

Expense Payments and Benefits Policy

Policy Statement

The College has a clear and transparent schedule for the reimbursement of genuine business expenses. Appropriate controls are place to ensure that all expense reimbursement is appropriate and bone fide. The College adheres to all HMRC requirements for taxation of expenses.

Staff Travel

1 Car/Motor Cycle

- 1.1 The College has a standard allowance to reimburse staff for mileage done for business purposes in/on their own vehicles. The rate that can be claimed for using a car is 45 pence per mile for the first 10,000 miles in any tax year (April to March) and 25 pence thereafter for each subsequent mile¹. The motor cycle rate is 24 pence per mile and the cycle rate 20 pence per mile. These rates are payable irrespective of the size of engine or number of passengers. Payment of mileage at these rates is in accordance with the statutory rules and administrative arrangements issued by HM Revenue and Customs² and does not currently result in the payment of tax or National Insurance Contributions.
- 1.2 Where possible and appropriate, staff should travel in the minimum number of vehicles needed to arrange transport to their destination. This supports the College's Green Travel Plan.
- 1.2 Any member of staff driving their own vehicle for work purposes (including travel between sites) must hold 'Class One Insurance for Business Use'. In accordance with relevant legislation the College must have evidence of appropriate insurance. Staff have a responsibility to advise HR if they become disqualified from driving. Insurance documents will be requested from all staff who anticipate using their vehicle for business purposes. Responsibility for any additional costs of Class One Insurance for Business Use lies with the member of staff. No additional financial support is provided by the College.
- 1.3 For employees of Halesowen College the cost of travel between home and work is not an allowable claim and would be subject to taxation. Staff should therefore note that where a journey is undertaken from home or they return directly home, the total mileage claimed will be reduced by their normal home to College (main base of employment) mileage and return if necessary. Travel between home and College is only claimable when a member of staff is called out to attend site out of hours for an emergency.
- 1.4 Staff should claim car mileage on the Expenses Reimbursement claim form monthly or at least termly. Claims are always paid through the payroll in arrears. All journeys

¹ In respect of car mileage for NIC purposes, the rate is 45p per mile.

² HM Revenue and Customs defines business mileage as travel doing your job. It can include travel to a temporary workplace but excludes normal travel between home (or anywhere that is not a workplace) and the permanent workplace, and private travel.

except those within the local area and between sites should have the prior consent of the budget holder responsible for reimbursement of the claim. In accordance with Financial Regulations, budget holders cannot authorise their own travelling expenses; this must be referred to the line manager. Authorisation of claims for the Principal and Senior Leadership Team/Senior Management Team must be in accordance with Financial Regulations. Staff should also keep an up to date record of their total mileages as these may need to be produced for audit purposes. Any significant mileage claim submitted outside the financial year within which the journey was taken will not normally be paid. Car parking charges will be reimbursed (subject to budget holder approval) where the claimant has obtained a receipt or parking ticket, and attached the same to their claim form. Under no circumstances shall parking and/or speeding fines be reimbursed. Where it is not possible to obtain a receipt or ticket, costs may be reimbursed on the approval of Chief Finance Officer and Vice Principal.

- 1.6 All mileage claims should be 'true' claims as estimated claims will not be accepted. Staff should use the mileage counter in their vehicles or note the start and end mileage. Except for inter-site travel, the date, purpose and mileage of each journey must be clearly recorded on the form. Summary information will not be accepted.
- 1.7 Staff should wherever possible take the most direct route in terms of distance. Alternative routes which are longer in distance but may be beneficial in terms of time ie to avoid traffic blackspots may be taken.
- 1.8 When standard mileages are in place, for example inter-site then this must be the distance claimed. Should staff claim different mileages for inter-site travel the standard only will be paid.
- 1.9 When applying for staff development, cost of travel should be included. The total value of reimbursement allocated will be specified by the Staff Development Manager and shall not exceed the mileage rates specified in paragraph 1.1 nor the actual costs of rail/air/boat or taxi travel.
- 1.10 All necessary road and bridge toll charges shall be reimbursed in full when claimed. Optional tolls, for example M6 toll must be agreed in advance with the budget holder and should only be claimed where the saving of time outweighs the additional cost.
- 1.11 Congestion/emission costs for travel into inner city areas are not reclaimable, in accordance with the College's commitment to the green agenda. Where staff have a disability/ health condition which prevents them from using public transport an exception may be granted, this must be agreed in advance by the Chief Finance Officer and Vice Principal.

2 Railway

- 2.1 When travelling outside of the local area staff should purchase rail tickets in advance and seek the most economic option. Staff can procure their own tickets and claim reimbursement for the costs
- 2.2 It is acknowledged that when using certain Metro services and/or the London Underground it is often not possible to retain tickets. In these circumstances the cost will however be reimbursed.

3 Taxi

- 3.1 When a taxi journey represents best value when considering time and cost, or when public transport is not available or is inappropriate, reasonable taxi fares will be reimbursed. Authorisation should be obtained in advance from a member of Senior Leadership Team for any taxi travel.

- 3.2 In certain circumstances (where a taxi represents good value in terms of time a taxi may be ordered on the College account.
- 3.3 Staff must obtain a receipt which should be attached to their claim.
- 3.4 Taxi travel is not reimbursable for inter-site journeys or home to College travel.

4 Domestic Air Travel

- 4.1 Advance credit card purchases are essential when travelling within the UK by air. Procedures for purchases are as specified in paragraph 2.1.
- 4.2 Prior consent from the Principal is required for domestic air travel. Where air fares are more expensive than rail or road travel consent shall be given if the saving in time is sufficiently substantial to justify any additional cost.
- 4.3 Prior consent for the Principal to travel by air shall be necessary from the Chair of the Corporation.
- 4.4 In accordance with the College's commitment to sustainability, environmental factors should be considered when deciding on an appropriate travel option and certainly before air travel within the UK is authorised.

5 Expenses for Volunteers and Interview Candidates

- 5.1 Payment shall be made to reimburse second class fare, bus fares or mileage at a flat rate of 25p per mile.
- 5.2 Any subsistence or accommodation payments will be in accordance with rates and conditions specified in sections 7 and 8 of this policy.
- 5.3 Payment will be by BACS and candidates/volunteers must submit their bank details.
- 5.4 Interview expenses will only be paid in exceptional circumstances provided that they are agreed in advance and approved by the Director of HR.

6 Overseas Travel

- 6.1 Staff may travel overseas accompanying students on an educational visit or engage in a pe-visit to establish risk assessments et al. Reimbursement of travel is in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of this policy and the conditions of the College Student Visit Policy.
- 6.2 Expenses relating to any other overseas visit may only be claimed provided that the visit was justified in advance and approved by the Principal. The Chair of the Corporation must approve any overseas expenses for the Principal, Senior Post Holders and/or other members of the Corporation.
- 6.3 All overseas expense claims must be countersigned by a member of Senior Leadership Team/ Claims from the Principal/ Senior Post Holders must be authorised by the Chair of the Corporation.
- 6.4 All expenditure on overseas travel incurred by Senior Post Holders shall be declared in the Annual Accounts.

7 Other Travel Costs

- 7.1 Any additional necessary travelling costs incurred due to a disability learning difficulty and/or health condition, for example use of taxi because an underground or metro station is not wheelchair accessible, will be reimbursed in full.

8 Subsistence

- 8.1 Halesowen College does not routinely reimburse staff for subsistence when they are away from College during normal working hours. Where staff are required to stay away from home on College activities (UK and overseas) they may benefit from any included meal plan. Should no meals be included a contribution towards an evening meal may be claimed up to the HMRC taxable values which are for periods of more than 10 hours £10.

Costs in excess of this upper limit will not be paid unless the individual has approval from a member of College Leadership Team. Where these upper limits are exceeded there may be a taxation liability. Where staff are away from College on business overseas the College will use the HMRC approved worldwide subsistence rates document to inform upper limits. Budgets for subsistence must be approved in advance.

Staff subsistence expenses may not be used to purchase alcoholic drinks or tobacco products.

- 8.2 Subsistence claims must be agreed by Budget Holders in advance. It is the Budget Holder who is responsible for checking that claims are in line with College policies and College interests. Claims for subsistence can be made on the Expense Reimbursement form; receipts must be attached.

9 Accommodation

- 9.1 Costs of accommodation shall be reimbursed in full or paid in advance by the College whenever it is reasonable³ to travel the previous evening for a course/conference the following day. Accommodation costs will also be paid whenever an event spans several days. These costs should be reasonable and represent best value for money. As a guide accommodation should not exceed £100 per night. Accommodation may also be reimbursed when the employee cannot return home as planned due to disruption to public transport caused by strike, inclement weather or similar.
- 9.2 Accommodation booked locally for a visiting consultant or similar can be arranged at one of the College's approved hotels. Details may be obtained from the Procurement team. Such hotels can provide a lift to all floors and full access bathrooms.
- 9.3 When booking accommodation, terms and conditions specified in Standing Orders Relating to Contracts should be adhered to.

10 Governors and Halesowen College Enterprises Directors Expenses

³ Destination should normally be at least 50 miles away from the employee's home address and/or the event has an early morning start time and/or evening activities.

- 10.1 Any expenses for car mileage and travel claimed by governors of the College and directors of the company are subject to the rates specified in this policy, ie 45 pence per mile for the first 10,000 miles annually and 25 pence thereafter, and actual costs of public transport.
- 10.2 All expense claims including subsistence must be actual cost; round sum expenses will not be payable.
- 10.3 Expenses shall be claimed on the College Expense Reimbursement form and payment made by BACS (except staff governors/directors who will be reimbursed via the payroll).
- 10.4 All expense claims shall be in accordance with the appropriate sections of this policy and be authorised by the Director of Governance for governors and the chair of the Board for Halesowen College Enterprises Directors.
- 10.5 A governor or director who does not have a formal contract of employment with the College Corporation is for tax purposes a volunteer. Any expenses claimed whilst carrying out their voluntary work will not be liable to Income Tax. Neither will the reimbursement of any extra costs that might be incurred for example, travel expenses between home and work.
- 10.6 In accordance with the College's commitment to safeguarding it is permissible for the Director of Governance to arrange appropriate transport home for any student governor to attend meetings/events which extend beyond the usual College day.

11 Authorisation and Payment of Claims

- 11.1 All claims must be made on an official College Expense Reimbursement form. This must be signed by the claimant to certify that all journeys claimed for are bona fide and reflect actual mileage/cost.
- 11.2 The completed signed claim must be authorised for payment by the appropriate budget holder then forwarded to payroll.
- 11.3 A Budget Holder cannot authorise his/her own claim for payment. They must be passed to the line manager for signature authorisation before being submitted to finance.
- 11.4 Travelling expenses claimed by the Principal shall be authorised by the Chair of the Corporation.
- 11.5 Financial Regulations state that Budget Holders are responsible for certifying the accuracy of claims for expenses incurred by staff. The budget holder should not sign unless satisfied that the claim is correct and bona fide.
- 11.6 All reimbursement for expenses will be via the payroll (Governors by BACS) and not from petty cash.

12 Clothing/Uniforms

- 12.1 Staff should purchase their own clothing for work; it is not paid for by Halesowen College unless it is a requirement that the staff wear a uniform eg Estates and the Reception.
- 12.2 Protective clothing worn as a matter of physical necessity including protective gloves and boots will be issued as appropriate.
- 12.3 In order that a taxable benefit does not arise all non-protective clothing issued by the College must have a prominent and permanent College logo.

- 12.4 On cessation of employment staff are required to return all clothing provided back to the College.
- 12.5 The College will purchase clothing as necessary from designated budgets only. Staff will not be required to purchase clothing and reclaim expenses. Staff should not benefit from complimentary clothing offered as a result of student orders (refer to anti-bribery policy).

13 Telephones

- 13.1 The College has mobile telephones which can be used by staff on College business; for example when accompanying a student visit. Protocols are in place for the use of these telephones.
- 13.2 Staff should be aware that in the event of using their personal mobile telephone and/or landline for College business these costs cannot be reimbursed unless an itemised bill demonstrating actual cost is available and accompanies the claim. The line rental remains the personal liability of the claimant⁴.
- 13.3 Staff issued with an individual College mobile device must use these for business purposes.
- 13.4 The College will not pay for vouchers/top-up for an employee's own mobile telephone – this reimbursement attracts Class 1 National Insurance Contributions. The purchase of a mobile telephone for a team requires prior approval by the Head of Finance and Payroll.
- 13.6 All College purchased telephones remain the property of Halesowen College and employees must return any/all equipment on cessation of employment. The Head of Finance and Payroll shall maintain a register of College telephones and similar devices.

14 Refreshments and Hospitality

- 14.1 Working lunches/dinner etc may from time to time be provided by the College for staff. Such refreshments shall only be provided when it is essential that activities are scheduled at these times ie there is a genuine business purpose for such hospitality.
- 14.2 Financial Regulations and Gifts and Hospitality Policy provide clear and comprehensive procedures relating to gifts and hospitality. Certain staff may be permitted to provide modest hospitality. This should be ordered via College catering or purchased using the procurement cards for the College shops whenever possible. If reasonable hospitality is authorised to be offered off the College premises employees should claim for reimbursement.

15 Accommodation for Students

- 15.1 College staff may provide accommodation and associated meals for exchange students and/or students requiring overnight examination supervision.
- 15.2 Reimbursement is paid at up to £30 per student per night.
- 15.3 This is deemed by HM Revenue and Customs to be a round sum allowance as the payment is fixed and not a direct reimbursement of expenditure actually incurred.

⁴ The cost of business calls must be determined by considering the particular tariff appropriate to that telephone including free call time.

As this cannot be treated as a business expense it is subject to both taxation and National Insurance Contributions.

- 15.4 All payments of this nature will be authorised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and be accounted for through payroll without exception.

16 Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Eye Tests and Corrective Glasses

- 16.1 The College will provide an eye test voucher (redeemable at Specsavers) for an employee who is deemed to be a DSE user, to take an eyesight test. A DSE user is defined as an employee who regularly uses DSE as a significant part of their normal work (daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more).

16.2

For employees who then have a need for glasses or contact lenses solely for the use with the DSE, then the College will provide a voucher (redeemable at Specsavers) which will contribute £49 as a one off contribution towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses.

1

- 16.3 Vouchers for eye tests and/or glasses/contact lenses should be requested from the Health and Safety Officer in advance of any eye test or optical appointment being booked.

- 16.4 Entitlement to retesting will usually be allowed every two years, except in exceptional circumstances. Claims for more frequent tests/corrective glasses will be based on the clinical judgement of the optometrist/doctor and require approval by the Health and Safety Officer.

17 Review

- 17.1 The Policy and HM Revenue and Customs Dispensation shall be reviewed annually and/or whenever taxation legislation demands.

Reviewed/Approved	By	Date
Updated by	Andrew Woodford	06/01/2025
	CLT	14/01/2025
Website	Yes / No	Yes
Next Review Date		01/05/2026

Halesowen College Standard Mileages

TO \ FROM	Whittingham Road	Coombs Wood	Shenstone House	Trinity Point
Whittingham Road		1.1	0.9	1.0
Coombs Wood	1.1		1.5	1.6
Shenstone House	0.9	1.5		0.7
Trinity Point	1.0	1.6	0.3	