

Business trip information leaflet

Travel expenses are processed on completion of the business trip, by the Travel Expenses Unit in accordance with the Travel Expenses Regulations of the State of Lower Saxony (NRKVO).

1. Business trips

Business trips are journeys for official purposes outside the place of employment or for the purpose of further training carried out exclusively in the interests of public service, section 84.1.1.1 NBG.

2. Approval

Business trips must always be commissioned or approved in writing before the trip commences. Please refer to the Guidelines for the approval of business trips for a list of responsible authorities. <http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/dezernat2/finanzbuchhaltung/reisekosten/>

Oral approval is sufficient for business trips at the place of employment if no request for reimbursement of expenses will be filed. The 'Business Trip Approval Request Form' (*Antrag auf Genehmigung einer Dienstreise*) must be used when submitting a written application for a business trip. Please ensure that the application has been submitted, completely filled in and signed by the relevant authority, before departing on the trip.

Professors require written approval if an application for reimbursement of expenses is to be filed. If no application for reimbursement of expenses is submitted, then trips outside of the town of work must be announced to the authorising office. For the purposes of documentation, the 'Business Trip Approval Request Form' can also be used in the event of a work-related accident.

Business trips should in principle not start before 6 am or end after midnight. Business travel on work-free days should be avoided (exception: business or economic reasons).

In the case of international travel, employees must check entry and residence formalities with the embassy or consulate in the destination or transit country **before** their trip. Travel advice for specific countries can be found on the Federal Foreign Office website www.auswaertiges-amt.de.

In the case of business trips for recurring work-related duties of a specific kind, it is possible to request long-term approval for business trips (see § 3 Guidelines for the approval of business trips at the University of Oldenburg).

3. Down Payment

Travellers must bear the costs of business trips themselves before requesting reimbursement. They can request and be granted an advance payment of up to **80%** of the expenses, if the anticipated travel costs exceed **€200**.

As a matter of principle, advance payments must be accounted for no later than **four weeks** after the end of the business trip, using the accounting form.

4. Claiming expenses

Only adequate and necessary costs will be granted, section 84.1.2. NBG. The '*Approved Business Trip Accounting Form*' is used to process travel expenses. Travel expense claims must be submitted promptly, at the latest within 6 months (exclusion period) after the end of the business trip. In determining whether this deadline was met, the date of receipt of the central post office of the University or Division 2 will apply rather than the date of submission to the Faculty or the date the travel expense claim was signed.

If the application is not filed on time and no claim is made before the six-month deadline, then any advance payments received must be returned.

The fully filled in and signed travel expenses claim must be accompanied by original travel receipts, which include in particular:

- the approved travel authorisation request
- tickets for transportation used and any other transportation receipts (e.g. taxi, boarding passes)
- the hotel bill
- any additional costs, e.g. attendance and entry fees.

Electronic documents must be printed and marked as such (e.g. mobile phone tickets). The receipts must be issued in the name of the University. Due to digital archiving, the payment of travel expenses can only be made in the future if they are suitably attached to an A4 sheet.

5. Rail travel

For train journeys on Deutsche Bahn, business travellers must always use the university's key customer discount (Grosskundenabonnement, customer number: 1300570), as well as private rail passes (BahnCard), monthly season tickets, semester tickets, etc. They must also make use of any available discounts on fares. The key customer discount, which is currently 5%, is applied to the standard price (Flexpreis), and can only be combined with a BC Business rail pass. The reimbursement of rail travel costs is limited to the cost of 2nd class travel. The travellers or their organisational units are responsible for making sure a BahnCard has been purchased. Permission from the Travel Expenses Unit must be obtained before purchasing a BahnCard. For this, please make use of the form 'Application for the refunding or purchasing of a BahnCard'.

6. Flights

Flight costs will be refunded if flying is necessary for the work to be carried out or is more economically advantageous. In such cases, travellers must prove that flying is necessary.

7. Taxis

The costs of travel by taxi for official or urgent personal reasons (e.g. due to health considerations) are reimbursed.

Official reasons for using taxis include:

- in individual cases due to care responsibilities
- if public transport is not available or would cause an unacceptable delay
- if travel between 11 pm and 6 am requires travelling by taxi for arrival and departure or necessary journeys at the destination
- in connection with the use of public transport, such as women's night taxis

Unfamiliarity with the area or adverse weather conditions alone do not justify the use of a taxi.

8. Travelling by private car

If a private car is to be used, a reimbursement of **20 cents** per kilometre will be made, up to a maximum sum of **€100** (For outgoing trips only the amount is halved to 50 euros). In this case, all liability for material damage rests with the person going on the business trip. A reimbursement of **30 cents** per kilometre will only be made if the authorising office has **previously** recognised that the use of a private vehicle is beneficial for the work to be carried out. In this case, liability for material damage does not rest with the person going on the business trip.

When travelling on a business trip by company or rental car (e.g. Cambio Carsharing), please take into account the respective most up-to-date version of the guidelines and notes

[\(http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/dezernat2/sonderaufgaben/fuhrpark/\)](http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/dezernat2/sonderaufgaben/fuhrpark/):

- [Guidelines for the use of company and rental cars of the University of Oldenburg](#) University motor vehicle guidelines

- [Tips on car sharing at the University of Oldenburg](#)

9. Accommodation costs, daily allowance

Necessary accommodation costs will be reimbursed. You may not exceed the sum of €80 per night (applicable within Germany). If hotel costs are higher, these must be substantiated. If a room is shared with a person who is not entitled to reimbursement, the cost will be divided between the number of persons (proof of the cost of a single room is not required).

For hotel bookings, you can use the university intranet by clicking on the link 'hotel bookings': <http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/dezernat2/finanzbuchhaltung/reisekosten/>

Special conditions apply if bookings are made directly through Motel One Hotels. Account details can be obtained from the Travel Expenses Unit.

For trips lasting longer than 8 hours, employees receive a daily allowance for meals and other extra costs. The amount of the daily allowance is calculated according to section 9.4a.3 EStg. Meals included in conference, hotel or flight prices reduce the daily allowance and the employee is obligated to state any inclusive catering on their travel expense claim.

The daily and overnight accommodation expenses for international travel are governed by section 3.1.1. ARV.

10. Other expenses

Other expenses are those which are directly connected with the business trip and are necessary to carry out official duties. When claiming travel expenses, additional costs must be justified in detail regarding purpose and necessity. These costs will only be reimbursed if original receipts are provided. Expenses for medical and travel cancellation insurance will not, as a rule, be reimbursed.

11. Combining business trips with holidays

If the business trip is connected to a private journey of up to five working days, the travel cost reimbursement is calculated as if only the business trip had taken place.

This does not include cases where the stay is extended beyond the duration of the official purpose in order to achieve substantial reductions in travel tariffs. In both cases, a comparison must be attached, showing which travel costs would have incurred in the case of a direct arrival before the start of a business trip or a direct return after the end of the business trip. The comparison must be made on the date of the train/flight booking.

If business trips are combined with a private journey of more than five working days, only the costs incurred for business execution will be reimbursed as travel expenses. Daily and overnight accommodation allowances may be granted for the duration of the business trip as well as the additional travel time (subject to prior consultation with the Travel Expense Unit).

12. Using discounts for business purposes

If an airline or any other company gives you any refunds, complimentary flights, discounts etc. for flights or other transportation forms that you used on a business-related trip, you are required to use these for future business-related trips. Any discounts which arise on account of a business trip may only be used for business purposes.

13. Other

Membership of the German Youth Hostel Association is a prerequisite for accommodation in a youth hostel. Division 1 manages use of the membership card (*Jugendherbergsausweis*), and the card may be borrowed from the office if this has been arranged in advance.

Please use Contract Number 40093101 when booking a rental car from Europcar.

Overnight accommodation tax, visitor's tax or cultural subsidy taxes do not constitute an eligible additional cost as long as these costs are avoidable. These taxes are often excluded for business travellers if they are able to demonstrate the professional nature of their trip. In some cases, the employee may need to apply to the municipality for exemption.

14. Accident insurance cover

According to the Employer's Liability Insurance Associations, employees are covered by accident insurance while at work and on business trips. This applies as long as the trip is taken for business and not private purposes.

(https://www.uni-oldenburg.de/fileadmin/user_upload/arbeitsicherheit/download/download_Formulare/Unfall/UV-Schutz_an_Hochschulen.pdf).

Accidents must be reported immediately to Division 1 in accordance with the following guidelines <https://www.uni-oldenburg.de/dezernat1/service-a-z/unfaelle/>.

15. Note on the implementation of procurement guidelines when applying for trips

When applying for business trips, the same legal basis applies as when applying for normal goods and services (VOL, procurement guidelines etc.). In the case of trips, however, responsibility lies with each individual user. In order to facilitate legally compliant procurement, the following must be taken into account:

When making declarations of expenses of up to €500 (net), there are no further requirements under procurement law. When declaring expenses of over €500 (net), three quotations (or, as the case may be, website printouts) must be provided.

If certain destinations can only be reached via one airline, or if it is not possible to travel to the business trip destination via other means (e.g. rail), a brief comment substantiating this must be provided and included when claiming expenses.

If you have any questions regarding procurement law, please contact the procurement department staff.

Notes for the authorising office

A business trip may only be approved if funds are available for this purpose. The general requirement for the economical expenditure of funds set out in section 7 (1) LHO obligates both the employer and employees to take every feasible action within their due diligence to keep travel costs as low as possible. The scope of the business trip authorization is binding for the duration of the business trip and the settlement of travel expenses claims and is the responsibility of the approving authority. The employee must be informed in the approval process where the business trip will begin and end (home/office).

Please note that before applying for travel authorization, the employee must confirm that the planned trip is a business trip. Business trips are journeys for official purposes outside the place of employment or for the purpose of further training carried out exclusively in the interests of public service, section 84.1.1.1 NBG.

Especially if a personal car is being used, it must be ascertained whether there is a considerable need for this in terms of the work to be carried out.

Section 5.3.2 VV NRKVO

A considerable official purpose is present if

- the business can't be executed, otherwise
- the use of a private car is necessary for the business and the use of a company car is not suitable, for example if
 - o the business can't be executed using public transportation or there is none available
 - o heavy (>25 kg) or bulk luggage must be taken on the business trip for the purpose of carrying out the business-no personal luggage
 - o the use of a car makes it possible to conduct business at various locations on a given day, which would not be possible using public transport
 - o the employee has a severe disability classified as 'aG'
 - o the business trip is economically more advantageous than by using public transport. Part aspects could be under other taking along other officials of the same employer, avoiding additional costs, for example daily or accommodation allowance-and substantial reductions of times of absence.

Flight costs may be reimbursed if an aircraft is used: for official reasons - e.g. due to time constraints or economic considerations such as saving travel expenses or working time of at least eight hours

- for official reasons - e.g. due to time constraints
- or economic considerations such as saving travel expenses or working time of at least eight hours

Rental car:

There are justifiable reasons for hiring a rental car if:

- The availability of public transportation is limited or considering the overall circumstances, alternative options are not appropriate for official reasons.
- A fleet vehicle is not available
- The use of taxis would not be more cost-effective

All of the above conditions must be fulfilled. In general, only the cost of renting a vehicle up to the lower middle class may be reimbursed.

Applicants may not authorise their own business trips, even if they are, for example, the project leader. In case of holiday or sickness, staff covering the absence is entitled to approve business trips.

For additional information, please contact the Travel Expenses Unit (Ms Engel, tel. 2764, Ms Thiede, tel. 2500).

Business travellers	Authorising office
Professors who wish to claim travel expenses	Dean. If the Dean so requests, this task can be delegated to the management of the institute or department
Faculty Directors	Dean
Research staff below the rank of professor within the faculty institutes and institutions	Dean. If the Dean so requests, this task can be delegated to the management of the institute or department
Technical & Administrative (MTV) staff and other non-academic faculty staff	Faculty Directors
Heads of scientific and research centres	President
Staff of scientific and research centres	Head of the scientific or research centre
Heads of central bodies	President
Staff of central bodies	Head of the central body
Heads of units and administrative departments of the Presidential Chair	President
Staff of units and administrative departments of the Presidential Chair	Head of the unit or administrative department
Heads of divisions	Vice President for Administration and Finance
Staff of divisions	Head of the division