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Atlantic
Technological
University

ATU
Travel & Subsistence
Policy
Version 1.0

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Date of this revision: 26 th September 2022	Date of next review: September 2023
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Version Number/ Revision Number	Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Changes marked
1.0	September 2022	New Policy	

Consultation History:

Version Number/ Revision Number	Consultation Date	Names of Parties in Consultation	Summary of Changes

Approval:

This document requires the following approvals:

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This Policy was approved by the Governing Body on 26th September 2022. It shall be reviewed and, as necessary, amended by the University annually. All amendments shall be recorded on the revision history section above.

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1 Purpose

The Travel and Subsistence policy sets out the rules for travel and expenses claimed from the Atlantic Technological University (ATU). The purpose of the travel and subsistence policy is as follows:

- To ensure that all travel on behalf of ATU is planned, necessary and appropriately approved.
- To ensure ATU correctly reimburses travel and subsistence in accordance with government and revenue issued circulars and guidance.
- To ensure that claims are recorded on a timely basis, and documentation is filed appropriately for audit purposes.
- To ensure that the best value for money is obtained in respect of each official trip undertaken, consistent with the requirements of official business.
- To set out the protocols staff are to adhere to when travelling on ATU business.

2 Scope

The Travel and Subsistence policy covers travel undertaken on behalf of the ATU and reimbursement of related expenses. This policy shall apply to all staff, Governing Body members and in certain instances to students, who may be entitled to claim for travel costs and expenses. The policy applies to all claims submitted to and paid by the ATU, irrespective of funding source.

3 Principles

The following are the broad principles which govern travel undertaken on behalf of the ATU:

- Actual and reasonable travel and related expenses incurred by ATU employees in the conduct of the organisation's business will be reimbursed. Expenses are not intended to be a source of emolument or profit.
- Travel should be undertaken only when necessary. Journeys should be co-ordinated with other activities and, wherever practicable, travel should be planned to avoid repeated long-distance trips.
- Employees are expected to exercise good judgment and financial common sense when incurring business expenses. All expenses should be incurred in the most economical way to ensure best use of taxpayers' money.
- Travel and related expenses of persons who have no direct connection with ATU and have no role in the official business being conducted will not be reimbursed. Thus, for example, reimbursement of expenses for a spouse or family member is not permitted.
- The claimant and the authoriser of the claim shall not be one and the same person. As a general principle, the person authorising claims must be at a more senior employment grade than the claimant.
- Approvers are responsible for reviewing expense claims to ensure value for money, completeness, appropriateness, necessity, and relevance to the specific business of the ATU prior to authorising same. In addition, they are responsible for adherence to this policy and to the related procedure document.

- Governing Body members and employees must only claim travel and subsistence allowances in respect of official travel and must not claim from more than one organisation/body for the same journey.

3.1 Travel Procedure and Regulations

ATU shall have a set of travel procedures, which will be based on current guidance and best practice in the public sector and shall implement the University's Travel and Subsistence policy. The travel procedures shall be approved by the VP for Finance & Corporate Services.

3.2 Compliance

Compliance with the ATU Travel and Subsistence Policy and Procedures is checked by the Finance department.

3.3 Travel Authorisation

Each member of staff requires prior approval for any trip away from their ATU base.

3.4 Submission of Travel and Expense Claims

Claims for reimbursement of travel expenses must be submitted as soon as possible, generally within one month and in any event no later than 3 months after return from a trip. Claims submitted after this time must be approved by the Finance Manager or a VP of Finance & Corporate Services. The ATU reserves the right not to process claims submitted outside of the timeframe permitted or those which are non-compliant with ATU travel procedures.

3.5 Motor Expenses

An employee who is required to travel on behalf of the ATU will be authorised to use his/her own motor vehicle on official business in the following circumstances:

- Where no suitable public transport option is available consistent with the requirements of the travel.
- Where public transport is available only at equal or greater expense.
- Where the use of public transport would result in the loss of official time which it is necessary to avoid.

The rates paid are with reference to circulars relevant at the time the trip is undertaken. The onus is on staff members who use their own vehicle for official ATU business, to have it insured for that purpose.

Distance should be referenced to google maps/AA Route planner or similar calculator and should be the nearer of employment base, or home to the destination. Mileage will not be paid in respect of any portion of a journey which covers all or part of the claimant's usual route between home and employment base.

Where more than one staff member from the same ATU base are travelling to the same event or location, arrangements must be made, where possible, to share transport in order to keep ATU costs to a minimum.

3.6 Subsistence Allowance

Subsistence allowances are payable for absences of longer than 5 hours in line with rates relevant at time of

travel as issued by DPER. Subsistence relating to international travel will be paid with reference to worldwide subsistence rates. Deductions will be made for meals provided at events free of charge.

3.7 Foreign Travel

All Foreign travel must be approved in advance by the line manager/head of function. This should be done by completing the prior authorisation form available on the staff portal. Where ATU pays directly for accommodation this should be noted on the claim form.

3.8 Other Expenses

Other expense claims for all items excluding motor travel and subsistence allowances, must be accompanied by vouched evidence of expenditure. Receipts should clearly identify the expenditure that is being claimed.

4 Exceptions to Policy

Exceptions to this policy require approval by a VP of Finance & Corporate Services or the President.

5 Freedom of Information

Details of expense payments to ATU staff and related parties may be released in response to requests received under FOI legislation.