



Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

Travel & Subsistence Policy

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Purpose

This policy sets out the protocols and procedures to be followed by staff when travelling on Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) official business.

The travel policy has been framed having regard to the relevant Circular Letters from the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs and relevant regulations of the Revenue Commissioners.

Scope

Travel expenses are payable in respect of travel necessarily undertaken on official ETB business.

The mileage year for travelling purposes commences on 1st January. All claims for reimbursement of travel expenses will be paid via electronic fund transfer.

Rates of Expenses

Expenses payable shall be in accordance with rates and conditions as approved in the relevant Circular Letters and Regulations

General Principles in relation to staff travelling on ETB business

4.1 It is essential that all members of staff travelling on WWETB business are familiar with this policy and with the correct procedures for claiming reimbursement of travel expenses.

4.2 Travel expenses should be kept to a minimum and should represent value for money for the ETB. Each line manager is accountable to ensure that only valid, reasonable and necessary expenses are incurred and that all unnecessary expenditure and extravagance is avoided.

4.3 All claims for reimbursement of travel expenses must be clearly presented on original WWETB or DES claim forms and properly authorised.

4.4 Travel and subsistence expenses must only be paid in respect of necessary absences from an employee's base and are incurred in the performance of official duty/events which are beneficial to WWETB.

4.5 It is the duty of all line managers to ensure that only essential travel is undertaken and that the number of officers absent on official business is kept to an absolute minimum.

4.6 All official travel should be undertaken by the shortest practicable routes. Distances claimed are checked using AA route planner / Google Maps

4.7 Supporting documentation verifying the purpose of each journey must be in place and kept by the claimant (e.g. agendas, invitations etc...). Original receipts must be attached to the travel form for any vouched expenses incurred (e.g. tolls, car parking, public transport).

4.8 As a general rule, public transport should be availed of where appropriate.

4.9 Alternatives to frequent travel, such as installation of video conferencing facilities, should also be considered, where appropriate.

4.10 No reimbursement will be made for parking fines, motor tax fine, insurance fines or clamping fees.

4.11 Where a staff member travels to a location direct from home or returns home direct, the mileage payable will be calculated by reference to the distance from home or normal place of work, whichever is the lesser.

4.12 Claims must be submitted in a timely manner and in all cases no later than 3 months after the journey being undertaken. Travel claims over 3 months in arrears will be returned without the approval of the relevant Director.

4.13 Travel Rates per Km depend on the engine size of the vehicle and category of claimant as outlined in the DES Circular Letter.

Authorisation of Claims for Reimbursement of Travel & Subsistence Expenses

5.1 All claims for reimbursement of travel expenses must be authorised by the appropriate manager/budget holder. No staff member can authorise their own travel or expenses form - (see table hereunder).

Claimant	Authorised by
Chief Executive	Chair of WWETB
Directors	Chief Executive
Administrative/executive Staff	Director of OSD or other Director/Line Manager - where appropriate – (Assistant Principal Officer/ Principal/AEO/ Centre Co-ordinator. Manager etc. as applicable.
School/College Staff	Principal (or in long term absence Deputy Principal.)
Further Education Staff ; (including) Literacy/BTEI/VTOS/Youthreach/Community Education/AEGI etc.	Director of FET/AEOs/Centre Coordinators (as appropriate)
Principal/ Centre Co-ordinators	Relevant Directors
Training Centre Staff	Area Training Managers / Unit Managers
Board of Management Members	Principals/Secretary to Board of Management
Board Members for ETB Board/Finance/ Audit Committee or other approved Meetings	Chief Executive or other designated Director/Senior Management

5.2 Each claimant should discuss with his/her direct line manager the budget to be indicated on the claim form for costing purposes

Vehicle Details

6.1 It is the responsibility of each officer/employee who uses their vehicle in the performance of ETB duties to comply with legal requirements and in order to comply with these requirements for staff claims, WWETB may periodically check for verification of your

- a) Driving licence
- b) Vehicle registration certificate
- c) Motor insurance policy

6.2 It is the responsibility of the claimant to ensure that his/her insurer is aware of the extent of use of personal vehicles for ETB business. In accordance with Department of Education circular 37/2017, each claimant must complete an indemnity declaration form regarding the use of their personal vehicle on office business.

Accommodation

7.1 An overnight allowance will not generally be payable in respect of a necessary absence on official business that is within 100 km of an officer's home or headquarters (whichever is the lesser).

7.2 If your accommodation has been paid for by the host organisation, you should clearly indicate this on your claim form. In this instance, the relevant daily subsistence rate is payable only if applicable.

7.3 Accommodation should not be extravagant.

Subsistence

8.1 DES/DPER Circular Letter rates will be used as a basis to recover subsistence costs (accommodation and meals).

8.2 The subsistence allowance payable is not intended to meet the whole cost of the subsistence when absent from home/headquarters. It is not intended to be a source of profit or emolument to the claimant. No incidental costs for food can be claimed where subsistence allowance has been claimed.

8.3 Subsistence is only paid when lunch/meals were not provided and this is clearly indicated on the claim form.

8.4 A day allowance is not payable for an absence on official business that is within 8 km of an officer's headquarters or home (whichever is the lesser).

Foreign Travel

9.1 All foreign travel must be pre-approved by the Chief Executive Officer. A Foreign Travel Requisition Form must be completed by the applicant, approved by the relevant Manager/Director and submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for authorisation.

9.2 Only essential travel is to be undertaken and the number of officers on any official journey must be kept to the absolute minimum.

9.3 Claims for reimbursement must be completed on the WWETB foreign travel form and submitted with the Foreign Travel Requisition Form for payment.

9.4 Staff may request a travel and subsistence expense advance payment. In requesting an advance, the proposed travel dates and expected costs to be incurred should be detailed on the form. The amount payable is limited to 75% of the expected costs of the trip. Once the trip is complete, a fully vouched settlement claim must be submitted within two weeks of completion of travel. Such advance payments require the authorisation of the CE/Director as its sole purpose is to minimise any financial burden on staff approved to incur overseas travel on ETB official business prior to reimbursement.

9.5 In cases where an advance is issued but the planned trip does not occur, the funds will immediately be returned to WWETB.

9.6 Expense claims will not be processed for payment where a staff member has an outstanding advance in place.

9.7 The ETB will reimburse the cost of entry visas required for travel on ETB business once backup documentation and relevant authorisation is attached to the claim.

9.8 First class travel is not permitted without prior approval of the Chief Executive or the Board.

9.9 Prior to foreign travel, staff members should review whether subsistence rates are available for their intended location. Where no subsistence rate is available for a particular location, the claim must be based on actual vouched costs. Claims should not be submitted based on subsistence rates for the nearest city or location for which a subsistence rate is available. In some cases, the subsistence rate available will be a combination of vouched accommodation costs plus a flat-rate meal allowance.

9.10 Staff travelling overseas on ETB business are covered by the ETB's insurance policy. The costs of any additional travel insurance policies taken out by staff members will not be reimbursed. Please ensure that you submit full details of your planned trip at least two weeks in advance to the Corporate Services Department.

9.11 Each claimant should discuss with his/her direct line manager the budget to be indicated on the claim form for costing purposes.

Conference/Seminar Attendance

Where food/and or accommodation has been provided as part of a course/conference fee or is supplied free to attendees, no claim in respect of subsistence is payable.

Staff Sharing between Centres/Schools

Subsistence is not normally paid to staff contracted to work in more than one school/centre. However, in cases where a staff member is obliged by the ETB to work between more than one centre/school on the same day, specific approval of eligibility to claim travel between locations may be authorised from Director/Chief Executive.

Under normal conditions:

- Subsistence will be paid to staff with one designated base when travelling on ETB business provided the usual requirements are met (Section 8 above).
- Subsistence will not be paid to staff with two, or more, designated bases when working at those bases on the designated days.

Public Transport

Travel by public transport will be reimbursed where supported by a valid receipt/travel ticket.

Submission of a False or Exaggerated Claim

The submission of a false or exaggerated expenses claim is a serious matter which may lead to action being taken under the WWETB Fraud Policy.

Freedom of Information

Details of travel and subsistence payments made by WWETB may be released in response to requests received under the Freedom of Information Legislation.

Procedure for claiming

15.1 The relevant WWETB or DES claim forms must be used when claiming travel and subsistence.

15.2 Incomplete claims will be returned to the claimant unpaid.

15.3 The claim form should be fully authorised by the budget holder in advance of submission to the finance department.

15.4 Original receipts for all vouched expenditure should be attached to the claim form

Review & Update

This policy will be subject to review in accordance with organisational needs and/or where it is necessary to do so due to changes in Departmental regulations, legislation or other such situations.