

## **SOUTH BANK ACADEMIES**

### **Travel and Expenses**

#### **Introduction**

This policy sets out the South Bank Academies (SBA) rules on how staff, Local Governing Body (LGB) members and Trustees (known subsequently as Relevant Individuals) can claim for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties for the Trust. The policy covers travel, meals and accommodation, business hospitality, gifts and staff parties.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees are properly reimbursed for legitimate business expenses and to ensure that these expenses are treated appropriately for tax purposes.

#### **Procedure**

SBA will reimburse Relevant Individuals for actual expenditure that is incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively in connection with authorised duties that Relevant Individuals undertake on behalf of SBA.

To claim for expenses, Relevant Individuals must use the SBA expenses claim forms (see appendix A), available from the Finance Team and should set out the reasons why the expense was incurred on the claim form.

Expenses will not be paid unless supporting evidence is provided, together with a completed expenses claim form. This should include original receipts or invoices with the date and time of the transaction (unless claiming for mileage). When claiming for travel expenses on public transport, tickets showing the departure point and destination of the journey should be enclosed. Credit and debit card statements will not normally be accepted. Where you are submitting a VAT receipt, you should set out:

- the name and VAT registration number of the retailer or service provider;
- the goods and services provided; and
- the amount of VAT payable.

Once completed and signed, the expense claim form should be submitted to the appropriate school Finance Department.

Expenses claims must be submitted within 30 days of the expense being incurred. If this is not practical, written approval for any extension will be required from the Finance Department. SBA reserves the right to withhold any payment where written approval has not been sought and until such approval is granted.

SBA may return an expenses claim form without payment if it is completed incorrectly or lacks supporting evidence to enable you to complete properly and resubmit in such cases. As long as the claim was originally submitted within the 30

day window, the claim will be paid even if the need to provide additional receipts which were inadvertently omitted initially means that the claim is then submitted after the 30 days.

SBA will pay claims for authorised expenses by BACS transfer into a stated bank account.

In general, Relevant Individuals should not incur expenses other than in the categories listed below. However, if claims for expenditure other than for those categories listed

below are submitted, prior written approval from the Finance Department should be sought before incurring the expense.

SBA will accept email as written approval where it is required in this policy.

Any queries in relation to this policy should be directed to the South Bank Academies Business Manager

## **TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE**

### **Travel**

Relevant Individuals should consider whether or not travel is necessary to meet business objectives or if there are more appropriate means (for example, teleconferencing or videoconferencing).

### **Air**

Any flight must be pre-authorised by the Finance Department in writing before being booked. Where possible, flights should be booked well in advance to benefit from any discounts for early booking.

Personal incentives or rewards associated with specific air travel, such as air miles, should not be a factor in determining which flight is purchased for SBA business. The key consideration is whether or not the flight is the most cost-effective for SBA, unless there is a valid business reason for taking an alternative flight.

SBA will only reimburse travel in economy class unless there are exceptional circumstances.

### **Rail**

SBA will only reimburse travel for standard class rail fares only. Where possible, rail journeys should be booked well in advance to benefit from any discounts for early booking.

Where possible, any rail cards or season tickets that have already been paid for as part of the normal commute to work should be used towards any journey taken on SBA business.

### **Taxis**

Relevant Individuals may claim for a taxi fare only in limited circumstances. These are:

- where taking a taxi would result in a significantly shorter travel time than using public transport;
- where there are several employees travelling together; or
- where personal security and safety of employees is an issue, for example night travel.
- where pre-agreed by a line manager in the case of pregnancy, disability or sickness.

A receipt with details of the date, place of departure and destination of the journey must be obtained.

### **Use of your own car**

It may be appropriate and cost-effective to use your own car when travelling on SBA business, for example if you are travelling with several employees or, where there is limited public transport to your destination, or the journey time is significantly shorter than using public transport. Any use of your own car on company business is subject to you:

- holding a full UK driving licence;
- ensuring that your car is roadworthy and fully registered; and
- holding comprehensive motor insurance that provides for business use.
- having business insurance upgrade on your car.

Prior authorisation should be sought from the Finance Department before using your own car on SBA business.

SBA accepts no liability for any accident, loss, damage or claim arising out of any journey that you make on company business unless caused by our negligence. SBA will not pay for insurance policy upgrades required for you to use your own vehicle for work purposes.

To claim for fuel expenditure, you should set out the distance of the journey undertaken on your expenses claim form. SBA will pay you a mileage allowance of 45p per mile for mileage under 10,000 business miles per annum and 20p per mile for mileage over 10,000 business miles per annum, or such other rate as set out from time to time by HM Revenue and Customs.

SBA will pay for tolls, congestion charges and parking costs incurred, where applicable.

### **Late Night/Early Morning Transport**

SBA will, in exceptional circumstances, reimburse Relevant Individuals for late night or early morning transport, including a taxi, if you are required to travel to or from work, airport, railway station or other destination for specific business reasons.

You should seek prior written authorisation for late or early departures from or to work where possible from your Finance Department. If this is not possible, you should set out the reasons for the late or early departure in your expenses claim.

**No transport expenses will be reimbursed for any staff social events held by SBA or its employees unless staff are obliged or directed to attend as part of their working duties.**

### **MEALS/ACCOMMODATION**

As a guideline for business travel, Relevant Individuals should book accommodation up to the equivalent of three-star standard.

It is the responsibility of the Relevant Individual to ensure that any hotel reservations are cancelled within the required cancellation period if they are no longer required.

If you are required to be away from home and normal place of work on SBA business, you may claim for the following subsistence where incurred up to:

£15 for hot "English breakfast" (if this is not included in the hotel room rate);

£10 for a business meeting over lunch. (Lunch is normally the expense of the employee at their place of work irrespective of location)  
£25 for Table d'hote dinner or equivalent; and  
£5 per night for general incidental costs such as a beverage, newspaper or telephone calls where you are not allocated a SBA mobile phone.

Receipts and invoices should be submitted for all hotel and meal expenses.

### **OVERSEAS EXPENSES**

The meal and hotel allowances set out above also apply when travelling overseas on SBA business.

The applicable currency exchange rate should be supplied for the date on which the expense was incurred. SBA will verify the exchange rate submitted as part of any overseas expenses claim.

SBA will reimburse for any travel visas required for business travel. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have a valid passport with a minimum of six months remaining prior to the expiry date.

SBA will provide business travel insurance for any authorised trips.

### **RELOCATION EXPENSES**

If a Relevant Individual is relocated by SBA to work in an area where they do not normally reside which means that they would need to relocate to this area in the performance of their duties for longer than one month, SBA will write separately to them about their individual circumstances and SBA's assistance for them and their family.

SBA will reimburse for reasonable relocation costs up to a maximum of £5,000.

### **BUSINESS HOSPITALITY/GIFTS**

SBA recognises that corporate hospitality can provide opportunities to strengthen business relationships enhance SBA's reputation and deepen prospective clients' or suppliers' understanding of the business. Any hospitality booked for clients, suppliers or other business contacts must be approved in advance by the Finance Department. Submissions should include:

- details of the individuals whom you wish to invite;
- the name of the company that they represent;
- the nature of the hospitality, including date and location; and
- the business reasons for the hospitality.

SBA will only approve business hospitality proposals that demonstrate a clear business objective and that are appropriate for the nature of the business relationship. SBA will not approve business hospitality where it considers that a conflict of interest or a pecuniary interest or family relationship that may arise or where it could be perceived

that undue influence or a particular business benefit is being sought for example, prior to a tendering exercise or prior to discussions with and/or canvassing of prospective transferee schools, their governors, staff and officers of the local authority.

#### **EXPENSES THAT WILL NOT BE REIMBURSED**

SBA will not reimburse you for:

the cost of any travel between home and usual place of work (except in exceptional circumstances for early morning/late night transport as set out above);

the cost of any travel undertaken for personal reasons;

the cost of any travel for partners or spouse;

any fines or penalties incurred while on SBA business for whatever reason, including penalties for not paying for a rail ticket in advance of boarding the train and penalties or fines associated with motoring offences, including speeding or parking fines, clamping or vehicle recovery charges;

any expenses incurred for personal benefit or to improperly influence or reward a business contact; or

cash advances or withdrawals from an ATM machine.

You are required to pay for any travel costs incurred by your partner or spouse in the event that he or she accompanies you on SBA business. Your spouse or partner must have adequate travel insurance for that journey.

#### **STAFF ENTERTAINING (including Christmas)**

Lunch, dinner or hospitality for the benefit of staff, LGBs and Trustees will ordinarily be an expense of the individual.

#### **FALSE CLAIMS**

If SBA considers that any expenditure claimed was not legitimately incurred on behalf of the Company, it may request further details from you. SBA will thoroughly investigate and check any expenses claim as it sees fit. It may withhold payment where insufficient supporting documents have been provided. Where payment has been made to you prior to the discovery that the claim was not legitimate or correct, it may deduct the value of that claim from your salary with notice and agreement as required.

Any abuse of SBA's expenses policy will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to:

- false expenses claims;
- claims for expenses that were not legitimately incurred;
- claims for personal gain;
- claims for hospitality and/or gifts to induce a client, prospective transferee school (and its personnel) or other business contact to take improper action; and
- receipt of hospitality and/or gifts from business contacts that may be perceived to influence your judgment.

SBA will consider disciplinary action where appropriate and, in certain circumstances, may treat a breach of this policy as gross misconduct, which may result in your summary dismissal. In addition, SBA may, if appropriate, report the matter to the police for investigation and criminal prosecution.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

The South Bank Academies Audit Committee and Chief Executive Officer will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the Travel and Expenses Policy.

Appendix A

Travel and Expenses Claim Form										
Name:		Normal Work Base:			Registration No:					
School:		User Status: <i>*delete as appropriate</i>			Exact CC:					
Month:		Car/Motorcycle Make & Model:			Payroll Number:					
					Business Travel			Other Expenses		
Date	Start Point	Places Visited	Finish Point	Purpose of Visit	Passengers Carried	Mileage Claimed	Home To Base	Passengers Mileage Claimed	Description	£
I declare that the journeys / other expenses detailed above and the mileages shown have been necessarily incurred and are made in accordance with the Travel & Expenses Policy. I also declare that I hold a valid driving licence, that the vehicle is insured for 'use in connection with the policy holders business' or similar and that the vehicle has been maintained in a roadworthy condition and has a valid MOT certificate where appropriate.					Totals					
					Total Business Mileage (mileage claimed minus home to base column)					
<b>Failure to make a valid declaration may result in disciplinary/criminal action.</b>  Signature: _____ Date: _____  FOR PAYROLL USE ONLY:					<b>Authorised by (print name):</b> If the form is not fully completed it must be returned to the claimant prior to authorisation. I declare that I authorise this claim in accordance with the Travel & Expenses Policy and that the journeys/other expenses have been necessarily incurred. I confirm that the claimants driving licence, certificate of motor insurance which includes business use and MOT certificate where appropriate has been provided in the last 12 months.  Signature: _____					