff member is eligible for AU travel insurance. In this instance there is no need to use the approved travel supplier. However, no claim for expenses can be made.

Any bookings which have been procured and self-funded will require either a travel cover application form for domestic travel or an international individual travel risk assessment to be completed and sent to travel and fleet.

Personal travel

If you wish to take your family with you to a business event the University will only reimburse you the costs of your travel. If there are no additional costs for occupying a double room then the amount to be reimbursed by your partner is nil. If you wish to extend your trip to include a personal holiday, you can claim for your flights to and from the event, but no costs once you start your holiday. You will need to take personal travel insurance for the period of your holiday. The University travel cover will insure you for the period of business travel.

Group travel

In instances where students are required to book and pay for their own travel, there is no need to use the approved travel supplier.

If the travel is a part of the studies, then AU travel insurance will apply.

Any bookings which have been procured and self-funded will require a travel cover application form for domestic travel or an international group travel risk assessment to be completed and sent to travel and fleet.

Trip Rearrangements, Cancellations, Refunds and Compensations

Once travel has been booked and authorised, and a situation arises where there is a change of plans, and travel needs to be rearranged, this must be authorised and agreed in writing by the budget holder (if the traveller is the budget holder, their line manager). The budget holder for audit compliance must keep a copy of the new booking, the cancellation and confirmation of approval.

Where it is no longer possible to take a business trip, the traveller is responsible for notifying the approved supplier. This should be done as soon as possible to avoid cancellation charges. If the cancellation is beyond your control, then a claim can be submitted to the Travel and Fleet section with appropriate accompanying evidence for consideration.

Train operators and airlines usually compensate passengers for significant delays. The compensation will depend upon the length of the delay. Please contact the Travel Management Company in the first instance. In the event of any concerns, please contact the Travel and Fleet section.

Unused tickets must never be destroyed, as refunds are usually possible (subject to the type of ticket purchased and any ticket restrictions). Please contact the Travel Management Company in the first instance. In the event of any concerns, please contact the Travel and Fleet section. It is recommended that there is always sufficient evidence produced to support reasons why travel arrangements needed to be re-arranged.

Car Hire/Taxis

Car hire car rental must only be used if this is the best value for money transport method for the business journey. If vehicle hire is required for a short duration within the UK, then one of the university's pool cars are to be used. Full details of these can be found on the Travel and Fleet website. UK car hire bookings must be made with our framework provider. This agreement offers excellent value for money and carbon emissions can be measured for all trips booked with this supplier. Supplier contact details and online booking information can be found on the Travel and Fleet website. Should a person on university business damage a hire car, the financial impact must be notified and dealt with by the Travel and Fleet department and not submitted on a personal expense claim.

International car hire bookings should be made via a reputable company, please ensure you check their terms and conditions.

Taxis should only be requested when there is no suitable public transport option or if it is not appropriate due to the nature or time of the journey e.g. Unsocial hours or where sharing a taxi is cheaper than using public transport.

Fleet Vehicles

Fleet vehicles are not allocated to any one employee. Staff should always comply with the following conditions in respect of pool cars and vans:

- must be available to and used by more than one employee and must not ordinarily be used by one employee to the exclusion of other employees.
- 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.
- must usually be kept overnight at the University's business premises. On occasions it may be necessary for staff to keep the pool car or van overnight at your home, for example, where it will be used for a business journey early the next day, staff must obtain permission in advance from the relevant Head of Department.

If you have any travel related queries, please contact our Travel and Fleet team on email: travelandfleet@aber.ac.uk or telephone: 01970 621623. Please refer to the Travel and Fleet website for further information [Travel & Fleet : Estates, Facilities & Residences , Aberystwyth University](#)

Appendix A

Details of allowable and non-allowable costs on expense claims.

1 Travel by vehicle

Category	Allowable Cost	Comments
Car/Motorcycle mileage in own vehicle	Yes only for journey's under 100 miles	Drivers are responsible for ensuring their vehicle is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insured for business purposes. • Taxed with MOT certificate if applicable.

		• Safe.
Travel in AU EV salary sacrifice vehicle	Yes	Current approved HMRC rate payable
Travel from home to work	No	Occasionally allowable e.g. staff on call outside hours. Reimbursed through payroll and subject to deduction of tax/NI.
Vehicle rental	No	Vehicles may be hired via the framework agreement. When renting a vehicle abroad the framework does not need to be used, but please ensure that you use a reputable company and check their terms and conditions carefully.
Vehicle rental fuel costs & EV charging off campus	Yes	Claim cost of fuel/EV via expenses with detailed VAT receipt showing amounts.
Electric bike	Yes	Reimbursed at cost with supporting receipt, however, these can be charged free of cost on campus. In addition, time to travel between campuses and lost time needs to be considered by Line Manager.

2 Travel (other)

Category	Allowable Cost	Comments
Buses	Yes	Bus fares
Taxis	Yes	Taxis can be used if this is cost-effective and appropriate for the journey. Taxis should be hailed/booked by the traveller and reclaimed via expenses.
Minibus and Coach Services	Not through expenses	Should be procured via a purchase order in advance.
Car parking	Yes	Reasonable car parking charges can be claimed where they are essential for the university business.
Toll charges	Yes	Receipts should be obtained where possible.
Parking fines	No	Never an allowable cost.
Speeding fines	No	Never an allowable cost.
ULEZ fines	By exception	Journeys should be planned to avoid such charges. Charges will only be reimbursed if incurring them was unavoidable.
Tourist taxes	Yes	Fees imposed by the destination country or resort and usually payable locally such as 'resort fees' or 'tourist tax' are allowable.

3. UK Rail/Underground

Category	Allowable Cost	Comments
UK rail tickets	Yes	Standard class is the expected standard of travel. Tickets must be booked through university's Travel Management Company.
Railcard	No	

Underground/light rail	Yes	Normally underground tickets should be purchased with rail tickets (choose London Zone 1 as your destination) through the university Travel Management Company. Otherwise, claims for trips paid by contactless should be made through a personal Transport for London account which will provide documentation to support expenses claim.
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4. Air Travel

Category	Allowable Cost	Comments
Air Travel	Yes	Tickets must be booked through university's Travel Management Company. In the exceptional circumstance that this does not prove possible, confirmation of the reason why the Travel Management Company was not used should be included on the expense claim. Claims for flights where the TMC has not been approached will not be reimbursed until after date of travel. Note: the TMC offer a price match service if you feel the most economical price has not been offered.
Air Travel - Economy	Yes	Economy class is the expected standard of travel
Air Travel – Premium Economy	By exception	Premium economy travel is allowable only in exceptional circumstances due to the additional carbon emissions and cost deemed to be associated with such travel. This would normally apply to flights exceeding 6 hours where certain circumstances may exist such as: excessive total journey time and/or complexity; where other classes of travel may have a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of the traveller; or where the timing in relation to the performance of university business activity merits it. In those circumstances written approval containing details of the justification for Premium Economy travel must be obtained by the relevant member of the university Executive Board prior to making the booking. Quotes from the Travel Management Company outlining the difference in price must be submitted as part of the approval request. The booking should be made via the Travel Management Company and a copy of the written approval must be provided at the point of booking.
Air Travel – Business Class	By exception	Business class travel is allowable only in exceptional circumstances and if Premium Economy is not available due to the additional carbon emissions and cost deemed to be associated with such travel. In those circumstances written approval containing details of the justification for Business class travel must be obtained by the Director of Finance prior to making the booking. Quotes from the Travel Management Company outlining the difference in price must be submitted as part of the approval request. The booking should be

		made via the Travel Management Company and a copy of the written approval must be provided at the point of booking.
Airport lounge	By exception	In the case of a delayed flight, or circumstances that allow staff to access facilities that support working at the airport, the use of an airport lounge is permitted.