Finance and Accounting Manual

Travel Procedures

Approved by the Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Vice-Chancellor on 1 September 2008
Date of effect: 1 October 2008
Updated for Delegations amendment: 25 June 2010
Updated: 25 September 2012

OVERVIEW

1. Purpose

This procedure is a supplement to the University's Travel Policy and provides details on procedures for travel on University business.

The University of Sydney travel policy and procedures are designed to provide the maximum convenience, flexibility and safety for University travellers, to help ensure the financial integrity of all travel payments and maintenance of accurate records, and to ensure the consistent and fair treatment of all University travellers and staff who are directly or indirectly involved in the travel process, regardless of the source of funds.

Travellers and authorising officers are expected to exercise prudent business judgement at all times when booking, authorising and undertaking University travel.

When travelling on University business, the purchase of travel services should be made on the following basis:

- traveller safety
- value for money
- use of one of the University's Travel Preferred Suppliers, and
- traveller convenience, eg, flight times, stopovers, length of flight.

2. Coverage

The Travel Procedures apply to everyone who travels domestically or internationally on behalf of the University of Sydney, on pre-approved University business, regardless of the source of funds or the duration of the travel, with the exception of travel relating to Special Studies Program, Visiting Scholars, Interviews, Relocation of new appointees or student travel.

Refer to the Travel Website for all University travel related information (requires UniKey login) and the Travel Expense Management System User Guide for the Expense Management System input and approval procedures.

KEY ASPECTS OF UNIVERSITY TRAVEL

3. Duty of care

The University's primary responsibility for all travellers undertaking travel on University business is to protect their safety and well-being. Therefore, procedures and resources have been established to ensure that every precaution is taken to ensure a safe and healthy return for all University of Sydney travellers.

The University maintains strict guidelines on travel to restricted areas and all travellers should make themselves familiar with the resources and procedures that have been put in place to minimise risk to their own health and safety.

Travel to restricted areas is governed by the University's Policy on Travel to Restricted Areas or in the absence of such a policy by the travel advisories of Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade ("DFAT") and information provided by the University's travel risk management advice supplier, International SOS and it is the responsibility of all travellers and authorising officers to check this information before booking travel.

4. Traveller Health Precautions

Many destinations, both overseas and local, can pose a risk to a travellers' health. There are World Health Organisation (WHO) requirements for inoculations when travelling into or between certain countries. It is advisable for frequent travellers to keep basic vaccinations up to date at all times. Information is also available from the University's travel risk management advice supplier, International SOS.

5. Travel Preferred Suppliers

The University has arrangements in place with selected Travel Preferred Suppliers for travel related activities, which includes travel management companies, an online booking tool, accommodation and car hire. To maximise the benefits of these arrangements, travellers must utilise these preferred suppliers for all travel bookings. Bookings made through a Travel Preferred Supplier do not require comparative quotes.

SETUP FOR NEW TRAVELLERS

6. Expense Management System

All University travel requests, approvals, reimbursements and acquittals are managed through the Expense Management System (Spendvision.com). Travellers must undertake training in the Travel Module of Spendvision.com before they are set up to enter details in the system.

7. University Corporate Card

The University Corporate Card is the primary payment method for business travel expenses.

Existing cardholders need to apply to use the corporate card for travel purposes, by completing a Corporate Card Profile Amendment form.

Travellers who do not have a University Corporate Card need to apply, by completing a Corporate Card Application and Agreement form.

Some travellers will not require a University Corporate Card, including staff members who travel infrequently. These travellers will need to contact the Travel Helpdesk (phone 9036.9555 or email travel.services@sydney.edu.au) for training and setup in the Expense Management System (Spendvision.com).

8. Traveller Profile

All University travellers expecting to travel at least twice per year on University business should complete and submit a traveller profile form to ensure that pertinent personal details and preferences are adhered to in the reservation process. These details include:

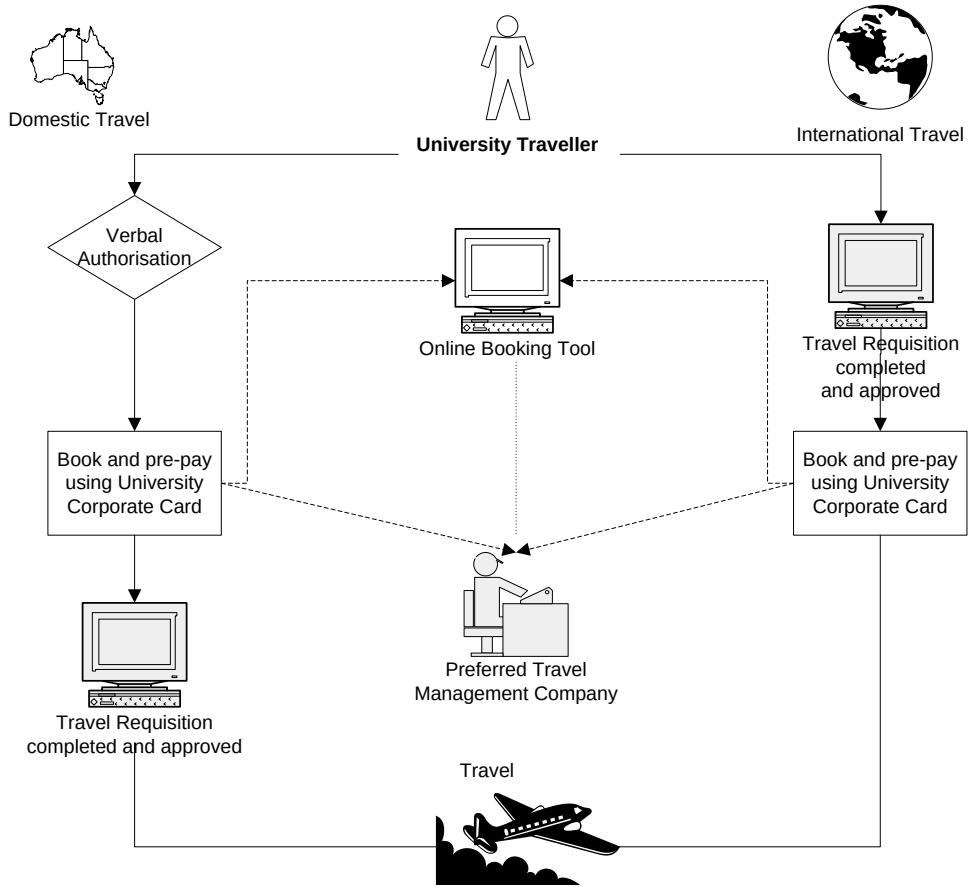
- Name (on travellers passport)
- Business contact details
- Home contact details
- Passport and VISA details
- Airline Membership numbers

- Airline seating and meal preferences
- Accommodation preferences
- Car rental preferences
- Payment details

University Travellers should complete and lodge their Traveller Profile Form with each of the travel management companies used.

TRAVEL BOOKING PROCEDURES

9. Travel Booking Flowchart



10. Travel Itinerary, Budget and Approval

All travel itineraries, budgets and approvals are managed through the Expense Management System (Spendvision.com) to ensure relevant insurance and duty of care controls are maintained. The online Travel Requisition form in the Expense Management System must be completed and approved prior to travel. Amounts shown in the Expense Management System are in Australian currency and include all taxes and charges.

The online Travel Requisition details include:

- Purpose of the business travel and its relationship to University duties
- Budget required for the business travel and the funding source
  Budget details include airfares, accommodation, conferences, meals and other travel.
- Travel itinerary
  The travel itinerary includes the start and end date of the travel, destination, reason, and a day by day itinerary.

- Acknowledgement that the traveller has seen the Travel Website
- Acknowledgement that the traveller has seen the Audit and Risk Management website for travel insurance
- Acknowledgement that the traveller has seen the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade ("DFAT") website and information provided by the University's travel risk management advice supplier, International SOS.
- Completion of a myHRonline leave request for associated personal leave
  Travellers complete the leave request within myHRonline

Generally travel requisitions should include sufficient information for the authorising officer to approve the travel online. Where supporting documentation is available (eg, letters of invite, conference details) the traveller should note this supporting documentation on the travel requisition comments so that the online authorising officer can request to review this documentation if required.

10.1 Travel Requisition Approval

Authorising officers are required to be satisfied that the proposed costs for the travel are reasonable.

The University has subscribed to a Travel Management Benchmarking Resource (Runzheimer) which allows travellers and authorising officers to plan and review travel budget requirements prior to undertaking travel. This resource outlines the estimated expenses by city for accommodation, meals and transportation.

Travellers and authorising officers can also use the ATO reasonable allowances rates to determine estimated costs for travel to domestic and international travel.

11. Domestic Travel

All domestic travel may be booked and ticketed prior to formal approval if the travel costs are within budget and approval in principal (verbal) has been received. It is the traveller's responsibility to ensure that formal (online) approval has been entered and approved within the Expense Management System **prior to departure**.

All domestic travellers must use the online Travel Requisition form in the Expense Management System and book flights through either the University's Travel Online Booking Tool or one of the University's preferred Travel Management Companies, using a University Corporate Card as the preferred payment method. Travellers are to use the Travel Preferred Suppliers to book accommodation and car hire. Travellers should travel on the most direct route using normal economy class air travel.

Steps for Domestic travel

1. Obtain verbal approval to travel from authorising officer
2. Book and pay for flights through Travel Online Booking Tool or Travel Management Companies using the Corporate Card
3. Book and pay for other travel arrangements through Travel Preferred Suppliers if available, using the Corporate Card
4. Complete (and have approved) travel requisition in Expense Management System, including a cash advance if required
5. Complete (and have approved) leave form for any personal leave during the trip
6. Undertake Travel
7. Pay for travel costs using the Corporate Card where possible
8. Acquit Corporate Card transactions in Expense Management System against approved travel budget
9. Acquit Cash Advance (if obtained) in Expense Management System
10. Request reimbursements for out of pocket expenses in Expense Management System

12. International Travel

All international travel must be entered and formally approved (online) within the Expense Management System **prior to booking**.

All international travellers must use the online Travel Requisition form in the Expense Management System and book flights through either the University's Travel Online Booking Tool or one of the University's preferred Travel Management Companies, using a University Corporate Card as the preferred payment method. Travellers should travel on the most direct route using normal economy class air travel.

Steps for International travel

1. Complete (and have approved) travel requisition in Expense Management System, including a cash advance if required
2. Book and pay for flights through Travel Online Booking Tool or Travel Management Companies using the Corporate Card
3. Book and pay for other travel arrangements through Travel Preferred Suppliers if available, using the Corporate Card
4. Complete (and have approved) leave form for any personal leave during the trip
5. Undertake Travel
6. Pay for travel costs using the Corporate Card where possible
7. Acquit Corporate Card transactions in Expense Management System against approved travel budget
8. Acquit Cash Advance (if obtained) in Expense Management System
9. Request reimbursements for out of pocket expenses in Expense Management System

13. Flights

A University Travel Management Company or Travel Online Booking Tool is to be used to book all flights.

Travellers should travel on the most direct route using normal economy class air travel. The Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor will travel business class air travel.

In special circumstances business class air travel is permitted for other travellers following approval by the Dean or Principal Officers. Guidelines for the approval of business class travel can be found at sydney.edu.au/staff/travel (requires Unikey login).

On Jetstar specifically, subject to HOS/HOA approval and the existence of sufficient funds, travellers may use StarClass fares only where the cost of a StarClass fare does not exceed the normal economy class cost on a competing airline offering the same route.

Travellers must specify within the Expense Management Solution's Travel Requisition the class of travel they are seeking approval to use.

13.1 Travel Management Companies

The University's Travel Management Companies are:

- Anywhere Travel
- Campus Travel

The contracted Travel Management Companies provide travel management services including expert business travel advice, bookings, ticketing, management data and reports, account management and other ancillary services.

13.2 Travel Online Booking Tool

The University has contracted with Arnold Travel Technology to provide its own independent Travel Online Booking Tool. The online travel booking tool allows travellers to secure their travel reservations electronically.

14. Other Travel Arrangements (Travel Preferred Suppliers)

14.1 Accommodation

The University has a number of preferred rates at individual properties as detailed at the Travel Website. All travellers should ensure when booking accommodation that the rate charged is the corporate/government rate, and payment is made, wherever possible, using the University Corporate Card.

Travellers should use these properties unless accommodation is not available at the particular location or there are other justified reasons for alternative accommodation.

The University's standard for Australian and overseas accommodation is that rate which, in the opinion of the relevant Head of School is 'reasonable', having regard to the status of the staff member within the University.

Accommodation expenses are not paid in advance as an allowance but must be paid, wherever possible, using a University Corporate Card.

14.2 Car Hire and Insurance

The University is using the car rental agencies approved by the Australian Vice Chancellors Committee, which are:

- Avis
- Europcar
- Thrifty

Travellers are to include the lowest excess options for vehicle insurance cover for damage and theft in all car/vehicle rental agreements.

15. Changes to Travel Arrangements

Where travel is approved and subsequently changed, the traveller must, as soon as practicable, liaise with the University Travel Management Company or the Travel Helpdesk to minimise the financial loss to the University of Sydney. The details of the changes as follows should be included in this information:

- Details of the (proposed) change
- The reason(s) for the amendment
- Details of any additional costs to be incurred because of the changes.

All changes to approved travel including budgets, travel destinations and duration of travel absence must be approved by the original authorising officer.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

16. Cash Advance – Request, Approval and Payment

A cash advance can be obtained for travel, generally to remote locations where a credit card cannot be used, or for those travellers who do not hold a Corporate Card. Travellers must include the request for a cash advance when completing the online Travel Requisition form.

For University staff members, payment of a travel cash advance is provided to them via the payroll. For non-University staff members, payment of a cash advance is made directly to a nominated bank account via the accounts payable finance system.

Note: Travellers should request and have approved the cash advance through the expense management system at least 21 days prior to departure to ensure payments are processed prior to travel.

17. Cash Advance - Acquittal

Acquittal of the cash advance must be made in the Expense Management System no later than 7 working days after the traveller's return to the University.

Acquittal in the Expense Management System is in Australian currency, and conversion of foreign currency transactions into Australian currency will be required prior to entering the acquittal in the Expense Management System. Travellers should use the exchange rate applicable when the foreign currency was purchased. If the exchange rate is unknown, travellers may refer to the overseas exchange rate conversion website (OANDA FX Conversion) for assistance.

If funds remain unspent from a travel cash advance, the traveller must deposit the unspent amount with the University Cashier within 7 working days after the traveller's return to the University, and enter the transaction as a credit against the cash advance acquittal. Alternatively, if the traveller is a Corporate Cardholder the unspent amount can be deposited to the card number at a National Australia Bank branch and the transaction linked to the cash advance in the Expense Management System. Supporting documentation must be retained with the travel acquittal by the traveller.
If the acquittal of the travel cash advance results in money owing to the traveller, then a cash expense claim will be automatically generated in the Expense Management System, with payment processed through payroll for staff members and accounts payable for non-staff travellers.

18. Corporate Card Payments and Acquittal

The University Corporate Card is to be used to pay for business travel expenses where feasible. University Corporate Cards are intended for business costs only and should be used to pay for all business travel and related costs. The University Corporate Card must not be used for private expenses.

Cardholders are accountable for transactions incurred on their Corporate Card and for the safe keeping of their card. It is also the responsibility of the cardholder to follow up unknown transactions. On a daily basis transactions will appear on the online bank statement in the Expense Management System.

Cardholders are required to review the statement and link the travel transactions with the appropriate Travel Requisition.

Acquittal of the corporate card transactions must be made in the Expense Management System no later than 7 working days after the traveller's return to the University.

For occasional travellers who do not hold a University Corporate Card, airfares and accommodation should be charged to another University Corporate Card, preferably one held by their area's Finance or Administrative Manager. In those circumstances, out of pocket expenses should be paid in cash or charged to a personal credit card and a claim for reimbursement made in the Expense Management System within 7 working days after the traveller's return to the University.

19. Cash Claims (Out of Pocket Expenses Acquittal)

Expenses that cannot be paid through University Corporate Card, should be paid in cash and claimed using the Cash Claims module in Spendvision.com, Expense Management System within 7 working days after the traveller's return to the University. This expense claim in the Expense Management System will automatically generate a reimbursement to the traveller in the Expense Management System with payment processed through payroll for staff members and accounts payable for non-staff travellers.

For more information on Cash Claims, please refer to Section 10.6 of the Travel Policy

20. Travel Documentation

University travellers are responsible for ensuring that they maintain all documentation with regards to the travel request, travel approval and all supporting documentation for travel expenses. This documentation must be kept securely for 6 years in line with ATO requirements.

21. Reimbursement of Private Motor Vehicle Travel Expenses

Travellers should use public transport or University vehicles before using private vehicles for University business travel. The use of a private vehicle must be specifically included in the Travel Requisition and approved prior to the travel and the expense claim included in the Expense Management System.

22. GST (Goods and Services Tax)

Travellers must obtain tax invoices for all transactions that are inclusive of Australian GST. Where a tax invoice is not obtained, the University is unable to claim credits for GST paid. **A corporate card transaction docket is not a valid tax invoice.**

The only exception is for amounts less than $82.50 (GST inclusive), which do not require a tax invoice. In these instances a receipt must still be obtained and included as supporting documentation to the travel acquittal.

For further information on tax invoices and GST refer to the Tax – GST Guide.

23. Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT)

Travel costs associated with an overnight stay away from the traveller's normal residence are not subject to FBT as the travel diary requirements of the Australian Taxation Office are complied with in the Expense Management System.

A FBT liability will arise when a spouse, partner or dependant accompanies an employee on work-related travel and expenses incurred by the spouse are met by the University.

Refer to the Tax – FBT Guide for additional information.

24. Travel Authorisations

As outlined in the University Travel Policy at Clause 5.3, all University travel must be authorised by Head of School or Head of Administrative Unit or above, within the Expense Management System.

The Authorising Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the travel is relevant to University business, there are sufficient funds within approved budgets for the travel and that impact on business unit operations is minimal, regardless of the source of funds.

OTHER INFORMATION

25. Excess Baggage Requirements

Travellers carrying University equipment likely to exceed the standard baggage allowance should contact the Travel Helpdesk to arrange for costs to be waived wherever possible.

26. Personal Expenses

Travellers should ensure that personal or private expenses are not paid using the University Corporate Card. Where combined personal and business costs cannot be paid separately, they should be paid personally and the business component claimed as an out of pocket expense.

Also refer to Non-Allowable Expense Procedures.

27. Leave Forms

For all approved University travel the approved online requisition within the Spendvision is the only approval required for the business component of the trip. For any personal leave appended to approved University business travel the traveller must have approval from the appropriate personal and complete a leave request within myHRonline.

28. Fieldwork

Items of equipment purchased for fieldwork activities should be recorded on the areas equipment register (eg, cameras, tents) together with the storage location and custodian of the items. Approval is required from the Head of School to store the equipment away from the University.

Salary payments for fieldwork in Australia and to Australian residents for work undertaken outside Australia must be paid through the University payroll as there are Australian taxation implications.

29. Tipping

Tipping in Australia and overseas up to 10% of the cost is an allowable expense, however, tipping above 10% is a personal expense.

30. Conferences

For University approved business conference attendance, the University traveller may use accommodation suggested by the conference organisers or book and pay for alternate accommodation. All payments for accommodation, wherever possible, including conferences should be made using the University Corporate Card.

RELATED INFORMATION

31. Responsibilities/Accountabilities

31.1 Traveller Responsibilities/Accountabilities

It is the responsibility of travellers who are to travel on University business to ensure that:

- policies and procedures for travel are followed and correct approval is given prior to the travel being undertaken;
- adequate planning is made to minimise costs;
- the most cost effective 'best fare' is purchased at all times;
- prompt acquittal is made of expenses for the travel;
- they obtain and submit relevant receipts and documentation for all travel expenditure;
- no unnecessary or excessive expenditure is incurred on behalf of the University; and
- no private expenditure is charged to the University.

31.2 Authorising Officer Responsibilities/Accountabilities

When approving travel costs, the authorising officer must ensure that:

- there are sufficient funds in the nominated accounts;
- the travel is for official University business;
- the cost to the University is minimised;
- duration and timing of the travel is convenient and complies with maximum periods allowed;
- the travel is booked through the Travel Preferred Suppliers (ie, Travel Online Booking Tool or Travel Management Companies for flights, accommodation and car hire) so that maximum value is obtained by the University; and
- all relevant costs associated with the travel request are fully captured

32. Resources and Weblinks

References

- Corporate Card Application and Agreement form
  sydney.edu.au/finance/docs/corpcard_applic_agreement.pdf
- Corporate Card Profile Amendment form
  sydney.edu.au/finance/docs/corpcard_profile_amend.pdf
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
  www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/
- Expense Management System (Spendvision)
  www.spendvision.com/
- myHRonline
  myhr.sydney.edu.au/cgi-bin/hrlogin.cgi
- OANDA FX Conversion
  www.oanda.com/convert/classic
- Audit and Risk Management
  sydney.edu.au/audit_risk/
- Special Studies Program Policy
  sydney.edu.au/policies/showdoc.aspx?recnum=PDOC2011/130&RendNum=0
- Tax – FBT Guide
  sydney.edu.au/policies/showdoc.aspx?recnum=PDOC2011/28&RendNum=0
- Tax – GST Guide
  sydney.edu.au/policies/showdoc.aspx?recnum=PDOC2011/30&RendNum=0
- Travel Expense Management System User Guide (Spendvision)
  sydney.edu.au/finance/training_docs/SPC100-user-guide.pdf
- Travel Management Benchmarking Resource (Runzheimer)
  sydney.edu.au/staff/travel//resources/expenses
- Travel Management Companies
  sydney.edu.au/staff/travel/suppliers/travel_agents
- Travel Preferred Suppliers
  sydney.edu.au/staff/travel/suppliers/travel_agents
- Travel Policy
  sydney.edu.au/policies/showdoc.aspx?recnum=PDOC2011/135&RendNum=0
- Travel Website
  sydney.edu.au/staff/travel
- Traveller Profile Form
  fmx01whs.ucc.usyd.edu.au:8080/travel/traveller_profile.jsp
- World Health Organisation
  www.who.int/en/

33. University policies and procedures superseded or replaced by this policy:

- Travel Procedures: 30 June 2008
- Travel Procedures: 1 June 2008
- Fieldwork Administrative Guidelines: 28 May 1999
- Special Duties Overseas/Australia (SDO/A) and Fieldwork Policy: 19 February 1999
- Travel Procedures: 20 May 2003

CONTACTS AND REVIEW

34. Contacts

- **Policy Interpretation and Application**
  Phone: (02) 9036-9555 Fax: (02) 9351-8729
  Email: james.hayes@sydney.edu.au
- **Travel Helpdesk**
  Phone: (02) 9036-9555 Fax: (02) 9351-8729
  Email: travel.services@sydney.edu.au

35. Review

The Chief Financial Officer will approve changes to financial procedures and guidelines and will co-ordinate changes to financial policy, with the Vice-Chancellor delegated to approve University financial and infrastructure policy.

Amendments to forms, schedules and weblinks will be processed by Financial Services.

Amendments to the Finance and Accounting Manual procedures and forms are listed on the Financial Services website under:-

- FAM Amendments
- Amendments to Forms

Please forward suggestions and comments on the Finance and Accounting Manual via the Feedback Form.