



Category:	Finance & Administration
Number:	4.06
Responsibility:	Vice-President Finance & Administration
Approval:	Board of Trustees
Approval Date:	February 26, 2004
Issue Date:	January 2004
Next Review:	January 31, 2007

INTRODUCTION

Brock University recognizes that employees may be required to travel from time to time on university-related business. Brock shall pay for reasonable business expenses incurred for authorized travel on university business by employees, subject to the availability of funds. Reasonable is defined as “fair and moderate”.

All employees that will be traveling and/or approving travel and related expenses should be aware of the policies the University has adopted herein prior to initiating any travel or entertainment.

As with all University expenses, travel and entertainment may be the subject of review by a member of the Finance Department, Internal Audit, or the external or funding agency auditors.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is

- To set out the conditions under which expenses incurred for travel and related expenses will be reimbursed.
- To identify expenses that are eligible for reimbursement.
- To outline the criteria under which travel advances will be allowed.
- To ensure sufficient information is available to maximize any GST input tax credits available to the University for expenses incurred.
- To establish a mechanism for the claim and reimbursement of approved travel and related expenses.
- To raise an awareness of health and safety issues that may arise when traveling on university business.

SCOPE

This policy applies to travel and related expenses funded from all University administered funds (e.g. operating, ancillary, plant, research, special purpose and development funds).

The University requires that employee travel must meet one of the following criteria:

- To make a presentation to a committee on behalf of the University.
- To obtain or maintain the presence of the University in an organization and/or the community at large.
- Necessary for the execution of official University business.
- Necessary in relation to the assigned duties of any employee of the University.

Some ineligible expenses include (see [Ineligible Expense List](#)), but are not limited to:

- Expenses for personal entertainment or of a personal nature (movies in hotel, sight-seeing trips, surcharges and expenses related to spouses or any individual who is not on University business and accompanies/meets/joins the University employee),
- Tickets and fines for traffic violations,
- Interest charges levied on overdue invoices,
- Memberships in social clubs where there is no demonstrated benefit to the University,
- Personal gifts (e.g. Flowers, chocolates) to faculty and/or staff,

- Items lost or stolen in transit,
- Passport fees,
- Flight cancellation insurance for **travel with cost <\$500**,
- Service charges, interest charges, or annual fees associated with personal credit cards. It is the responsibility of the claimant to file expense forms on a timely basis to avoid these charges.
- Expenses reimbursed by another institute, university or organization.

Research-related travel and other expenses may be subject to additional guidelines established by a Research funding agency. Where agency guidelines differ from the policies set out herein, those of the funding agency take precedence. Where agency guidelines do not exist, the policies set out herein will prevail. If it is unclear which travel policy should be used, contact the Office of Research Services for clarification prior to travel.

POLICY

Claims

1. Individuals must obtain the authorization of their immediate (not related or personally associated) supervisor prior to any travel and related activity. All Expense Reports must be signed by the claimant and approved in accordance with the Signing Authority policy. In so doing, the claimant certifies that the expenses are for University business purposes and in accordance with policy, or highlights exceptions to policy for the reviewer. The approver's signature confirms the expenses were actually incurred on behalf of University business and are in accordance with policy or where noted, policy exceptions are approved.
2. The Finance Department is responsible for conducting detailed financial reviews (expense code, documentation, approvals, clerical accuracy) of each Expense Report. The Department of Finance will return Expense Reports to claimants and/or supervisors for clarification, completion or approval, where absent.
3. Reimbursement for travel and entertainment expenses will only be allowed where an authorized Expense Report is submitted to the Finance Department. All Expense Reports should be submitted on a timely basis. To ensure that all expenses are recorded within the correct fiscal year, Expense Reports should be submitted no later than the cut off date after April 30th prescribed by the Finance Department or they will be charged to the next fiscal year.
4. While the University recognizes that there may be exceptional circumstances that result in delays in filing Expense Reports, travel and related expenses submitted to the Finance Department for reimbursement that are older than 12 months may not be reimbursed unless exceptions by the President and/or VP are obtained.
5. Original detailed receipts are required to substantiate expense claims. This includes but is not limited to detailed statements for accommodations, details of all meals (including those appearing on hotel statements), bus/train/plane/ferry tickets, boarding passes that confirm travel, conference itinerary, confirmation of conference registration, meeting/seminar/workshop agenda/attendance, and print screens or printable confirmations of on-line expenditures.
6. Credit card slips and credit card statements are not acceptable except where they are the only receipt provided (e.g. gasoline purchases used in a rental vehicle). Travel agency invoices, alone, are insufficient supporting documentation. Proof of travel must be provided. Copies of tickets and boarding passes will be accepted when the original is required for return travel (e.g. guest speaker or potential employee).
7. There are some exceptional cases where receipts are not easily obtained or normally issued and for which expenses may be claimed without a receipt (e.g. parking meters, public transit tickets/tokens, international food stalls, small gratuities paid in cash, gratuitous accommodation, coin telephones). Full details and explanation of these cash expenses must be provided.
8. In cases where the cost of the travel is partially funded by an outside source which requires original receipts, the original receipts must first be submitted to the Finance Department with the Expense Report. Accounts Payable will stamp, date, mark the amount covered by the University, photocopy these receipts and return them to the claimant. Any expenses submitted for reimbursement and paid by the University must not be used to support and obtain reimbursement from another organization.

9. All expenses must be listed on the Expense Report in a single currency. Reimbursement will be provided in Canadian or US dollars only. The exchange rate used for conversion must equal the claimant's actual cost of obtaining the foreign currency. This exchange rate cost must be supported by
- a foreign exchange purchase receipt from an official exchange agent,
 - a credit card statement that identifies the rate of exchange, or
 - a printout of the exchange rate on the transaction date (e.g. on-line bank currency that was used for the actual expenditure).

Prepaid Travel

10. Brock's preferred travel agencies are listed on the Purchasing website. Subject to the Purchasing policy, travelers may choose to
- book their travel through these agencies,
 - book their travel through a reputable travel agent,
 - book travel arrangements directly with the service provider, or
 - book tickets/accommodation through the internet.
11. All travelers must make their own arrangements to pay for travel they have booked. They may
- use their own personal credit card,
 - use the Corporate Card (as available),
 - obtain a Travel Advance (as outlined below),
 - arrange for a Purchase Order to be sent to the supplier and an invoice directly to the Finance Department, or
 - ask that the travel agent invoice them directly and submit this invoice with the Expense Report.
- The University will not pay travel agent invoices issued in the name of Brock University without a Purchase Order.

Travel Advances

12. Travelers may be provided with an advance to cover the cost of pre-booked travel and related expenses under any of the following circumstances:
- The traveler does not have a Corporate Card or personal credit card.
 - The traveler's credit card has insufficient credit card limits.
 - The traveler is supervising a group of students at an event where the University is participating.
 - Travel is outside North America, or where a credit card is not accepted.
13. Advance Requests will not normally be issued for amounts < \$100 and > \$5,000 or for pre-booked travel that relates to future conference/events unless an invoice is not available until the trip is completed (e.g. airline e-ticket, conference attendance/participation receipt).
14. Advances will only be provided to travelers where an authorized Travel Advance Request form is submitted to the Finance Department at least 5 business days before the travel date to ensure sufficient time for payment processing. All available documentation (e.g. itineraries and/or copies of e-tickets, copies of internet booking arrangements, etc.) concerning the prepaid travel must be attached to the Travel Advance Request. All Travel Advance Requests must include the signature in accordance with the Signing Authority policy.
15. Advance Requests for related expenses while abroad will not normally be issued more than one month prior to the date of departure.
16. Travelers are required to report on the use of these advance funds upon return from travel. (See Claims above.) All outstanding advances are considered the responsibility of the recipient. Future advances and claim reimbursement will be withheld pending the clearing of older advances. Advances older than 90 days from the date of issue will be deemed to be of a personal nature and invoiced accordingly.
17. Advances will be charged to the Travel Advance account receivable. The Finance Department will monitor the Travel Advance receivable account for timely collection and return of advance or expense report submission to clear the advance.

18. If an amount is to be returned to the University, a personal cheque payable to Brock University, for the correct amount, must be attached to the Expense Report. If cash is being used to repay the amount due, the claimant must obtain a receipt from the Accounts Receivable (Finance Department), a copy of which is attached to the Travel Expense Report.

Travel Fares

19. Reimbursement of travel costs will not normally exceed economy air or rail fare. To be reimbursed for these costs, the traveler must attach the electronic ticket(s), accompanied by boarding passes, and/or other proof of completed travel to the Expense Report. The traveler must pursue credit from the travel agent or carrier for any unused tickets or any portion thereof and ensure:
 - The credit is issued to the University,
 - The credit is used for University purposes, or
 - The credit is personally refunded to the University if the credit is used for personal purposes.
20. Upgrades to business or first class may be done at the expense of the employee, unless warranted by special circumstances (e.g. medical certificate) or approved by the appropriate Unit Head/Dean. Evidence of price differential paid by the employee must be provided with the completed Expense Report.
21. Travel should be via the most direct route, but indirect routing can be approved if the cost does not exceed that for the direct route. The individual requesting indirect routing must be able to provide evidence of the variable cost, if requested, prior to confirming travel arrangements.
22. Employees are encouraged to consider alternatives that may result in substantially lower travel fares by adjusting departure times (e.g. leave on weekend may be less expensive than midweek), advance ticket purchases, or mode of travel (e.g. rail may be less expensive than air fare).
23. Employees are encouraged to consider the mode of travel from a safety perspective, in addition to the economic perspective. Driving, for long distances alone, after late, extended travel, or red-eye flight arrivals may be unsafe. Employees are advised to consider livery services under similar circumstances. Rental vehicles are normally in good working order to maximize customer satisfaction and can easily be replaced, if required. Personal Vehicle Usage below.
24. A traveler may enroll in a frequent flyer program at their cost. Travelers may not alter travel arrangements to accommodate frequent flyer programs. The choice of carrier must always be based on the most economical fare. Frequent flyer points are taxable in the hands of employees except where used for university business. CCRA places the onus on employees to declare the market value of these points as benefits of employment where they are not used for employment purposes.

Vehicle Rentals

25. When renting vehicles for University business, travelers are encouraged to use preferred vendors as noted on the Purchasing website unless other suppliers result in substantially lower rates. These preferred vendors invoice the university directly for all expenses related to the vehicle usage.
26. Insurance coverage is not provided if an employee rents a vehicle for University business and pays for it with their personal credit card unless the name of the University appears directly on the rental contract with the driver's name (e.g. John Smith on behalf of Brock University). University vehicle rental insurance is only provided according to the University insurance policy requirements (see Insurance – Vehicle Rentals).
27. Employees may also rent an automobile for university business and pay for it directly using their Corporate Travel Card.
28. Employees are required to refill the gas on all rental vehicles prior to their return to minimize costs.

Personal Vehicle Usage

29. Personal vehicles may be used within a 250 km radius of St. Catharines. If travel is beyond this distance, public transportation, hired livery services or rental vehicles should be used. Refer to Vehicle Rentals above.

30. The use of personal vehicles should be limited to those trips where no suitable public transportation is available or where it is more economical and efficient. Where used for personal convenience only, reimbursement shall be limited to the lesser of mileage claimed or the equivalent 14-day advance purchase economy airfare.
31. Eligible distance is the lesser of
 - The actual distance traveled, or
 - The difference between the actual distance traveled and the distance normally traveled to the workplace.
32. Ineligible travel includes distance between home and normal work location even when employees hired to work at off-campus locations.
33. When it is necessary to travel by personal vehicle, the employee is entitled to kilometre reimbursement at the University-approved rate published on the Purchasing website or allowed by the research funding agency. This rate is intended to cover the wear and tear, cost of gasoline, repairs, maintenance and insurance, etc. of the employee's vehicle while on University business. Cost of parking and tolls are eligible for reimbursement in addition to the mileage allowance except where used for personal preference.
34. Kilometre reimbursement is generally allowed for only one personally owned vehicle where persons traveling together could reasonably be expected to travel in one vehicle. When exceptions arise, approval for kilometers reimbursement for more than one vehicle must be noted on the Travel Expense Report. Passengers may not claim mileage or cost of equivalent public transportation.
35. Employees using personal vehicles for business purposes should ensure their correct classification for insurance purposes.

Accommodation

36. Reimbursement of reasonable accommodation expenses is normally limited to a single room rate per traveler. Surcharges for individuals who accompany the employee and who are not on University business will not be reimbursed. The lowest rate and/or Government/CAUBO rates should be requested. The latter can be found on <http://www.caubo.ca/index1.html> under Procurement
37. If an employee is required to spend more than one continuous week in a single location, appropriate arrangements for accommodation at weekly or monthly rates are to be made prior to or as soon as possible after the start of travel.
38. When a friend or relative provides gratuitous employee accommodation, a gift of appreciation other than cash to the host may be appropriate. The maximum value of such a gift should be based on \$20.00 per day of accommodation. A receipt of the invoice for the gift must be filed with the Expense Report. The name, address, phone number and relationship to the employee of the person supplying accommodation must be provided with the Expense Report.
39. If accommodation reservations must be cancelled, it is the responsibility of the traveler to ensure that cancellation is made in sufficient time that a financial penalty is avoided.

Meals

40. Actual itemized receipts for all reasonable meal costs plus gratuities must be submitted with the Expense Report for reimbursement. Meals included on hotel statements must be detailed. Neither credit card slips nor credit card statements are acceptable unless allowed by the granting agency. Most granting agencies do not allow hospitality or entertainment expenses.
41. Per diem rates may be allowed by a research agency or for international travel but are not necessarily available to all University employees. Employees that are required to leave home prior to breakfast or return home after supper as a result of University business travel are eligible to submit claims for these meals unless otherwise provided as part of the conference, meeting or travel arrangements. The lesser of per diem rates or actual receipts must be claimed. Current per diem rates are available from the Finance Department.

42. Where only employees are in attendance at a meal, the most senior employee must pay for and submit the claim for reimbursement.
43. In some cases, meal times (breakfast, lunch, supper) may be the only time people can assemble to conduct University business. Meals when only employees are in attendance will be reimbursed if the meeting is called specifically to conduct University business. The names of the employees and the purpose of the meeting must be documented as rationale for payment of a supplier invoice/internal charge from Hospitality Services.
44. Normally, no reimbursement will be made for meals or ticket costs to social events (seasonal parties, retirement parties, departure parties) involving only University employees and/or their spouses where it cannot be demonstrated that attendance is a requirement of University business. Exceptions for reasonable, fair and moderate expenses will be allowed where prior approval is obtained from the President or Vice-President.
45. Where individuals external to the University are entertained, the names of the individuals in attendance or the name of the event and the purpose/benefit to the University must be detailed on the Expense Report. Some examples of these circumstances are:
 - Meeting with a potential donor
 - Special events to recognize significant events in the university (awards, certificates, major project initiation or completion)
 - Special guest lecturer for a university course
 - Potential research collaborator
 - Potential employee

Incidentals

46. Dependent care costs are eligible for reimbursement while an employee is out-of-town overnight or on weekends on university business. These costs do not include those costs incurred by the employee for the care of children or dependent adults during the normal workday unless it can be demonstrated that such costs would normally not have incurred. Receipts, including the cost, dates of employment, caregiver's name and phone number must be submitted. Amounts paid to immediate family members may not be claimed unless they represent direct costs incurred (e.g. travel costs).
47. Personal telephone charges will be reimbursed at the discretion of the signing authority. Reasonable amounts will not be denied. Employees are encouraged to use long distance telephone cards, where possible.
48. Laundry/dry cleaning expenses where the travel period extends beyond 7 consecutive days are reimbursable where actual receipts are filed with the claim.
49. Local taxi fares are allowable expenses. Similarly, off-campus (University) parking expenses are allowable expenses where the location is not the employee's normal workplace. A receipt is required for lot parking but not for metered parking.
50. Travel insurance for medical expenses incurred in a foreign country will be reimbursed for all employees that are not covered by benefits.
51. Costs of obtaining foreign visas, immunizations and excess baggage charges are eligible for reimbursement if incurred for the sole purpose of international travel for University business.

Research

52. Where policies or guidelines are provided by a funding agency or sponsor

RELATED POLICIES

Purchasing

Purchasing - Research

Procurement Cards

Signing Authority