



University Travel Policy

Next Review: August 2022

CONTENTS LIST

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Scope and Application
- 4.0 Principles
- 5.0 Compliance
- 6.0 Risk
- 7.0 Insurance

APPENDIX 1 : Travel Procedures

APPENDIX 2: Booker Authorisation Forms

APPENDIX 3: Travel Exception Forms

APPENDIX 4: FCDO Guidance

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The University of Kent recognises that travel for business or academic purposes is an essential part of the University's operation. To that aim, the University's Travel Policy is designed to provide mandatory guidance on the correct procedures and processes.

1.2 The University has a responsibility to ensure that expenditure incurred in carrying out its business activity is reasonable and justifiable. The University must also balance the needs of individuals who are required to travel with its commitment to the health and safety of staff, students, and others, and environmental sustainability.

1.3 This policy operates in conjunction with all the other University policies and procedures, including, but not limited to the Expenses Policies and Personal Expenditure Guidelines, Purchasing Card Procedures, Health and Safety Procedures, the Driving At Work Policy, and any other applicable regulation or legislation. Links to the above policies and procedures can be found in Section 20.

1.4 It is a requirement that all travel arrangements are made in strict adherence to this Travel Policy, in order that financial benefits are maximised and that risks are minimised.

1.5 All travel that is undertaken must be fulfilled in accordance with the law by using licensed vehicles or other legally authorised forms of transport.

1.6 The Travel Management Company (hereafter referred to as "the TMC") for the University of Kent is **Key Travel** whose contact details are:

Email: kent@keytravel.com

Website: www.keytravel.com

Tel: 020 7843 9672

Emergency/24 Hour Queries: 020 7843 9602

1.7 Use of the TMC is mandated for all travel other than in exceptional circumstances. These circumstances should be recorded in the "Exceptions Form" at Appendix 3.

1.8 If travel arrangements are made through another agent, other than the TMC, the associated costs incurred may not be accepted by the University and the individual may be required to personally settle these accounts. Furthermore, the travel may not be covered by the University's insurance policy. The costs of these may be higher than any perceived saving especially when taking into account the cost of processing Expenses Claims and Purchase Orders

1.9 For further information, please contact:

The Procurement Team

procurement@kent.ac.uk

01227 824301

2.0 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures that **must** be followed when making

business travel arrangements and claiming expenses that have been incurred in connection with University business.

2.2 The key principle of this policy is to ensure reasonable standards of service, comfort, convenience and safety for those who need to travel on University business whilst achieving best value for money.

2.3 The objectives of the policy are to ensure that:

- Clarity and guidance is provided to all travellers and travel bookers relating to business and academic travel;
- Those required to travel on behalf of the University do so in an appropriate manner with full regard to the duty of care the University has to all staff and associated individuals;
- Expenditure on travel represents only the necessary and reasonable costs incurred;
- The health, safety, and wellbeing of all travellers is managed appropriately to minimize risk to all concerned;
- Travel only occurs when necessary and unavoidable;
- The carbon footprint and environmental impact of University travel is reduced as much as reasonably practical to meet our carbon usage targets;
- The travel services offered to those travelling on business will be of an appropriate standard to enable the University to fulfil its duty of care to business travellers and deliver value for money;
- The University's ability to negotiate discounted rates with preferred suppliers is maximised and thereby reduce travel expenses through pro-active utilisation of management information; and
- There is guidance on the types of expenditure that will and will not be reimbursed by the University, and further to inform business travellers and those approving expenses of their responsibilities when controlling and reporting travel expenditures.

2.4 All travel that occurs on University business should follow the below principles:

- For University business and the furtherance of the objectives of the University;
- At minimum necessary risk (including timing visits to minimise risk) to all concerned; and
- Cost-effective to reduce unnecessary expenditure.

2.5 This policy applies to:

- Employees of the University at all sites; and
- Students of the University who are required to travel for learning and research purposes; and
- Other representatives of the University (e.g. visitors and honorary fellows) where the travel is directly related to academic (learning and/or research) purposes organised or authorised by the University.

2.6 The policy does not apply to:

- Individuals that are self-employed, or work as contractors or consultants for the University;
- Employees of the University that may be undertaking private work for other organisations, e.g. as a visiting lecturer or external examiner, in which case the end client is responsible for meeting the cost of any travel [and should therefore, follow the travel policies of the relevant organization]

2.7 Examples of University business include, but are not limited to:

- Attending conferences or meetings;
 - Conducting research or fieldwork (more likely for grant funded activities);
 - Visiting other campuses or institutions;
 - Conducting student welfare visits; and
 - Marketing and promotional events to raise the University profile, admissions, or income.
- 2.8 All travellers and travel bookers should be aware that the Freedom of Information Act applies to all of the University's activity, including travel. You should therefore consider, in all transactions, how travel expenditure may be perceived in the public domain and act accordingly to minimise any reputational damage that may arise from excessive travel spend.
- 2.9 Unnecessary travel, or manipulation of the travel policy (such as booking out of policy travel without justification or not using the TMC without sufficient reason) may result in disciplinary action subject to the nature and severity of the breach.
- 2.10 The University has a duty of care to its staff and students and there are serious legal and reputational implications to travelling without taking adequate care. It is therefore extremely important that all travel follows the guidelines outlined in this policy and at all times, all travellers take the utmost care and travel using the TMC.

3.0 SCOPE AND APPLICATION

- 3.1 This policy shall apply to all University business travel outside of the campuses and therefore all directorates must comply with this policy.
- 3.2 For the avoidance of doubt, where funding has been provided by an external body and their rules conflict with the University's travel policy, it is a condition of the funding that the University adheres to the policies of the funding body and their rules take precedence. You may need to check with the funding provider.
- 3.3 Travel and or/accommodation costs borne by other parties where the source is not a research contract or similar must be recorded in the Gifts/Hospitality Register following the requirements of the Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy and any other relevant policies.
- 3.4 The TMC provides the following functionality:
- Price discounts and extra flexibility through specialist air fares, known as '*Academic Fares*' via specific airlines
 - Price match guarantee on like for like bookings
 - Access discounted and locally negotiated hotel room rates (plus budget hotels and a huge range of hotels via Expedia, Booking.com, Last Minute and other sources).
- 3.5 The TMC also meets the following safety requirements:
- 24/7 access to an emergency support to help fix any travel problems
 - Pre-trip destination briefings and in-trip risk alerts on every journey
 - Proactive crisis support to the University and all its travellers affected by environmental or terrorist incidents through use of the TMC Travel App.
 - The University's Duty of Care responsibilities and the location and safety of staff in event of an emergency.
- 3.6 The TMC have a Customer Support Team to deliver the service to the University, and contact details are included on their website.
- 3.7 A business journey is one necessarily undertaken by an employee to carry out his or her duties for the University, or to attend training courses or conferences necessary for the performance of those duties. Travel between the permanent workplace and a temporary workplace, or travel between home and a temporary workplace, or travel between two

temporary workplaces, are all considered business journeys in line with HMRC guidance.

- 3.8 In contrast, the cost of travelling from home (or any other place the employee attends for personal reasons such as the home of a friend or relative) to a permanent place of work is generally not claimable as this is regarded for tax purposes as “substantially ordinary commuting” and therefore a private journey. Please see the relevant HMRC guidance at: <https://www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/employment-income-manual/eim31800>
- 3.9 Please note that Travellers should use the TMC in every instance where practicable ; the costs of processing an expense claim are considerable and often far higher than any perceived saving generated by purchasing directly and not using the TMC. In addition, not using the TMC exposes both the University and the traveller to risk as the University may not know where the traveller is in event of emergency, disaster, or similar.
- 3.10 All travellers are expected to accept the lowest available cost travel as determined by the TMC unless the journey is of excessive length (as outlined below) or other circumstances dictate a higher fare. For example :
- If the travel is outside the normal working hours/days (i.e. at weekends, etc.);
 - Where it is more practical and reasonable to travel the night before;
 - Where personal circumstances such as carers responsibility or childcare make it unreasonable;
 - Where the period of rest between travel events is unreasonably short, such as being shorter than a minimum period of rest in a HR policy or UK Legislation/Regulation

4.0 PRINCIPLES

Alternatives to Travel

- 4.1 The University is committed to reducing its overall impact on the environment and has set challenging but achievable carbon reduction targets that can be found in the University's Carbon Management Plan. As travel accounts for a significant proportion of the University's Scope 3 carbon emissions, all travellers can contribute to achieving these targets by considering the alternatives:
- Is the journey absolutely necessary?
 - Could the meeting be effectively held in any other way, which will result in reduced cost or environmental impact, i.e. telephone/video/web conferencing?
 - If travelling to the same meeting as colleagues, is car sharing or train/bus travel possible?
- 4.2 Further information regarding the University's commitment to carbon reduction can be found in the Carbon Management Strategy found at: <https://www.kent.ac.uk/estates/sustainability/carbon/carbon-management.html>

Authorisation to Travel

- 4.3 Your line manager, your respective Director or Division Director must give permission to travel outside your country of normal residence, prior to any commitments being made e.g. air tickets and/or car hire. When booking travel, either for yourself or on behalf of another traveller (such as, for example a PA booking on behalf of a Director), the TMC booking process will require the booker to complete a travel declaration which, *inter alia*, confirms that the traveller is fit to travel and that the journey has been risk assessed.
- 4.4 Where the booker is not the traveller they must ensure that they have obtained from the traveller a fully completed, signed and dated “Booker Authorisation Form” that remains in date and is located at Appendix 2.

- 4.5 If you cannot use the TMC to book travel, you must follow the process detailed at “Travel Exceptions Form” at Appendix 3.
- 4.6 Staff may arrange to extend a business trip for holiday purposes, or arrange for family members or friends to join them entirely at their own cost. Where room rates are quoted irrespective of the number of occupants so that there is no additional cost, then this is permitted. The University’s business travel insurance applies only in respect of travel undertaken at the University’s expense.
- 4.7 Adding extra days before or after your business trip is permissible subject to there being no additional cost to the University. Any extra days, up to a maximum of seven extra days, and in no case more than the length of the business portion of the trip, will be covered by business insurance. Extra days beyond these parameters should be covered by personal insurance. If these days are to be taken in the course of the normal working week, the traveller must take annual leave if not travelling on these days.
- 4.8 The making of joint travel bookings at the University’s expense to include a spouse, partner or companion who is not travelling on University business is regarded as an exception and must be approved in advance by a duly authorised person senior in grade to that of the principal traveller and is subject to there being no additional cost to the University. If the University is paying for the travel, the University’s travel insurance is available. If the University is not paying for the travel the University’s travel insurance is not available. Such approval must be documented by means of completion of the “Travel Exceptions Form” at Appendix 3.
- 4.9 Incentive schemes must not influence the purchasing decision. AirMiles etc. must not be retained by the traveller for their personal use. AirMiles and other incentives collected during University Travel that are paid for by the University should be allocated to the University’s account.

TMC Travel App

- 4.10 All travellers who have a mobile phone should install and use the TMC Travel App The TMC Travel App allows travellers to view all elements of the trip in one place, from itineraries, flight and hotel bookings to rail and car hire and will also alert travellers in real time to any alterations or delays that may impact the journey, to avoid last minute surprises.
- 4.11 The app facilitates direct access to the TMC’s 24 hour emergency service. Use of this app is compulsory if you are travelling to high risk areas classified as Red/Amber Zones [see Risk, Section 6].

5.0 COMPLIANCE

- 5.1 No traveller should use the facilities afforded to them for any exclusively non-business travel. Use will be analysed and audited. Any use for non-business travel may be subject to disciplinary action.

6.0 RISK

- 6.1 Before planning to travel, it is the traveller’s responsibility to conduct a risk assessment relating to not only the travel itself, but also the activities to be undertaken. This policy applies to both international and domestic travel. For advice and guidance on Overseas Travel risk assessments and Overseas Health Risk assessments visit:

<https://www.kent.ac.uk/safety/hs/pages/travel-work-overseas/travel-work-overseas.html>

It is important to note that FCDO guidance is the minimum standard of safety the University will implement and The University guidance may be tighter and provide more restrictions to minimize risk in event of a global health event such as a pandemic. The fact that the FCDO may relax travel restrictions does not override the University policy.

The underlying FCDO guidance takes into account all risks, not just those relating to the Covid pandemic. Government advice relating to Red List countries is published by the Department For Transport and the Department For Health And Social Care. See Appendix 4 for more information.

You should take into account the following:

- i) Always check the countries you will be travelling to, or through, with the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office advisory page at: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice> :
 - a) Where the FCDO advises against all but essential travel you will be required to gain written permission from the Division Director, before planning or booking any travel. You should provide a written justification for the travel.
 - b) Where the FCDO advises against all travel you will be required to gain written permission from the relevant Director (or equivalent), before planning or booking any travel. You should provide a written justification for travel. *You should assume that travel will not be possible as this will present a high-risk environment and make no commitments until approved in writing.*
- ii) You will, as part of the booking process, be required to confirm that you have followed the above process and checked the FCDO guidance. **You will not be permitted to travel if you have not followed this process.** Making a false declaration, or travelling without written permission, or refusing to follow a reasonable instruction not to travel when advised not to, as above may result in disciplinary action. You may not also have insurance cover for some territories if you travel without permission, and some territories you will not be covered at all due to the level of risk. Any travel that occurs without following the process may be at your own risk.
- iii) FCDO Guidelines are detailed in Appendix 4. Please note that should a country move to Red Zone or Red List status in the window between booking and travel you should not travel. If it moves to a Red Zone or Red List status when you are in the relevant region, you should consider the risks of remaining in the region versus the risk of leaving the region and seek advice if necessary, but always follow any related advice that is provided by the FCDO.
- iv) You should also refer to any guidance available on the TMC App around travelling to these destinations. For more information see the following:

<https://www.keytravel.com/uk/travel-toolkit/key-travel-mobile-app/> - TMC Travel App.

6.2 You should also be aware of any local developments not recognised or updated by the FCDO, where reasonably possible including local news both inside the UK and internationally. The FCDO performs regular checks and updates on the status of each country. However, it may be that there are fast developing local situations. In these circumstances, you should review your risk assessment. These types of events include, but are not limited to:

- National Holidays, Events, Celebrations;
- Sporting and Social Occasions;
- Civil or Military Unrest; and
- Religious Events or similar.

6.3 You may also be exposed to individual risk dependent upon your location, such as deprived or high-crime areas where you may be regarded as a 'target', unattended public transport hubs such as remote train stations, travelling at unsociable hours (early morning, and/or late night), as well as areas that may be at risk due to natural occurrences such as flood, earthquake and/or extreme temperatures. It is always prudent to assess the risk in these circumstances and take appropriate precautions to ensure your safety. You should plan travel accordingly.

- 6.4 At all times you should balance the risk and the practicality of this policy. If use of public transport may, for example, expose the traveller to risk such as an unattended train station in a remote location, or travel at unreasonably early / late times, you should consider a mode of travel that minimizes risk.
- 6.5 You should also consider the timing of your visit. If the visit can be delayed due to anticipated risk exposure (such as a likely cessation of hostilities or civil unrest), the University recommends that the travel is delayed.
- 6.6 You should not take dependents, partners, or friends on these trips unless absolutely necessary. If this is the case, they must fund their own travel (including provision of travel insurance). Please refer to the Expenses Policy for full details.
- 6.7 You must be aware of, and follow:
- Health and Safety Travelling and Working Overseas Performance Standard:
https://www.kent.ac.uk/safety/hs/pages/travel-work-overseas/Travelling_Working_and_Studying_Overseas%20PS_2018.pdf -
 - Overseas Travel Guidance:
<https://www.kent.ac.uk/safety/hs/pages/travel-work-overseas/travel-work-overseas.html>
 - University Staff Business Travel Guidance:
<https://www.kent.ac.uk/transport/business/index.html>

7.0 INSURANCE

- 7.1 Travellers intending to travel outside of the UK, or within the UK by air or including one or more overnight stays, must register at the time of booking for the University's travel insurance. This registration is handled automatically within the TMC booking process or otherwise by completion and submission of the online form found here:
<https://www.kent.ac.uk/finance-staff/services/insurance/travelstaff/index.html>
- 7.2 The University's travel insurance coverage can only be confirmed when booked with a provider other than the TMC if a duly authorised Travel Exceptions Form has been submitted to the Insurance Office.
- 7.3 It is the responsibility of the traveller to carry whilst travelling details of the University's travel insurance (including the insurer's emergency assistance number) which are available at:
<https://www.kent.ac.uk/finance-staff/services/insurance/travelstaff/index.html?tab=travel-insurance-information>
- 7.4 Subject to registration for the University's travel insurance, travellers are, unless advised by the Insurance Office to the contrary, covered by the University's travel insurance policy for the business elements of the journey and up to a maximum of seven extra days provided that the duration of the business element of the trip is longer than the duration of the extra days. Travellers should ensure that they are appropriately covered by personal insurance for any hazardous sporting activity and take no unnecessary risks during any such extra days.
- 7.5 Any extended periods of holiday added to a business trip will not be covered by the University's travel policy. The University will not provide travel insurance for additional travellers such as partners and children travelling for non-business reasons.
- 7.6 Travellers' own vehicles are NOT covered by the University's insurance policies and are their own responsibility when used on University business and an appropriate business-use clause should be included in the vehicle's insurance policy.

- 7.7 A justification for the travel must be provided upon request in every instance.
- 7.8 Finance will keep electronic copies of travel and associated documentation for a period of at least six years from the date of the travel.

APPENDIX 1 : TRAVEL PROCEDURE

1.0 HOW TO BOOK

1.1 Bookings must be made online using the TMC. The TMC is also able to take bookings on the phone, though it should be noted that there is a greater cost to completing a phone booking in comparison to booking online. Therefore, phone bookings should be avoided except in the arranging of the most complex of itineraries. Phone bookers must ensure they have the authority to book and not use phone booking as a way of avoiding obtaining authority to travel.

1.2 All air, rail, hotels, ferry reservations, including en-route changes and additional services such as visa requirements, must be arranged through the TMC unless this is not possible.

1.3 Booking all travel through the TMC will not only ensure cost saving opportunities are maximised, but will also assist the University in responding to any emergency situation which may arise.

1.4 Passports and Visas

The traveller is responsible, where applicable, for all passport and visa requirements. Facilities are available through the TMC for the issue/renewal of passports and visas. Costs associated with the issue/renewal of passports must be met by the traveller and cannot normally be claimed from the University. If this service is required, the traveller must contact the TMC for further details.

1.5 Traveller Profiles

Due to increased airline security requirements and to ensure the TMC can provide an efficient and effective service, all business travellers will have a traveller profile created with their personal data.

It is the responsibility of each traveller to keep their profile on the TMC website up to date of any changes to individual requirements or personal details including health, married names, dependents etc. The information is held by the TMC in the strictest of confidence in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018.

2.0 WHEN TO BOOK

2.1 Advance Booking

Travel must be booked as far in advance as possible to achieve the best value for money and ideally, no less than two weeks before travel to ensure maximum value can be achieved.

If trips need to be cancelled, this must be done as soon as practicable to achieve the maximum refund or credit, and such refunds or credits must be paid to the University.

3.0 GENERAL TRAVEL ADVICE

3.1 Travel planning tips

Travellers must help the TMC to provide an efficient and economical service by:

- Planning travel well in advance wherever possible and generally as soon as you are aware you will need to travel – this will ensure the best prices and availability are obtained. A minimum of two weeks before the date of travel is recommended;
- Discussing travel arrangements with the TMC – this may assist with your itinerary and will ensure that promotional fares are taken advantage of where possible;
- Specifying any non-standard criteria such as the need for flexibility – this will avoid late

changes to bookings which can be costly; and

- Utilising Academic Fares whenever possible for air travel.

3.2 **Saturday Night Rule**

Travellers should also be aware of the 'Saturday Night' rule, whereby to qualify for a low round-trip airfare, some airline carriers require travellers to spend Saturday night at their destination. The rule is based on the airlines' assumption that business travellers are more likely than leisure travellers to spend Saturday night at home. You should take this into account when booking travel.

4. **EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES**

- 4.1 In the event of a localized emergency (such as attempted coup or natural disaster, terrorist event, or similar), the over-riding priority will be to secure the safety of any and all affected people. The University does have a duty of care towards staff and students, and staff should contact the emergency assistance service on +44 (0) 20 7173 7796 as soon as practicable to discuss the situation and any additional travel requirements prior to making any booking. Staff must use their best judgement around risk, and, if advised, it is permitted to book travel back to a home base at short notice if necessary using the TMC if that option is available.
- 4.2 It is important to note that, as per section 6, FCDO guidance is the minimum standard of safety the University will implement and The University guidance may be tighter and provide more restrictions to minimize risk in event of a global health event such as a pandemic. The fact that the FCDO may relax travel restrictions does not override the University policy.
- 4.3 In event of emergency or other event, such as a global health event, pandemic, or similar, the University may choose to disable or restrict the ability to book, to introduce a central master approver to prevent unnecessary, risky or otherwise unapproved travel, or prevent booking by other means.
- 4.4 If this occurs, staff are not authorized to book travel independently for University related activity whether they use the TMC or another provider. If they do using their own funds, this will not be with University consent and the funds are at their own risk; they may not be claimed back using the expenses method.
- 4.5 The University reserves the right to issue guidance and update or amend this policy at short notice in event of any emergency event.

DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

5.0 **RAIL TRAVEL**

- 5.1 Tickets, whenever possible, should be arranged through the TMC, via the rail-booking tool on their website.
- 5.2 All travellers will travel standard class (with seat reservations where required) and are expected to investigate the possibility that two single tickets may be cheaper than a return and that saver tickets may be available at lower cost.
- 5.3 Consideration must also be given to travel at off peak times where significant savings can be made, and tickets must be purchased well in advance of travel to take advantage of the discounts offered by Advanced Purchase (APEX) tickets. A single fare on an advance ticket, subject to the time of travel, may yield considerable cost reductions and should be considered.
- 5.4 Use of off peak returns or timed tickets may be considerably cheaper and should be used wherever possible.
- 5.5 Where staff have possession of discounted railcards options, such as a Network Railcard,

they should use these where possible.

5.6 First class rail tickets may only be purchased where they are the cheapest option available..

7.0 HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

7.1 All hotel accommodation must be booked through the TMC. Where a group activity or conference specifies travel agents or hotels that must be used, this may be done, provided the expenditure is authorised in advance by the Division Director. Accommodation should be comfortable (and en-suite) rather than prestigious and should be comparable with the type of accommodation that would normally be booked in the UK. Accommodation should include facilities such as Wi-Fi and telephone access.

7.2 Travellers should stay in standard rooms (single occupancy) with private bath/shower, minimum 3* where applicable, and in compliance with the HMRC Worldwide Subsistence Rates. Travellers may accept room upgrades to suites or executive floor rooms if the upgrade is at no additional cost to the University.

7.3 Payment for the cost of the room (including breakfast and VAT where appropriate) will normally be settled directly by the University through the TMC. Upon checking out, the traveller will be required to settle all incidental charges.

7.4 Other factors may also be taken into consideration when choosing overseas accommodation, these include:

The degree of personal safety risk based upon terrorism/disturbance information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the British Council or local intelligence;

- The degree of potential risk to health from the accommodation available in the location concerned based upon reasonable objective information;
- The extent of essential business services provided by the available hotels (e.g. reasonable internet provision, own restaurant/room service for those not comfortable eating on their own at a local restaurant, access to local taxis from the hotel);
- Attendance at a key event which requires University delegates to be part of a larger group in respect of which the hotel choice has been made by the event organisers, or by consensus amongst all the attending delegates;
- The cost of travel, and lost time, if employees stay in cheaper accommodation at a distance from the venue of an exhibition or a conference which is held at a location having sleeping accommodation at or near, the venue concerned.

7.5 The maximum rates for hotel accommodation that may be incurred without specific explanation are available through the HMRC website here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scale-rate-expenses-payments-employee-travelling-outside-the-uk>

7.6 If exceptionally, there are sound business reasons why the HMRC standard overseas rates for the country concerned need to be exceeded, an appropriate explanation of the reasons must be attached to the relevant documentation in the form of a completed and signed "Travel Exceptions Form" (Appendix 2).

8.0 TAXI AND VEHICLE USE

8.1 Taxi Use

Where possible, public transport must be used and taxis should only be used where there is

genuinely no public transport alternative, or early morning / late night travel is required, or connection times make it the only feasible option. Generally, only short journeys should be taken in a taxi – longer journeys should be pre-approved and comparative quotes obtained from private hire companies. Taxi use is permitted are when travelling with heavy or bulky luggage or when the group size means that public transport fares would be more expensive. If a longer journey length will result in overtime, you should consider these additional costs. Taxi fares must be receipted. Use of Taxis should be subject to relevant approval channels.

8.2 **Vehicle Hire**

Where the use of public transport is not practicable, or is very expensive, travellers should consider the use of a self-drive hire car for undertaking longer business journeys. This is often a cheaper alternative to use of a traveller's own car. Any car hire should be booked using the current University Contract Car hire provider if travel is within the UK and through the TMC where they are able to cater to the requirements. The hire company's motor insurance, including Collision Damage Waiver and Excess Protection (UK only) must be taken out at the time of booking.

- 8.3 It is the responsibility of the traveller to ensure hire vehicles are returned in accordance with hire company's instructions, including areas such as the amount of fuel that is required to be in the tank, in order to avoid unnecessary penalty costs.

8.4 **Own Vehicle Use**

- 8.5 Travellers who wish to use their own means of transport (private car, van, motorcycle, or bicycle) on University business must have general approval to do so from their line manager before commencing such use.
- 8.6 Travellers must ensure that their vehicle insurance policy includes use for business purposes.
- 8.7 Travellers may use a private means of transport for appropriate business journeys to and from a destination within 100 miles from the employee's main work place or home, whichever is the closer, without individual prior-approval for each and every journey. For journeys to a destination more than 100 miles from the main work place or home, whichever is the closer, travellers should obtain the specific prior approval of their line manager.
- 8.8 When a round-trip journey exceeding 200 miles is undertaken where public transport is reasonably available, but for personal reasons an employee wishes to use their own means of transport, line managers may permit such use on the condition that the traveller may be reimbursed only the equivalent public transport cost when this is less than the private mileage allowance which otherwise applies. Opportunities to car share on official journeys should be maximized provided that appropriate business-use insurance cover is held.

9.0 **AIR TRAVEL**

- 9.1 Whilst the needs of the traveller will be taken into account, all travel must be both cost and time effective. The TMC can advise on the best options with the travel Booker whilst making the reservation.

9.2 **Class of Travel**

- 9.3 All flights of less than six hours' duration must be in Economy class seating. Daytime flights (ie those completed within the same day in relation to the departure time zone) over six hours' duration may be in Premium Economy class where available. Overnight flights over six hours' duration may be in Business Class.

Both Premium Economy/Business Class are only available where the nature of the trip warrants travel at this level, or where this class of travel is less costly than the lowest available economy ticket for the individual journey. Where Premium Economy is not available, approval from the Division Director may be given for Business Class on a daytime flight where it is

required. Such approval must be documented by means of completion of a "Travel Exceptions Form" (Appendix 2).

9.5 Flexibility of flight arrival/departure

9.6 Flight departure or arrival time within two hours before or after the requested times should be accepted where a significant saving can be identified as long as this does not compromise safety, connections, or would require an unnecessarily early or late arrival/departure.

9.7 Indirect Flights

9.8 One stop or connecting flights should be utilised if savings of £500 or more can be achieved and the total travel time does not increase by a maximum of 2 hours, subject to overtime costs and working hours directives, and any directives around the maximum length of travel, working hours, and similar.

9.9 Airline Preferences

9.10 Business travellers may not specify a preferred carrier. If a specific carrier demonstrably shows a consistently poor standard of performance and / or announces disruption or strikes (for example), this carrier can be deselected under the direction of the Procurement Team to the TMC.

9.11 Limit of all staff travelling together

9.12 University personnel travelling together should be restricted to 4 per flight where practical.

SPECIFIC INSTANCES

10.0 CANCELLATIONS AND CHANGES

10.1 All requests for cancellations and changes must be made by the travel booker directly to the TMC.

10.2 Cancellation conditions vary depending on the travel supplier (i.e. airline, hotel). It is advisable to familiarise yourself with the cancellation conditions for your flight/rail journey/hotel/hire car before making the booking.

10.3 If the cancellation is because the operator has cancelled (such as not running a flight or train) please contact the TMC for guidance.

10.4 General Cancellation Procedure

10.5 When a trip is cancelled after the air/rail ticket or hotel/car hire voucher has been issued, the traveller must firstly inquire about using the same ticket for future travel.

10.6 You may be liable for cancellation charges, or not be able to claim any refund on an unused ticket, if you do not cancel your reservation prior to travel.

10.7 No-Show charges are not reimbursable.

10.8 Air Cancellations

10.9 Airline tickets may sometimes be reissued for a nominal fee or no fee at all dependent on airfare eligibility requirements. It should be noted that some airlines now charge 100% cancellation charges if the ticket is not cancelled prior to departure or when the restrictions advise.

10.10 If it is not possible to reuse tickets, proceed as follows:

Contact the TMC for advice and guidance in this event: either at www.keytravel.com or 0207 843 9600.

10.11 **Unused/voided airline tickets**

10.12 Unused airline tickets or flight tickets must never be discarded or destroyed as these documents may have a cash value. In general, the minimum value would be the airport taxes that can be reclaimed via the agency where the ticket was purchased.

10.13 **Hotel Cancellations**

10.14 Contact the TMC to make the cancellation. Always obtain a reference and confirmation email.

10.15 If you do not cancel a hotel reservation and do not show up at the hotel, you may be liable for the cost of the room for the duration of the stay you booked. Even when a booking is cancelled, you may still be liable for a cancellation fee, depending on the time of cancellation.

10.16 **Alterations and Changes**

10.17 In the event you may need to change or alter a booking (hotel, flight, ship or other), please liaise with the travel booker who will contact the TMC for guidance. It is possible that not every request for such a change can be made, or is possible. Any changes or alterations must be for unavoidable business purposes only and may incur charges. These changes or alterations may need to be approved by the relevant role holder as per any booking, and subject to delays in approval. Upgrades and alterations of class of travel after the initial booking, and submissions after the event, are unlikely to be authorised. Avoiding this process and claiming additional costs incurred by expenses may not be successful and could result in disciplinary action.

11.0 **SPECIFIC PROVIDERS**

11.1 **Uber**

11.2 Travellers may, in exceptional circumstances use Uber for taxi journeys in the UK. For travel within the UK, Uber should only be used in exceptional circumstances and only while Uber is licenced to operate. For travel in other countries, Uber may be used where there are no or limited alternatives or where use of Uber would reduce a significant risk to the traveller.

11.3 You will be required to make a risk assessment around the use of Uber, and in environments where there are limited, or no alternatives, and/or where travelling by alternative methods, especially in high-risk environments, presents risk, you can use your personal judgement on the use of Uber. Use of Uber in international environments is permitted but you should always assess the risk of doing so.

11.4 **AirBnB**

11.5 The University requires that the travel booker check with the TMC for all accommodation bookings in the first instance.

11.6 In circumstances where the TMC cannot offer a solution, the travel booker may consider in exceptional circumstances, the use of AirBnB. A typical example of this would be for a long-term let (i.e. a number of weeks or longer) or in a destination not readily served by the TMC. Where you are making such bookings, calling TMC by telephone may be the best route to check availability. Cost Savings would not necessarily be an exceptional circumstance.

11.7 The Traveller must be aware that use of AirBnB accommodation cannot be recommended by the University and is undertaken entirely at the travellers own risk. Upon arrival at AirBnB accommodation, the traveller must satisfy themselves that the accommodation provides a reasonable level of safety and the level of risk is acceptable (for example, checking fire exits, alarms, and similar). If it is not safe to stay there, alternative accommodation must be arranged

immediately.

11.8 **Booking.com**

11.9 If you find any available hotels or bookings that cannot be served by the TMC directly but are available on Booking.com, you may make telephone bookings with the TMC who have offline access to the Booking.com offering.

11.10 **Home Accommodation**

11.11 Travellers may on occasion utilise the offer of staying at the home of a friend or colleague, subject to a reasonable assessment of the risks and imposition this may cause. Guidance on any daily allowance will be provided in the Expenses Policy.

12.0 **EXCEPTIONS**

12.1 Wherever possible all bookings should be made through the TMC in advance. However, in circumstances where you cannot fully comply with the terms of this policy, or where standard travel is suspended in event of emergency such as a pandemic, the traveller must obtain written authority from the Division Director for any deviation on a "Travel Exceptions Form" (Appendix 2).

12.2 Other than described above,,the use of a travel provider for personal gain is not allowed. For example :

- In order to gain AirMiles for personal benefit; AirMiles for University travel can be accrued via the TMC and should only be used for business journey; and/or
- To obtain a better standard of travel, class of flight, standard of hotel room or similar that is in breach of the Expenses Policy; and/or
- To avoid or operate outside of policy for any reason whatsoever.

12.3 In all circumstances where the TMC are not used the traveller must provide a fully completed and signed copy of the "Travel Exceptions Form" to the Insurance Office and complete an online insurance submission form:

https://www.kent.ac.uk/finance-staff/services/insurance/staff_forms/travelform.html

12.4 Additional Guidance on Exceptions, and the policy, will be published at :
<https://www.kent.ac.uk/finance-staff/procurement/index.html?tab=travel>

13.0 **ATHENA SWAN PRINCIPLES**

13.1 The University has signed up to the Athena SWAN gender equality charter and is supporting all Schools to achieve at least a Bronze level award, reflecting an understanding of gender equality issues and a commitment to take action to address them. Institutionally, the University holds a Bronze award and the Athena SWAN team are working on delivering the associated action plan and making impact that will support our application for a Silver level award.

13.2 The requirements of the Travel Policy should be balanced against the Athena SWAN principles.

13.3 For more information please see the below links :

<https://www.kent.ac.uk/human-resources/athenaswan/news.html> (our internal website)

<https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/> (the external Athena SWAN website)

14.0 USEFUL LINKS

14.1 For further information, you may also review the following links:

Contact Details for the Travel Management Company:

Email: kent@keytravel.com
Website: www.keytravel.com
Tel: 020 7843 9672

Emergency/24 Hour Queries: 020 7843 9602

14.2 Links

The latest versions of the relevant documentation, guidance, and information are published at : <https://www.kent.ac.uk/finance-staff/procurement/index.html?tab=travel>

APPENDIX 2 – BOOKER AUTHORISATION FORMS

UNIVERSITY OF KENT BOOKER AUTHORISATION – SINGLE TRIP <i>When completed, please return a signed and dated copy to xxx@kent.ac.uk</i>	
Traveller Name	
Job Title	
School/Department	
Trip Destination(s)	
Depart Date	
Return Date	
TRAVEL DECLARATIONS	
I confirm that the travel is University business related and for a period of less than 365 days.	YES / NO
I confirm that the travel has been risk assessed and authorised and also for travel outside the UK that it complies with the University’s Travelling and Working Overseas Performance Standard and that the FCDO website has been checked to confirm no disturbed area travel.	YES / NO
I confirm that I am not travelling against medical advice and that I shall be under 75 years of age on the date of departure and I acknowledge that no insurance cover is provided if these criteria are not met.	YES / NO
I confirm that I shall not engage in any hazardous activity (e.g. piloting an aircraft) during the period of travel.	YES / NO
I confirm that I have declared to the Insurance Office details of any single property item valued in excess of £1,500 or a total property value in excess of £4,000 that will be taken whilst travelling.	YES / NO
<p><i>Important - Please note that failure to make accurate declarations may result in the coverage provided by the University’s travel insurance policy being invalidated.</i></p> <p><i>Any questions arising from these declarations should be referred to the Insurance Office (insurance@kent.ac.uk) for attention.</i></p>	
<p>I hereby authorise the Booker to complete the Travel Declarations on my behalf when making the travel arrangements for my trip.</p> <p>I confirm that the declarations provided herein are accurate and I acknowledge my ongoing duty to disclose immediately to the Booker any change in circumstances.</p> <p>Signed Dated</p>	

UNIVERSITY OF KENT	
BOOKER AUTHORISATION – MULTIPLE TRIPS	
<i>When completed, please return a signed and dated copy to xxx@kent.ac.uk</i>	
Traveller Name	
Job Title	
School/Department	
Anticipated Trip Destination(s)	
Start Date	
Expiry Date	
<i>Note: Expiry date must be no later than 6 months after the start date</i>	
TRAVEL DECLARATIONS	
I confirm that the travel is University business related and for a period of less than 365 days.	YES / NO
I confirm that the travel has been risk assessed and authorised and also for travel outside the UK that it complies with the University’s Travelling and Working Overseas Performance Standard and that the FCDO website has been checked to confirm no disturbed area travel.	YES / NO
I confirm that I am not travelling against medical advice and that I shall be under 75 years of age on the date of departure and I acknowledge that no insurance cover is provided if these criteria are not met.	YES / NO
I confirm that I shall not engage in any hazardous activity (e.g. piloting an aircraft) during the period of travel.	YES / NO
I confirm that I have declared to the Insurance Office details of any single property item valued in excess of £1,500 or a total property value in excess of £4,000 that will be taken whilst travelling.	YES / NO
<p><i>Important - Please note that failure to make accurate declarations may result in the coverage provided by the University’s travel insurance policy being invalidated.</i></p> <p><i>Any questions arising from these declarations should be referred to the Insurance Office (insurance@kent.ac.uk) for attention.</i></p>	
<p>I hereby authorise the Booker to complete the Travel Declarations on my behalf when making the travel arrangements for my trips.</p> <p>I confirm that the declarations provided herein are accurate and I acknowledge my ongoing duty to ensure that they remain accurate for all trips during the period of validity of this authorisation and to disclose immediately to the Booker any change in circumstances.</p> <p>Signed Dated</p>	

APPENDIX 3 – TRAVEL EXCEPTIONS FORM

UNIVERSITY OF KENT TRAVEL EXCEPTIONS FORM <i>When completed, please return a signed and dated copy to the Travel Booker, Insurance Office (insurance@kent.ac.uk) and Procurement (procurement@kent.ac.uk)</i>	
Traveller Name	
Job Title	
School/Department	
Trip Destination(s)	
Departure Date	
Return Date	
NATURE OF EXCEPTION <i>(Please provide full details)</i>	
JUSTIFICATION FOR EXCEPTION <i>(Please provide full details)</i>	
COST IMPLICATIONS WHEN NOT USING KEY TRAVEL (IF APPLICABLE) <i>(Please provide full details)</i>	
Price quoted by Key Travel: Identity of alternative supplier: Price quoted by alternative supplier: Amount saved: Key Travel response to price match request (please supply copy):	
<i>Important - Please note that failure to make accurate declarations may result in disciplinary action.</i>	
Traveller Declaration	
Signed	Dated
Division Director Approval	
Signed	Dated
Print Name:	

Extra guidance concerning exceptions to the University of Kent Travel Policy can be found here:
[The University of Kent Travel Policy Exceptions Guidance 2019.docx](#)

Travel not booked with Key Travel needs to be registered for the University's travel insurance coverage via the following link:-
<https://www.kent.ac.uk/finance-staff/services/insurance/travelstaff/index.html>

APPENDIX 4: FCDO AND UK GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

As of writing (September 2021), the latest guidance is published at :

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england>

FCDO Advice Categories	Notes
<p>Red Zones: Advise against <u>all</u> travel</p>	<p><u>You should not travel to any countries or areas within countries in the Red Zones.</u></p>
<p>Amber Zones: Advise against <u>all</u> <i>but</i> <u>essential</u> travel</p>	<p>All Staff will require written permission by way of a Travel Exceptions Form signed by their Division Director detailing why the travel is deemed to be essential and the risk assessment must be reviewed by the Safety Health and Environment Unit.</p> <p>Postgraduate students will require written permission by way of a completed Travel Exceptions Form signed by their Division Director detailing why the travel is deemed to be essential and the risk assessment must be reviewed by the Safety Health and Environment Unit.</p> <p>No undergraduate students are permitted to travel to these destinations for University or course related business.</p> <p>You may not be covered by insurance when in these territories.</p> <p>To facilitate the insurance coverage for travel, a copy of the Travel Exceptions Form signed by the Division Director should be forwarded to insurance@kent.ac.uk for attention. If requested, a copy of the finalised and approved travel risk assessment should also be forwarded to insurance@kent.ac.uk</p>
<p>Green Zones: No specific travel restrictions but read FCO travel advice before travelling.</p>	<p>Staff and students may travel having regard to the travel advice. A generic travel risk assessment may be appropriate for this travel but a bespoke travel risk assessment must be produced where necessary.</p>

OTHER UK GOVERNMENT ADVICE

Advice Categories	Notes
<p>Red List Rules Advise against <u>all</u> travel</p>	<p><u>You should not travel to any countries in the Red List.</u></p>
<p>Rest of the World Travel is permitted subject to compliance with the rules related to being fully vaccinated or unvaccinated</p>	<p>Staff and students may travel having regard to the travel advice.</p> <p><u>You must follow FCDO guidance at all times.</u></p>