

## A5 Staff, student and visitor hospitality and incidental expenditure



### A5.1 Scope

This appendix sets out rules and guidance relating to expenditure on the following:

- visitor hospitality
- staff and student hospitality
- professional subscriptions and memberships
- research volunteer payments
- job applicants' expenditure
- relocation expenditure.

All of these categories of expenditure are an appropriate use of University funds when wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in order to perform University business. There is particular public scrutiny over the types of expenditure dealt with in this appendix so it is of the utmost importance that value for money in purchasing can be demonstrated and expenditure is met only where it is an appropriate use of University funds.

Anyone purchasing goods, services and works in these categories is subject to the provisions of this appendix; this includes anyone engaged in University business and some examples are:

- members of University staff and students
- external parties, e.g. external examiners, visiting researchers and other third parties, where the travel is directly related to University activities and has the prior approval of the University
- interview candidates for University jobs.

### A5.2 Items not considered to be an appropriate use of University funds

The following list provides examples of items that are not appropriate use of University funds:

- alcohol, except in specified instances in this Policy where modest provision of alcohol is considered an appropriate use of University funds
- travel between home and usual place of work
- traffic fines
- gratuities, except when the culture is such that paying a gratuity is seen as an integral part of the cost of receiving a service
- dinner jacket or ball gown costs to attend formal functions

- staff parties except leaving parties and University staff parties open to all staff.

## A5.3 Visitor hospitality

It is an appropriate use of University funds to meet the reasonable entertaining costs of staff and their guests, e.g. client, sponsor or partner on a collaborative project. There must be a valid business purpose, for example - meals with external examiners, speakers or other guests in which knowledge is shared. The entertainment should not be used simply to reward external guests and staff should consider how the entertainment would be justified

if the expenditure were to be published in the public domain. Guideline maximum levels of entertaining expenditure are as follows:

Lunch	£30 max	Total cost, per person, including drinks and VAT.
Dinner	£50 max	Total cost, per person, including drinks and VAT.

Where possible, members of staff should use University facilities when entertaining visitors to the University. The ratio of staff to guests should not exceed 2:1. Exceptionally, this can be a maximum of 3:1 for entertainment on the University campus. If an event is likely to exceed these ratios, the organiser must secure the pre-approval of the Director of Finance. Modest provision of alcohol is judged to be an appropriate use of University funds within the maximum limits set out above.

An attendee at the event, or recipient of the services provided, should not undertake the approval of a transaction for the purchase of business entertaining and hospitality.

Spouses and partners should not generally attend except in exceptional circumstances approved in advance by the Director of Finance.

### A5.3.1 Catering

All purchases of on campus catering and hospitality should be from the University's provider for on campus conference, catering and hospitality services. Anyone wishing to arrange catering should use the nominated campus-catering provider.

Only in circumstances where the University's specific business need cannot be met should an alternative provider of catering and hospitality be considered (see appendix A1.1.1). The cost of catering provided by the nominated catering provider must be charged directly to a School or Professional Services Division budget and bookings made via the provider's web based booking system.

## A5.3.2 Staff leaving events

Heads of Schools and Directors of Professional Service may exceptionally contribute from their School or Divisional budget to a farewell party for a member of staff who is retiring or leaving after highly valued service. The cost incurred should be proportionate to the length of service and their role within the University. The nominated campus-catering provider should be used and booked in accordance with A5.4.1 above unless business need cannot be met. The maximum allowed expenditure is £15 per head. The function must be open to all staff within the departing employee's department or immediate section. At these events, a modest provision of alcohol is considered a reasonable use of University funds.

## A5.3.3 Student welcome/leaving events

A moderate School contribution up to a maximum of £10 per student is acceptable for student welcome and farewell parties, where this is affordable within the School's overall budget and where the number of students present is likely to be well in excess of the number of staff. At these events, a modest provision of alcohol is considered a reasonable use of University funds. The nominated campus-catering provider should be used and booked in accordance with A5.4.1 above unless business need cannot be met.

## A5.3.4 Other staff and student events

Hospitality and associated costs for staff events which have a clear business purpose and which are open to all University staff are an appropriate use of University funds. The maximum budget for such an event should be proportionate to its purpose and represent good value for money. The Director of Finance must give approval in advance. Provision of a modest amount of alcohol is considered a reasonable use of University funds where this is appropriate to the timing and purpose of event.

### **University-wide staff events**

Hospitality and associated costs for University-wide events which have a clear business purpose and which are open to all University staff or a significant community of staff e.g. all academic staff or all professional services staff.

- It is acceptable to pay directly incurred costs e.g. travel for staff who are exceptionally required to attend work events at their normal place of work outside working hours, e.g. weekend open-days. However in this situation any payment may be considered a taxable benefit for the employee and must be discussed with the relevant HR or payroll contact to make appropriate arrangements before payment is agreed.
- that the University does not fund campus parking costs for staff (including those classed as remote workers), except in the above situation.

It is not an appropriate use of University funds to subsidise the cost of other staff and student parties, including School or Professional Services Division staff Christmas parties.

### A5.3.5 Staff working lunch

Staff lunches may only be provided where staff have to, exceptionally, keep a service open at lunchtime, or if meetings occur during lunchtime when this is the only time available to hold the meeting. It should take place at the normal place of work and be consistent with a standard lunchtime meal, e.g. a sandwich or similar, with a non- alcoholic beverage.

The nominated campus-catering provider should be used and booked in accordance with A5.4.1 above unless business need cannot be met.

### A5.3.6 Provision of refreshments at meetings

Refreshments (tea, coffee, biscuits) may be ordered through the campus catering provider for staff meetings that are scheduled for 90 minutes or more, have an agenda and are formally minuted. The nominated campus-catering provider should be used and booked in accordance with A5.4.1 above unless business need cannot be met.

### A5.3.7 Teamwork based training events

Heads of School and Directors of Professional Services may fund the cost of teamwork based training events up to a maximum total event cost of £50 per head. Events should take place on campus where possible and the nominated campus- catering provider should be used and booked in accordance with A5.4.1 above unless business need cannot be met.

### A5.3.8 Alcohol

The consumption of alcohol at University organised events and business events attended by University staff must be appropriate and modest. It is only considered an appropriate use of University funds in specific circumstances set out in this appendix. The University will fund conference delegate fees, which include the cost of a conference dinner at which alcohol is served as part of an event package.

## A5.3.9 Gifts to members of staff

Gifts to members of staff should always be personal gestures and are not an allowable expenditure unless given as part of a formally approved and recognised University wide reward scheme, such as the long service awards scheme.

### **Gifts, flowers and cards for staff**

*Flowers and/or card to a maximum value of £50 for a member of staff where the member of staff is experiencing serious illness, experiencing a significant life event within the scope of the University's guidance regarding compassionate leave (i.e. the death or serious illness of a close relative)*

## A5.4 Professional subscriptions and memberships

It is not appropriate use of University funds to meet the cost of subscriptions to professional bodies and academic/learned societies.

However, the following exceptional circumstances are considered to be reasonable use of University funds:

- a specific individual's membership is an expressly stated contractual condition of a course accreditation, or a research or other funding award the University is dependent upon
- membership is corporate, or where the individual is a member because they represent the University in their specific role - e.g. Universities UK, Association of Heads of University Administration (AHUA), Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA).

Similarly, journal subscriptions taken out in an individual's name are not appropriate use of University funds. Exceptionally, the University will meet the cost of a journal subscription if it is only available to an individual member and the journal is then made available to all colleagues within a department.

## A5.5 Experimental subject payments

The cost of experimental subject payments is an appropriate use of University funds, where a member of staff, a student or a visiting researcher (in the course of undertaking their research) requires volunteers to participate in tests, interviews, etc. Each individual participant should receive a nominal sum to cover their out of pocket travel and subsistence expenses, and as appropriate compensation for their time.

## A5.6 Job applicants

It is an appropriate use of University funds to pay reasonable costs incurred by Job applicants to attend interviews.

## A5.7 Relocation Expenditure

Relocation expenditure is not covered by this Policy, but instead is governed by the Removal Expenses Policy on the Human Resources website.