

OFFICIAL



Department of
Education

OFFICIAL TRAVEL POLICY

OFFICIAL AIR TRAVEL PROCEDURES

TRAVEL ACCOMMODATION, MEALS AND OTHER EXPENSE PROCEDURES

This PDF contains the following documents:

Document 1:

Official Travel policy 2.0

Effective: 17 February 2026

Document 2:

Official Air Travel procedures 2.0

Effective: 17 February 2026

Document 3:

Travel Accommodation, Meals and Other Expense procedures 2.0

Effective: 17 February 2026



Department of
Education

OFFICIAL TRAVEL POLICY

EFFECTIVE: 17 FEBRUARY 2026

VERSION: 2.0

1 POLICY STATEMENT

Department of Education employees will only undertake travel where necessary to enable the effective implementation of core functions.

2 POLICY RULES

Employees and approvers of official travel must confirm:

- official travel is only undertaken where there is a genuine business need that cannot be met by other means, such as a virtual meeting
- official travel reflects clear value and benefit to the department and the most economical travel arrangements possible have been made
- appropriate approval of travel and comply with:
 - Official Air Travel Procedures;
 - Travel Accommodation, Meals and Other Expense Procedures;
 - Premier's Circular 2021/02: Guidelines for Official Air Travel by Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Government Officers; and
 - Purchase Card Procedures.

Guidance

The Department's Official Travel Policy and procedures aim to ensure that travel delivers public value and benefits to the department whilst maintaining the safety and security of travellers.

In considering a request for future travel, approving officers should assess whether the travel is necessary and give due consideration to alternatives such as web enabled video conferencing, teleconferencing and support from staff on-site at destinations.

Where it is established that travel is required:

- *every effort should be made to minimise the cost of travel and the expenditure should be properly controlled and accounted for*
- *the most economical travel arrangements should be chosen and the principle of "best fare of the day" applied, provided that it also meets the business requirements of the traveller*
- *the travel should cause minimal disruption to educational outcomes*
- *travel for the purposes of professional development should have a demonstrable benefit to the Department*
- *the total cost, including relief staff (if applicable), should be reasonable and justified*
- *the number of employees travelling on any one trip should be minimised.*

The onus for demonstrating that expenditure incurred is reasonable is with the travelling officer and includes the following:

- *travel expenditure would stand up to public scrutiny and probity*
- *ability to justify that the expenditure incurred was for business purposes*
- *travel costs aligned with award conditions and rates.*

Clause 54 of the Public Service Award 1992 and clause 60 of the Teachers Award 1993 provide rates that are to be used as a guide for what is a reasonable level of travel-related expenditure.

All travel activities are conducted in an ethical and transparent manner and comply with the Department's Integrity Framework (staff only).

<undefined>

All policy and procedural statements contained within this document are lawful orders for the purposes of section 80(a) of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA) and are therefore to be observed by all Department of Education employees.

3 RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

Senior Executive Officers, Directors of Education, Principals, Line Managers and Site Managers are responsible for the implementation of the policy.

Line Managers are responsible for compliance monitoring of the policy.

Travellers are responsible for compliance with the policy throughout the travel planning, approval, travelling and post travel activities.

4 SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees.

Guidance:

This policy does not apply to:

- *official travel to a location less than 50 kilometres from the employee's usual place of work or within the Perth metropolitan area, which is the area within a 50 kilometre radius from the Perth City Railway Station*
- *employees travelling to new headquarters to undertake relief duty who are entitled to relieving allowance (not travelling allowance)*
- *subsidised leave travel concessions, return to home and relocation entitlements*
- *motor vehicle allowance claims*
- *students who are travelling. (For information on student travel refer to the Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy).*

5 SUPPORTING PROCEDURES

Official Air Travel Procedures

Travel Accommodation, Meals and Other Expense Procedures

Manage school purchase cards (staff only)

Manage central services purchase cards (staff only)

6 DEFINITIONS

APPROVERS OF OFFICIAL TRAVEL

A senior officer with the authority to approve travel arrangements and expenditure for the employee as defined in the Official Air Travel Procedures and the Accommodation, Allowance and Expense Procedures.

BEST FARE OF THE DAY

Best Fare of the Day means the lowest fare that exists in the marketplace at the time of booking and for which a seat is available, that meets the business requirements of the traveller.

OFFICIAL TRAVEL

Approved travel, specifically undertaken for official work purposes, where public monies are used to fund all or part of the travel.

7 RELATED DOCUMENTS**Relevant legislation or authority**

Premier's Circular 2021/02: Guidelines for Official Air Travel by Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Government Officers
Australian Tax Office (ATO) Reasonable Expense Amounts for Overseas Travel Allowance
Chartering of aircraft on regional regular public transport air routes- Premier's Circular 2021/15
Education Department Ministerial Officers' Salaries, Allowances and Conditions Award 1983
Government Officers' Salaries, Allowances and Conditions Award 1989
Public Service Award 1992
Teachers (Public Sector Primary and Secondary Education) Award 1993
Financial Management Act 2006
School Education Act 1999
Western Australian Procurement Rules

Related Department policies

Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy
Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy
Work Health and Safety Policy

Other documents

Integrity Framework (staff only)
Contact Details of Contracted Travel Provider (staff only)
Financial Management in Schools: Finance and Accounting Manual (staff only)
Financial Management Manual for central and regional services (staff only)
Insurance and Claims Management Guide (staff only)

8 CONTACT INFORMATION

Policy manager: Director Financial Services

Mailbox address: FinancialPolicy.Advice@education.wa.edu.au

9 REVIEW DATE

17 February 2029

10 HISTORY OF CHANGES

Effective date	Last update date	Policy version no.	Ref no.	Notes
21 February 2017	21 February 2017	1.0	D17/0059186	This new policy replaces the Official Air Travel, Domestic Travelling Allowance and International Travelling Allowance policies. Endorsed by the Director General at Corporate Executive on 28 November 2016.
21 February 2017	21 February 2017	1.1	D17/0075999	Minor change to contact information D17/0075988
21 February 2017	10 October 2018	1.2	D18/0437053	Minor changes to update position titles and related policies D18/0437050
21 February 2017	20 January 2021	1.3	D21/0029734	Minor changes to replace the Regional Executive Director position title with Director of Education D20/0647278.
21 February 2017	16 August 2022	1.4	D22/0257850	Minor changes resulting from major review of the Acceptance and Provision of Gifts Policy. D22/0246936
17 February 2026		2.0	D24/0816572	Major change D24/0816572 review of meal reimbursements/ payments and to align with Premiers Circulars 2021/02 & 2021/15 Approved by the DG on 16 January 2026

<undefined>

All policy and procedural statements contained within this document are lawful orders for the purposes of section 80(a) of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA) and are therefore to be observed by all Department of Education employees.





OFFICIAL AIR TRAVEL PROCEDURES

EFFECTIVE DATE: 17 FEBRUARY 2026

VERSION: 2.0

CONTENTS

1	POLICY SUPPORTED	3
2	SCOPE	3
3	PROCEDURES	3
3.1	APPROVAL FOR ALL AIR TRAVEL	3
3.2	TRAVEL NON-EMPLOYEES	5
3.3	SPONSORED TRAVEL BY A THIRD-PARTY ORGANISATION	6
3.4	BOOKING TRAVEL.....	6
3.5	HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS	8
3.6	MEMBERSHIP OF TRAVEL FACILITIES AND SCHEMES.....	8
3.6.1	FREQUENT FLYER POINTS AND INCENTIVE/LOYALTY SCHEMES	8
3.6.2	AIRPORT LOUNGE MEMBERSHIP	9
3.7	USE OF AIR CHARTER SERVICES	9
3.8	VEHICLE HIRE	10
3.9	INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL.....	10
3.9.1	PERSONAL SAFETY	10
3.9.2	INTERNATIONAL SOS CARD	11
3.9.3	STAYING IN TOUCH.....	11
3.9.4	INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OR MEETING AS A DELEGATE OR SPEAKER.....	11
3.9.5	PASSPORTS AND VISAS.....	11
4	DEFINITIONS	12
5	RELATED DOCUMENTS	13
6	CONTACT INFORMATION	14
7	REVIEW DATE	14
8	HISTORY OF CHANGES	14

1 POLICY SUPPORTED

Official Travel Policy

2 SCOPE

These procedures apply to all employees of the Department travelling on official business.

3 PROCEDURES

3.1 APPROVAL FOR ALL AIR TRAVEL

When representing the Department on official business, regardless of whether the employee funds their own travel or not, employees must:

- complete the appropriate travel application form:
 - for domestic air travel, use Appendix B *Travel Application Form – Domestic Air Travel*;
 - for international air travel, use Appendix C *Travel Application Form – International Travel*.
- submit the form for approval to the relevant approval authority listed in Appendix A *Travel Approval Schedule* prior to booking travel
- include any leave that is to be taken before, during or after official travel on the travel application form
- forward a copy of the approved travel application form (either Appendix B or C) to the Financial Reporting Officer, Financial Accounting and Reporting prior to all interstate and international travel
- seek new approval from the approval authority when approved travel arrangements are amended
- within two weeks of the date of return from the travel complete Appendix D *Travel Reporting Declaration* and submit it to the Financial Reporting Officer, Financial Accounting and Reporting for all interstate and international travel
- complete Appendix E *Proposed Sponsored Travel Funded by a Third-Party Form* for any work-related travel that has been offered by a third-party organisation and submit it to the approval authority prior to travel.

For international travel, employees must also:

- complete the Appendix F *International Travel Checklist* and submit it to the approval authority prior to travel
- complete Appendix H *International Travel Security Checklist* and submit it to the approval authority prior to travel
- notify Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTSI) by submitting a copy of the approved Appendix C *Travel Application Form – International Travel*
- contact Business Events Perth, if the officer's travel includes attending an overseas conference or meeting as a delegate or speaker
- complete Appendix G *Statement of Purpose and Benefits to Western Australia*, on the request of the approver of the international travel within two months of the completion of travel.

Line Managers/Principals must:

- only approve employee requests for air travel that are fully compliant with the Department's Official Travel Policy, Official Air Travel Procedures, and Travel Accommodation, Meals and Other Expense Procedures.

Guidance

Travel approval

Refer to Appendix A Travel Approval Schedule, for the appropriate approval authority.

Timeframe for approvals

Air Travel Application Forms (Appendix B or C) should be submitted to the approval authority for approval within the following timeframes:

- For domestic travel - a minimum of three weeks before proposed date of departure.
- For international travel – a minimum of six weeks before proposed date of departure.

In instances where the timeline cannot be met, reasons should be provided to justify a shorter timeline for approval.

School Excursions

Staff participating in school excursions are still subject to the Official Travel Policy and accompanying procedures. Staff are required to complete the relevant travel application form. This is consistent with the Duty of Care for Public School Students Policy and Excursions in Public Schools Procedures, ensuring that all staff travel related to school excursions is properly approved and documented.

Privately funded travel

Where a trip is privately funded but authorised by the Department or school, such as a research excursion, the trip is classed as 'official travel' and the employee is still required to complete the relevant travel application form (Appendix B or Appendix C) and Appendix D Travel Reporting Declaration (for interstate and international travel).

Association work-related travel

For DoE staff travelling for association-related purposes (e.g. professional Principal and MCS Associations) funded by an external organisation, a travel application form is not required. However, staff must seek approval from their line manager to be away from their usual place of work through standard processes. It is the responsibility of staff to determine if there are any association-specific travel policies they need to abide by.

Leave before, during or after official travel

If any recreational leave is taken before, during or after the travel and exceeds four working days in total, then only a one-way fare will be funded by the Department:

- in the case of domestic travel, the Department books only a one-way fare (via travel provider or Regional Travel Agent).
- in the case of international travel, the Department books a return fare but requests separate billing from the travel agent.

The travel path must be the most direct route available to meet the traveller's needs. Any deviation from this route for personal purposes is not considered a business expense, irrespective the cost of the return ticket. The fare for such deviations will be at the cost of the employee.

Travel to and from Australian Territories

For approval and reporting purposes, travel to and from Indian Ocean Territories such as Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands is considered intrastate travel.

Group travel

When travelling domestically in a group, the lead traveller for the group can submit a single air travel application form on behalf of the group as long as all the travel itineraries are the same. If travel itineraries differ, then separate Travel Application Forms (Appendix B or C) are required. This is only applicable to intrastate and interstate (domestic) travel and excludes international travel.

The number travelling together in a group need to be considered reasonable and justified based on the requirements and nature of the event.

Emergency response

For Level 2 incidents, the Incident Support Coordinator is authorised to submit a group travel application for approval on behalf of the Incident Support Team. Similarly, for Level 3 incidents, the Incident Commander is authorised to submit a group travel application form for approval on behalf of the Incident Management Team.

For more information on incident management, please refer to the Incident Management on Department of Education Sites Policy.

Travel Reporting Declaration form (Appendix D)

The Travel Reporting Declaration Form is to be completed by the travelling officer or a nominee within two weeks of the return from the trip. However, for school based employees, if a trip is taken during a term break, the Declaration Form should be submitted on return to school.

If actual travel differed from the planned approved travel, the travelling officer must provide a brief explanation in the Declaration Form. The reasons for the change in travel may be for unforeseen reasons, for e.g. weather-related delays, accidents or transport disruptions, illness/personal circumstances preventing travel or other unexpected events impacting travel plans.

The information contained in the Travel Reporting Declaration is used to prepare a quarterly summary report of interstate and international travel for the Director General. The quarterly summary report of international travel is then submitted to the Minister's Office for publishing and tabling in Parliament.

Refer to the Premier's Circular on official air travel for more information.

Completion of forms

The forms contained within the appendices include relevant contact details and email addresses for their submission (where applicable).

To assist in completing forms and claims, you may consider keeping a travel diary recording times, dates and places of travel.

3.2 TRAVEL FOR NON-EMPLOYEES

Line managers and principals must ensure that non-employees travelling in an official capacity using Department funding complete the *Non-Employee Travel Form (Appendix J)* and the *Terms and Conditions for Non-Employees (Appendix J.4.)*. A line manager/sponsoring officer (DoE responsible Officer) must coordinate and submit the relevant forms on behalf of the non-employee, as the non-employees' access to DoE's policies, forms and the email system may be limited. In addition, the DoE responsible Officer's written justification is required for any non-employee travel to be paid for by the Department.

For interstate and international travel, the *Appendix J.2. Air Travel Reporting Declaration for Non-Employees* must also be completed.

Guidance

Non-employee travel includes individuals such as advisors, consultants and contractors (including those with a valid EZ-number) who are travelling on official business funded by the Department.

Although non-employees are not covered under Department industrial awards (i.e. not eligible for staff travel/meal allowances), they must agree to abide by the Department's Official Travel Policy and Procedures via the Appendix J.4. – Terms and Conditions for Non-Employees form.

Where it is more efficient and effective (e.g. the non-employee is travelling with a Department employee on the same itinerary), travel may be booked and paid for by the Department. Otherwise, travel costs should be factored into the non-employee's contract or fee arrangement. The DoE responsible Officer must provide justification for the non-employee travel within Appendix J – Non-Employee Travel Form.

Non-employees, for e.g. parent volunteers travelling on overnight school excursions are outside the scope of this policy. For more information, please refer to the Excursion in Public Schools Procedures.

3.3 SPONSORED TRAVEL BY A THIRD-PARTY ORGANISATION

Employees must:

- not accept sponsored travel for an event or another purpose if:
 - it places them in a position of actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest
 - there is not a legitimate business benefit.

When accepting travel sponsored by a third-party organisation, employees must:

- adhere to the policy and procedures for official travel
- complete Appendix E Proposed Sponsored Travel by a Third-Party Form and obtain approval before accepting the travel.

Guidance

Sponsored travel is classified as a gift if it is offered personally to an employee, their spouse or dependents for personal or recreation purposes. In this case, employees must follow the procedures outlined in the Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy.

3.4 BOOKING TRAVEL

When booking domestic airline travel, employees must:

- obtain appropriate approval for official travel before booking or incurring any travel expenses, including airfares
- use available flight credits, where possible
- book and manage travel arrangements through the Government's contracted travel provider and the travel provider's online booking tool, where available (note: a Regional Travel Agent in the prescribed zone may also be used where applicable)
- not use online booking platforms other than the Government's contracted Travel Provider.

When booking international airline travel, employees must:

- use the Government's contracted travel provider;
- use a travel agent; or
- book directly with the carrier.

Economy class is to be used for both domestic and international air travel, with the following exceptions:

- travel by the Director General
- one additional officer accompanying the Director General (if required) to facilitate the performance of duties at the destination.

Guidance

Booking travel arrangements

To avoid incurring unrecoverable costs, full approval is required before booking airfares. Refer to Appendix A Travel Approval Schedule, for the appropriate approval authority.

The most cost-effective and efficient way to book and manage travel arrangements is through the Government's contracted travel provider or Regional Travel Agent. Using the online tool, rather than speaking directly to the booking service's staff, can significantly reduce transaction costs. For details of the Government's contracted travel provider, please refer to Access the Government Contract Directory – Education Edition (staff only).

Flexible airfares

If travel arrangements are subject to change, it is advisable to book flexible airfares, which allow for amendments or refunds, instead of non-flexible fares.

Payment for travel bookings

It is preferred and most efficient to pay for all Department bookings through the travel provider using an approved purchase card.

However, if a purchase card is not available or if the total booking cost (e.g. for significant group travel) exceeds the purchase card's threshold/limit, the travel provider can issue a tax invoice for payment.

International travel bookings

A Common Use Agreement is available for international travel bookings, for details please refer to Access the Government Contract Directory – Education Edition (staff only). However, it is not mandatory to use this contract for international travel bookings. Bookings may be made with other travel agents or directly with the carrier in accordance with the Western Australian Procurement Rules.

Travel booking officer

Business unit managers and principals may appoint a travel booking officer or travellers may handle their own bookings.

- *travel booking officers are encouraged to attend training sessions on the travel provider portal and online booking tool. These sessions offer guidance on viewing live Ticket Credits and filtering by Cost Centre levels to locate available credits.*
- *for access and post-training queries, please refer to the contact details under 'Travel Management Services' in the Access the Government Contract Directory (staff only).*

Unused flight credits

Unused flight credits are public funds and must be used for official travel where possible.

- *If an airfare is non-refundable, but the ticket allows for a credit, this can be held with the travel provider and applied to a new booking.*

- *Flight credits are valid for 12 months from the date of the original booking and all travel is to be completed within this period.*
- *If the officer is unlikely to travel within the 12-month period, a name change can be requested for a fee.*

Buying website - Contracting arrangements

It is advisable to check contract information relating to Travel Providers and Vehicle Rental Providers via the following link [Access the Government Contract Directory \(staff only\)](#).

Travel insurance

Insurance cover is automatically provided for all employees (with an active E-number) travelling on approved official Department business, regardless of the funding source. Non-employees (active EZ-number) or no Department employee number are not covered under the RiskCover travel insurance arrangements.

For employees cover commences from the place of departure and continues on a 24 hours a day basis until the employee returns from the approved official travel trip.

Cover for employees on approved travel includes periods when they are not solely engaged in Department business, provided that recreational leave taken does not exceed two days across the duration of the trip. If recreational leave exceeds two days, the employee must arrange personal travel insurance to cover the leave period (including the two days of permitted leave).

For more information on travel cover for employees, refer to [RiskCover's Travel Certificate of Currency](#).

[Non-employees are responsible for organising their own travel insurance cover.](#)

3.5 HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Line managers and principals must:

- consider the Department's Work, Health and Safety policies
- inform travelling employees that they are responsible for adhering to the Department's Work, Health and Safety policies during their travels.

Employees must:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety. For more information, refer to the [Work Health and Safety Policy](#).

Guidance

Policy: [Work Health and Safety Policy](#)

Procedures: [Manage work health and safety risks and hazards](#)

3.6 MEMBERSHIP OF TRAVEL FACILITIES AND SCHEMES

3.6.1 FREQUENT FLYER POINTS AND INCENTIVE/LOYALTY SCHEMES

Employees must not:

- accumulate frequent flyer points in the course of official air travel;
- select an airline for official travel based on frequent flyer points or other incentive/loyalty schemes.

3.6.2 AIRPORT LOUNGE MEMBERSHIP

If employees are required to undertake official international or interstate travel and wish to acquire airport lounge membership, they must:

- apply for membership by completing Appendix I [Airport Lounge Membership Application Form](#) and submit it to their line manager for consideration, followed by approval from the Director General.
- forward a copy of the approved original Appendix I [Airport Lounge Membership Application Form](#) to the Financial Reporting Officer, Financial Accounting and Reporting (traveldeclarations@education.wa.edu.au)
- include details of the approved Airport Lounge Membership on the relevant travel application form (Appendix B and C).

Guidance

Access to airline lounge facilities, frequent flyer schemes or similar loyalty programs may influence the choice of airline for official travel, potentially undermining the 'Best Fare of the Day' principle.

The Director General is responsible for determining whether to cover the cost of officers joining or maintaining these memberships.

Department-funded airport lounge memberships may be considered for officers who are required to travel:

- on long haul international flights
- at least eight times annually for interstate travel.

Intrastate travel is not deemed appropriate for airport lounge memberships.

The preferred membership is Priority Pass Lounge Membership, as it is not affiliated with any specific airline and will not influence airline selection or compromise the 'Best Fare of the Day' principle. For more information, refer to: [Airport Lounge Membership | Priority Pass](#)

If Qantas Club membership is approved, employees must join under the WA Government Corporate Scheme (quote scheme number 591730). Justification is required if applying for an alternative membership.

3.7 USE OF AIR CHARTER SERVICES

Prior to using Air Charter Services, line managers and principals must:

- obtain approval in accordance with [Appendix A - Travel Approval Schedule](#)
- ensure that the use of air charter services complies with the:
 - [Premier's Circular-\(2021/15\) Chartering of Aircraft on Regional Regular Public Transport Air Routes](#)
 - [Western Australian Procurement Rules](#)

Guidance

Regular public transport air services should be used when travelling intrastate to regional and remote communities. However, exemptions to this policy may be granted under the following conditions:

- the cost per passenger for a charter flight is less than the cost per passenger to use a public service
- there is an emergency situation
- normal commercial air services are unavailable or travel plans cannot be adjusted to suit commercial schedules
- other means of transport are impractical, uneconomical or unsafe.

Except in emergencies or for humanitarian reasons, only employees approved for travel are permitted to use pre-arranged charter services. Where appropriate, arrangements may be made with other government agencies or private organisations to share a charter service.

Family members of an employee based in a remote area may be allowed to travel on charter service, provided approval is obtained from the appropriate authority for air charters.

The charter service company is to provide a passenger manifest along with their invoice when it is submitted for payment.

3.8 VEHICLE HIRE

If a vehicle is required for domestic travel in conjunction with a flight, employees must:

- hire vehicles in accordance with Western Australian Procurement Rules
- comply with the Manage driver and vehicle safety policy
identify the vehicle usage on the relevant and approved travel application form (Appendix B and C).

Guidance

For guidance on managing driving and vehicle safety, whether using your own vehicle, a leased vehicle or a Department-provided vehicle, refer to the Manage driver and vehicle safety.

The approval authority for the vehicle hire is outlined in Appendix A Travel Approval Schedule.

For further information, refer to link Access the Government Contract Directory.

3.9 INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

In addition to the previous requirements, employees travelling internationally must comply with the following requirements.

3.9.1 PERSONAL SAFETY

Employees must:

- consider security and travel advice provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Smart Traveller
- not travel on official business to countries or areas where DFAT has issued a "Reconsider your need to travel" or "Do Not Travel" warning.

Guidance

When undertaking international travel, employees are responsible for their own personal safety, as outlined in the Work Health and Safety Policy.

The Smart Traveller website provides useful advice to help travellers understand and mitigate risks, including advice on avoiding and handling difficult situations. Prior to travel, employees are recommended to:

- complete the Smart Traveller travel checklist
- record the Emergency consular assistance details and note the assistance offered in the Consular Services Charter
- review the Travel advisories for advice on the planned travel destination
- consider the General travel advice which covers a range of travel topics.

3.9.2 INTERNATIONAL SOS CARD

Employees must obtain an International SOS card prior to travelling internationally.

Guidance

The International SOS card provides travellers with access to worldwide medical, security, travel and emergency assistance during an approved overseas work trip.

A digital format of the SOS card can be obtained from Access Emergency Assistance from Overseas (SOS).

Instructions should be followed to obtain the card before travel departure.

Employees will need to make their own arrangements for additional cover if a trip is extended for personal travel.

The SOS also includes cover for leisure activities undertaken during the trip, provided these activities do not exceed two days within any leave period taken during the trip.

3.9.3 STAYING IN TOUCH

Employees travelling internationally must:

- ensure their emergency contacts details are up to date in the Department's Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS) (staff only).
- follow the processes outlined in Manage working alone risks (staff only).

Guidance

To review emergency contact details in HRMIS refer to emergency contact details.

Travellers need to consider the most appropriate method of maintaining communications whilst travelling overseas. To acquire a work phone or enable a work phone for use overseas refer to mobile services and handsets.

3.9.4 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OR MEETING AS A DELEGATE OR SPEAKER

Employees travelling internationally to attend an international conference or meeting as a delegate or speaker must contact Business Events Perth and provide details of the travel prior to departure.

Guidance

Refer to Premier's Circular 2021/02: Guidelines for Official Air Travel by Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Government Officers section 11 for contact details.

3.9.5 PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Employees travelling internationally must:

- have a valid passport and visa for travelling to the intended destination and returning to Australia.

Guidance

Travellers are responsible for arranging any necessary visas. Information is available from DFAT at Getting a foreign visa.

Travellers are responsible for obtaining a valid passport. Information is available from DFAT Smart Traveller Passport Services.

Travellers should consider whether an official passport may be appropriate. Refer to Premier's Circular 2021/02: Guidelines for Official Air Travel by Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Government Officers section 14.

4 DEFINITIONS

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

A senior officer with the authority to approve travel arrangements and expenditure for the employee. Refer to *Appendix A Travel Approval Schedule*.

BEST FARE OF THE DAY

Best Fare of the Day means the lowest fare that exists in the marketplace at the time of booking and for which a seat is available, that meets the business requirements of the traveller.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest arises in circumstances where an employee's performance of public duties is, or could be, influenced, or is viewed as influenced, by the employee's personal or private interests. For more details please refer to the *Conflict of Interest Policy* (staff only).

DOMESTIC TRAVEL

Includes travel within the state (intrastate) and travel between states (interstate) of Australia.

INTRASTATE TRAVEL

Refers to travel within the same state or territory.

For the purposes of travel approval, the following applies:

1. Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands: Travel to and from these islands is treated as intrastate travel.
2. Uluru/Yulara: Travel to and from schools in the remote areas of Western Australia via Uluru/Yulara is considered intrastate travel, provided no official business is conducted in another state or territory.
3. Northern Territory (School Excursions): School excursions that involve crossing into the Northern Territory but do not involve an overnight stay are considered intrastate travel, since the final destination remains within Western Australia.

INTERSTATE TRAVEL

Travel to other Australian state or territories outside of Western Australia.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Travel overseas, outside Australia.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Department of Education employee self-service system for travel claims and personal details including next of kin.

LEGITIMATE BUSINESS BENEFIT

A legitimate business benefit furthers the conduct of official business, educational or other legitimate organisational goals and supports government policy objectives and priorities.

NON-EMPLOYEE

Anyone not directly employed by the Department under one of the industrial awards, who travels on official Department business (e.g. advisors, consultants, contractors).

OFFICIAL TRAVEL

Is approved travel by staff members and non-employees where public monies are used to fund all or part of the travel.

PRIVATELY FUNDED TRAVEL

For the purpose of air travel booking, privately funded travel means the cost of travel is fully paid for by the traveller.

SPONSORED TRAVEL FUNDED BY A THIRD-PARTY ORGANISATION

Sponsored Travel is any work-related travel expense that has been fully or partially paid directly by a third party or for which you have been reimbursed directly by a third party.

If the travel provided is not work related, this would be considered a gift and employees should refer to the [Gifts Benefits and Hospitality Policy](#).

TRAVEL BOOKING OFFICER

An officer appointed to organise all airfare bookings for a directorate, cost centre and/or school.

5 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Relevant legislation or authority

[Access the Government Contract Directory \(staff only\)](#)

[Australian Tax Office \(ATO\) Reasonable Amounts for Overseas Travel Allowance](#)

[Chartering of Aircraft on regional Regular Public Transport Air Routes – Premiers Circular 2021/15](#)

[Education Department Ministerial Officers' Salaries, Allowances and Conditions Award 1983](#)

[Government Officers' Salaries, Allowances and Conditions Award 1989](#)

[Premier's Circular 2021/02: Guidelines for Official Air Travel by Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Government Officers](#)

Public Service Award 1992

Teachers (Public Sector Primary and Secondary Education) Award 1993

Related Department policies

Gifts Benefits and Hospitality Policy

Work Health and Safety Policy

Conflict of Interest Policy

Other documents

Travel Accommodation, Meals and Other Expense Procedures

Contact Details of Contracted Travel Provider

Financial Management in Schools: Finance and Accounting (staff only)

Finance Management Manual for Central and Regional Office

Insurance and Claims Management Guide (staff only)

Understand purchase card holder obligations (staff only)

6 CONTACT INFORMATION

Policy manager: Director Financial Services

Email: FinancialPolicy.Advice@education.wa.edu.au

7 REVIEW DATE

17 February 2029

8 HISTORY OF CHANGES

Effective date	Last update date	Policy version no	Ref no	Notes
21 February 2017	21 February 2017	1.0	D17/0059194	These new procedures support the Official Air Travel Policy that replaces the Official Air Travel, Domestic Travelling Allowance and International Travelling Allowance policies. Endorsed by Director General at Corporate Executive on 28 November 2016.
21 February 2017	21 February 2017	1.1	D17/0060380	Minor changes under s3.3 to include Premier's Circular on use of air charter services D17/0060301

21 February 2017	21 February 2017	1.2	D17/0076046	Minor typos and corrective changes D17/0076028 and D17/0076010
21 February 2017	23 February 2017	1.3	D17/0080402	Minor typos and corrective changes D17/0080388
21 February 2017	24 May 2017	1.4	D17/0221844	Minor changes to Appendix A, Appendix C and Appendix D. D17/0221842
21 February 2017	28 August 2017	1.5	D17/0367779	Minor changes to email address in Appendices C, D and K. D17/0365861
21 February 2017	10 July 2018	1.6	D18/0244574	Minor changes in Appendix A and Appendix C D18/0244572, and Appendix K D18/0297752
21 February 2017	10 October 2018	1.7	D18/0437054	Minor changes to update position titles, related policies and contact information D18/0437050
21 February 2017	16 October 2019	1.8	D19/0477174	Minor changes to update appendices D19/0477140.
21 February 2017	20 January 2021	1.9	D21/0029732	Minor changes to replace the Regional Executive Director position title with Director of Education D20/0647278.
21 February 2017	16 August 2022	1.10	D22/0257843	Minor changes resulting from major review of the Acceptance and Provision of Gifts Policy. D22/0246936
21 February 2017	23 August 2022	1.11	D22/0639122	Minor changes to Appendices A, C, K on the approval process for overseas travel D22/0637671
21 February 2017	22 March 2023	1.12	D23/1022055	Replaces Appendix C as per D23/0984083
17 February 2026		2.0	D24/0890707	Major change D23/1852914 review of meal reimbursements/ payments and to align with Premiers Circulars 2021/02 & 2021/15 Approved by the DG on 16 January 2026



Department of
Education

TRAVEL ACCOMMODATION, MEALS AND OTHER EXPENSE PROCEDURES

EFFECTIVE: 17 FEBRUARY

2026 VERSION: 2.0

CONTENTS

1	POLICY SUPPORTED	3
2	SCOPE	3
3	PROCEDURES	3
3.1	TRAVELLING EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES	3
3.2	LINE MANAGERS/ PRINCIPALS RESPONSIBILITIES	5
3.3	ACCOMMODATION EXPENSES	6
3.4	MEAL EXPENSES	6
3.5	INCIDENTAL ALLOWANCES	7
4	DEFINITIONS	8
5	RELATED DOCUMENTS	9
6	CONTACT INFORMATION	9
7	REVIEW DATE	10
8	HISTORY OF CHANGES	10

1 POLICY SUPPORTED

Official Travel Policy

2 SCOPE

These procedures apply to all employees of the Department travelling on official business.

Guidance

The procedures cover accommodation, meal expenses and incidental allowances for domestic and international travel. They do not cover procedures for motor vehicle allowance claims.

3 PROCEDURES

3.1 TRAVELLING EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees must:

- Prior to travel, complete the applicable travel application form and obtain approval from an approving officer in accordance with Appendix A - Travel Approval Schedule:
 - for non-air overnight travel, please completed Appendix E – Non-Air Travel Application Form if applicable (refer to guidance notes)
 - for domestic air travel, please complete Appendix B – Travel Application Form – Domestic Air Travel (employees must refer to and comply with the Department's Official Air Travel Procedures)
 - for international travel, please complete Appendix C – Travel Application Form – International Travel (employees must refer to and comply with the Department's Official Air Travel Procedures)
- carry out purchase card acquittals and approvals on a timely basis in accordance with purchase card procedures. For schools refer to Manage school purchase cards (staff only) and for central office staff refer to Manage central services purchase cards (staff only)
- submit all incidental or travel allowance claims in HRMIS within two weeks of trip completion. For school-based staff completing a trip during school holidays, claims must be submitted within two weeks of returning to school.
- not use a purchase card for personal purposes. For details, refer to Understand purchase card holder obligations (staff only).

Guidance

Non-Air Travel Application Form (Appendix E)

This form has been introduced to provide oversight of non-air travel and ensure compliance with the official travel policy and relevant procedures. It serves as a record of travel details for accountability purposes. While completing this form is not mandatory, the form content is and must still be documented and retained in an alternative format, for e.g. in an email,

Employees whose regular job duties require frequent travel within their region are not required to complete the Non-Air Travel Form or equivalent for these trips. This applies only to non-air travel directly related to their regular duties and does not extend to infrequent or out-of-the-norm travel. Travellers must ensure that all travel still complies with other applicable policies and approvals.

Principals are not required to complete the Non-Air Travel Form for intrastate overnight business travel involving fewer than three nights of accommodation. For trips exceeding three nights, approval must be sought from the line manager (Assistant Director of Education or higher) prior to travel. The regional office reserves the right to lower the number of nights that necessitate completing and submitting the Non-Air Travel Form (or equivalent) for approval.

The use of the Non-Air Travel Form for all other employees is not required where the same details and approvals are documented in an alternative written format and retained for audit purposes (achieving the same objective as the form).

Requests for overnight travel should be submitted at least two weeks prior to travel, with justification provided if this timeframe cannot be met.

Purchase cards

Frequent travellers (staff that travel five or more times per calendar year) are strongly encouraged to obtain a Department purchase card.

Where an employee holds a purchase card and the merchant accepts card payments, the employee is strongly encouraged to use it for meal expenditure related to business travel.

Purchase cards must not be used for personal expenses.

Meal and Incidentals

Where an employee is entitled to a travel allowance under the Teachers (Public Sector Primary and Secondary Education) Award 1993 (TA), Public Service Award 1992 (PSA) or applicable industrial agreements, the decision as to what travel is approved and how travel costs are met is that of the department, and not the employee.

The travelling officer is responsible for ensuring that all incurred expenses are reasonable, which includes:

- the ability to justify that the expenditure incurred was for business purposes*
- ensuring travel costs are in accordance with award conditions and rates.*

Where an employee uses a purchase card for travelling meal expenses, they are not entitled to claim any residual from the full allowance as identified in the TA or PSA or receive reimbursement for items which have already been paid for by the department.

Meals are not to be purchased on purchase card or allowances claimed where the cost has been covered by other means. For example claiming a meal allowance when attending a professional development course where meals were provided.

It is not appropriate when using a purchase card to participate in tipping or gratuities.

Purchase Card Acquittals

Purchase card acquittals must contain sufficient information to enable the manager to efficiently and effectively review purchases. This includes providing a copy of the approved travel form and itinerary, ensuring the dates align. While optional, Appendix I – Travel Expense Log for Purchase Card Acquittals of Meals and Incidentals is available to assist staff in accurately recording and acquitting travel meal and incidental expenses.

3.2 LINE MANAGER/ PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Travel requests must be approved by line managers prior to any travel being undertaken or expenses being incurred, ensuring compliance with the travel policy.

In order to approve travel expenditure made by purchase card and /or travel allowances claimed through HRMIS. Line managers and principals must ensure the following:

- claims are for official purposes
- travel application has been approved
- accommodation is within the applicable award rates
- number of meals claimed aligns with the approved travel itinerary
- meal expense claims are reasonable
- alcohol is not claimed
- employee cannot claim an allowance through HRMIS if the meal and/or incidental expenses are provided as part of the trip or purchased using a purchase card.

Guidance

The manager is to exercise discretion when deciding whether to approve travel expenditure.

The officer's relevant award entitlements are to be used for guidance only purposes:

- *for domestic travel the relevant award (Teachers Award 1993 or Public Service Award 1992)*
- *for international travel the Australian Tax Office (ATO) Reasonable Expense Amounts for Overseas Travel Allowance rates*
- *expenditure does not include items not ordinarily required for the purposes of sustenance such as alcohol.*

Any higher-than-expected expenditure, should be documented and justified as part of the employee's support for consideration by the line manager. The following procedure is to be followed:

- *the employee must notify their line manager as soon as they realise that their travel expenses will exceed the approved budget.*
- *within five working days of returning, the employee must provide a written justification for higher-than-expected expenditure, either in writing or via email, with all relevant receipts and explanations attached. This documentation must be retained for audit purposes.*
- *the line manager reviews the justification and supporting documentation to determine if the expenses were reasonable and unavoidable. The line manager either approves or rejects the additional expenditure. If uncertain, they may escalate the decision to a higher authority. Where needed, cases can be reported to Standards and Integrity.*
- *any purchases that are excessive or not supported are deemed personal expenses and must be paid back to the Department via standard procedures. For school staff – please refer to Report personal use of a school purchase card (staff only) and for central services staff, please refer to Report personal use of a central services purchase card (staff only).*
- *the employee submits the expenses (purchase card acquital or application for reimbursement of expenses) through the standard expense management process.*
- *all related documentation must be retained according to the department's policies.*

For allowance rates please refer to Apply for travel allowance or a travel advance (staff only).

Refer to the following for the most frequently used allowance rates:

Appendix H Teachers Travel Allowances

Appendix F Public Service Officers Travel Allowances

Appendix G ATO Reasonable Amounts for Overseas Travel Expenses

3.3 ACCOMMODATION EXPENSES

Employees must:

- Make or confirm accommodation bookings after approval of the relevant travel application and prior to official travel.
- accommodation bookings must:
 - align with award conditions/rates and if exceeded justification must be provided by the traveller and approved by the relevant approval authority
 - paid for by either purchase card or, only where it cannot be paid by purchase card, direct billing to the Department or school for payment.
- arrange separate billing and personal payment for accommodation costs incurred during approved recreational leave while travelling.

Guidance

An administration officer can make bookings for approved travel for flights, accommodation and car hire on behalf of the employee.

Where the travelling officer has approval to utilise non-commercial accommodation such as staying with family and friends it is considered that the travelling officer is fully responsible for their own accommodation costs.

The relevant travel application form (Appendix B, C and E) requires approval prior to accommodation bookings being made. The appropriate form requires an estimate of costs. The manager has the discretion to allow an increase in cost up to a nominated tolerance prior to re-application being essential.

Employees are entitled to a reasonable standard of accommodation when travelling. When approving accommodation, line managers should have regard to economy, functionality and safety and take into account proximity of the accommodation to the location of work being performed. Refer to Appendices F, G and H for guidance on reasonable accommodation costs when using a purchase card.

Refer to Appendix E Non-Air Travel Application Form, Appendix B Travel Application Form – Domestic Air Travel and Appendix C – Travel Application Form – International Travel.

Short Stay Accommodation

Whenever possible, accommodation bookings should be made through the Department's Travel Service Provider or directly with the hotel/motel. The use of short stay accommodation such as Airbnb and Stayz should only be considered where booking is not available through the Travel Service Provider or directly with the hotel/motel.

3.4 MEAL EXPENSES

Employees must:

- select one payment method for travel-related meal expenses for the entire trip – either Department purchase card or HRMIS travel meal allowance and apply it consistently for the duration of the trip. Mixing methods within the same trip is not permitted.
- retain proof of purchase documents to substantiate the purchase of meals

- not claim a meal allowance or reimbursement for any meals that has already been provided or paid for by the Department (e.g. included in conference fees or accommodation packages)
- not double-claim, i.e. where a meal is paid using a purchase card, the employee must not also claim the travel allowance or seek reimbursement for that meal
- during employee recreational leave periods pay for any meals as a personal expense.

An employee who holds a purchase card is strongly encouraged to use the purchase card for their travel-related meal expenditure, subject to the following: official travel exceeds a radius of 50 kilometres from the employee's usual place of work

- *if travel is for part of a day, calculation of allowed meal expenses is as per the part-day formula in the relevant award. Travel times are to be recorded to inform this calculation.*
- *meals have not already been provided (for example at professional development or breakfast as part of the accommodation package)*
- *meal expenses have not been paid via another method such as direct billing.*

Reasonable costs for a meal are guided by the officer's relevant entitlement and are not definitive limits (please refer to Appendix F, G and H for guidance):

- *for domestic travel the relevant award (Teachers Award 1993 or Public Service Award 1992)*
- *for international travel the Australian Tax Office (ATO) Reasonable Expense Amounts for Overseas Travel Allowance rate*
- *and does not include items such as alcohol.*

For clarification, 'per annum' is considered to be the school calendar year.

In instances where the traveller does not use the purchase card for their travel-related meal expenditure, such as when an EFTPOS machine is unavailable, they may personally pay for their meal and submit a request for reimbursement. Travellers who use the purchase card for meals during a trip are not eligible to claim meal allowances. Only the purchase card expenses or approved reimbursements where the purchase card could not be used are allowed.

Expenditure reimbursement is available through:

- *Central and regional services staff refer to Claim out-of-pocket work expenses in Oracle Financials (staff only)*
- *School staff refer to School payment voucher form (staff only)*

Employees who travel frequently (five or more times per annum) are strongly encouraged to obtain a purchase card. Line managers may recommend applying for a purchase card where travel become frequent to streamline payment and acquittals.

If two officers are travelling together and only one holds a purchase card, then the officer with the purchase card may cover the meal expenses for both the travelling officers as long as prior approval has been obtained from the line manager responsible for purchase card acquittals.

3.5 INCIDENTAL ALLOWANCES

Employees must:

- only claim the incidental allowance where accommodation is provided on business travel
- use HRMIS to claim the incidental allowance
- use a purchase card for additional incidental expenses that are above the allowance (where required and justifiable)

- exercise economy when incurring additional incidental expenses
- make an expense claim for additional incidental expenses that are above the allowance only where the traveller does not hold a purchase card
- confirm the additional incidental expenses relate directly to the business travel and provide proof of purchase documents to substantiate the additional incidentals
- pay for any incidental expenses as a personal expense during employee recreational leave periods.

Guidance

Purchase cards should only be used where incidental expenses are in excess of award rates.

Receipts are not required when claiming the incidental allowance unless they are additional incidentals that are in excess of the award rates. If additional incidentals are claimed, then the total receipts of all incidental and additional incidental expenses must be retained and only the residual amount of the total incidentals less the incidentals allowance paid should be claimed.

Additional incidental expenses are minor but necessary expenses associated with your work-related travel – for example, a car parking fee, bus ticket or a charge for using the phone or internet for work-related purposes at your overnight accommodation. Items of a personal nature should not be included, for e.g. toiletries, hotel room entertainment or snack bar.

Travellers who do not hold a purchase card refer to the following to claim additional expenses:

- *Central and regional services staff Claim out-of-pocket work expenses in Oracle Financials (staff only) or via an expense claim form*
- *School staff School payment voucher form (staff only)*

4 DEFINITIONS

DOMESTIC TRAVEL

Includes travel within the state (intrastate) and travel between states (interstate) of Australia.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Travel overseas, outside Australia.

DOMESTIC TRAVELLING ALLOWANCES

Travelling allowances received by staff members as per the relevant award when on official travel within Australia.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLING ALLOWANCES

Travelling allowances received by staff as per the Australian Tax Office (ATO) Reasonable Expense Amounts when on official travel outside Australia.

MEAL

Refers to a substantial amount of food for sustenance, consumed at regular intervals throughout the day (breakfast, lunch or dinner) within reasonable expenditure limits. The applicable employee award rates serve as a guide only and are not strict limits. Light snacks and alcohol do not qualify as a meal or part thereof.

OFFICIAL TRAVEL

Is approved travel by staff members and non-employees where public monies are used to fund all or part of the travel.

ORACLE FINANCIALS

Oracle Financials is also known as Oracle E-Business Suite.

Central and regional services staff can claim out-of-pocket expenses by creating an expense report in Oracle E-Business.

REASONABLE COSTS

Clause 54 of the Public Service Award 1992 and clause 60 of the Teachers Award provide rates that are to be used as a guide for what is a reasonable level of domestic travel-related expenditure.

5 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Relevant legislation or authority

Education Department Ministerial Officers' Salaries, Allowances and Conditions Award 1983

Government Officers' Salaries, Allowances and Conditions Award 1989

Teachers (Public Sector Primary and Secondary Education) Award 1993

Related Department policies

Gifts Benefits and Hospitality Policy

Other Documents

Official Air Travel Procedures

Code of Conduct

Financial Management in Schools: Finance and Accounting (staff only)

Understand purchase card holder obligations (staff only)

6 CONTACT INFORMATION

Policy manager: Director Financial Services

Policy contact: FinancialPolicy.Advice@education.wa.edu.au

7 REVIEW DATE

17 February 2029

8 HISTORY OF CHANGES

Effective date	Last update date	Policy version no	Ref no	Notes
21 February 2017		1.0	D17/0059199	These new procedures support the Official Air Travel Policy that replaces the Official Air Travel, Domestic Travelling Allowance and International Travelling Allowance policies. Endorsed by Director General at Corporate Executive on 28 November 2016
21 February 2017	21 February 2017	1.1	D17/0076066	Minor typo change D17/0076028
21 February 2017	23 February 2017	1.2	D17/0080458	Minor typos and corrective changes D17/0080388
21 February 2017	4 October 2018	1.3	D18/0437055	Minor change to position titles D18/0437050
17 February 2026		2.0	D24/0890718	Major change D23/1852914 review of meal reimbursements/ payments and to align with Premiers Circulars 2021/02 & 2021/15. Approved by the DG on 16 January 2026