

Quick Reference - Policy 31 University Expenses and Guidelines

This document is prepared by the department. It is superseded by Policy 31 and Guidelines below.

- [Policy 31 – University Expenses](#)
- [Guidelines for Expenses](#)

Timelines

Claims should be submitted within 30 days of receipt date, travel end date, or research study end date; or before the University's fiscal year end (April 30), whichever comes first.

Claims not submitted within one year from receipt date, travel end date, or research study end date are not eligible for reimbursement.

FPER claims not submitted before Finance's deadline, will not be eligible for reimbursement. The internal deadline to request your claim be reviewed by Carla or Shaleen is mid-March.

Research Purpose Statement

*Students should obtain this from their supervisor

A Purpose Statement is required in the Report Header, including a detailed explanation of how expenses claimed are directly connected to the University's objective, as it relates to scholarship, teaching, and research. Please enter this in the comments field of the Report Header.

Conference Schedule

A copy of the Conference/Workshop/Annual Meeting programs (schedules, abstracts, participation lists) must be uploaded under expense type 'Additional Documentation'. We suggest you do this before uploading your receipts to ensure you don't forget. It is intended to show the name of the event, dates, participant's name if presenting, and meals provided by the conference, which are excluded from the per diem.

Comments

Comments are extremely helpful to the reviewers and auditors. If the reason for the expense is not fully clear, please provide a comment in the comment box of that expense.

Receipts

[What is an original receipt?](#)

Please retain your original receipts until payment is confirmed. Receipts do not need to be submitted to Finance any longer.

Cash is not preferred as a method of payment since there is no paper trail available. Please choose a method that provides a receipt.

Please enter each receipt separately (e.g., taxi, bus, train, uber). Do not combine your expenses.

Cash Advances

Cash advances are recommended by Finance and can be issued for trips exceeding \$250. Payment of a cash advance will not be issued less than 10 business days prior to the travel or expense start date.

The amount is charged to your grant at the time of settlement. If your cash advance exceeds your expenses, add a new expense line in Concur under expense type 'Cash Advance Return' and add the amount owing (shown in Concur).

Finance will email you a Shopify link to make your payment electronically.

Cash Advances may now include an attachment which enables Claimants the ability to attach supporting documentation, such as conference registration information, flight quotes, or Research related information to support their request for a Cash Advance. Please note, this is voluntary, but it is highly encouraged.

Proof of Payment

If the receipt does not show the method of payment (i.e., the last 4-digits of your credit card card), please upload a copy of your credit card statement with any personal information redacted.

Foreign Currency

If an expense is paid in foreign currency, change the currency within that expense to the type of currency you paid, and it will convert to the Canadian dollar amount automatically. This CDN amount can then be adjusted if you have a supporting credit card statement to show the revised amount.

The currency shown on the receipt is how it is entered in Concur (e.g., if you paid USD in a country where IDR is recorded on the receipt, the entry should be from IDR to CDN to be reimbursed).

Airfare:

Lowest logical fare includes:

- Base Level Economy (coach/standard/flex or equivalent)
- Advanced Seat Selection
- Trip cancellation insurance (if part of a bundled insurance package including cancellation, baggage and trip interruption insurance, the bundled package is eligible)
- Refundable/changeable ticket status
- One checked bag

Pre-Approval (in advance) is required:

Pre-approval requests are sent to the Chair in advance of booking. Request will be sent for the Dean's endorsement and then forwarded for review and approval by the VP Academic & Provost. Confirmation of pre-approval should accompany your claim as 'additional documentation'. Approval cannot be granted afterward.

- If choosing Premium or other augmented levels of Economy and greater
- For inter-continental flights with trip segments greater than 6 hours, not including layovers.
- To support a reasonable medical accommodation with supporting documentation (i.e., doctor's note)

- As of Spring 2025 Finance recommends booking Air Canada Economy Flex airfare along with cancellation insurance (provided by HTS and not Allianz), as refundability is a reasonable requirement for airfare. Please keep in mind that as airlines change their definitions, our requirements remain “Lowest Logical Fare.”
- Any augmented level of economy (except coach/standard/flex or equivalent) would need provost approval, or a supporting cost comparison or justification/explanation attached to it, that demonstrates it was the lowest logical fare/rate available at the time of booking.
- International travel for students must be pre-approved by submitting [conference travel pre-approval form](#). Requests for international travel submitted through this form are then sent to the Chair for approval.
- International travel claims for faculty should include the memo from the Dean to meet the pre-approval requirement, added as ‘additional documentation’ in Concur up until April 30, 2026, along with the intention of registration with [Safety Abroad](#) (refer to the News Item email sent out on 06/17/2025).
- The business portion may include arrival, no more than two days before an event held outside of North America (to accommodate long overnight flights), or one day before an event held within North America, and departure can be no later than one day after the event.
- Cost comparisons are required in advance of booking for flights, including personal days. Comparison costs are uploaded to Concur.
- Only the business portion will be reimbursed.
- Use the itemization tab to separate receipt items into categories (e.g., accommodation with parking)
- Access fees to airport lounges are ineligible.
- Boarding passes are not required to be uploaded to Concur.

Accommodation

- A standard, single occupancy room is considered the standard “lowest logical rate” for hotel bookings.
- Airbnb and Vrbo and other vacation rental platforms are not encouraged due to safety, legal, and insurance reasons.
- Private and non-commercial accommodation (e.g., staying with family or friends) up to a maximum of \$50 CDN/day for short-term visits (less than 1 week). The host’s full name, address and beginning and end dates should be included. UW will not reimburse an individual within the UW community who elects to host a visitor to UW.

Ground Transportation

- Mileage is reimbursed at \$0.59 cents per kilometer, up to 500 kilometers (one-way). Use the mileage calculator tool within Concur to enter the start and end locations.
- Trips more than 500 kilometers (one way) require a quote showing the cost of an alternative method of transportation (train, plane, bus) together with explanation of why driving was preferred. The most economical means of transportation between the options is reimbursable.
- 407 ETR tolls are an eligible business expense. If using the 407 on your trip, please wait to receive your bill so it can be included, together with proof of payment, for a complete claim.
- Personal automobiles now include leased vehicles.

- Automobiles must be owned and operated by the Claimant or immediate family member (individuals in the same household). An individual cannot claim the kilometer rate for a borrowed automobile.
- Third-party liability insurance is required with a minimum coverage if using your personal vehicle for business purposes.

Business Meals

- Itemized receipts are required for every meal. If your receipt is not itemized, please provide details in the comment box of that expense to indicate what food was provided to you.
- Tips are eligible up to the customary rate (up to 25% is reasonable).
- Alcohol and cannabis are ineligible for individuals working or traveling on university business.

Per Diems

- Per Diems are strongly encouraged for administrative ease as receipts are not required.
- Remove all provided meals when determining your per diem total.
- Meal costs may be claimed when travelling outside of North America, using the expense type 'Meal With Attendee'. These scenarios are considered hospitality meals with externals. Please include original itemized receipts.

Canadian dollar amounts - Within CANADA

| Meal | Fraction | Amount |
|-----------|----------|--------|
| Breakfast | 0.25 | 20.00 |
| Lunch | 0.25 | 20.00 |
| Dinner | 0.50 | 40.00 |

Canadian dollar amounts - Outside CANADA

| Meal | Fraction | Amount |
|-----------|----------|--------|
| Breakfast | 0.25 | 25.00 |
| Lunch | 0.25 | 25.00 |
| Dinner | 0.50 | 50.00 |

RECEIPTED MEALS – Canadian dollar amounts

| Meal | Fraction | Amount |
|-----------|----------|--------|
| Breakfast | 0.25 | 35.00 |
| Lunch | 0.25 | 35.00 |
| Dinner | 0.50 | 70.00 |

Internal Meals

- Before incurring any costs for internal employees only, please see Lucy or Carlos.

Missing Affidavit link - <https://uwaterloo.ca/statistics-actuarial-science-resources/financial-processes-faculty-and-staff/adding-affidavit-concur> (to be uploaded as 'additional documentation')

- This affidavit should be completed within Concur for any missing receipt. Every attempt should be made to obtain the original or itemized receipt before a missing affidavit is completed.

Other Points of Interest

- Purchases made by or reimbursed by the University will remain the property of the University (i.e., computing equipment, cell phone, iPad, etc.) and should be returned to department administration in the event you leave the department, or the item is surplus.
- The University does not reimburse expenses purchased with frequent flyer points, gift cards, vouchers, loyalty points or digital/cryptocurrency.
- An individual should not incur expenses for wages, honoraria, or services (i.e., translation, editing, etc.) rendered by an individual. The University should pay the individual directly.