

POLICY DOCUMENT

# Travel & Expenses Policy

## Policy Review Schedule

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|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
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Policy Owner: Business Manager

### Amendment Overview

| Version            | Date       | Pages | Comments   | Actioned                        |
|--------------------|------------|-------|--|---------------------------------|
| 2006 - 1.0         | 12/09/2006 |       | Ratified by Senior Management  | HR & included in staff handbook |
| 2008 - 2.0 (Draft) | Dec 2008   |       | Revised for consideration by Senior Management<br><br>P2 – policy introduction; influences; policies impacted<br><br>P3 – authorisation procedures; working outside normal hours; car mileage;<br><br>P4 - taxis; air travel | Margot Roberts                  |
| 2008 - 2.1(Draft)  | 21/1/2009  |       | Approved by Senior Management  |                                 |
| 2008 - 2.1 (Draft) | 25/2/2009  |       | Approved by Board subject to minor change<br>P4 – air travel<br>use of business class approved for London –Heathrow route  | Margot Roberts                  |
| 2008 - 2.2         | 24/3/2009  |       | HR & included in staff handbook  |                                 |
| 2011 - 3.0 (draft) | 15/9/2011  |       | Updated to reflect changes to 'Working outside normal hours' and 'Entertaining' Presented to NIMDTA Board for approval. <b>Approved.</b>   | Margot Roberts                  |
| 2011 - 3.1         | 01/10/2011 |       | Reformatted to new policy template   | Linda Craig                     |
| 2011 – 3.2         | 01/10/2013 | 13    | Format updated to reflect new corporate format   | Linda Craig                     |
| 2018 – 4.0         | 05/09/2018 |       | Name revised content reviewed and updated to include Guidance for approval of Overseas Travel (Permanent Secretary's letter of 27.09.2016). Presented to SMC for approval.   | Paula Black                     |

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# Role of the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency

The Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) is an Arm's Length Body sponsored by the Department of Health (DoH) to train postgraduate medical and dental professionals for Northern Ireland. NIMDTA seeks to serve the government, public and patients of Northern Ireland by providing specialist advice, listening to local needs and having the agility to respond to regional requirements.

NIMDTA commissions, promotes and oversees postgraduate medical and dental education and training throughout Northern Ireland. Its role is to attract and appoint individuals of the highest calibre to recognised training posts and programmes to ensure the provision of a highly competent medical and dental workforce with the essential skills to meet the changing needs of the population and health and social care in Northern Ireland.

NIMDTA organises and delivers the recruitment, selection and allocation of doctors and dentists to foundation, core and specialty training programmes and rigorously assesses their performance through annual review and appraisal. NIMDTA manages the quality of postgraduate medical and dental education in HSC Trusts and in general medical and dental practices through learning and development agreements, the receipt of reports, regular meetings, trainee surveys and inspection visits. It works in close partnership with local education providers to ensure that the training and supervision of trainees support the delivery of high quality safe patient care.

NIMDTA recognises and trains clinical and educational supervisors and selects, appoints, trains and develops educational leaders for foundation, core and specialty medical and dental training programmes throughout NI.

NIMDTA is accountable to the General Medical Council (GMC) for ensuring that the standards set by the GMC for medical training, educational structures and processes are achieved. The Postgraduate Medical Dean, as the 'Responsible Officer' for doctors in training, has a statutory role in making recommendations to the GMC to support the revalidation of trainees. Revalidation is the process by which the GMC confirms that doctors are up to date and fit to practice. NIMDTA also works to the standards in the COPDEND framework for the quality development of postgraduate Dental training in the UK.

NIMDTA enhances the standard and safety of patient care through the organisation and delivery of relevant and valued career development for general medical and dental practitioners and dental care professionals. It also supports the career development of general medical practitioners and the requirements for revalidation through the management and delivery of GP appraisal.

NIMDTA aims to use the resources provided to it efficiently, effectively and innovatively. NIMDTA's approach to training is that trainees, trainers and educators should put patients first, should strive for excellence and should be strongly supported in their roles.

## Policy/s Impacted

Changes to this policy may have an impact on the following:

- Authorisation Framework
- Code of Conduct (NIMDTA Employees)
- Code of Practice for Board Members
- Gifts and Hospitality - Provision and acceptance of

## Policy Influences

This policy has been influenced by:

- Code of Conduct for HPSS Managers (Circular HSS (SM) 4/2003)
- Managing Public Money NI
- Permanent Secretary's letter of 27<sup>th</sup> September 2016

## This Policy to be read in conjunction with:

- NIMDTA Overseas Travel Request Form ([Appendix A](#))
- Cross Departmental Finance Manual

# 1. Introduction

The NI Medical and Dental Training Agency aims to ensure that all resources used within the organisation are maintained, controlled and recorded in line with principles of good financial governance.

NIMDTA reimburse employees for all reasonable expenses which they incur wholly, necessarily and exclusively in the course of NIMDTA business.

'Staff' for the purpose of these guidelines is defined as those employed directly by NIMDTA, members of NIMDTA Board, and those authorised by the Chief Executive/Postgraduate Dean to act on NIMDTA's behalf.

Those eligible to claim fall into the following categories:

- Members of the NIMDTA Board
- Staff employed by NIMDTA
- Heads and Deputy Heads of School
- Training Programme Directors
- College Regional Advisers
- Members of Foundation and Specialty School Boards
- ARCP/RITA panel members
- Members of recruitment and selection panels
- NI representatives on national Specialist Advisory Committees
- Specialty trainees required to attend national ARCP/RITA panels
- Members of GMC and Deanery visiting panels
- Local and visiting speakers at NIMDTA courses
- Those invited by the Postgraduate Dean to represent the NI Deanery at national meetings

NIMDTA must ensure that such payments comply with Inland Revenue regulations and it is therefore essential that the rules detailed in this guide are followed when making an expenses claim.

This Policy does not apply to NIMDTA Trainees.



## **2. Purpose**

This document is a key element of the NIMDTA's internal control environment and describes, in detail, how to ensure that the Resource Management responsibilities placed upon the Accountable Officer are discharged and implemented.

The purpose of this procedure note is to clarify the arrangements for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by NIMDTA staff in the course of their duties.

The procedure note compliments the NIMDTA's Standing Financial Instructions

## **3. Scope**

The procedure and guidelines apply and will be communicated to all staff, including temporary staff and contractors to the NIMDTA

## **4. Controls**

Management recognises that the good financial governance in respect of the submission and authorisation of Travel and Expenses Claims can only be achieved through adherence to a system of internal controls and procedures.

NIMDTA has devised a detailed procedure for the submission of Claims which is documented in the Cross Departmental Finance Manual.

Staff should demonstrate value for money, it is not appropriate to benefit from loyalty cards/schemes for purchases reimbursed through travel & claims.

In line with NIMDTA's prompt payment policy staff will be reimbursed within 30 days of receipt of the claim. All claims must be submitted to an authorised Approver as set out in the NIMDTA Authorisation Framework. Self-authorised claims will not be accepted for payment under any circumstances and if a member of staff attempts to submit a false claim this will be treated as a serious offence, which may lead to disciplinary action.

Staff should follow NIMDTA's booking procedures as outlined in the Cross Departmental Finance Manual in relation to flights and hotels using the approved provider.

## **5. Authorisation**

### **5.1 Justification**

All travel and expenses must:

- Be fully justified in terms of making an important contribution to the business needs of NIMDTA.
- Represent value for money, taking account also of the cost of time spent away from the office, and
- Not give grounds for public criticism.

### **5.2 Alternative Arrangements**

Staff must consider alternative arrangements such as conference/video calling. If alternatives are not available or suitable, the number of representatives attending an event/meeting should be limited to avoid, as far as possible, situations arising where NIMDTA send multiple representatives to the same event/meeting. Justification for multiple attendees should be documented within the booking process and retained.

### **5.3 Authorisation Process**

It is important that NIMDTA staff demonstrate resources are used properly and efficiently and that all expenditure is reasonable and defensible.

The Travel Management Company may process travel bookings which have increased during the booking process by up to £25 more than the original authorisation. The company must seek re-authorisation for any increased cost in excess of £25; this must be documented by the authoriser and retained for audit review.

Guidance detailing standard events for which staff are required to Travel to fulfil their duties will be maintained and circulated.

## **6. Travel**

Staff should note that NIMDTA's purchasing regulations must be followed with regard to travel especially by air and rail. In effect this will mean that in most instances staff need not actually incur expenses as NIMDTA will be invoiced directly by its appointed travel agent through the Travel Management Contract.

NIMDTA is only liable for the costs relating to a member of staff's travel. NIMDTA will not be responsible for:-

- Any accompanying persons
- Additional travel costs to facilitate personal business

## 6.1 Flights & Rail Fares

Staff and those acting on behalf of NIMDTA who are required to travel by air should go by the most economical means available.

Flights and Rail Fares must be booked through the appointed Collaborative Travel Management Services contractor), at least 4 weeks prior to date of departure. Only in exceptional circumstances will flights be approved where notice of less than 4 weeks has been provided.

Staff booking Travel should provide the location of the event/meeting and times to the Travel Management Company who should provide a number of possible flight options depending on availability.

The most economic method of travel should be selected which will allow the member of staff to carry out official business to spend as short as period practicable away from their headquarters.

First or business class travel can only be approved in very exceptional circumstances, and where there is clear business need. A supporting business case may be required to justify the specific request.

The selected travel option should then be sent to the relevant authoriser to approve and forward to the Travel Management Company to book.

In the event of a flight being missed or cancelled, whilst attending a meeting on the UK mainland, staff should contact the Travel Management Company to make alternative arrangements. Authorisation should be sought for payment of hotel expenses or additional flight costs.

## 6.2 Overnight Accommodation

Where possible, travel should be booked for the day of the meeting/conference with an overnight stay only if absolutely necessary to avoid unreasonable travel times and costs.

In order to reduce the impact on staff performance due to flight times and reduce the need for multiple flights overnight accommodation can be considered in the following instances:-

- Meetings/events held on consecutive days in the same geographical area within GB.

- Flights scheduled before 8am in the morning (to facilitate the time of the meeting/event) staff may consider a flight and overnight accommodation for the previous evening.

Where overnight accommodation is deemed necessary justification must be documented and held with the booking details for audit review.

### **6.3 Taxis**

Where taxis are required in the course of NIMDTA business the approval of the Head of Department will be required. NIMDTA is included in the Transport Services contract and as such are obliged to use the designated taxi company on account.

### **6.4 Travel Expenses**

All Travel and Expenses claims should be summarised on an expenses claim form supported by receipts and must be approved by an authorised signatory. Only in exceptional circumstances will payment be given to staff in advance of a meeting/event. In the event of a receipt being lost payment must be authorised by the Head of Department.

Authorisers are responsible for ensuring Travel expenses have been incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively in the course of NIMDTA business.

Travel and Expense claims should be submitted within one month of the expense being incurred, claims received after 3mths will not be paid, in exceptional circumstances Department Heads may consider payment however these decisions must be documented and retained.

#### **6.4.1 Car Mileage**

In accordance with Inland Revenue regulations, the first 10,000 business miles travelled by a member of staff in his/her own car will be reimbursed at a higher rate than any business miles travelled in excess of that figure. The rate which will be reimbursed may vary from time to time but will comply with the relevant terms and conditions of service.

Full details of all journeys including the date, reason for the journey, starting point and destination should be shown on the expenses claim form. Where the allowance for additional passengers is claimed, names must be provided. In addition, as NIMDTA does not provide car insurance cover for staff using their own vehicles, staff are required to confirm that they have taken out personal car insurance with an appropriate extension to cover use in connection NIMDTA business. The mileage rates payable by NIMDTA include an element to defray the cost of insurance as well as vehicle depreciation, fuel etc.

## **6.4.2 Public Transport**

Where staff use public transport they will be reimbursed on a receipts basis provided the expenses are reasonable. Staff who are relocated on a permanent basis to a new work base are entitled to claim travel expenses for a period of four years in respect of daily excess mileage where the option to physically relocate house is not taken. Such travel expenses are paid at the public transport rate, currently 24p per mile and are taxable at source.

NIMDTA will not, under any circumstances, reimburse parking or speeding fines.

## **6.5 Authorisation of Overseas Travel (outside Britain and Ireland)**

Instructions for the approval of Overseas travel has been set out in the Permanent Secretary's letter of 27<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

- Staff Travel outside Britain and Ireland requires approval in advance from the Chief Executive/ Post Graduate Dean.
- The Chief Executive/Post Graduate Dean's Overseas travel must be approved in advance by the Permanent Secretary

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, no member of staff should travel outside of Ireland or Britain more than five times in a calendar year without specific Ministerial approval sought through the Permanent Secretary.

Applications for Overseas Travel must be submitted on the Overseas Travel Request Form ([Appendix A](#))

All completed and approved 'Overseas Travel Request Forms' must be forwarded to NIMDTA's Business Manager for completion of the Bi-Annual Overseas Travel Return.

## **7. Expenses & Allowances**

All Expenses claims should be summarised on an expenses claim form supported by receipts and must be approved by an authorised signatory. Only in exceptional circumstances will payment be given to staff in advance of a meeting/event. In the event of a receipt being lost payment must be authorised by the Head of Department.

Authorisers are responsible for ensuring expenses have been incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively in the course of NIMDTA business.

Travel and Expense claims should be submitted within one month of the expense being incurred, claims received after 3mths will not be paid, in exceptional circumstances Department Heads may consider payment however these decisions must be documented and retained.

The Cross Departmental Finance Manual provides guidance on the claims procedure.

## 7.1. Subsistence Allowance

The subsistence rates listed below represent the maximum permissible rates available. Departments may, on occasions, wish to apply a separate arrangement whereby the subsistence rates on offer are less than those outlined below. Such treatment does not contravene the rules and is therefore acceptable. All subsistence claims must be accompanied by receipts.

### 7.1.1 Daily Subsistence Rates

A subsistence allowance may be claimed to cover meals taken by staff who are required to work at a location which is more than five miles away from both their home and their normal place of work. The following allowances may be obtained:

| Length of Absence                               | Current Rate      |
|---|-------------------|
| More than 5 hours (must include 12.00 – 2.00pm) | maximum of £5.00  |
| More than 10 hours (must end after 7.00pm)      | maximum of £15.00 |

### 7.1.2 Overnight Subsistence Rates

All overnight accommodation should be booked via the Travel Management Contract.

Where staff are required to travel on NIMDTA business with an overnight stay necessary which cannot be booked via the contract, an overnight subsistence allowance may be claimed. The rates payable are as follows:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Bed and Breakfast | maximum of £55  |
| Meal allowance    | maximum of £20 to cover the necessary costs of a main evening meal and one other daytime meal |

NIMDTA will only bear the cost of accommodation required for business purposes and will not meet the costs of any extensions to a stay for personal reasons or for accommodation provided to a spouse or other family members.

Members of staff should note that items of a personal nature, such as alcoholic drinks, minibars, video hire etc. will not be reimbursed by NIMDTA and these should be deducted from any bills submitted for reimbursement.

### **7.1.3 'Staying with Friends' Allowance**

Where employees choose not to stay in a hotel or guesthouse and instead stay with friends or relatives, an allowance (currently £25 per night) may be claimed as a contribution towards the costs incurred by relatives in providing the accommodation. This allowance is instead of any hotel costs which might normally be claimed.

### **7.1.4 Entertaining**

The general principle regarding the reimbursement of entertainment expenditure is that staff members will be reimbursed reasonable entertaining costs for themselves and guests where guests are present for a professional purpose and their presence is considered to be beneficial to NIMDTA.

Expenses for entertaining will only be reimbursed for staff who have a valid reason for being present and all claims must be authorised in compliance with NIMDTA's 'Hospitality Guidelines'.

Consideration should be given to whether the expenditure is:-

- Fully justified in terms of making an important contribution to the business needs of NIMDTA.
- Represents value for money, taking account also of the cost of time spent away from the office, and
- Does not give grounds for public criticism.

### **7.1.5 Telephone**

Business calls made from a home telephone by staff may be reimbursed subject to their inclusion on the expenses claim form and the provision of an itemised telephone bill. NIMDTA will not bear the cost of any part of the rental nor of any private calls.

NIMDTA provides mobile telephones only where a specific operational need arises. It is the policy of NIMDTA that no private use is made of these telephones except in emergencies. If any private use is involved then the staff member will be required to reimburse NIMDTA for the cost of the call.

NIMDTA will not reimburse staff for the rental of personal mobile telephones but will meet the cost of business calls made on the phones subject to evidence of the calls being provided with the expenses claim form.

## **8. Miscellaneous**

### **8.1 Working outside normal working hours**

Staff (Band 7 and below) required to work outside the hours of 8am and 6pm (eg attendance at a meeting outside Northern Ireland) will be entitled to claim overtime or time in lieu. Hours owed will be calculated from time of departure from home but cannot be claimed beyond 10pm in the evening.



## Appendix A

# OVERSEAS TRAVEL REQUEST FORM

**Authorisation:**

NIMDTA Staff Overseas travel must be approved in advance by the Chief Executive/Post Graduate Dean. The Chief Executive/Post Graduate Dean's overseas travel must be approved in advance by the Permanent Secretary.

**Justification:**

All travel must:

- Be fully justified in terms of making an important contribution to the business needs of NIMDTA;
- Represent value for money; taking account also of the cost of time spent away from the office; and
- Not give grounds for public criticism.

Travel arrangement must comply with the NIMDTA Travel & Expenses Policy.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, no member of staff should travel outside of Ireland or Britain more than five times in a calendar year without specific Ministerial approval sought through the Permanent Secretary.

**Passenger:****Department:****Reason for travel:****Please state why this overseas travel request should be approved:****Approved: Yes/No****Signed:****Date:**