

Nursing and Midwifery Council

Council Travel, Accommodation and Expenses policy

Policy title	Council Travel, Accommodation and Expenses policy
Summary	A policy which covers travel, accommodation and other expenses for Council members, members of Council's committees and others asked to undertake work on the Council's behalf.
Approval	Approved by Remuneration Committee on 14 February 2017
Policy Owner	Governance team
Review date	Dependent on legislative change but possibly April/October 2023. All governance policies will be reviewed in preparation for transition to a Unitary Board governing model.

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Policy overview

- 1 This policy covers travel, accommodation and other expenses for:
 - 1.1 Council members;
 - 1.2 Members of Council committees; and
 - 1.3 Others asked to undertake work on behalf of Council.
- 2 Members can either make their own travel and accommodation arrangements or these can be booked by the Governance team. Members must ensure they have due regard to the need to use Council funds prudently and make the most cost-effective travel and accommodation arrangements.
- 3 Where members make their own arrangements, reasonable costs and expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with the maximum limits set out in this policy.
- 4 The NMC will only meet costs or make bookings in relation to activities undertaken in the course of NMC responsibilities, such as:
 - 4.1 Attending any meeting of the NMC, including the Council, any committee of the Council or other NMC organised activities; or
 - 4.2 Attending any external function, including conferences, training and development opportunities or events, on behalf, and at the request, of the NMC.
- 5 Council members' expenses will be included in the statutory Annual Report and Accounts and published on a regular basis.

Equality and diversity

- 6 The NMC is committed to ensuring that it treats its members fairly and with respect and that it does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of their race, age, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, disability, religion / belief and pregnancy / maternity.
- 7 The NMC is committed to ensuring that we make any reasonable adjustments for travel and accommodation for members in line with our legislative obligations. This includes making adjustments for members who are pregnant or who have either a temporary or permanent disability.

Travel

- 8 Members can book travel through the Governance team. Members are asked to request travel bookings as far in advance as possible. This will allow the Governance team to obtain the best possible price. Requests for travel should be sent to the Governance team.

Rail travel

- 9 The NMC will only meet the costs of standard class rail travel unless there are exceptional circumstances or if reasonable adjustments apply (see paragraph 7).
- 10 If a member wishes to travel first class they can do so but they will need to meet the difference in cost. The NMC will only reimburse the standard class rate at the time of booking.
- 11 The member must provide proof at the time of booking of the charge that would have applied had the tickets been purchased at the standard rate. This would normally be in the form of either:
 - 11.1 A print-out or screen shot of a rail booking website or the official website of the rail company;
 - 11.2 Dated and signed evidence from rail station staff.
- 12 Any claim involving first-class travel without dated supporting documentation will not be reimbursed.

Air travel

- 13 Air travel may be used where it is the most cost effective or convenient means of travel.
- 14 Tickets provided will normally be electronic tickets (e-tickets).
- 15 Members are responsible for ensuring that they have the necessary valid passport / ID/ visa documentation for travel.
- 16 The NMC will not pay for first or business class flights within the UK unless there are exceptional circumstances or if reasonable adjustments apply (see paragraph 7).
- 17 If a member wishes to travel first or business class they can do so but they will need to meet the difference in cost. The NMC will only reimburse the economy class rate at the time of booking.
- 18 The member must provide proof at the time of booking of the charge that would have applied had the tickets been purchased at the economy rate. This would normally be in the form of either:
 - 18.1 A print-out or screen shot of a travel booking website or the official website of the airline;
 - 18.2 Dated and signed evidence from airline staff.
- 19 Any claim involving first or business class travel without dated supporting documentation will not be reimbursed.

Taxis

- 20 Where practical, when travelling from the NMC's offices taxis should be booked through the Governance team so as to make use of centrally negotiated services and reduce out of pocket expenses for members and partner members.
- 21 Where a taxi has not been pre booked by the NMC, taxi receipts are required and should be submitted with the NMC expenses claim form. Receipts must show the amount paid, date, start location and end destination.

Private vehicle use

- 22 Members may use their own cars for local journeys or to access public transport (for example travelling to and from the nearest train station) if this is the most cost effective means of travel. In line with approved amount for mileage allowance payments" (AMAPs) published by HM Revenue and Customs, the mileage allowance is 45 pence per mile for the first 10000 business miles in the tax year. Should the member travel more than 10000 business miles by car in a tax year, the allowance is 25 pence per mile.
- 23 A personal car usage declaration must be completed in advance and sent to the Governance team. It is members' responsibility to ensure they have the appropriate insurance.
- 24 A mileage allowance will also be paid to members using a bicycle at the rate of 20 pence per mile.

Changes to travel arrangements

- 25 Where changes have to be made to a travel booking, these should be made through the Governance team. Where the Governance team are unable to make the changes required - for example, where the required changes occur after office hours or cannot be made in time - members should meet the additional costs themselves and then make a claim on expenses.
- 26 Any changes to a travel booking must be supported by a receipt of email from the travel supplier which itemises the changes made and any additional cost incurred.

Cancellation of travel arrangements

- 27 If a travel booking has to be cancelled, Members are asked to notify the Governance team at the earliest possible opportunity so as to minimise the cancellation charges imposed by travel providers.
- 28 All unused tickets (or portions of) should be returned to the Governance team team as soon as possible, so that a refund can be obtained from the travel provider (please note that this includes flights and tickets that say non refundable, as sometimes the NMC can negotiate a refund or it may be possible for them to be used by someone else).

Hotel accommodation

- 29 Accommodation may be booked through the Governance team. The NMC has negotiated cost savings with preferred suppliers of hotels. The Governance team will book suitable standard accommodation (including breakfast) on the basis of best value for money (normally up to a maximum value of £200.00 inclusive of VAT).
- 30 Members may book their own accommodation and reclaim the cost, provided it is consistent with the provisions in this policy.

Cancellation of accommodation

- 31 Accommodation booked through the Governance team can be cancelled up to up to 12 noon on the day before check-in. To minimise cancellation charges incurred by the NMC, Members are asked to notify the Governance team at the earliest possible opportunity.

Expenses allowances

Overnight expenses

- 32 Members staying on NMC business overnight are entitled to breakfast at their hotel. Where accommodation is booked by the Governance team, breakfast will be included as part of the accommodation package.
- 33 Members staying on NMC business overnight can claim for the cost of dinner where provision has not already been made by the NMC (for example, Council dinner). Claims for evening meals will be reimbursed when an overnight stay is involved or you will be arriving home after 8.00pm.
- 34 The NMC will reimburse up to a maximum of £30.00 per evening meal, per member inclusive of VAT and other service charges.

Day expenses

- 35 When you undertake NMC business away from either your home or your normal place of work, subsistence expenses may be claimed as follows:
 - 35.1 We will reimburse up to £10.00 against receipts for breakfast when no overnight stay is involved, provided that the start time for your engagement means that you would have to leave home before 7.30am.
 - 35.2 We will reimburse up to £10.00 against receipts for lunch, provided that you are away for more than seven hours and lunch has not been provided.

Non allowable expenses

- 36 The NMC will **not** reimburse expenses associated with the following:
 - 36.1 Entertainment.
 - 36.2 Alcohol (even with evening meal).
 - 36.3 Tobacco.
 - 36.4 Personal expenses such as toiletries, clothes, haircuts, saunas or personal treatments, luggage, in-room videos.
 - 36.5 Hotel charges for personal international calls.
 - 36.6 Motoring fines or penalties.
 - 36.7 Travel/accident insurance.
 - 36.8 Care of pets.

Loyalty programmes

- 37 Members may join and use air miles or similar loyalty programmes. However, any costs associated with the programme will not be reimbursed by the NMC and **must not** influence supplier selection. Members may retain any benefits they may earn through their business travel and accommodation.

Receipt requirements

- 38 The NMC requires full VAT receipts in order to process any expenses claims.
- 39 Receipts should clearly show your name (if applicable), supplier name, date and goods or services provided and must be itemised.
- 40 Credit and debit card vouchers are **not acceptable** as receipts by legal or tax authorities or for audit purposes.

Reimbursement

- 41 To obtain reimbursement of expenses, members must complete an expenses claim form available from the Governance team. Relevant original receipts should be stapled to the form. It may not be possible to reimburse claims without receipts.
- 42 Individuals must claim their expenses separately.
- 43 It is our intention to settle claims within 15 days from the date all necessary receipts are made available to the NMC.
- 44 All claims should be sent within three months of travel to the Governance team.
- 45 If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Governance team.