

EXPENSES POLICY

This section outlines the policy for claiming travel and any related expenses from the College in connection with authorised business.

Travel expenses are a major cost to the College and considerable savings can be made by booking trains, flights, and hotels in advance.

The College will book or reimburse a reasonable cost of travel, subsistence and accommodation for service users and carers involved in College activities.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists is a charity and as such, there is a legal obligation to act prudently and provide value for money. The College also needs to abide by charity law and HMRC guidelines. The latter requires that all expense claims be appropriate, scrutinised and supported by receipts.

TRAVEL EXPENSES

The College will reimburse the following business-related travel expenses only.

We would encourage all travel bookings to be made at least four weeks in advance.

- Buses
- London Underground
- Standard advance or off-peak rail fares. No 'anytime' tickets will be permitted without preauthorisation.
- Rail sleeper fares (if preapproved by the College)
- Domestic flights, where this is the only practical means of transport
- International flights at a reasonable fare, (these must be preapproved and booked by the College). A separate policy exists for flights over five hours duration.
- Car mileage at 45p per mile (regardless of engine capacity). The total reimbursement for mileage should not exceed the 'advance' standard class rail fare for the equivalent journey, except in exceptional circumstances e.g., carrying heavy goods or a number travelling together. This must also be preapproved by the Chief Executive or Treasurer
- Electric car mileage at 45p per mile (regardless of engine capacity). The total reimbursement for mileage should not exceed the 'advance' standard class rail fare for the equivalent journey, except in exceptional circumstances e.g., carrying heavy goods or a number travelling together. This must also be preapproved by the Chief Executive or Treasurer
- Car parking charges (but no fines)
- London congestion charge
- Taxis (only where public transport is not a practical alternative e.g., carrying heavy goods, certified disability, or no public transport available). Taxi journeys for long distance travel (i.e., fares more than £20) are normally not permitted unless preapproved by the Chief Executive or the Treasurer

- Mini cabs may be booked but a receipt is required for an expense claim
- Bicycle mileage at 20p per mile
- Motorbike mileage at 45p per mile
- A view on international travel will be taken if flexible rates are available
- Hotel stays in London and other major cities: can be booked up to £250 per night, including breakfast
- For the purposes of this policy, the following are considered as major cities:
 - o London
 - o Manchester
 - o Liverpool
 - o Birmingham
 - o Edinburgh
 - o Belfast
 - o Leeds
 - o Bristol
 - o Cardiff
 - o Glasgow
 - o All other international cities
- Other locations outside of the above list may be booked up to £200 per night including breakfast
- The following subsistence rates will be reimbursed
 - o Breakfast up to £15
 - o Lunch up to £20
 - o Dinner up £35

However, if any conferences / events / hotel stays are inclusive of meals, then the relevant meal allowance cannot also be claimed by you as a separate expense.

Subsistence cannot be claimed for events taking place at Prescot Street, where meals have been provided, or a meal voucher issued for Cafe 21

The College WILL NOT reimburse:

- Parking fines
- Speeding tickets

The College does not cover travel or accommodation costs for any accompanying people (unless they are also attending/participating in College business).

TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE CLAIMS

Elected members who incur unavoidable travel and subsistence expenses in attending meetings of the following, should initially claim reimbursement from their employer, if they are unable, please then begin a claim with the College.

- Council, Education, Training and Standards Committee (ETSC)
- Standing or special committees of council or ETC
- Executive Committees of Faculties, Divisions and Devolved Nations
- Co-opted members may claim provided that their co-option has been approved by the Finance Management Committee.
- Members of sub committees or working groups may claim expenses if, and to the extent that, the Council has specifically authorised the groups

Payment of other member expenses must be authorised by the Chief Executive or the Treasurer.

Please submit any claims within eight weeks of the expense date. Receipts are required for any claims. In addition, original travel tickets must be submitted to satisfy audit and HMRC requirements.

It is not sufficient to provide credit card receipts or the receipt that is printed when a rail ticket is issued. If you have an electronic flight ticket, please provide a copy of the confirmation and boarding pass.

Any meal claims for more than one person require the claimant and attendee's names to be listed. If you are unsure of requirements, please check with the Finance team before submitting your claim, to prevent any delay in processing.

TRAVEL CLAIM EXEMPTIONS

The following are not treated as travel but for which expenses can be claimed:

- Any journey between an employee's permanent workplace and home
- Travel which is for your own purposes.

Where you travel to a temporary workplace on business straight from home or return directly to your home after such a trip, the journey will be a business journey provided that:

- The temporary workplace is one which you must attend in the performance of your duties of employment
- The main purpose of the journey is not private; and
- Your home to permanent workplace travel is deducted.

EXPENSE CLAIM PROCEDURE

Members (who normally claim via the College) are required to request their travel in advance through the relevant Committee/Division Manager or other staff member administering that committee.

- All expense claims are to be submitted via MyExpenses the online expenses portal. Claims must be submitted within eight weeks of the expense date to be reimbursed.
- Members should submit their claims using their personal login details.
- Supporting vouchers and receipts should be scanned and submitted. Original travel tickets must be retained to satisfy audit and HMRC requirements, Credit card receipts are not sufficient for claim purposes. For electronic tickets, a copy of the confirmation along with the boarding pass (if available), should be submitted. Please note, Oystercard travel will be reimbursed and but requires a printout of all travel details. This can be obtained from a ticket counter at any rail station or printed if the Oystercard is registered with Transport for London (TfL). Only the value of the journey can be claimed and not the 'top up' value.

This will enable authorisation by the budget holder electronically. It will avoid any delay caused by sending documents in the internal post.

- Once the claim has been authorised, the Finance team will process payment in the next pay run. The College pay run is scheduled every Wednesday.

All claimants' need to provide the College with their bank details for bank transfer (BACS) payments.

COVID TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

Currently there are no domestic Covid travel restrictions.

Travel is now open to many countries where testing or quarantine is not required. As the situation continues to change, it is worth checking the following link for up-to-date information - Covid-19 Travel Map | Travel News (fctgtravelnews.com), along with an update from Corporate Traveller.