



Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

Travel and Subsistence Policy

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1.0 Purpose

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

The travel policy has been framed having regard to the relevant Circular Letters from the Department of Education (herein referred to as DE), the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (herein referred to as DPER), the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs and relevant regulations of the Revenue Commissioners.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all staff members including temporary staff, contractors, consultants, vendors, service providers, partners, affiliates, third parties or any other person who travels on official ETB business. For the purposes of this policy the terms staff member and claimant will be used interchangeably.

3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 Governance and Compliance Responsibilities

- To ensure the Policy is reviewed and approved by the Governing Body.

3.2 CE/Director/Principal/Centre Manager/Line Manager Responsibilities

- To familiarise themselves with the terms of this policy.
- To review and approve expense requests in line with the guidance set out in this policy.
- To ensure that only valid, reasonable and necessary expenses are approved and that all unnecessary expenditure and extravagance is avoided.
- To ensure that only essential travel is undertaken and that the number of staff members absent on official business is kept to an absolute minimum.

3.3 Staff member Responsibilities

- To familiarise themselves with the terms of this policy
- To adhere to the procedures within to claim reimbursement of travel expenses
- To submit all expense claims in a timely manner
- To ensure all expense claims adhere to the general principles set out in section 4.2

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4.0 Policy

4.1 Rates of Expenses

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

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

4.2 General Principles in relation to staff members travelling on 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.
- Travel expenses should be kept to a minimum and should represent value for money for WWETB.
- All claims for reimbursement of travel expenses must be clearly presented on original WWETB or DE claim forms. Please ensure to insert post codes. All completed forms are to be properly authorised.
- Travel and subsistence expenses must only be paid in respect of necessary absences from a staff member's base and are incurred in the performance of official duty/events which are beneficial to WWETB.
- **All official travel should be undertaken by the shortest practicable routes.** Distances claimed are checked using AA route planner / Google Maps
- 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).
- Alternatives to frequent travel, such as Microsoft Teams should be utilised where possible to ensure that the necessity for travel is kept to an absolute minimum.
- No reimbursement will be made for parking fines, motor tax fine, insurance fines or clamping fees.
- 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.
- 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 if the approval of the relevant Director is not attached to the form.

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5.0 Authorisation of Claims for Reimbursement of Travel & Subsistence Expenses

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 Managers

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

6.0 Vehicle Details

It is the responsibility of each staff member 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:

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a) Driving licence

b) Vehicle registration certificate

c) Motor insurance policy

It is the responsibility of the claimant to ensure that his/her insurer is aware of the extent of use of personal vehicles for WWETB 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.

7.0 Accommodation

- An overnight allowance will not generally be payable in respect of a necessary absence on official business that is within 100 km of a staff members home or headquarters (whichever is the lesser).
- If accommodation has been paid for by the host organisation, the claimant should clearly indicate this on the claim form. In this instance, the relevant daily subsistence rate is payable only if applicable.
- Accommodation should not be extravagant.

8.0 Subsistence

- DE/DPER Circular Letter rates will be used as a basis to recover subsistence costs (accommodation and meals).
- 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.
- Subsistence is only paid when lunch/meals are not provided and this is clearly indicated on the claim form.
- A day allowance is not payable for an absence on official business that is within 8 km of a staff member's headquarters or home (whichever is the lesser).

9.0 Foreign Travel

- All foreign travel must be pre-approved by the Chief Executive. **A Foreign Travel Requisition Form** must be completed by the applicant, approved by the relevant Manager/Director and submitted to the Chief Executive for authorisation.
- Only essential travel is to be undertaken and the number of staff members on any official journey must be kept to the absolute minimum.

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- Claims for reimbursement must be completed on the **WWETB Foreign Travel form** and submitted with the **Foreign Travel Requisition Form** for payment.
- Staff members 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 WWETB official business prior to.
- In cases where an advance is issued but the planned does not occur, the funds will immediately be reimbursement returned to WWETB. trip
- Expense claims will not be processed for payment where a staff member has an outstanding advance in place.
- WWETB will reimburse the cost of entry visas required for travel on WWETB business once backup documentation and relevant authorisation is attached to the claim.
- First class travel is not permitted without prior approval of the Chief Executive or the Board.
- 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.
- Staff travelling overseas on WWETB 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.
- Each claimant should discuss with his/her direct line manager the budget to be indicated on the claim form for costing purposes.

10.0 Conferences/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.

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11.0 Staff Sharing between Centres/Schools

Subsistence is not normally paid to staff members contracted to work in more than one school/centre. However, in cases where a staff member is obliged by WWETB 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 members with one designated base when travelling on WWETB business provided the usual requirements are met (Section 8 above).
- Subsistence will not be paid to staff members with two, or more, designated bases when working at those bases on the designated days.

12.0 Public Transport

As a general rule public transport should be availed of where appropriate. Travel by public transport will be reimbursed where supported by a valid receipt/travel ticket.

13.0 Procedure for claiming

- The relevant WWETB or DE claim forms must be used when claiming travel and subsistence.
- Incomplete claims will be returned to the claimant unpaid.
- Emailed or scanned copies of Claim Forms will be accepted as well as the usual posted claims.
- Claimants must sign the signature box on the form in all cases (by typing your name into the box on the form if necessary)
- A scan of any vouched expense (e.g. toll/ public transport ticket) must be attached to the form/ email. Please retain the original toll receipt/ public transport ticket.
- The claimant should forward their claim form via email to their line manager. The line manager should forward the claim form and state they approve the journeys undertaken by email to travel@wwetb.ie
- 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 the Department of Education circular 37/2017, each claimant must complete an indemnity declaration form regarding the use of their personal vehicle on office business.
- Bank account – Bank Mandate to be completed for any changes to bank details (please note updates to payroll are separate)
- For audit purposes there must be a clear record that the line manager has approved the specific claim being made.

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14.0 Policy Breaches

All users are required to familiarise themselves with the terms of this policy. 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.

Violations may also lead to disciplinary actions in line with normal WWETB Disciplinary Policies. The disciplinary action to be taken will depend on the circumstances and the seriousness of the violation.

15.0 Policy Review and Update

The policy contained within these documents will be in place for three years following approval of a review and amendments. An earlier review can take place should exceptional circumstances arise resulting from this policy; in whole or in part, being insufficient for its purpose and/or if there are legislative changes that render this policy obsolete.

WWETB reserves the right to periodically amend this policy in line with guidance from the HSE and Department of Foreign Affairs.