



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
A College of Queen's University Belfast

External Hospitality Policy

Contents

1.1	Introduction	2
1.2	Allowable Expenditure	2
1.3	Guest to Staff Ratio	2
1.4	Reasonable Costs for Entertaining	2
1.5	Reimbursement of Expenses.....	3
1.6	Expense Claim Forms	3
1.7	Time Limit for Reimbursement.....	3
Appendix A: External Hospitality Authorisation Form		4

1.1 Introduction

The general principle regarding the reimbursement of hospitality expenditure is that staff members will be reimbursed for reasonable entertaining costs for themselves and guests. Hospitality is normally provided internally through the College's Hospitality Services Department.

For reasons of economy and where reasonably possible, entertaining of staff and guests should take place within College premises using the College Hospitality Services to provide both facilities and refreshments - see separate Internal Hospitality Policy.

The Policy covering externally provided hospitality should therefore only be used in exceptional cases. This is particularly prudent given that significant scrutiny is applied to the use of public funds.

Please note that the University College will not re-imburse any external hospitality costs relating to the attendance of a spouse or partner of a member of staff.

In addition, it should be noted that under no circumstances will the College contribute to the cost of external entertaining, when not part of a wider event, when only members of staff are involved.

Where it is deemed appropriate for the entertainment of guests to take place outside of the College the guidance below applies.

1.2 Allowable Expenditure

All of the following three conditions must be met for expenditure to qualify for reimbursement:

- The guest must be present for a professional purpose; and
- The presence of the guest must be considered beneficial to the University College; and
- Prior written approval must be obtained from the Principal or the appropriate member of the Corporate Planning Team using the External Hospitality Authorisation Form - see Appendix A. A copy of the approved form must be attached to the related travel and subsistence expenses claim form in order for the costs to be reimbursed

It should be further noted that expenses for entertaining will only be reimbursed for staff that have a valid reason for being present.

1.3 Guest to Staff Ratio

There should normally be no more than two members of University College staff present to each non-staff guest attending any external hospitality event.

On such occasions where there are more than two members of University College staff present to each non-staff guest, the claimant must obtain prior written approval from the Principal for this change in ratio.

This approval must be obtained as evidenced in the relevant section of the External Hospitality Authorisation Form - see Appendix A.

The appropriately approved External Hospitality Authorisation Form must be attached to the related travel and subsistence expenses claim form in order for the costs to be reimbursed.

1.4 Reasonable Costs for External Entertaining

The following limits are considered to be reasonable for external entertaining:

Lunch – up to £25 per head

Dinner – up to £40 per head

Please note that these limits include gratuities and a modest amount for alcoholic beverages.

If it is felt that there is a legitimate business reason for the external hospitality required to be in excess of the maximum allowable, then prior written approval, setting out the reason for the extra expenditure, and a revised maximum claimable per head must be obtained from the Principal as evidenced in the relevant section of the External Hospitality Authorisation Form - see Appendix A.

The appropriately approved External Hospitality Authorisation Form must be attached to the related travel and subsistence expenses claim form in order for the costs to be reimbursed.

1.5 Reimbursement of Expenses

It is stressed that no reimbursement of external entertaining expenses will be made unless the above guidelines are followed and the External Hospitality Authorisation Form, with all the relevant approvals, has been attached to the travel and subsistence expenses claim..

1.6 Expense Claim Forms

The following information must be provided on an approved External Hospitality Authorisation Form which must accompany the related travel and subsistence expense claim forms which seeks reimbursement for external hospitality expenditure:

- (a) names of all attendees;
- (b) the organisation they represent; and
- (c) the purpose of the entertainment (e.g. negotiation of contract)
- (d) all relevant prior written approvals that are required as detailed in this policy.

All original detailed receipts in respect of the expense claim must be submitted with the claim form.

All expense claims in respect of entertainment costs must be approved by the Principal or the appropriate member of the Corporate Planning Team.

Please note that, in accordance with HM Revenue & Customs rules, only mileage in excess of the normal home to office mileage can be claimed for attending such events.

1.7 Time Limit for Reimbursement

The University College and its staff have a mutual interest in travel and subsistence expense claims being submitted, approved and paid promptly. Claim forms which include external hospitality expenditure must normally be submitted for approval to the relevant Budget Holder no later than one month following the related external hospitality event.

Reimbursement may not be made for claims received after the expiry of the time limit unless a satisfactory explanation is provided.

Payment will normally be made by the Finance Department within 30 days of receipt of the appropriately approved and documented claim.

Dr Anne Heaslett
Principal

Date November 2014
Review Date: November 2017
For distribution to: All Staff

