



ENERGY COAST UTC

EXPENSES POLICY

2025-2028

Approved: Finance Committee

Signed:

Date: March 25

Date for Review: March 28

Revision History:

Revision History			
Revision	Date	Owner	Summary of Changes
1	January 2017	MR	New
2	June 2019	MR	Reviewed
3	June 2022	KL	Reviewed
4	March 2024	LS	Reviewed
5	March 2025	LS	Amended following annual accounts audit

1. INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1.1 All staff and Governors have a responsibility to ensure that financial and other resources entrusted to the Energy Coast UTC are used to best effect in order to further the best interests and the purpose of the UTC. This policy provides staff and Governors with detailed guidance on the procedures to follow when incurring/claiming expenses (e.g. travel and subsistence, course fees, professional body subscriptions etc.) which are required wholly, necessarily and exclusively for the performance of their duties.

1.2 There is a fundamental requirement on all staff and Governors that they should not incur any personal financial benefit through their employment by the Energy Coast UTC other than their agreed salary. Any breach of this requirement may lead to disciplinary procedures. Relevant staff and all Governors are required to disclose any pecuniary or other links they, or close relatives, may have with the Energy Coast UTC's suppliers by means of a completed entry in the Register of Business Interests.

1.3 Staff and Governors must also be aware that public relations and perceptions require that the Energy Coast UTC not only has a rigorous, effective and transparent Staff Benefits and Expenses Policy in place, but also that no misleading or unfortunate impression can be created in the application of the policy. Accordingly, the Responsible Officer in conjunction with the external auditors will be requested to carry out periodic targeted reviews of the application of the policy.

1.4 The CEO, as Accounting Officer, is responsible for ensuring compliance with all Financial Regulations, Policies and Procedures. Ultimately the Accounting Officer is answerable to Parliament via the Public Accounts Committee for all uses to which the UTC's public funding is put, and this policy contributes to the framework within this accountability sits.

1.5 The underlying principles of the policy are as follows:

- The lowest cost option for travel and subsistence must always be chosen provided this is consistent with the required convenience and speed of travel. It is recognised that some travel may involve long journeys and 'unsociable' hours. The overriding principle of this policy is to fulfil the business requirement of the journey in a way that minimises the inconvenience to the employee.
- To provide travel and accommodation of a sufficient standard to ensure employees' safety and provides a reasonable level of comfort.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all UTC staff and UTC Governors. Any exemptions to this policy require the prior written approval of the CEO. Where the exemption applies to the CEO the prior written approval of the Chair of Governors is required.

3. EXPENSES

3.1 Responsibilities

3.1.1 It is every employee's responsibility to ensure that any travel undertaken is approved in advance by their Line Manager.

3.1.2 It is every Governor's responsibility to ensure that any travel undertaken is approved by the Chair of the Governing Body.

3.1.3 The Business Director is responsible for ensuring that all Governing Body members and UTC employees have access to the policy.

3.1.4 The Chair of the Governing Body and the CEO must:

- Control expenditure under the policy.
- Ensure that the Governing Body members and UTC employees are aware of the requirement to seek formal approval before incurring expenditure on expenses.
- Ensure compliance.
- Ensure the policy is included with induction procedures for new members/employees.

3.2 Authorisation, Responsibility and Procedures

3.2.1 All staff should submit their approved Expense claims to their Line Manager for approval normally within one month of the end of the month in which expenditure is incurred. Any claim for expenses presented more than three months after the date in which the expenses were incurred will be refused.

3.2.2 The Line Manager will validate the claim and ensure that the amounts claimed are justifiable and represent Best Value, before being passed to the Finance Department for recording and processing.

3.2.3 Receipts must accompany all claims. Credit card slips or statements will not be accepted as evidence of business expenditure. A VAT receipt must include the name and address of the retailer, the retailer's VAT registration number, date of purchase, details of what goods or services have been purchased and the VAT inclusive value of those goods or services in sterling.

3.2.4 All expenses reimbursement will be made via BACS, cheque or petty cash. Detailed VAT receipts or invoices must be attached to the Expense claim form as confirmation of expenditure incurred. Where receipts are not available, i.e. for toll charges or underground fares, the reason for their unavailability must be given.

3.3 Travel Considerations

3.3.1 Where practicable, audio conference facilities and video conference facilities should be considered as an alternative to travelling. When travelling, public transport should normally be used.

3.3.2 Home to UTC travel – staff are responsible for the cost of all travel between their home and normal primary place of work.

3.3.3 Private cars – staff may use their private cars for school purposes providing: they can demonstrate they have business use as part of their insurance package.

3.3.4 Personal travel and incentives linked to the Energy Coast UTC – personal travel as part of a business trip is discouraged, and in any event only allowed where such travel actually reduces the cost of business travel e.g. staying a Saturday night to take advantage of a lower cost fare. Where additional costs are incurred e.g. Saturday night in a hotel, the individual employee must meet these. Weekend accommodation will be paid where the traveller is unable to return home as part of a longer business trip.

3.3.5 Travel with a spouse or partner – if a spouse or partner who is not involved in the Energy Coast UTC business accompanies a member of staff, the traveller must bear the cost of their

spouse/partner. It is not permitted to downgrade the travel or accommodation booked in order to fund travel costs for a companion.

3.4 Private Cars and Driving

3.4.1 Private cars may be used for journeys of less than a 200 mile round trip. It is generally more cost effective to use an alternate method for journeys greater than 200 miles therefore the mileage reimbursement drops to 10p per mile to encourage the use of a hire car or rail travel.

3.4.2 Any parking, Road Traffic Act fines, congestion fines or penalties incurred are the personal responsibility of the member of staff and will not be reimbursed by the Energy Coast UTC.

3.4.3 Drivers will be reimbursed for Congestion and Toll Charges incurred subject to production of receipts, where available. Congestion charges will only be reimbursed at the daily rate, so the driver must ensure that payment is made before the deadline. No tolls or congestion charges can be claimed for travel between home and work.

3.4.4 Drivers must ensure that their private vehicle is adequately insured for appropriate business use, as the driver is personally liable for any incident.

3.4.5 Mileage will be paid at the published HMR&C rate, 45p for the first 200 miles, thereafter mileage will be paid at 10p per mile. When travelling on business by car you must deduct your usual home to work base mileage from your mileage claim. This is a requirement of HMR&C.

3.5 Taxis

3.5.1 When travelling by taxi, a receipt must be obtained. Where possible, the claimant should obtain prior approval from their Line Manager before using a taxi. Travel by taxi should be kept to a minimum and normally only used for the following circumstances:

- Where heavy baggage or equipment is being transported
- Where public transport is not available
- When a member of staff has a mobility issue
- Where personal security is perceived to be an issue

3.6 Rail

3.6.1 First class rail travel should be approved by the CEO and Business Director and should only be used if it is cheaper or the same price as standard travel.

3.6.2 Significant savings can be obtained by specifying outward and/or return journeys at the time of booking.

3.7 Air

3.7.1 For travel within mainland UK and to/from Eurostar destinations rail is the default mode of travel over air unless it is a more cost effective (including time cost) method of travel. Staff should travel economy class.

3.7.2 Approval must be given in advance by the CEO. Travel must be booked via the Finance Department. Significant savings can be obtained by specifying outward and/or return journeys at time of booking. Some airlines will also allow changes to fixed tickets for an additional charge and this may be cheaper than buying a flexible ticket. Fully flexible tickets should only be requested when absolutely necessary.

3.8 Foreign Currency

3.8.1 Foreign currency required e.g. for school organised educational and cultural visits abroad should normally be obtained via the Finance Department, who will obtain the best exchange rates available. If staff are required exceptionally to purchase currency using a personal credit/debit card, reimbursement will be made for the full out-of-pocket cost of the transaction including any bank or other charges incurred.

3.9 Subsistence

3.9.1 When staff are working away from the school and meals are not provided as part of the purpose for travelling (e.g., attendance at a conference), staff may claim the actual cost of relevant meals on presentation of receipts, up to the limits (including VAT and service) below. All claims must be supported by appropriate detailed VAT receipts or invoices. These limits take account of the fact that staff would normally incur a domestic cost for meals in any case:

Meal	Limit (including VAT & Service)
Breakfast	£8.00
Lunch	If absent over 5 hours £15 (£20 in London)
Dinner	For overnight stay £20 (£25 in London)

3.9.2 If certain meals have been provided for you, such as breakfast being included in the accommodation charge or location catering provided for lunch, only the other meals may be claimed.

3.9.3 If one member of the team pays a bill on behalf of other members of staff, details of the reason and location and the names and staff numbers of staff must be shown on the expenses claim. Claiming shares of joint expenses is not permitted under any circumstances. Claims cannot exceed the number of staff multiplied by the relevant per head cost for the type of meal.

3.9.4 Staff may not claim expenses related to purchase of any alcoholic beverages unless prior written approval has been given by the Chair of Governors.

3.10 Overnight Accommodation

3.10.1 Overnight stays must be pre-approved by the relevant authorised signatory. If you have to stay away from base overnight, the UTC will pay for the cost of a standard room. Advance bookings should always be made, if possible, to reduce the costs involved.

3.10.2 The cost of the room should not normally exceed the following limits. The limits will be the maximum claimable, with receipts, unless there has been prior approval of the Head of School/CEO after special consideration of the circumstances.

Overnight stay – room only	Limit (including VAT & Service)
Outside of London (and similar lower cost destinations)	£115 In limited circumstances, this can be increased to £120 – for example a last-minute trip at peak times.
In London (and similar high-cost destinations)	£250

	In limited circumstances, this can be increased to £300 – for example a last-minute trip at peak times.
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3.11 Business Phone Calls

3.11.1 When you use your own home or mobile phone on UTC business, the cost of itemised business calls will be met on production of an itemised bill. The UTC, irrespective of whether these include a certain amount of free call time, will pay no rental charges. HMR&C will only allow the UTC to reimburse the business call costs.

3.11.2 The UTC will not meet the cost of phone cards for pay as you go mobiles.

3.11.3 The UTC will meet the cost of business calls from a callbox or hotel room, provided details of the call, including the length and to whom, are included on the expense claim.