



**An Rannóg Seirbhísí Airgeadais
Financial Services Division**

Travel Policy

Version 5.0

(For internal use only)



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Travel Policy

1. Context

Travelling on behalf of Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, hereafter referred to as Trinity, may be required in particular circumstances. However, in line with best practice, Trinity requests that the carbon footprint and health implications of all travel choices be considered in advance of any travel as follows:

- Consider whether it is necessary to travel at all, prioritise active travel for short journeys or public transport for longer ones, and make efforts to car-pool. Single occupancy car travel should be a last resort.
- If travelling to Europe, try to build in time for slow travel i.e. sail and rail on at least one leg of the journey.
- If travelling internationally, try to make fewer trips and combine activities on a single trip where possible and use public transport or active travel options when you are there.

If travel is required, then Trinity seeks to manage the manner of travel and expenses incurred in an open and transparent manner, via the provisions of this Policy, to ensure value for money and reduce adverse environmental impacts.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Travel Policy is to:

- Ensure consistency and transparency in relation to University expenditure on travel.
- Ensure that travelling on behalf of the University is appropriate and reasonable.
- Ensure travel occurs only when necessary and appropriate and there is no alternative to achieve the same purpose, to minimise the University's carbon footprint.
- In particular for users to consider method of travel in view of related average carbon emission rates.
- Guide and protect the claimant and approver through the provision of detailed procedures and guidelines.

3. Benefits

The benefit of the Policy is to provide claimants and approvers with a clear set of broad principles and guidelines which should be followed and used to ensure that all travel costs incurred are broadly considered, appropriate and reasonable in a public funding environment/context.

4. Scope

The Travel Policy and procedures apply to all individuals, including employees, students, and visitors who:

- Travel on behalf of Trinity, in Ireland or abroad,
- and who seek reimbursement* from the University for such travel



*The policy applies to the reimbursement of travel-related expenditure to anyone who undertakes travel for Trinity business regardless of the funding source (core, self-financing, research, etc).

In the instance whereby funder policies regarding travel costs do not align to this Policy, the provisions under this Travel Policy will prevail.

5. Principles

Travel expenditure is underpinned by the following principles. It must be:

- Wholly necessary and exclusively for the business of Trinity
- Of benefit to the University
- Properly documented
- Carefully spent on the best options available, balancing minimal carbon footprint with time constrictions and available transport methods
- Managed in a consistent and cost-effective manner
- Specific enough that a third-party reviewer can understand the business purpose for which the expenditure occurs.

6. Policy

6.1 Sustainability and Types of Travel

Staff should aim to avoid travel whenever possible, seeking other ways of being present at meetings, events or conferences, including the use of technology as an alternative. Doing so will reduce the costs, carbon footprint and time implications associated with travel and aligns to Trinity's Sustainability Policy available [here](#).

To note, flights taken by staff and students are one of the most significant carbon emission sources for the University. For a visual comparison of emissions by mode of transport, see [Appendix 1](#).

6.1.1 Travel by Air

Where air travel is the only option available, it is Trinity policy to book the lowest fare available at all times, including low-cost carriers.

All staff should travel standard class on flights. To ensure maximum value for money, expenditure on travel air fares should be booked as far in advance as possible to obtain the best fare.

Please note that the University has a procured travel agent, see the Travel & Accommodation section of the [Preferred Suppliers List](#).

Air travel may only be booked with the procured travel agent or directly with an airline but cannot be booked with an alternative travel agent or web booking service.

The following rules apply for all air travel:

- Economy Classes must be used on all flights of less than eight hours duration.



Staff travelling Economy Class on long haul trips (greater than eight hours) will be given time to recover before being expected to report for work. If staff are travelling from Ireland to the Far East, one day's recovery is recommended.

- The use of non-Economy Classes and Business Class travel should only be availed of when air travel is of more than eight hours or in exceptional circumstances, and if a reasonable fare can be sourced.

Business class travel carries a heavier carbon footprint and therefore should be avoided where possible. All Business Class flights, and non-economy classes must be expressly authorised in advance by the Head of School (Academic Areas) or Head of Area (Support Functions). A copy of such approval should always be attached in Oracle. No retrospective approval will be given.

6.1.2 Travel by Rail/Ferry

All Staff should travel standard/economy class on trains/ferry. Fares should be booked in advance for best value. First class rail travel may be availed of for specific business reasons. However, all first-class rail travel must be expressly authorised in advance by the Head of School (Academic Areas) or Head of Area (Support Functions). A copy of such approval should always be attached in Oracle. No retrospective approval will be given.

6.1.3 Travel by Car

Travel by car is the most environmentally damaging mode of transport after flying. However, where public transport is unsuitable and the budget holder or Head of School/Admin/Support function authorises the use of a private car by an employee on Trinity business, a mileage allowance, at the University's current rate, may be claimed. The mileage rates can be found in the Travel & Subsistence Booklet available on the [FSD Financial Policies & Procedures webpage](#).

6.1.4 Travel by Car – Private Car

It is the responsibility of each staff member who anticipates the need to use a personal car on University business to ensure that the private motor insurance cover in place is adequate to cover business use driving as distinct from ordinary personal private use only. The authority for the use of a privately owned motor vehicle by a person on University business is subject, inter alia, to the individual confirming that:

- the use of a private motor vehicle on official business is subject to any relevant regulations
- the insurance cover for the motor vehicle will be maintained by the individual in compliance with the Road Traffic Acts.
- that they have adequate business insurance in place, which indemnifies Trinity against all claims arising, while using private transport, on University business.
- the individual is aware that Trinity will not be liable for any loss or damage of any description resulting from the use of the vehicle on official business, whether the risk is or is not covered by the individual's policy of insurance.



For queries related to any of the information above, or any aspect of insurances while travelling on behalf of Trinity, please contact the insurance section in Estates & Facilities by emailing insurance@tcd.ie.

6.1.5 Travel by Car - Hire Car

The cost of car hire from a standard economy/compact range plus petrol will be reimbursed upon presentation of all receipts.

6.1.6 Travel by Bicycle

Depending on the location being visited, cycling can be one of the quickest, healthiest and most convenient ways to travel. Safety aspects of the location should be considered before committing to hiring or using a local bike service. If an employee uses a personal bike (safely) to get around, mileage rates are reimbursed as per the Travel & Subsistence Booklet available on the [FSD Financial Policies & Procedures webpage](#).

6.1.7 Public Transport, Taxis, Airport Parking

Public transport should be used where feasible having due regard to the efficient use of time. Most major cities have modern and efficient public transport options, offering the low carbon option to travel.

- If public transport is not available or public transport is unsuitable, taxi fares will be reimbursed on presentation of receipts.
- Staff considering the use of public transport or taxis should be mindful of personal safety at all times.
- Taxis to and from functions should be taken only as a last resort, and are reimbursable only if attending for University business in an official capacity as per the Hospitality & Entertainment policy available on the University's Finance Policies webpage [here](#).
- Parking at airports should only be used if booked in advance to take advantage of special rates available and if more economically and environmentally advantageous than using public transport or taxis, if public transport is unsuitable. It is recommended to use the cheapest option available including long-term parking if possible.

6.2 Travel Insurance

Full details of the University travel insurance cover provided for staff and registered postgraduate students on official travel are available [here](#).

Any further details or claim forms, in the event of a claim, are available from the Insurance section in Estates and Facilities, by emailing: insurance@tcd.ie. Trinity travel insurance covers staff and postgraduate students while they are on official TCD activities and for the full duration of those activities. Should an individual decide, for example, to extend a conference trip to a personal holiday, then Trinity's travel insurance covers only that period relevant to the conference.



6.2.1 Authorisation required for safety and travel insurance purposes

The approvals process is based on the Department of Foreign Affairs Travel Advisory System. Permission from your Head of School / Unit must be obtained for all travel. Travel must also be risk assessed. For further information please see [University Safety Office](#).

For low-risk travel in the UK, Switzerland, the EU and the EEA, no safety authorisation is required and travel insurance can be assumed once the online form, please see [Travel Insurance](#), has been completed. The staff member is not covered by the Trinity travel insurance scheme unless this form is completed prior to the journey and personal travel insurance will not be reimbursed.

A country or region which is subject to a Department of Foreign Affairs' status of 'Avoid Non Essential Travel' or 'Do not travel' must be referred to insurance@tcd.ie in advance of the proposed dates of travel. It may not be possible to obtain travel insurance for travel to certain regions.

All Travel Insurance requests should be applied for through the website [Travel Insurance](#) at least two weeks in advance of proposed travel, or ideally at the time of booking.

For queries related to any of the information above, or any aspect of insurances while travelling on behalf of the University, please contact the insurance section in Estates & Facilities by emailing insurance@tcd.ie.

6.3 Accommodation & Subsistence

When booking hotels and using restaurants, the University representative should act in a prudent and reasonable manner and weigh up the closest location to the event to reduce local travel requirements and ensure best value for money at all times.

All expenses incurred in relation to accommodation and subsistence will be reimbursed at the per diem subsistence rate or on the basis of actual vouched receipts (up to the maximum allowed under the rates approved by the Civil Service as set out in the Travel & Subsistence Booklet available on the [FSD Financial Policies & Procedures webpage](#)).

If claiming per diem, travel documentation (for example flight tickets) must be included to allow for validation of the travel dates used in the per diem subsistence calculation.

Visitors to the University should use one of the University's preferred hotels or onsite accommodation if available, opting for a balance of cost and accessibility, see [Preferred Suppliers List](#), refer to section Travel & Accommodation.

7. Travel Expense Reimbursement -Claims

7.1 Submission of Travel Expense claims

Staff reimbursement expense claims: Submission and processing of valid expenses is completed via iExpenses system in Oracle. The FSD team provide regular demonstrations and training on the Oracle Financial Information System (FIS) and if you would like to request specific FIS training



in relation to iExpenses, please complete the general FIS training booking form on the FIS Workshops webpage on the [FSD website](#).

Non-staff expense claims: Submission and processing of valid expenses is completed via Non-Standard Payment Requisition form in Flowforma. Access to (and related guidelines) for the online form is available in the Accounts Payable Forms section on the [FSD website](#).

7.2 Time Limit of Expense Claims

All expense reimbursements for travel costs should be submitted in a timely manner and within 12 months from the date of the travel being undertaken.

If travel expenses are submitted to FSD for processing more than 12 months after the travel takes place, the circumstances that led to the delay in submission of the reimbursement should be documented and specific Head of School/Division approval attached.

7.3 Responsibility and Implementation

The Faculty Deans/Chief Officers have overall financial responsibility for their Faculties/Areas and each School/Department under their remit. A Faculty Dean/Chief Officer may, at their discretion, devolve all or part of their financial responsibility to the Heads of School/Area/Directors of TRI or other Office Holder(s). Where the Faculty Dean devolves financial responsibility in part or in full within a unit, control needs to be maintained by that person who is accountable to the Faculty Dean. Final accountability and responsibility shall remain with the Faculty Dean/Chief Officer.

7.4 Responsibility of Claimant

- All overseas travel (except if claimed from a Research Account) must be pre-approved, in writing, in advance by the approver/budget holder of the account to which the travel costs will be charged.
- It is the responsibility of every Trinity representative to act in a prudent and reasonable manner when travelling on behalf of the University and to ensure the travel undertaken aligns with the principles set out under Section 5 above.
- All reimbursement claimants are required to comply with the Travel Policy.
- Remote attendance at conferences offers cost, carbon and time saving benefits and should be investigated at all times and referenced in the pre-approval process.
- Claimants cannot approve their own reimbursement reports, they must be submitted to the claimant's designated approver for consideration.

7.5 Responsibility of Approver

- The approver must ensure that the travel is appropriate and complies with this Travel Policy.
- By authorising a reimbursement claim, the approver takes full responsibility and accountability for the expenditure.
- The reimbursement claim submitted should be fully scrutinised by the approver to ensure that the expenditure and backup submitted is reasonable, provides value for money, can be justified in terms of carbon footprint and that the claim is of a standard whereby it could be audited by an internal or external auditor.



7.6 Additional Guidelines for Approvers

The key issues to consider when approving an expense claim under the Travel Policy are as follows:

- Is there an alternative to travel, e.g. use of remote means such as Zoom/ MS Teams/etc.?
- Is the travel wholly, necessarily and exclusively for the business of Trinity?
- Is the travel reasonable and does it provide value for money?

To assist approvers, a quick guide for travel expenses is also available on the [FSD Financial Policies & Procedures webpage](#)

7.7 Audit Checks of Approved Expense Reimbursement Claims

Expense reimbursement claims that are approved and submitted for payment to FSD are randomly selected to audit for compliance with University policies, including the Travel Policy. Where there are found to be repeated instances of non-compliance with the Travel Policy, details will be circulated to School/Division Management to increase awareness of non-compliant approvals and to highlight repeated non-compliance.

8. Revenue's Enhanced Reporting Requirements: Travel & Subsistence

From 1 January 2024, all employers are obligated to comply with Revenue's Enhanced Reporting Requirements (ERR) which includes reporting details of certain non-salary payments made to employees, on or before the date of payment. Payments made to employees for reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs are included under these ERR provisions.

Further information is available on the [FSD Financial Policies & Procedures webpage](#) within the Other Policies & Procedures section.

As a result of ERR, details of these non-salary payments made to employees, including reimbursement of the work-related travel and subsistence expenses, will now form part of an individual's income tax record.

An employee may view any information reported by their employer on their "MyAccount" section of the Revenue website. Please follow the instructions at Revenue's My Account Registration webpage to create your own account.

9. Data Security/ Privacy while Travelling

When travelling on behalf of Trinity, all individuals should be vigilant in safeguarding University devices and data, and should be aware of cybersecurity risks, especially related to use of public Wi-Fi.

Further information is available within the IT and Cyber Security Policy which can be found on the [University Policies website](#).



10. Further Guidelines for Claimants and Approvers

10.1 Conference Travel Scheme

All travel from the Conference Travel Scheme must be pre-approved by the Head of School/Area in accordance with existing regulations under the Research, Training and Conference Travel Scheme available on the [University Policies website](#).

10.2 Field Trips

Field trips should be planned well in advance taking into account associated carbon footprint as well as local customs/arrangements and payments should be made in line with University procedures.

10.3 Back up documentation

All reimbursement claims submitted to FSD for processing should include documentation to support the business reason for travel:

- Appropriate documentation related to attendance at a conference includes event tickets, booking documentation, or an invitation to attend.
- For other travel, an invitation from a collaborator and the meeting agenda should be included.

If claiming per diem, travel documentation (for example flight tickets) must be included to allow for validation of the travel dates used in the per diem subsistence calculation.

10.4 Expenses in relation to visits to other Public Sector bodies/Universities

As a general rule, expenses in relation to a visit to another Public Sector body or University should be claimed from the body or organisation that requires the work (please refer to The Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPENDPR) [Circular 2015/15](#)).

Therefore, if as part of an employee's normal work, they visit other Universities or Public Sector bodies, the employee should claim the related expenses from their employing University.

If however, another University or Public Sector body has asked an employee to participate on a review board for example, or undertake any other work, then any related expenses should be claimed from that other University or public body. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that expenses are only claimed once from the relevant University/Public Sector body.

10.5 Family Members Accompanying Staff Abroad

Spouses/partners or family members of staff, accompanying a member of staff abroad, must pay their own travel expenses.

10.6 Personal Assistants

Personal Assistants can be included in this Travel Policy provided they are travelling as part of an employee's reasonable accommodation in College. For further details please see Information for



Teaching & Professional Staff at [Trinity disAbility Service](#) webpage. See section Information for Teaching & Professional Staff.

10.7 Extending Visits for Personal Purposes

When staff extend the period of their stay abroad for personal reasons, it must be approved in advance by the Head of School/Admin/Support function, documented and demonstrated that all additional costs are borne personally by the individual. The individual must be able to clearly demonstrate that legitimate University business is the primary purpose of the main visit. Leave records should record any extended personal absences.

11. Related Documents

- Travel & Subsistence Booklet available on the FSD's [Financial Policies](#) webpage.
- Quick Guide for Travel and Hospitality & Entertainment Expenses available FSD's [Financial Policies](#) webpage
- Hospitality & Entertainment Policy Jan 2023 Expenses available on FSD's [Financial Policies](#) webpage
- Research, Training and Conference Travel Scheme available on the [University Policies webpage](#) .
- Revenue's [Enhanced Reporting Requirements \(ERR\)](#) website and documentation.

12. Document/version Control for New Policies

Approved by: Board

Date policy approved: 26 March 2025

Date of next review: 2028/2029

Officer responsible for review: Chief Financial Officer

Document Control for Revised Policies

22.1 Date of initial approval: 4th May 2011

22.2 Date revised policy approved: 26 March 2025

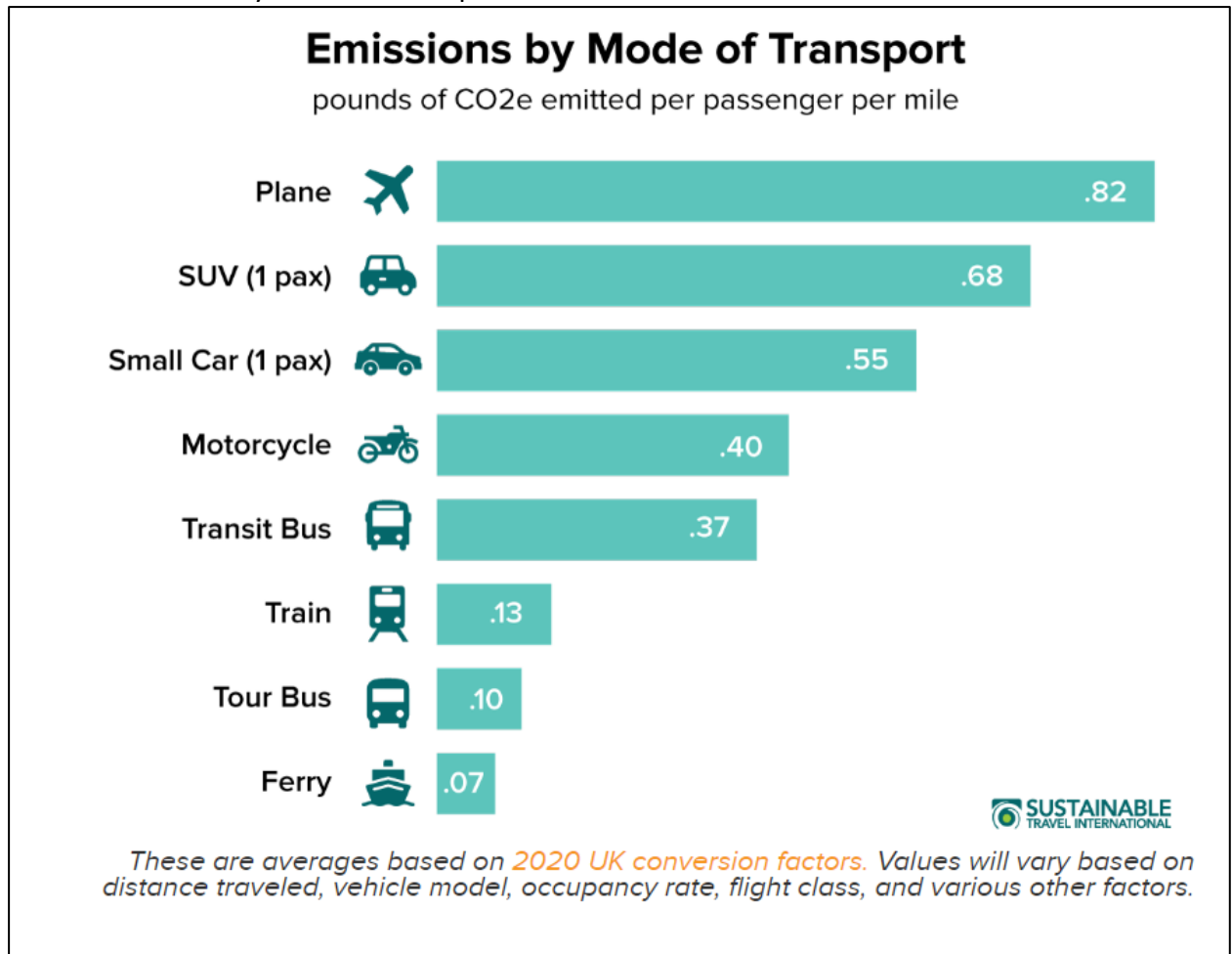
22.3 Date policy effective from: 26 March 2025

22.4 Date of next review: Academic Year 2028/2029



Appendix I

Carbon Emissions by Mode of Transport



Sourced from BBC's [Climate change: Should you fly, drive or take the train?](#)