

OWLCOTES MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Expenses Policy



June 2018
Reviewed: May 2026

About Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust (OMAT)

OMAT is committed to the development of inclusive schools, sharing a common purpose to provide excellent education and improved outcomes for pupils.

OMAT strives to provide high-quality education for all children within our local communities by inspiring innovation, creativity and aspiration through an enriched curriculum.

OMAT is committed to the principles of co-operation, collaboration and sharing best practice with a strong focus on staff development.

OMAT is also committed to the preservation of the unique identity of all schools within the trust: each school will have a Local Governing Board (LGB) which is involved in decision making at school level, with autonomy to make decisions for its own school in line with the scheme of delegation.

All trustees and any schools joining must agree to share and uphold all of these principles now and in the future.

Expenses Policy

1. Overview

- 1.1 It is the Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust's (OMAT's) policy to reimburse staff for all necessary travel, accommodation and other expenses incurred while engaged on authorised business (excepting normal day-to-day travel to and from home).
- 1.2 OMAT will set levels of expenditure that are deemed appropriate and cost-effective and which may only be varied at the discretion of the CEO. The key principle to be applied is value for money.
- 1.3 The level of reimbursement allowed should be sufficient to provide a standard and quality that adequately meets the needs of members of staff and promotes the effective conduct of OMAT's business. The rate of reimbursement is set out below.
- 1.4 All staff should complete travel and expenses claim forms and return them to the OMAT finance office (via the school administrator) using a copy of the expenses claim form.
- 1.5 All claim forms should be submitted by the end of each term in which the cost has been incurred, or a payment has been made. Claim forms that are submitted later than this will only be paid if the staff member can show adequate justification for the delay.
- 1.6 Failure to follow this policy may lead to non-payment of expenses or where the employee has intentionally sought to defraud the Trust, disciplinary action.
- 1.7 This expenses policy will be monitored by the CFO and the Finance Risk and Audit Committee and reviewed every two years.

2. Travel Expenses

- 2.1 OMAT's Financial Regulations require cost-effective travel arrangements. Car users should not therefore automatically use their cars for travel. Public transport including air travel may be more cost-effective for longer journeys, but health and safety considerations should be taken into account by the employee, particularly during busy periods, where public transport may put the employee at increased risk. In order to achieve best value, the person who makes a claim should ensure that they are able to demonstrate the cost-effectiveness of the journey claimed.
- 2.2 Careful consideration will be given to staff with mobility problems may experience when undertaking journeys. Adjustments may, for example, include payment of taxi fares or overnight accommodation.
- 2.3 Where more than one person is travelling to the same event, arrangements should be made to share transport if appropriate and convenient.

3. Travel Allowances

By Car:

- 3.1 The Casual User Car Allowance is 55p per mile for the first 10,000 business miles (25p thereafter). This can be claimed on authorised OMAT journeys. The distance between the staff's substantive Centre and the meeting / conference / course venue should be claimed except when the distance between home and venue is shorter. In this case the home to venue mileage should be claimed.
- 3.2 Car parking costs, while on OMAT business, will be met when receipts are provided. Necessary road and bridge toll costs will be met, including the congestion charge where there is a genuine business need to incur it.
- 3.3 Taxi fares may be claimed when travelling in an unknown location, where the saving in time is important and where there are issues surrounding personal safety. A limit of 20 miles per trip should be placed on taxi journeys. Receipts should be obtained. Planned taxi bookings must be made through the school's administrator or OMAT Central Finance.
- 3.4 When using your car on Trust business you must have a current and clean driving license, use a vehicle that is roadworthy, have a valid MOT and personal insurance protection that covers business use. A self-certification is included on the expense claim form and must be completed by all staff claiming mileage. All fines for motoring offences, including parking tickets, are the responsibility of the individual, not OMAT.

By Train:

- 3.5 Rail tickets should be booked whenever possible well in advance, preferably pre-booking tickets to travel on specific timed trains. Open tickets may only be booked if you have no way of knowing what time your meeting will finish (please see paragraph 2.1 above). Travel should normally be by standard class. First class travel is only appropriate if either, there are no standard class facilities to accommodate disabled or other special needs requirements, or the cost of the first-class ticket is less than the cheapest equivalent ticket for standard class, or if the facilities provided by first class (e.g., Wi-Fi access) are

essential and cannot be obtained on standard class. Booking should be made through OMAT using the school's debit card.

By Air:

- 3.6 Because of distance, air travel may be the most cost-effective mode of transportation. If this is the case, value for money should be demonstrated. As with train travel, whenever possible, flights should be booked well in advance using the most cost-effective ticketing arrangements. For flights over six hours' duration, business class travel is justifiable on health and work-related grounds. All air tickets should be booked through OMAT using the school's debit card. All air travel should be authorised by the CEO, or in the case of the CEO, the Chair of Trust.

4. Subsistence

- 4.1 Members of staff necessarily incurring additional expenses when away from home on OMAT business, with respect to meals or overnight accommodation, will be reimbursed (subject to prior authorisation by the CEO) up to the following amounts:

Overnight stay in hotels:

- London - up to £160 per night excluding VAT;
- outside London - up to £100 per night excluding VAT;

Meals:

- Breakfast - if leaving home before 7.00am and if not included as part of an overnight stay package - up to £8;
- Lunch - if not part of the course / conference / event - up to £12;
- Evening meal - if arriving home after 8.30 pm, or staying overnight - up to £20.

- 4.2 These are the maximum limits and where less is spent the actual amount should be claimed. Claims for meals and overnight accommodation should not apply when provided as part of a course/conference package. Expenses should be claimed using an expense claims form accompanied by receipts. Overnight accommodation should be booked through OMAT using the school's debit card. Please note if you fail to provide receipts then the costs cannot be reimbursed.

5. Other Sundry Expenses

- 5.1 OMAT policy is for all resources to be made through the purchasing process. This will either be through purchase order and invoice or through the charge card. However, it is recognised that staff may occasionally procure small value items, such as class resources with prior approval. Such items will be reimbursed through the expenses process, providing a valid VAT receipt is produced. The maximum suggested value for such expenditure is £20.

6. Authorisation of Expense Claims

- 6.1 Expense claims will be authorised using the web portal by the school Headteacher.

- 6.2 Expense claims for Headteachers or Owlcotes central team employees will be authorised by the CFO. Expense claims for the CFO will be authorised by the CEO. Expense claims for the CEO will be authorised by the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

**This Employee Expenses Policy was adopted by Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust on
18/06/2018**

Chair of Trustees: Mrs Judith Norfolk		
Signature:		Judith Norfolk:
Frequency of review:	2 years	
To be reviewed by:	FRAC	
To be approved by:	OMAT Full Board	
Date of next review:	May 2028	

REVIEW RECORD

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review
23/06/2022	Agreed review schedule.	June 2024

Name:		Signature:	
on behalf of OMAT Full Board			

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review
20/06/2024	Amendment to section 5.1 and section 6.1.	June 2026

Name:			
on behalf of OMAT Full Board			

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review
07/05/2026	Agreed review schedule.	May 2028

Name:		Signature:	
on behalf of OMAT Full Board			