



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
A U S T R A L I A

Guideline:

Business Expense

Effective: 27 October 2022

Audience: Staff

Policy Category: Management

Policy Sub-category: Finance and
Procurement

Key words:	Business expense, discretionary spend, travel, entertainment.
Guideline Owner:	Chief Financial Officer
Responsible Officer:	Director, Financial Compliance and Operations
Review Date:	October 2024

Contents

1	PURPOSE	3
2	RELATED DOCUMENTS	3
3	PRINCIPLES.....	3
4	UNIVERSITY EXPECTATIONS.....	4
5	TRAVEL.....	4
6	HOSPITALITY & ENTERTAINMENT.....	5
7	GIFTS, DONATIONS AND RECOGNITION EVENTS.....	5
8	OFFICE AMENITIES	6
9	VEHICLE RELATED EXPENSES	6
10	GENERAL BENEFITS	7
11	MONITORING	7
12	DEFINITIONS.....	8

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1** The University of Notre Dame Australia benefits from public funding and as such its employees are accountable for the prudent and appropriate expenditure of those funds.
- 1.2** The purpose of the Guideline is to assist employees with their assessment of whether a business expense is allowable or not. The assessment should be performed using the guiding principles of this document. These principles will assist employees to remain within the bounds of the University Code of Conduct, specifically the obligation to the University in terms of responsible stewardship of its resources and protection of its reputation in the wider community.
- 1.3** This Guideline:
 - 1.3.1** applies to any person who incurs or initiates expenditure on behalf of the University; and
 - 1.3.2** specifies the principles for determining allowable and non-allowable University business expenses.

2 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 2.1** This Guideline should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
 - 2.1.1** Code of Conduct (Staff)
 - 2.1.2** Policy: Standing Delegations of Authority
 - 2.1.3** Policy: Procurement
 - 2.1.4** Procedure: Procurement
 - 2.1.5** Procedure: Corporate Credit Cards
 - 2.1.6** Policy: Travel
 - 2.1.7** Procedure: Travel
 - 2.1.8** Policy: Gifts and Benefits
 - 2.1.9** Guidelines: Tools of Trade

3 PRINCIPLES

- 3.1** All expenses must be for legitimate University purpose, meaning they are reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances, and publicly defensible. The expenditure must not be, or perceived to be, excessive and must meet the following Principles:
 - 3.1.1** Necessary to perform a valid business purpose fulfilling the Objects of the University;
 - 3.1.2** Reasonable in that the expense is not extreme or excessive, and reflects a prudent decision to incur the expense;
 - 3.1.3** Appropriate in that the expense is suitable and fitting in the context of the valid business purpose; and
 - 3.1.4** Allowable according to the terms of any federal regulation, funding contract or University Policy.
 - 3.1.5** Budgeted in that there is available funding to cover the expense.
- 3.2** Individuals are entitled to reimbursement of expenses they incur on behalf of the University in alignment with the Principles.
- 3.3** An individual cannot approve their own expenses.
- 3.4** An individual cannot approve expenditure (including that of their subordinate or any other individual), if that spend directly benefits the individual in a way unconnected with their employment with the University irrespective of the source of funding or the delegation held.

- 3.5** Managers should lead by example and foster a culture of moderation in the expenditure of University funds. They must give particular scrutiny to expenditure of a personal or non-business nature and exercise good judgement in approving expenditure and the reimbursement of expenses having regard to the [Code of Conduct](#).

4 UNIVERSITY EXPECTATIONS

- 4.1** Employees are expected to exercise prudent judgement and use the principles as described in Clause 3.1 when using University funds.
- 4.2** Employees should use this Guideline in conjunction with the relevant Policy and/or Procedure.
- 4.3** The allowable expenses outlined below are subject to budget availability.
- 4.4** The allowable expenses outlined below must be approved by a person with the appropriate delegation in the reporting line of authority above the purchaser.
- 4.5** All University funds irrespective of the source are deemed to be public monies and should be spent only on University business for the purposes of the University.
- 4.6** All employees with authority under delegation have the responsibility for ensuring their approvals are in accordance with University policies.
- 4.7** External funding can be used for discretionary spend where the funding agreement allows and should be ceased once the agreement is no longer valid. It is the responsibility of the expenditure approver to monitor validity.
- 4.8** Employees who incur expenditure against externally funded grant agreements or similar need to follow this Guideline and must comply with the terms and conditions of the grant. Where there is inconsistency between the terms of the external grant and this Procedure, the terms of the external grant shall prevail.
- 4.9** Business expense items are listed under the following categories:
- 4.9.1** Travel;
 - 4.9.2** Food and Beverages;
 - 4.9.3** Gifts, Donations and Recognition Events;
 - 4.9.4** Office Amenities;
 - 4.9.5** Vehicle Related Expense; and
 - 4.9.6** General Benefits.

5 TRAVEL

- 5.1** The following travel related discretionary spend categories are detailed in the University's Policy: Travel and related procedure.
- 5.1.1** Tipping;
 - 5.1.2** Meals while travelling;
 - 5.1.3** Mini bar use;
 - 5.1.4** Entertaining visitors while travelling;
 - 5.1.5** Flights, car hire and accommodation;
 - 5.1.6** Changes to travel arrangements;
 - 5.1.7** Passport and visa documentation;
 - 5.1.8** Immunisation;
 - 5.1.9** Travel incidentals considered personal in nature;
 - 5.1.10** Newspapers and Magazines; and
 - 5.1.11** Laundry.

6 HOSPITALITY & ENTERTAINMENT

- 6.1** Hospitality means the provision of meals, catering, beverages, refreshments and other forms of entertainment for visitors, guests, clients and/or employees at functions/events/meals which further the Objects of the University and form part of its operations.
- 6.2** All hospitality must be:
 - 6.2.1** reasonable;
 - 6.2.2** cost effective; and
 - 6.2.3** able to withstand scrutiny of the Chief Financial Officer.
- 6.3** All employees incurring and/or authorising hospitality expenditure must be able to demonstrate that the expenditure will benefit the University. Normally, an Executive or Senior Leader would be acting as the host of these events.
- 6.4** Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) is applied to the portion of expenditure that relates to University employees and associates and will increase the cost to the University at the rate set out in the FBT legislation.
- 6.5** Consideration of cost should be given to the nature and purpose of the event, the number of participants and the amount of travel involved by those attending.

7 GIFTS, DONATIONS AND RECOGNITION EVENTS

7.1 Supplier, Volunteer or Donor Gifts

Approval for costs incurred outside of these guidelines (below) will be at the discretion of the relevant Executive.

- 7.1.1** Suppliers that are paid for their supply of goods, services and consultancies to the University should not be given gifts funded by the University.
- 7.1.2** The provision of a gift to a volunteer or donor, or when a service is provided free of charge, i.e. guest speaker, is an acceptable University expense provided it is approved by the relevant Senior Leader or above and the value of the gift is kept to a maximum of \$100 (incl GST).

7.2 Staff Recognition Gifts

Approval for costs incurred outside of these guidelines (below) will be at the discretion of the relevant Executive.

- 7.2.1** Upon leaving the employment of the University, employees with continuous 10 years or greater service may be recognised with a gift with the approval of the relevant Senior Leader. These gifts must be of a value no greater than \$299 (incl. GST). This is separate to gifts funded by work colleagues.
- 7.2.2** The department is responsible for managing this cost within their annual budget.
- 7.2.3** Individuals wishing to express congratulations, support or sympathy in the form of gifts for occasions such as maternity/paternity and the birth of a child, engagements, weddings, funerals, etc. should be paid for by the individuals themselves.
- 7.2.4** Exceptional service recognition and reward for employees in the form of gifts other than for long serving staff detailed at 7.2.1 must be approved by the relevant Executive. Any such reward(s) must be of a value no greater than \$299 (incl. GST) and be an irregular or infrequent occurrence to a particular employee in order for the gift to be considered a minor benefit and therefore not attracting Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT).

8 OFFICE AMENITIES

8.1 Coffee, Tea, Milk and Sugar

The provision of coffee, tea, milk and sugar to all staff on campus should be limited to the purchase of basic products.

8.2 Common Area Appliances

Approval for costs incurred outside of these guidelines (below) will be at the discretion of the relevant Executive.

8.2.1 Basic items such as microwave, kettle, toaster, sandwich press, cutlery and crockery can be provided by the University so long as they are located in a designated common kitchen area and accessible to all employees.

8.2.2 Items such as fridges and dishwashers are a university expense when located in a designated common kitchen area accessible to all employees.

8.2.3 Coffee machines and barbeques are generally not considered an appropriate expense of the University.

8.2.4 No personal appliances should be brought onto University premises unless approved by the relevant Campus Manager.

8.3 Office Area Appliances

Items such as portable air conditioners, fans and heaters are acceptable University expenses when necessity is determined and approved by the relevant Campus Manager. Purchases are funded by the Estates and Facilities budget.

8.4 Information Technology Peripheral Equipment

8.4.1 For the purpose of this Guideline, peripheral equipment are items which do not require connection to University networks such as, but not limited to the following items, i.e. keyboard, mouse, web cameras, tablet accessories, mobile phone accessories, phone chargers, adapters for electrical equipment.

8.4.2 Peripheral equipment has a maximum purchase value of \$200 per item and may be purchased via a University corporate credit card or a purchase order. Prior to purchase, it is best practice to enquire with the Information Technology Office if equipment is available internally.

8.4.3 Peripheral item purchases should be 'one off' for multiple use as required by the employee when undertaking University business and must remain the property of the University at all times, including items purchased and used while working from home.

8.4.4 Software is not considered to be peripheral equipment and should be purchased through the Information Technology Office. Please contact the IT Office for further information.

8.4.5 All other information technology equipment purchases are covered by the Procurement Policy.

9 VEHICLE RELATED EXPENSES

9.1 Parking and Speeding Fines

Parking and speeding fines are the responsibility of the individual whether incurred on or off University campuses. Under no circumstances will the University pay any portion of any costs associated to these types of fines for the drivers of University owned/leased or personal vehicles.

9.2 Fuel for Personal and University Vehicles

- 9.2.1** University owned/leased vehicles should all have an assigned fuel card. In situations where the fuel card is not accepted, fuel should be purchased using a University corporate card or claimed by the purchaser through the employee reimbursement process.
- 9.2.2** Employees utilising private vehicles for University business must complete the relevant staff claim form via the People and Culture Shared drive. No other method of expense claim will be accepted.
- 9.2.3** Students required to use their private vehicle to travel for fieldwork or University business must seek reimbursement through the student reimbursement process. Fuel receipts are required in conjunction with a record of the number of kilometres travelled.

9.3 Tolls

Normally, toll charges are the responsibility of the individual. An employee must be able to demonstrate that a toll was charged while on University Business in order to be reimbursed for these charges.

10 GENERAL BENEFITS

Approval for costs incurred outside of these guidelines (below) will be at the discretion of the relevant Executive.

10.1 Personal Items (clothing, toiletries and the like)

Incidental items, such as clothing, toiletries, etc. that are considered personal in nature are not a permitted University expense.

10.2 Subscriptions and Books

10.2.1 Subscriptions and books purchased must have a direct relationship to the individual's area of study/teaching/work for the University. All purchases remain the property of the University at all times.

10.2.2 Individuals are asked to be mindful of the University Library as a source of various publications so as not to increase costs to the University for those already subscribed to by this central resource.

10.3 Home Internet

Home Internet connection and usage costs are not considered an expense of the University unless there is a contractual arrangement that specifically permits an employee to receive this benefit. This could take the form of a contract between the employee and the University (i.e. employment contract) or external funding which can be used where the funding agreement allows.

10.4 Mobile Phones

Mobile phones provided by the University are purchased and managed through the Information Technology office. Costs incurred for business use of personal mobile phones is not considered an expense of the University unless approved by the relevant Executive.

11 MONITORING

- 11.1** The People and Culture Office, Finance Office and Risk Management will conduct random and planned monitoring of the Guideline requirements within the University.

12 DEFINITIONS

12.1 For the purpose of this Guideline, the following definitions apply:

12.1.1 *Executive* means any Staff Member who is a member of the Senior Management Group, as determined by the Vice Chancellor.

12.1.2 *Senior Leader* means those positions responsible for leading one or more large function/school/area at the University and include the positions of CFO; CPFO; Executive Dean; CIO; Academic Registrar; Director; VET CEO; University Librarian.

Version	Date of approval	Approved by	Amendment
1	27 October 2022	Chief Financial Officer	New Guideline