UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
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SUBSISTENCE, ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL REGULATIONS		
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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 PURPOSE

This Regulation is designed to control travel, accommodation, and subsistence allowances related to official University business.

The Regulation prescribes and provides requirements for claims in respect of travel, accommodation, and subsistence related expenses from all funds managed by the University. Any further restrictions as outlined by funders supersede this Regulation. Likewise, any prevailing policy by the funder will supersede this Regulation.

A person travelling on official University business is expected to exercise prudence and be economical, transparent, and cost-effective in incurring travel expenses. Excess costs, circuitous routes, delays, or luxury accommodation as well as unnecessary, unjustified services for the convenience or personal preference of the employee in the performance of official University business, are prohibited.

1.2 SCOPE

a) This Regulation applies to all official business travel on behalf of the University by:
   (i) All members of Council and their sub committees,
   (ii) All University staff (whether full time or part time);
   (iii) All prospective employees of the University;
   (iv) Any other individual who is required to travel on official business on behalf of the University.

b) The Regulations are positioned largely, and are to be construed, within the context of the South African Revenue Service (SARS) definitions and rulings on subsistence and travel. They must be read in conjunction with the annual communique on reimbursement of expense claims and payment of allowances.

c) The rates allowed by SARS are the maximum amounts payable (NB – payment above these rates will attract income tax) and, as such, the Budget Holder may, in exceptional cases, and depending on the availability of funding, use his/her discretion and make reasonable adjustments to the expenses claimed, if necessary.

d) It should also be noted that more restrictive rules may apply to expenditure chargeable to research grants depending on the terms and conditions attaching to the particular research grant.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of these Regulations are:

(i) to ensure good corporate governance and cost efficiency;

(ii) to ensure that no person who conducts official business on behalf of UKZN is disadvantaged economically;

(iii) to strengthen internal controls in respect of travel, accommodation, and subsistence; and

(iv) to ensure proper documentation and authorisation of travel, accommodation, and subsistence allowances and or claims for re-imbursement.

1.4 PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE REGULATIONS

The following are major principles upon which these Regulations are predicated:

(i) Approval for any expenditure must be obtained in advance and prior to making a firm commitment, monetary or otherwise, to incur such expenditure.

(ii) Such approval must be documented and retained, on the system, by the person incurring the expenditure for audit purposes.

(iii) All claims for repayment or reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of business, travel or otherwise, must be authorised by a designated person in addition to an approved signatory to the relevant cost centre.

(iv) Wasteful expenditure must be avoided.

(v) The University's contracted service providers must be used, unless permitted otherwise by the Finance Division.

(vi) University financial resources should be dealt with prudently and the necessity of the expenditure should be carefully considered.

1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS

TERM	DEFINITION
Budget Controller	Any person to whom control of the University budget or part thereof has been delegated.
Budget Holder	A member of the Executive Management Committee to whom any budget has been allocated in writing by the University and/or a person who is delegated the responsibility to manage the budget.
CFO	The Chief Finance Officer of the University.
College	A cluster of cognate schools in the academic sector, and Support and Students Services Colleges.
Council	Council of the University
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
EMC	The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar or Registrars, and other members of Senior Management who are responsible for assisting the Vice-Chancellor in the management and administration of the University.
Executive	The Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar or Registrars, and the Executive Directors in other Administrative positions determined by the Council to be executive positions.
Financial Manager	The financial manager of the College/Support Division responsible for financial administration.
Incidental costs	Are personal, incidental expenditure incurred which directly relates to the official duty for the business travel undertaken (e.g. laundry, personal telephone calls, newspapers, drinks, tips, etc)
SA	South African
SARS	The South African Revenue Service
T & S	Travel and Subsistence
Travel Agency	The service provider or University staff appointed by the University to facilitate and manage travel arrangements for officials, students, and other individuals travelling on University business.
VC	The Vice-Chancellor of the University.

2. ALLOWANCES

2.1 SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE – LOCAL

a) A subsistence allowance is an amount paid to an individual on official duty for expenses incurred or to be incurred in respect of overnight living expenses and incidental costs when travelling on University business. This allowance can cover any of the following expenses:

   (i) Meals (including reasonable gratuities not exceeding 10% of the total bill);
   (ii) Incidental expenses for refreshments, snacks, drinks, newspapers, telephone calls, and similar expenditure; and
   (iii) All incidental expenses related to business travel.

b) The allowance is payable only in respect of meals and other incidental costs not paid for directly by the University.

c) Any payment of the allowance will be effected in accordance with SARS specifications in terms of subsistence allowance and as gazetted annually in February by the Minister of Finance, and is also subject to EMC approval. As such, the allowance paid is not subject to PAYE taxation implications, and will be reflected in full on the annual IRP5 tax certificate.

d) The purchase of alcoholic beverages is strictly prohibited and may only be approved by the Budget Holder in exceptional circumstances. Prudence and good judgement in relation to such purchases, and the approval thereof, shall be maintained at all times.

2.2 DAILY ALLOWANCE

a) The daily allowance is payable when an individual is on official duty for a period exceeding 5 hours and travels to a destination more than 100 km from his or her official place of work or home.

b) The daily allowance is payable in circumstances where the official will not be staying overnight.

c) An amount (in accordance with prevailing SARS T & S allowances rates) can be claimed to defray the cost of meals and other incidental costs. Submission of vouchers as proof of actual expenditure is required.

d) When a University official attends seminars or functions, where meals are provided, no daily allowance will be paid.

e) In certain circumstances, the Budget Holder or the delegated official in his/her sole discretion, may authorise that the daily allowance be paid in advance. However, officials are still required to produce proof of all expenditure (such as receipts, invoices, etc.) incurred.

2.3 SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE – TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The following applies to officials (ordinarily resident in South Africa) who travel outside the Republic of South Africa:

a) A daily subsistence amount equal to the current prevailing amount applicable to the relevant country as per the SARS schedule of rates per country (published on the SARS website www.sars.co.za) can be claimed to cover all meals and other incidental costs. No vouchers are required. This amount can be claimed for each night the individual is absent from South Africa.

b) In the case where the period spent outside the borders of South Africa exceeds six weeks (42 days), the full allowance will be declared as a taxable amount on the employee's IRP5. No tax will be deducted by the University, but employees must keep all relevant proof of expenses relating to personal accommodation and incidental expenses for their own personal tax returns.

c) Should the staff member incur excessive incidental expenses due to circumstances beyond their control, he/she must submit a written motivation to the relevant Budget Controller why they should be reimbursed for these expenses over and above the prescribed rate (applicable to the relevant country).

d) In the case of the Vice-Chancellor, claims for payment or reimbursement of expenses must be authorised by the CFO.

e) In the case of other members of the Executive, claims for the payment or reimbursement of expenses must be authorised by the VC or the DVC designated to act on his/her behalf.

2.4 TELEPHONE, MOBILE PHONE, AND DATA ALLOWANCE

a) The Policy governing the use of mobile phones and determined periodically by the University's EMC is the prevailing authority in this regard.

b) The payment of an allowance shall only be considered in cases where this type of instrument is absolutely essential for the proper execution of the staff member's official tasks as guided by the recommendations of the Information and Communication Services division.

c) University staff members that are required to make business calls or use data on their home or mobile telephones must attach the appropriate bill to the staff expenses claim form with relevant business calls or data usage highlighted and only these will be reimbursed.

3. TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

All requests for travel and accommodation must be made through the approved channels.

3.1 AUTHORISATION FOR TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

a) Travel and accommodation within South Africa must be authorised and approved by the relevant Budget Holder or delegated official (in accordance with the official delegations framework).

b) Requests for approval to travel may be on a case by case basis or in terms of an annual plan for a series of visits to achieve a specific objective.

c) Appropriate forms of approval for travel include, *inter alia*, exchange of emails or signature on the itinerary, letter of invitation or other appropriate document.

d) The Budget Controller is responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient funds in the budget to undertake the travel, and approval for the travel does not imply that any over expenditure is authorised.

e) It is critical that the authorisation should be obtained before the trip is undertaken and before travel and accommodation arrangements are made (booked). In addition, and where relevant, the appropriate type of leave must be applied for and approved.

f) No member of staff shall be entitled to approve their own travel and accommodation for themselves. Every member of staff must obtain the approval of their line manager or the approval of the relevant Budget Controller of the applicable budget who is duly authorised to give approval.

g) By authorising transactions, the authoriser confirms and warrants that the costs have been reasonable and necessarily incurred for the purposes of conducting or furthering the University's interests or business; that there are sufficient funds in the requisite budget to cover the expenses in question; and, furthermore, that supporting documentation, in the form of invoices, receipt, vouchers and the like has been presented by the member of staff concerned.

h) International travel must be approved in accordance with the following delegations:

	Category of official	**Approver**
i)	Member of the University Council or Sub-Committee of Council	VC **and** Chairperson of the Council.
ii)	Chairperson of the Council	Council
iii)	Vice-Chancellor	Chairperson or Deputy-Chairperson of Council
iv)	Members of the EMC	VC or the Deputy VC designated to act on behalf of the VC
v)	Staff members (other than EMC)	Budget Controller
vi)	Other (students, associates, etc.)	Budget Controller

i) UKZN officials are personally responsible for ensuring that their travel arrangements meet travel regulations and that their claims for re-imbursement are accurate.

j) All travel reservations (including flights and accommodation) must be made through the approved University Travel Agency.

k) If a travelling University official manages to secure the desired flights and accommodation (same venue, flights, and time-frames) at a cheaper rate or quotation than that quoted for by the Travel Agency, the traveller must first inform the Travel Agency who must be given the opportunity to revisit their quotation. If the service provider cannot match or improve on the quotation, then the Budget Holder may grant pre-approval for the official to make the reservations in their personal capacity. The official shall be reimbursed for the expenses incurred upon presentation of the relevant supporting documentation, such as receipts and invoices. This is subject to terms negotiated with the successful bidder or in the case of the existing service provider, yet to be negotiated.

NB: *The cost should not be more than the cost that the University would have incurred, had the arrangements been made through the normal Travel Agency route.*

l) Following an international visit, members of the Executive must prepare a brief trip report and forward this report to members of the EMC outlining the purpose of the trip and the outcomes achieved.

3.2 AUTHORISATION FOR RESEARCH TRAVEL

Authorisation for all travel funded for research purposes must be approved, in accordance with the University's policy on grants, from Research Funds.

3.3 OWN-VEHICLE TRAVEL

a) Members of staff that use their private vehicles on University business must seek prior authority to do so from their line manager.

b) A rate per kilometre (in accordance with prevailing SARS rates) can be claimed for travel when a staff member or student uses his/her own vehicle for University business purposes.

c) The amount payable is deemed to be the allowed distance travelled, multiplied by the prescribed rate per kilometre. The reimbursement rate per kilometre is deemed to include reimbursement for toll fees. The allowed distance is defined as follows:

(i) The lower of actual distance travelled or the distance from one's designated place of duty. The minimum claimable distance is 15 kilometres one way or 30 kilometres for a single trip.

(ii) Where travel is undertaken on a non-working day (i.e. weekends and public holidays) then the distance is calculated as the distance from one's designated place of residence.

d) The above rates only apply to 'kilometre claims' (actual mileage travelled) and exclude any policies and procedures for vehicle hire and airfares.

e) It is the responsibility of each staff member or student to ensure that their private insurance cover pertaining to the use of their private vehicle is suitable and adequate to cover business use. The University will not reimburse nor pay for insurance excesses, incidental damage to vehicles, or any traffic fines incurred during official University business trips.

f) All requests for travel re-imbursement shall be completed in detail on the University's official travel claim form. UKZN is a multi-campus University and travel distances between campuses are prescribed. They are as follows:

CAMPUS TRAVELLING FROM	CAMPUS TRAVELLING TO	KILOMETRES (SINGLE DISTANCE)
Howard/Medical	Westville	less than 15km therefore not claimable
Howard/Medical	Edgewood	20km
Howard/Medical	PMB	80km
Westville	Edgewood	15km
Westville	PMB	72km
Edgewood	PMB	65km

g) Details of any rail, flight, bus, or taxi costs for which reimbursement is sought should be claimed on a staff expenses claim for 'other public transport expenses.'

3.4 AIRFARE EXPENSES (LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL)

a) When flying on University business, all flights are to be economy class unless otherwise authorized. When claiming reimbursement of airfare, a copy of the flight ticket must be attached.

b) In instances where the research funding agency does not cover the cost of business class flights, but business class flights are unavoidable or are necessary, the Budget Controller may provide prior approval for the payment of the difference in costs from another appropriate budget allocation under his/her management.

c) If a reservation is cancelled, the official will be held responsible for any cancellation fees, except where cancellation is at the request of the University or in the event of illness or any other extraordinary personal circumstances, and has the approval of the relevant member of the EMC.

d) Upgrading of flight tickets or changes to travel arrangements that result in a price increase will be paid by the University official and may be claimed upon return provided that a reasonable explanation in writing is tendered. All such claims must be signed by the relevant member of the EMC and submitted to the travel office.

e) If a staff member is able to secure cheaper flights in their private capacity as compared to the University contracted supplier, reimbursement may be approved, in the sole discretion of the respective finance manager or his/her delegated authority, under the following conditions:

(i) Quotations must be comparable.

(ii) The total price differentiation must be material.

(iii) The University contracted supplier must be made aware of, and given the opportunity to revisit, their quotes.

3.5 FLIGHTS

a) Air travel, unless authorised in writing, should not be used if the destination is less than three (3) hours by road or rail transportation.

b) External members of Council (and its Sub-committees) may travel business class for all domestic and international flights.

c) All other University officials and students must travel in economy class for all flights.

d) Where the University's administered funds are prescribed to only meet the cost of economy class airfares, staff members are permitted to upgrade to a higher class of their choice using personally generated funding dependent on written documentation approved by the Budget Controller.

e) Only under extenuating and exceptional circumstances may the Budget Holder or delegated official approve the purchase of business class tickets for officials, based on disability or for those with special needs. A valid letter from the attending medical practitioner will be required before the Budget Holder may give such authorization.

f) Business class air travel may be permitted in specific circumstances such as :

(i) Where there is a medical condition, a disability or for those with special needs.

NB: A valid letter from the attending medical practitioner will be required before the Budget Holder may give such authorisation. The University reserves the right to consult its own internal appropriate medical personnel to assist the Budget Controller in making the decision whether to permit business class travel or not.

(ii) When the proposed flight exceeds six hours;

(iii) When meetings/events/classes are scheduled close to arrival time (flights are not regular)

The abovementioned are subject to the following:

i. The additional cost of business travel can be met from funds in the existing budgetary provision; and

ii. Prior approval is obtained from the relevant Budget Holder.

3.6 ACCOMMODATION

a) Accommodation must be arranged through the University-appointed Travel Agency and the necessary approvals obtained prior to embarking on the journey.

b) Hotel accommodation may not exceed two thousand rands (R2,000) per night per person (including dinner, breakfast and parking). The University may periodically review this amount. Accommodation upgrades are allowed and must be for the personal cost of the traveller.

c) UKZN staff members on official University business shall be accommodated in standard rooms at reasonable and appropriate accommodation venues as approved by the University contracted supplier.

d) In the event that the accommodation stipulated in 3.6 b) and c) above is not available or there is evidence of a possible risk to the traveller, the higher accommodation costs may be approved by the relevant member of the EMC or delegated official , the VC, Chairperson, or Deputy Chairperson of the University Council on good cause shown.

e) In instances where a conference or event being attended by a University staff member is held in a specific venue that also provides accommodation but of a higher grading than the maximum permissible, the Budget Holder or delegated official may pre-approve utilization of that particular accommodation if it is deemed more cost-effective than utilizing another establishment (based on other incidental costs such as car hire, extra food, etc.)

f) No advances of monies are permitted for accommodation costs.

g) Allowable accommodation expenses:

(i) If a staff member stays with a relative or friend, no accommodation allowance may be claimed. However, the staff member may, in addition to the applicable subsistence allowance, claim a taxable amount of R200 (Two Hundred Rand) per day.

(ii) Staff members are only allowed to book accommodation if the destination is beyond a radius of 100 kilometers from the University campus where the official is stationed. Exceptional circumstances may be approved by the respective Finance Manager or his/her delegated authority using good judgement.

(iii) In the event where an official is unable to make use of the meals provided due to religious and/or other convictions, the reimbursement for alternative meals shall be dealt with on an *ad hoc* basis with the authorization of the Financial Manager or his/her delegated authority.

g) If a staff member is able to secure cheaper accommodation in their private capacity as compared to the University contracted supplier, reimbursement may be approved, in the sole discretion of the respective finance manager or his/her delegated authority, under the following conditions:

(i) Quotations must be comparable (i.e. sourced at similar time-frames and for the same accommodation house).

(ii) The total price differentiation must be in excess of 5%.

(iii) The University contracted supplier must be made aware of, and given the opportunity to revisit their quotes.

3.7 CAR HIRE

a) All staff members should make use of A or B class car hire *via* the University's contracted service provider. Any exception to this rule has to be approved by the Budget Holder, for example where it would be cost effective or practical to hire a mini-bus when the number of representatives are required to travel to the same destination.

b) A different class of vehicle may be approved by the Budget Holder based on the type of terrain or to cater for special needs of the staff member. Prior approval with supporting documentation must be sought in these instances.

c) Insurance on hired cars booked through the University is centrally arranged by the Central Procurement Office and no insurance should be taken out by employees.

d) All business related toll fees and parking fees may be claimed for.

e) Speeding tickets and traffic violations committed whilst using a vehicle hired by the University is strictly for the responsible staff member's personal account.

f) **NB:** Cancellations must be made at least twelve hours prior to the stipulated delivery date and time unless there are unforeseen circumstances.

3.8 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

a) Travel by public transport (rail, bus, taxi) will be reimbursed where supported by a valid receipt/travel ticket. A reasonable figure will have to be worked out by finance, where a voucher is not available, e.g. taxi fare.

b) Taxis should only be used when strictly required and the relevant claim form should always detail the journey involved and the reason for use/event involved.

3.9 TRANSPORT TO THE AIRPORT

Car rentals from the place of work/home to the airport may be paid for by the University. However, this must be demonstrably economically viable in the sense that rental must result in a saving of costs that would otherwise be incurred through the use of a private vehicle.

3.10 OTHER INCIDENTAL COSTS

a) Toll fees, incurred whilst using a hired vehicle, will be reimbursed upon return (proof of payment must be provided).

b) Speeding tickets, traffic violations, and related administration costs, shall be for the member's personal account.

c) The cost of parking at hotels must be included in the accommodation voucher.

d) Parking costs incurred in the course of business travel may be claimed via the expenses system.

4. OTHER GENERAL MATTERS

4.1 VISAS AND PASSPORTS

a) The cost of passports and/or passport renewal will not be reimbursed by the University. Each staff member that is required to travel abroad must ensure that they are in possession of a valid passport.

b) The University will reimburse the cost of any entry visas and vaccinations required for travel on University business.

4.2 TRAVEL INSURANCE

a) Insurance cover for staff travelling on University business is provided for and is managed in accordance with the University's Insurance Policy.

b) The cost of any additional travel insurance policies taken out by staff members will be for the staff member's account and will not be reimbursed by the University.

4.3 FREQUENT FLYER PROGRAMS

a) Staff members and students travelling on official University business are permitted to accrue their own 'frequent-flyer' mileage or points and may retain any applicable program benefits.

b) Any incremental costs due to participation in any such programs is entirely for the traveller's account and not the University.

c) The University does not reimburse staff members for tickets purchased with "frequent flyer" miles.

d) The University will not be responsible for any tax liability which may result from the use of these benefits.

4.4 PRIVATE TRAVEL ASSOCIATED WITH OFFICIAL BUSINESS TRIP

a) The University is only liable for the costs relating to a staff member's travel. Any accompanying persons not authorised to travel at the University's expense will be responsible for their own costs. Neither airfares nor travel insurance will be paid by the University for accompanying spouses and/or families – these are to be negotiated separately out of the University account by the traveller.

b) A staff member shall not claim any additional travel costs, subsistence or other expenses for any days that may be construed as a holiday linked to a business trip. The University is only obligated to reimburse members' travelling expenses on behalf of the University for the "official travel period" being the minimum period required to travel to and/or from the destination of the business trip. If savings are achieved outside the official travel period, these may be approved by the budget controller.

c) Any additional costs relating to the private part of the journey (including, but not limited to, accommodation, subsistence, travel, and travelling insurance) are for the staff member's personal account.

4.5 ENTERTAINMENT

a) The entertainment of 'business contacts' (associates, potential investors or clients) falls outside the scope of the subsistence allowance and will be separately reimbursed (subject to prior approval where applicable).

b) 'Business contacts' may be entertained by the relevant staff members with the prior approval of the DVC or delegated official. The costs of entertaining shall be reimbursed on production of receipts, invoices and/or vouchers evidencing actual expenditure incurred.

c) **NB:** For this purpose, 'business contacts' do not include other employees of the University or of any organization or company associated with the University, whether in the form of a subsidiary or holding company in which the University has a direct or indirect interest.

d) However, where 'business contacts' are entertained and it is desirable or necessary for some staff members to attend, the costs for the staff members will be reimbursed on production of receipts.

e) In the event that a restaurant is utilized to cater for visitors from outside of the University, upon presentation of the receipts, the University may reimburse the costs involved, including the costs of gratuities up to a maximum of 10% of the total bill.

f) Reimbursements for alcohol purchases will be limited to a maximum of 20% of the total food bill.

g) Re-imbursements will be in line with the relevant conditions of employment.

4.6 PROFESSIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Personal professional subscriptions for members of staff are the personal responsibility of individual members.

4.7 CANCELLATIONS AND THE RESULTANT PENALTIES OR CHARGES

a) If a planned event/meeting is cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, the travel office, the line managers or delegated officials and the respective Finance Manager must be notified immediately to arrange a postponement or refund as necessary.

b) Detailed supporting/explanatory documentation must be submitted to the line manager. Any cash advance issued must be deposited in the appropriate cost centre (within 1 day of cancellation) and proof of deposit must be submitted to the Finance Manager in the respective College or Division.

c) Penalties and charges resulting from the cancellation of travel reservations (including airline, hotel, or other travel reservations and conference registration) shall be the University's obligation if the travel had been approved in advance and the cancellation or change is made at the direction of and/or for the convenience of the University.

d) If the cancellation or change is made for the personal benefit of the traveller, it shall be the traveler's obligation to pay any resultant penalty or charge necessitated by the cancellation or charge. However, in the event of documented incidents such as accidents, serious illness, or death within the traveller's immediate family or other critical circumstances beyond the control of the traveler, the relevant Budget Controller or delegated official may, at his/her sole discretion, elect to pay the penalties and charges.

4.8 SUBMISSION AND VALIDITY OF CLAIMS

a) Claims for re-imbursement should be made as soon as practically possible and not later than three (3) months after the expenditure has been incurred.

b) Claims older than three months will not be paid.

c) The submission of a false or exaggerated expenses claim is a serious matter which shall lead to disciplinary action being taken by the University in accordance with the applicable Human Resources Policies.

4.9 AUTHORITY TO DEVIATE FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE REGULATIONS

In exceptional circumstances, transactions that do not conform to the provisions and limitations of this Regulation may be authorised provided the deviation is unavoidable. In such an event, the transaction must be duly authorized by the respective Budget Holder or the CFO.

4.10 REGULATIONS VIOLATION

Any breach of this Regulation shall be subject to disciplinary action.