

1. Policy and Principles

1.1. About this Document

1. This manual contains the following:
 - a) **ONR's Business Expenses Policy**, which explains in detail what can be claimed for in respect of business travel costs or other expenses incurred in the course of your duties or working arrangements
 - b) **ONR's Business Travel Policy**, which clarifies what is expected of staff and their Career and Development Managers (CDMs) in both planning and undertaking journeys on official duties away from the office, both in the UK and abroad
 - c) **ONR's Hybrid Working Policy**, which has been established as a complementary expenses policy that reflects ONR's ongoing support to allow staff to work flexibly
2. The manual also details what can be claimed for and how to claim it.

1.2. Business Expenses Policy

3. Our expenses policy provides for staff who undertake travel which takes them away from their permanent office in the course of their duties to be reimbursed for the actual cost of any relevant expenditure up to the policy limit. The policy satisfies HMRC's requirements and means that staff are covered by an HMRC exemption from tax liability.
4. The policy requires staff to claim only for costs that are:
 - a) wholly and necessarily incurred in the course of their official duties.
 - b) reasonable and up to the limits detailed in the policy.
5. All staff are required to retain receipts as evidence of expenditure for audit and for taxation purposes and to keep them for three years after the date of travel (refer to 9.b)).

1.3. Business Expenses Principles

6. The following principles should be adhered to at all times:
 - a) All expenses claims should be made in accordance with ONR's Expenses policy and procedures.
 - b) payments can be made outside of the standard Policy in exceptional circumstances where there is a demonstrable business need and a

value for money case to do so. Any tax liability arising will be dealt with in accordance with HMRC rules.

- c) the final decision on whether costs can be met and/or reimbursed in exceptional circumstances rests with the Finance Director as part of their responsibilities for ensuring financial propriety and protecting the Chief Nuclear Inspector/Chief Executive (CNI/CE), who is ultimately accountable for ONR's budget and expenditure.
 - d) a robust procedure is established for dealing with amounts claimed and paid which do not comply with ONR's Business Expenses Policy.
 - e) You cannot claim for journeys or parts of journeys for which you hold a season ticket you had already purchased for your own travel purposes. However, if you travel on business regularly to the same place, it may be more cost effective for you to purchase a season ticket for the journey. More information on how you can do this is included in paragraph 64.
7. HMRC has a simple rule: if an employer provides expenses and benefits to staff, they are subject to both income tax and national insurance contributions unless they are covered by an exemption. To qualify for an exemption, employers must either:
- a) pay a flat rate to employees as part of their earnings – this must be either a benchmark rate or a special ('bespoke') rate approved by HMRC, or
 - b) pay back the employee's actual costs.
8. ONR adopts the second method (b) and reimburses the actual cost up to a specified limit.
9. Where a benefit is paid to staff which is not exempt, the individual is liable for tax and under HMRC rules, ONR is required to keep a record of every such expense and benefit. These records must include details of when and why the employee travelled and should be supported by receipts for the expenditure incurred.
These records are obtained from:
- a) detailed expenses claims being submitted through i-Expenses on SOP
 - b) staff retaining receipts for a period of three years after the end of the year in which the travel took place and making them available for scrutiny if required
10. In such cases where the benefit is not exempt, a P11D form will be completed and submitted to HMRC. HMRC will then recover any income tax and national insurance contributions, as deemed necessary, through the individual's pay.

1.4. Business Travel Policy

11. Business travel is undertaken by staff when they are required to travel for official duties, excluding ordinary commuting or private travel.
12. Ordinary commuting is defined as any journey between:
 - a) your home and a permanent workplace; or
 - b) a place you do not have to attend for business purposes and a permanent workplace (refer to paragraphs 19 to 27).
13. Private travel is defined as a journey between:
 - a) your home and any place you are attending for non-business purposes; or
 - b) travel between two places, neither of which you are attending for business purposes
14. All travel undertaken in ONR should be for activity covered by ONR's business plans. This includes site visits, training and development and stakeholder engagement.
15. An individual's private travel is not covered, except in exceptional circumstances. These exceptional circumstances might include occasions when you are using a hire car and you need to travel home to deal with a domestic emergency, or a member of staff falls ill while at work and you use the car to drive them home because it would be inadvisable for them to use public transport (refer to paragraph 75)
16. ONR has a travel booking system in place and a central specialised Procurement Team to assist staff in achieving best value in organising individual travel arrangements. The travel booking system is operated by our travel management supplier.
17. You should use the Procurement Team to help you navigate the online system and make bookings on your behalf. Utilising their knowledge of the travel policy and supplier's terms and conditions, the team can help you make the best choices of location, hotel accommodation, travel arrangements and car hire to make sure your official journeys meet your requirements and ensure value for money for ONR. The team should be used to help with group bookings and overseas trips which can be time consuming and complex to arrange.
18. The same principles apply whether travel is undertaken within the UK or internationally; and therefore, ONR expects you to follow this policy on all occasions. However, it is not possible to cover every eventuality, especially as travelling in some parts of the world can be very different from travelling in

the UK. If you find this policy does not cover your particular situation you should consult ONR Procurement in the first instance and most importantly, in advance of travel.

What is classed as ordinary commuting?

19. As explained in paragraph 12, travel between home and a permanent workplace is usually deemed ordinary commuting. This can even be the case in the situation where the home is deemed to be a workplace.

Substantially ordinary commuting

20. Joe works in an office based in Liverpool and this is Joe's permanent workplace. Joe's home is six miles away from the office.
21. Joe is requested to attend a conference centre to deliver a one-off training course, the conference centre is also in Liverpool and Joe usually passes the centre on the way into the office. The conference centre is three-miles away from Joe's home.
22. Although the conference centre is capable of being a temporary workplace, it is on route to Joe's permanent workplace and there is no significant difference in the distance travelled.
23. The journey is substantially the same as Joe's ordinary commute and should not be claimed for.

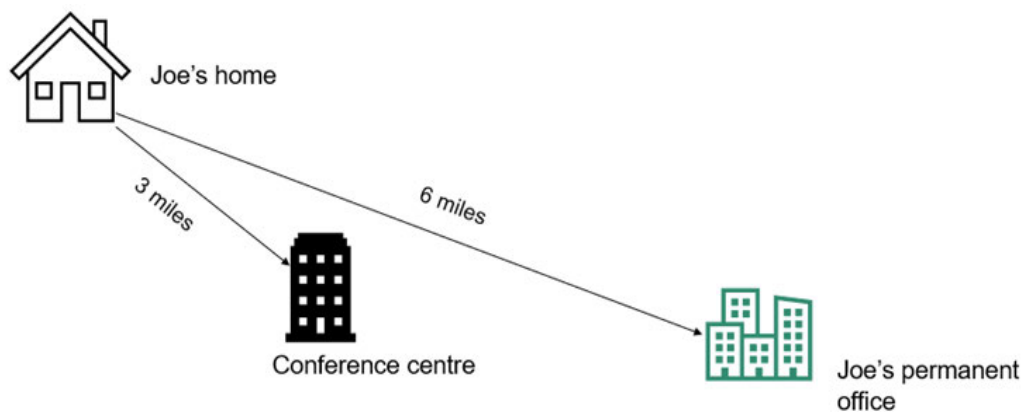


Figure 1: Example of substantially ordinary commuting.

Not substantially ordinary commuting

24. Sally works in a Leeds office and this is Sally's permanent workplace. Sally's home is three miles away from the office.
25. Sally is required to attend a meeting at an office on the outskirts of Leeds; this will involve travelling past her permanent workplace in order to get to the temporary workplace.

26. The total journey from Sally's home to the temporary workplace is 15 miles. The journey will be broadly in the same direction, however the additional distance involved is substantially longer than Sally's ordinary commute, therefore the journey to the temporary workplace is not deemed to be substantially ordinary commuting.
27. Sally can be paid travel expenses for the full 15 miles and these expenses would not be subject to tax.

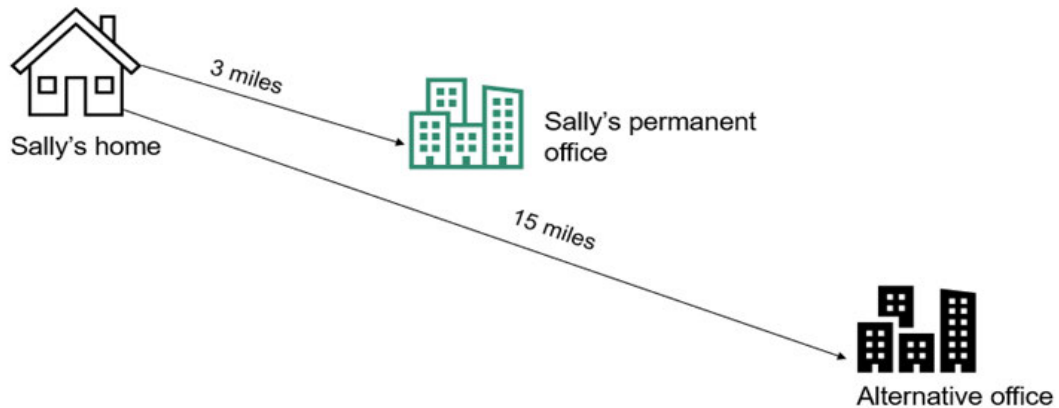


Figure 2: Example of not substantially ordinary commuting.

1.5. Business Travel Principles

28. The following principles should be adhered to at all times:
- business travel should only be undertaken to meet ONR's business needs and should be kept to the minimum time required to achieve the business objective
 - the travel is wholly necessary and appropriate** to achieve ONR's aims and objectives and that other forms of engagement are not appropriate or available - such as Teams conferencing
 - the form of travel selected is the most appropriate and demonstrates value for money
 - the use of public transport for journeys should always be encouraged as it is usually the most reasonable and cost-effective way to carry out official business
29. Should things go wrong the Procurement team will be on hand to help sort things out. They can help should any issues or difficulties arise during your trip and can liaise on your behalf to resolve them with travel providers. Please make sure you have the [emergency contact numbers](#) supplied by HR [1].

30. If you have made your own arrangements outside of the travel booking system and without the Procurement team's assistance, they will not be able to help as they will not be able to access booking references or other data needed to track and amend bookings.

1.6. Personal Responsibilities

31. As a public servant, you have a personal responsibility to ensure that any expenses you claim are in line with this policy and should recognise at all times that you are committing the use of taxpayers' money.
32. You are expected to adhere to the intent and spirit of this Business Expenses Policy at all times and you must ensure that:
- you understand your responsibilities and accountabilities and what ONR will reimburse prior to making any arrangements or making any purchases in relation to any business travel and/or accommodation
 - any business travel undertaken is cost effective and provides value for money
 - you do not profit from any expenses derived from travel. This includes any situation where you might be compensated or refunded for an unsatisfactory service or where you may be offered an incentive (refer to paragraph 35).
33. It is your responsibility to claim only for journeys which can be properly classed as business travel. You must not claim for journeys which are either ordinary commuting/private travel or substantially ordinary commuting (refer to paragraphs 19 to 27).
34. You are required to comply with the following:
- a) all travel must be planned and arranged to minimise waste and maximise value both to ONR and to our stakeholders
 - b) all bookings must be made in accordance with ONR's guidance and demonstrate value for money
 - c) you should make a reasoned judgement on the most cost-effective form of travel, be able to justify this, and as a default, choose the most sensible, practical and best value option. ONR's Procurement team can help with this and should be consulted. In deciding the most appropriate mode of transport, you should consider the following:
 - the advantages and disadvantages of alternative modes of transport; and which provides the most reasonable, cost-effective way to carry out your business;

- The availability of alternative modes of transport, e.g. hire cars;
- the actual costs involved;
- the savings in official time, e.g. rail travel may enable you to work / rest on the train (always check ONR security policy in relation to offsite working before undertaking work in public places);
- the savings in subsistence costs, e.g. flying may allow you to complete your journey in one day;
- your own personal circumstances and responsibilities, e.g. how long can you stay away from home and is it a reasonable expectation; and,
- your safety, e.g. whether it is safe to undertake a long journey late into the evening, rather than stay overnight.

Financial compensation

35. **In all cases, where financial compensation is provided, it must be returned to ONR** (refer to paragraph 109)). However, there are circumstances when it is appropriate to accept immediate and direct compensation where this saves additional cost to ONR. Such circumstances might include a delay to a flight that means an additional overnight stay is required. If the airline operator provided such an option as compensation, then this should be accepted rather than seeking to book additional accommodation through our Procurement Team. You should notify the finance team of such instances via [REDACTED] [@onr.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@onr.gov.uk), who will keep a record.

Incentives

36. Any incentives offered should be treated and recorded in accordance with our [gifts and hospitality policy](#) [2]. This includes air miles which you may acquire as a result of business travel and which you **must not use for private purposes**.

Lost tickets

37. If you lose travel tickets after they have come into your possession, they will not normally be replaced. It is your responsibility to look after tickets and, where necessary, meet the travel costs.
38. If you do not use your travel ticket, supplied by the travel supplier, you should return it to the Procurement Team, who will seek a refund of the cost of the ticket.

Business Plans

39. You should make sure that your travel is in line with your published directorate/ divisional business plan. You must seek agreement from your CDM, or Delivery lead (DL), where there is any possibility that the travel being undertaken may be considered as over and above that Plan and therefore beyond the scope of ONRs stated aims and objectives.

1.7. Policy Compliance

40. **You may be subject to disciplinary procedures in the event of non-compliance with any aspect of the policies and procedures outlined in the manual.**
41. ONR's Finance Team undertakes random monthly sample checks on expenses submitted and other targeted checks as appropriate to investigate instances which do not comply with policy. Findings and recommendations are reported to the Finance Director. Where instances of non-compliance are identified you may be asked to repay any expenses you have received and/or disciplinary action may be taken.

1.8. Responsibilities of CDMs and DLs

42. As a CDM or DL, you must assure yourself that staff undertaking travel as part of their duties, comply with the Business Expenses and Business Travel Policies. This will require discussion with the relevant DL and, where necessary, seeking documentary evidence.
43. You do not need to undertake manager checks of business travel for each individual journey made by your staff, particularly where travel to a site or another ONR office is routine and forms part of normal activity. However, to gain the necessary level of assurance, checks should be proportionate and undertaken frequently (as a minimum bi-annually) and should be evidenced for audit purposes.
44. As part of those checks, DLs, CDMs or CDMs in consultation with DLs (as appropriate) should gather sufficient evidence to gain assurance that the staff member is undertaking travel in accordance with directorate business plans and that it complies with the relevant policy and guidance for the journey. This should include being satisfied that the most appropriate mode of transport, accommodation and subsistence levels are selected for the respective journey.
45. You should take a balanced view of individual circumstances and of cost, distance, time saved, familiarity with vehicle, length of visit and other safety factors and then consider whether a hire car may be more appropriate than use of own car.