

# St George's University of London

## Expenses Policy

### Frequently Asked Questions

- **Why are these changes being made?**

The government (HMRC) has changed its rules on subsistence so St George's has revised its expenses policy to ensure that it complies with the new rules and comes into line with current Higher Education sector best practice.

- **If I am not a St George's, University of London, staff member, does this still apply to me?**

This policy applies to all staff, students and any people on SGUL business. This includes:

- Part time hourly paid teachers
- Demonstrators
- Casual workers e.g. fee claim basis
- Contractors
- Temporary staff paid via an agency

- **What does 'business need' mean in the expenses policy?**

A business need is where an event or activity is necessary for the promotion of St George's business. In respect of entertainment there must be a clear business need for any SGUL employees to attend.

- **The expenses are being funded from a discretionary fund, why can't I purchase what I want?**

The Financial Regulations and the Expenses policy apply to all expenditure and payments regardless of the source of funding.

- **Is there a time limit for submitting my expense claim?**

Expenses should be submitted as soon as possible after they have been incurred and must be submitted within three months. If you are spending from a grant, this is the length of time after the grant finishes before the final claim to the sponsor must be made and the grant is closed. If your claim is more than three months old, you will need to get approval from the Director of Finance in order for it to be paid.

- **I have lost my receipts, can I still claim?**

Receipts should be given as evidence for all items of expenditure regardless of the value of purchase. St George's recognises that on add occasions these may be lost. In exceptional circumstances, such as remote countries, such expenditure will be considered for reimbursement provided it is supported by written justification and approved by the Head of Operations or Director of Professional Services Division. The rates reimbursed in these circumstances will be the HMRC scale rates. The claim may still be rejected if it is not in line with the expenses policy.

- **Will St George's pay for childcare/pet care costs that would enable me to attend an important meeting?**

No, this is not an allowable item within the policy.

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- **I am attending a conference and the organiser is using a hotel that exceeds the policy limits – can I stay there?**

Yes - where possible the booking should be made through the organisers who often offer reduced rates.

## Travel

- **Can I get a taxi to take me to Heathrow for an early morning flight rather than getting a train?**

Providing it can be demonstrated that the taxi is more cost effective and practical than alternative means, and pre approval has been given by the budget holder, then such travel is allowed and will be refunded.

- **My flight was delayed and I missed the connection. Can I claim for the overnight stay?**

Yes – you should follow the guidance issued by the Air Travel Operator. You will need to ensure that you submit an insurance claim after the event.

- **Am I insured when I travel in the UK on St George's business?**

Yes, you are insured in the UK for business travel. You must complete the travel information before you travel which can be found under the Insurance section of the portal

- **Can I use my own car for travelling on St George's business?**

Yes, but you must make sure that you have "business use" included in your policy. Only additional costs incurred above what would normally be spent for commuting to work can be claimed and St George's reimburse at rates within the HMRC limits. Further details can be found in Appendix 1

- **The research grantor/other funder has indicated that they are willing to reimburse mileage at a rate above the St George's mileage rate. How do I claim?**

The St George's rules take precedence over the funders' rules, and you should claim in accordance with the St George's rules.

- **Are expenses taxable?**

No, provided they fall within the guidance issued by HMRC.

- **When submitting an expense claim, what constitutes a valid VAT receipt?**

The following are acceptable as valid VAT receipts:

- An itemised till receipt
- Print of an email for an online/internet purchase but only if it contains VAT breakdown

A credit card statement or a credit card receipt is NOT acceptable as a valid VAT receipt. There are some examples in Appendix 2.

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## Expenses abroad

- **My receipts are in a foreign language, is that an issue?**

Where receipts are in a foreign language, claimants should write a brief description of the expenditure on the back of the receipt to enable the claim to be processed more quickly.

- **I am in a foreign country and my laptop has broken but it is essential for me to do my work. Can I purchase a new one and claim back on expenses?**

All computer equipment and accessories should be normally purchased through Information Services. In exceptional circumstances such as this, then this will be considered allowable and will be reimbursed. On your return, IS will need to be notified of the purchase for asset tagging and future maintenance purposes.

- **Can I claim for non-prescription medicines as an expense while abroad or in the UK?**

No, this is not an allowable item within the policy.

- **Can I claim for personal items such as toiletries and make-up as an expense while abroad or in the UK?**

No, this is not an allowable item within the policy.

- **Can I take my partner/family with me on an overseas trip?**

Yes, you can take your partner/family with you but St George's will only reimburse you the costs of your travel, meals and hotels. It will not reimburse any costs incurred by your partner/family.

- **Can St George's pay the travel/hotel costs for my partner and then I will reimburse St George's?**

No – you should arrange to pay the travel agent directly for your partner's travel/hotels.

- **If I am travelling with my partner and am staying in a double room at no extra charge to St George's. How much should be attributed to and paid by my partner?**

As there is no additional cost for occupying a double room there is no taxable benefit then the amount to be reimbursed by your partner is nil.

- **I am visiting Japan on a conference and would like to extend my stay for a holiday. What can be paid by St George's or claimed through expenses?**

You can claim for the flights to/from Japan. You cannot claim for hotel/food/travel once the conference is completed and you start your holiday.

- **Am I insured when I travel overseas on St George's business?**

Yes, provided that you complete the travel information before you travel which can be found under the Insurance section of the portal.

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## Appendix 1 – Car Mileage

St George's encourages the use of public transport where possible for your journey.

If you are using your own car for St George's business then you must make sure that it is roadworthy and is adequately insured for business use – you are not covered by the St George's insurance.

You cannot claim mileage for commuting from your home to your place of work.

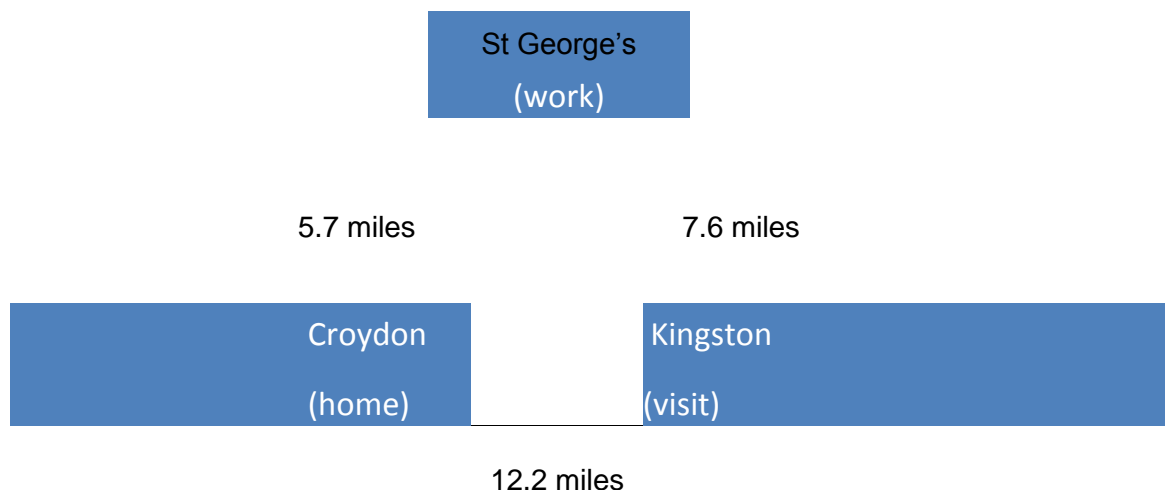
### How far to claim?

The maximum that you can claim is the shorter of

- Home to destination mileage and
- Work to destination mileage.

This is best demonstrated by an example. The person lives in Croydon and normally works at St George's. They are visiting Kingston University for the day.

Distance Croydon to St George's	5.7 miles
Distance St George's to Kingston	7.6 miles
Distance Croydon to Kingston	12.2 miles



The person can claim 7.6 miles because it is the shorter of SGUL to Kingston and Croydon to Kingston.

