

Hospitality Policy

Executive Management Team

8 December 2022

Version 1.0

Document Details

Document Title:	Hospitality Policy
Version:	1.0
Approved By:	Governing Body
Date Approved:	8 December 2022
Effective Date:	8 December 2022
Review Date:	7 December 2023
Policy Owner:	Vice Presidents Corporate Affairs

Consultation Details

Name:	
Date:	
Details of Consultation:	

Revision History

Previous Version No.	Summary of Amendments	Version No.
N/A	First draft	0.1
0.1	Two rounds (0.2 then 0.3) of finance review	0.3

Publication Details

Where	Date
Drive/Public/HR/Policies	
All Staff Email	

Feedback or issues arising on implementation of this policy should be communicated to the policy author.

Policy Author	Finance Managers
---------------	------------------

Contents

Document Details	1
Contents	2
1. Introduction	3
2. Purpose	3
3. Scope	3
4. Principles	3
5. Definitions	3
6. Responsibility and Authority	4
7. Payment Methods	4
8. Supporting Documentation	4
9. Guidance	5
9.1 In-house Facilities	5
9.2 Allowable Events and Occasions	5
9.3 Costs	6
9.4 Rates	6
9.5 Gratuities	7
9.6 Ratio – Guest to Employee 1:2	7
9.7 Alcohol	7
10. Staff Events	7
11. Compliance	7
12. Related Documents	7
13. Useful Links	7
14. Policy Author	8
15. Appendices	8
Appendix 1: Form detailing Provision of Supporting Documentation	9
Appendix 2 Code of Conduct (extract)	10

1. Introduction

In the course of official University business, there will be occasions where it is deemed appropriate to extend hospitality. This policy sets out the official position of the University when providing hospitality.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that hospitality is extended in a manner that is appropriate, fair, impartial and without preference or favouritism. Whilst recognising the importance of hospitality it is prudent for the University to apply limits and restrictions in order to ensure that hospitality is necessary for business purposes, is not excessive and provides value for money.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all operations and activities of the University, and its subsidiary undertakings, including research grants and consultancy projects administered by SETU.

This policy applies to:

- All employees of the University;
- Members of the University Governing Body;

It shall be made generally available and published publicly via the University web-site.

4. Principles

The general principle which should be followed by employees at all times is that hospitality expenditure should only be incurred where necessary and should always be kept to a reasonable minimum.

The guiding principles for the provision of hospitality are as follows:

- 4.1 Incurred wholly necessarily and exclusively for business purposes;
- 4.2 Of benefit to the University;
- 4.3 Compliant with this policy;
- 4.4 Managed in a consistent, transparent and cost-effective manner;
- 4.5 Specific enough that a third-party reviewer can understand the business purpose for which the expenditure was incurred.

5. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy hospitality is defined as “the provision of meals, beverages and other refreshments of any type to any person or group of individuals.”

6. Responsibility and Authority

All hospitality events and expenses must be pre-approved by an authorised budget holder. It is the responsibility of the approver to ensure that:

- 6.1 This policy is complied with;
- 6.2 The hospitality was deemed appropriate and necessary;
- 6.3 The cost is reasonable;
- 6.4 The most appropriate procurement process is followed.

7. Payment Methods

Every effort should be made to ensure that, as far as possible, the costs associated with hospitality are paid directly by the University. The preferred method is that such costs are processed through the normal purchasing practices within the University, that is, that a requisition is raised in the FMS M7. This is the safest and most transparent way to ensure a clear audit trail. It also ensures that employees are not out of pocket.

Alternatively, the following methods may also be used:

- Re-imburement to an employee for costs incurred via Core Portal (ESS) Expenses system or EFT¹. All re-imburements should be presented for payment no later than 2 months after the event.
- Corporate credit card (applicable in limited circumstances)

Under no circumstances should an employee seek reimbursement of such costs when an invoice has been issued to the University.

8. Supporting Documentation

The following information must support any request for hospitality:

- 8.1 Details of specific business purpose;
- 8.2 Date of event/meal etc;
- 8.3 Location of event/meal;
- 8.4 Full detailed list of attendees and organisation which they represent (See point 9.6 below re guidelines on attendees);
- 8.5 Where in-house facilities are not used (see point 9.1 below) a clear explanation as to why alternative, off site, arrangements were necessary.

It is essential that the invoice/bill must be fully itemised and detailed. A credit card receipt alone will not suffice as it does not represent adequate documentation for reimbursement, nor evidence for audit purposes.

¹ Electronic Funds Transfer

The supporting information requested must be supplied in the format outlined in Appendix 1 of this document. In cases where the above information is not supplied the invoice will not be processed.

9. Guidance

9.1 In-house Facilities

The University operates excellent facilities on campus. When providing hospitality, it is advisable to hold such events on University property and use internal facilities where practical and possible to do so.

Where there is a compelling reason for not using on-site facilities the approver of the expenditure and the person organising the event must consider the cost implications and ensure expenditure is kept to a minimum. All Hospitality Requisitions must be approved by the budget holder before approaching a Catering Company.

9.2 Allowable Events and Occasions

9.2.1 Host to Official Guests

When the University hosts official guests, including:

- visitors from other universities;
- members of the community;
- certain consultants and employees from other universities;

depending on the duration of the meeting, light refreshments or lunch may be arranged for the guests and the appropriate employee hosting the function. Consideration should be given to the ratio outlined below.

9.2.2 Meetings of an Academic Society/Conference

Where the University is a host or sponsor of such an event, light refreshments and lunch may be provided. In the case of conferences where it is appropriate to charge a fee, such fee should, in so far as is possible, be adequate to support hospitality costs.

9.2.3 Receptions

Light refreshments may be provided at receptions for official student & employee award ceremonies, opening of buildings, a launch and employee retirement presentations.

9.2.4 Evening Hospitality – External Venues

Evening hospitality should only be incurred where wholly necessary in relation to the business of the University (in the case of Research & Self-Financing Projects the costs must be eligible costs and these should not be claimed in addition to subsistence costs claimed by any individual).

Attention should be paid to the cost of such an event and excess expenditure should be avoided. If costs other than the cost of the meal are incurred, such as flowers, a cake or a gift, again a full explanation is required. Costs may be rejected for payment by the University if they are not deemed to be wholly necessary.

9.2.5 Evening Hospitality – Training Restaurant

In exceptional circumstances, and in consultation with the relevant Head of Department, meals may be provided in the Training restaurant. In such cases all events must be carefully planned to ensure best value for money.

9.2.6 Ineligible Events and Occasions

Expenditure on non-business related hospitality including meals and receptions are specifically not allowed. Ineligible events include, but are not limited to:

- Employee parties including Christmas events;
- Unofficial University events and employee social gatherings regardless of the occasion;
- Employee birthdays, weddings etc.

9.3 Costs

Every effort should be made to minimise costs at all times; costs incurred should be consistent with the;

- 9.2.1 Official role/function of the guest;
- 9.2.2 The occasion and circumstances; and
- 9.2.3 The number attending.

9.4 Rates

The following guidelines should be followed in relation to maximum allowable rates (and costs) per head for hospitality:

- | | |
|---|-----|
| ➤ Light Refreshments (morning/afternoon tea) | € 4 |
| ➤ Light Refreshments (at receptions sandwiches etc) | € 8 |
| ➤ Lunch on campus | €15 |
| ➤ Lunch off campus | €20 |
| ➤ Dinner | €45 |

There may be exceptional occasions where due to the rank and/or status of the guest these guidelines are exceeded, in such cases an appropriate explanation must accompany the invoice payment or claim for reimbursement.

9.5 Gratuities

In cases where it is necessary to host a meal in an external location, a gratuity may be included in the payment up to a maximum of 10% of the total bill and subject to the guideline above for rates. Gratuities in excess of 10% of the total bill will not be reimbursed or will be deemed to be the liability of the organiser of the event on occasions where the University is invoiced directly.

Where a service charge is included on a bill, no additional gratuity should be paid.

9.6 Ratio – Guest to Employee 1:2

Normally, there should be no more than two University employees for each guest attending any event. Costs associated with hospitality, involving only University employees, are not eligible for reimbursement.

9.7 Alcohol

Alcoholic beverages should not normally be charged to University funds. There is no exception to this during normal working hours, however when it is necessary to provide hospitality in the evening per the provision above (9.2.4) it may be appropriate to serve wine with a meal, in all circumstances this should be kept to an absolute minimum.

10. Staff Events

Provision for light refreshments should be made where the time and duration of the meeting extends beyond a reasonable timeframe (e.g. full morning meetings – provision may be made for morning tea break). Provision for meals should only be made when necessary and are an integral part of the meeting and not a matter of personal convenience.

11. Compliance

It is expected that all employees of the University and all members of the University Governing Body will comply with this policy.

12. Related Documents

Gift Policy

Credit Card Guidelines

Travel & Subsistence Policy

13. Useful Links

[Policies page](#)

[Circular 25 2000](#)

14. Policy Author

The authors of this policy are the Finance Managers. Any feedback or issues arising on implementation of this policy should be communicated to the policy authors. They are responsible to ensure that the Policy Owner is aware of these comments when reviewing the policy.

15. Appendices

Appendix 1 Hospitality Supporting Documentation Form

Appendix 2 Code of Conduct (extract)

Appendix 1: Form detailing Provision of Supporting Documentation

SETU HOSPITALITY PROVISION -SUPPORTING INFORMATION	
This form must accompany all invoices, EFT or ESS reimbursement requests associated with expenditure on hospitality.	
Purchase Requisition/ Order No:	
Name of Person Organising Hospitality	
Cost Centre Charged	
Specific Business Purpose of Hospitality	
Supplier/Venue/Location	
If In house facilities (as defined in Section 9.1 of Hospitality Policy) are not used please give reason:	
Invoice Value	
If Invoice Value exceeds guidelines for rates (as outlined in section 9.4 of the Hospitality Policy) please give reason:	
Details of Guests <i>(add lines if necessary)</i>	
Name of Guest	Organisation
If the ratio of 1 Staff Member to 2 Guests is exceeded please outline reason:	

Please note invoices in respect of hospitality will not be paid or reimbursed as appropriate unless all information requested in complete and accurate.

Appendix 2 Code of Conduct (extract)

3.3 Transparency

- 3.3.1 Employees must comply with the following guidelines in relation to giving and receiving gifts and entertainment, in order to ensure that university decisions are made on fair and objective criteria.
- 3.3.2 Employees must not solicit or receive gifts or hospitality for personal gain. The receipt of gifts and hospitality by employees from individuals or organizations will be governed by the highest standards. The term “gift” includes any benefit which is given to an employee free of charge or at less than its commercial price.
- 3.3.3 The exchange of official gifts (e.g. gifts exchanged with dignitaries and officials) to and from SETU is acceptable and in such circumstances, gifts received remain the property of SETU. Receipt of hospitality that constitutes normal courtesies in student, business and community relations (e.g. attendance at a community/civic/cultural function) is acceptable. Employees may only accept small items of promotional material (e.g. promotional calendars, diaries, beverage etc.), any other gifts should be returned with a suitable explanation. Further details will be defined in a SETU Hospitality & Gift Policy.
- 3.3.4 Employees, arising from their employment must not accept cash, gift cheques or any vouchers that may be exchanged for cash, regardless of the amount, from individuals or organisations.
- 3.3.5 Employees must make themselves aware of any SETU guidelines, which may be issued from time to time in respect of the above, including the appropriateness of gifts.