

International Business Trip Policy

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Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Travel and Subsistence	3
3.	Housing and Personal Effects.....	4
3.1	Responsibility.....	4
3.2	Removal.....	4
3.3	Customs Duty	4
3.4	Temporary Accommodation on Arrival Overseas	4
3.5	Rented Accommodation.....	4
3.6	Insurance	5
3.7	After The Trip - Transport to the Home Country	5
4.	Terms of Employment.....	5
4.1	Local Working Hours.....	5
4.2	Extension of the Trip.....	5
5.	Salary.....	5
5.1	Principles	5
5.2	Base Salary	5
5.3	Short Term Trip Allowance	6
5.3.1	Method of Payment	6
5.3.2	Tax and Social Security.....	6
5.3.3	Review during Trip	7
6.	Tax and Social Security	7
7	Benefits.....	7
7.1	Provision of a Car - Host Country (Countries).....	7
7.2	Pension, Savings and Investment Plans.....	7
7.3	Leave Entitlement	7
7.4	Home Leave Visits.....	8
7.5	Home Telephone Calls	8
8	Medical Matters	8
8.1	Medical Examinations	9
8.2	Inoculations and Vaccinations	9
8.3	Dental Check-Up and Eye Testing.....	9
8.4	During The Trip.....	9
8.5	Personal Accident/Life Assurance	9
9	Legal Matters	10
9.1	Passports.....	10
9.2	Work Permits/Visas and Other Consular Documents	10
10.	Force Majeure	10

1. Introduction

This Policy sets out the key principles by which the University manages employees who are requested to work abroad for a short period of time, up to a maximum of 6 months. The employee will continue to be employed under their De Montfort University contract of employment. International assignments of more than 6 months duration fall within the auspices of the 'International Assignments Policy'. This policy does not relate to business trips for meetings or seminars; for such trips please refer to the Business Expenses Policy.

In this Policy the term 'home country' is used to describe the country from which the employee is assigned. The term 'host country' (or 'host countries') is used to describe the country or countries to which the employee is sent.

All international business trips must be fully authorised by the Dean/Director prior to any arrangements being finalised.

In order to ensure that all international business trips on behalf of the University are co-ordinated, the employee must liaise with the International Team, in External Relations regarding the intended trip, prior to final arrangements being completed.

Prior to the business trip, consideration must be given via discussions between the employee and their line manager of any necessary or appropriate cover for home country workload and commitments.

To ensure no additional tax liability is incurred by the individuals in relation to any claims for expenses on an international assignment, receipts will be necessary in all cases, except in those cases where a per diem rate has been approved by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). All other additional personal tax liabilities should be the responsibility of the individual and not the University. Guidance should be sought on any taxation matters from the Taxation Accountant in the first instance.

2. Travel and Subsistence

Flights, travel and associated expenses of journeys to and from the host country (countries) will be reimbursed in line with the University's [Policy and Procedures on Reimbursement of Business Expenses](#) which can be viewed at the following web address

If appropriate and more convenient, individuals may arrange to have an advance on anticipated expenses in the form of traveller's cheques for use in the host country (countries).

Any employee, who plans to travel overseas on University business, should inform their Head of Department/School and their Dean/Director in advance of the dates of travel, destination and names of travellers. Procurement Services in the Finance Department must also be informed of all overseas travel of more than 30 days for insurance purposes. Failure to inform procurement services could leave the University and the employee without insurance cover that are normally in place.

When an individual travels outside of the United Kingdom on University business, they are covered by the University's Travel scheme. A summary of benefits and the services available can be viewed at the following at:

<https://sites.google.com/a/myapps.dmu.ac.uk/finance/home/procurement-home/insurance>

3. Housing and Personal Effects

3.1 Responsibility

The employee will be wholly responsible for deciding what to do about home country property that is owned by him/her. The University will not take responsibility in this area and accepts no liability for any decision taken by the employee.

3.2 Removal

Where agreed as necessary, the University will bear any excess costs of transporting a reasonable quantity of personal effects from the home country to the host country (countries), particularly where the business trip is for at least 6 months duration.

3.3 Customs Duty

The University will reimburse any Customs Duty or Import Tax in respect of the items agreed in [Section 3.2](#), if appropriate.

Items purchased during the trip abroad may incur Customs Duty on return and this will be the responsibility of the employee.

3.4 Temporary Accommodation on Arrival Overseas

The University will arrange suitable temporary accommodation, usually in a hotel. In this event, the University will normally meet the following expenses against receipts for up to four weeks:

- The basic cost of rooms.
- Reasonable expenditure on meals.
- Reasonable expenditure on laundry.
- Required service charges.

The above arrangements will be reviewed after the first four weeks by the line manager and extended if appropriate with the approval of the Director of HR or designated deputy.

3.5 Rented Accommodation

When the trip is expected to last for more than 4 weeks in one location, the University will normally arrange and meet the costs of suitable temporary accommodation, either in halls of residence or in appropriate, self-catering accommodation.

3.6 Insurance

Personal belongings physically transported by the employee at the beginning and end of a trip are insured.

The University will pay the cost of insurance of personal effects in the host country (countries). Employees should check the exclusions in the policy and make separate arrangements, at their own expense, where cover is not adequate, for example, in respect of single item limits, valuables temporarily removed from the premises etc.

3.7 After The Trip - Transport to the Home Country

Where the University has met the cost of transporting personal effects to the host country (countries) under [Section 3.2](#), the University will pay for those items to be returned to the home country at the end of the trip by air, land or sea freight as appropriate.

4. Terms of Employment

4.1 Local Working Hours

Employees will be required to observe the hours of work in force in the host institution or such hours as are appropriate to the agreed duties. These hours will be highlighted to the employee prior to the start of the trip.

4.2 Extension of the Trip

Where business needs require the trip to be extended, both the employee and the relevant line managers must agree the terms and conditions of the extension. Dependant upon the length of the trip the terms of the extension may differ from those of this Policy. Before acceptance of the extension, the impact of any changes and of other implications (for example, tax) will be discussed with the employee.

5. Salary

5.1 Principles

The aim of the University is to ensure that the employee has the equivalent net spending power in the host country (countries) in relation to the home country for the purpose of day to day living expenses. Employees will receive an allowance where the cost of day to day host country (countries) goods is above that employees would normally be expected to incur in the home country during periods in which they are living in self-catering accommodation. ([See 5.3 below](#)).

5.2 Base Salary

Employees will normally continue to receive their pre-trip salary, and remain on the home country payroll.

5.3 Short Term Trip Allowance

The short-term trip allowance will be calculated and set by the University taking account of the differences in the cost of living, taxes and other factors between the two countries in question. The aim of the short term trip allowance is to recognise the additional costs employees will incur in the host country (countries) compared to day-to-day living costs in the home country and is designed to give equivalent day-to-day spending power in the host country (countries) in relation to the home country. The allowance also recognises the change in lifestyle employees will encounter because they are temporarily living away from home.

Once an outline itinerary has been established, full discussion will take place between the employee and their line manager to discuss the appropriate level of the allowance.

5.3.1 Method of Payment

The Short Term Trip Allowance will usually be processed through the normal home country payroll for home country tax and social security purposes. The University will transfer the net amount to the host country (countries).

In some cases, it may be more practicable for employees to be responsible for the transfer of funds to the host country (countries). As there are a number of options, employees may be able to:

- Use credit cards and ATMs.
- Arrange a transfer of funds to a host country bank account or Post Office.
- Arrange a transfer of funds through an international travel agent.

The University will refund charges employees incur using one of these methods.

If the duration, or the location, of the trip makes it very difficult to set up an appropriate arrangement, the University will make funds available to employees by way of a loan, which should be converted into safe form to carry, for example, travellers cheques.

Where employees will become liable to income tax in the host country (countries), the method of payment of salary and allowances may change to reflect guidance in DMU's International Assignments Policy. Where this is known in advance of the trip, employees will be advised at the time the offer is made. Where the change occurs part way through a trip, for example where the stay is extended, employees will be advised as soon as the need to change is known.

5.3.2 Tax and Social Security

Where the Short Term Trip Allowance is subject to tax and social security contributions in the home country, it will be grossed-up by the payroll department and processed so that statutory deductions are made. Where it becomes taxable in the host country (countries), the University will set up a suitable arrangement, for example to meet the cost directly with the authorities.

5.3.3 Review during Trip

The Short Term Trip Allowance will remain unchanged for the duration of the trip, unless there is high inflation in the host country (countries). The Employee's line manager will assess this during the trip and authorise any changes.

6. Tax and Social Security

In most countries employees will remain resident in the home country for tax and social security purposes. Home country tax and social security will continue to be applied to all cash payments as if these were made in the home country.

In the event that the trip(s) become extended, and the employee becomes resident in two countries for tax, the University will make appropriate arrangements to pay, or reimburse, any tax payable in the host country (countries). Employees are responsible for co-operating with the University's tax advisers and must declare total income and benefits to the relevant authorities when requested to do so.

The University is responsible for ensuring that all corporate obligations are met in respect of income tax and social security for all employees in their country. Where a liability to tax arises for an individual because of a benefit provided by the University, the University will be responsible for ensuring that the benefit is declared as appropriate to the authorities. This will apply where additional taxable benefits are provided, or home country benefits are temporarily suspended, as a result of the trip.

Where possible, employees will be retained in the home country scheme, in order not to break continuity of contributions in a way that could adversely affect social security benefits. The University will apply for any necessary certificates. Employees will be advised if this is an issue for trips lasting for more than a few weeks.

7 Benefits

7.1 Provision of a Car - Host Country (Countries)

Cars or car lease allowances will be provided in the host country (countries) where this is necessary for business purposes or to meet special local circumstances, for example, security needs.

7.2 Pension, Savings and Investment Plans

Subject to the rules of pension schemes, savings and investment plans, and any relevant legislation or regulations, employees will remain in the home country scheme/plan.

7.3 Leave Entitlement

Employees must agree with their line manager whether it is appropriate to take annual leave during a trip and, if so, when best to take it to meet business needs. Normally, annual leave will not be taken during a trip of three months or less.

Leave entitlement will be limited to the days of entitlement in the home country, inclusive of local bank/public holidays. National holidays will be observed as appropriate in the host country (countries) and days remaining (from the total home country entitlement) will be the host country (countries) annual leave entitlement.

7.4 Home Leave Visits

Employees are entitled to one economy return air trip (or equivalent alternative) to the home country at the University's expense once in every 3 month period subject to business needs and personal circumstances and by agreement with the host country (countries) Line Manager. Every effort will be made to accommodate leave to meet particular family arrangements.

The costs of travel within the home country and of accommodation and subsistence are the responsibility of the employee.

Employees should note that the home leave travel costs may not be used for any other purpose except to allow immediate family to visit the host country (countries), as an alternative to employees using a home leave visit.

The University will meet reasonable travel costs incurred if the employee's family visits him/her in the host country (countries) instead of the employee using a home leave visit. The maximum cost to be met by the University is the cost that would have been incurred had home leave been taken. Where the travel costs are greater than this, the employee will pay the excess. Any tax liability incurred by the family visiting the employee as outlined above, will be the employee's, and the employee will be responsible for ensuring that the benefit is declared for tax purposes.

Immediate family will normally include spouse or partner, and dependent children living with the employee in the home country home.

7.5 Home Telephone Calls

The University will meet the reasonable cost of one hour per week of personal telephone calls to the home country. These calls should not be made from a hotel unless absolutely essential, as hotel rates are normally higher. Where accommodation provided by the University does not include a telephone, employees should use office or public phones.

8 Medical Matters

Any treatment employees are currently undergoing must be brought to the attention of their line manager, prior to the short-term assignment being accepted.

Any employee who is embarking upon a period of work overseas should ensure that they have read and understood DMU's [Health and Safety Policy SP3/67/98](#), "Health and Safety When Working Overseas" available from Health and Safety.

In general, the aim is to provide employees with equivalent cover in the host country (countries) as enjoyed in the home country. Treatment may be through a combination of public and private provision, depending upon the host country (countries). Employees will be expected to contribute at the same level as they would have contributed in the home country.

Where the home country has adequate public health care or treatment is free, employees should use this during home leave or upon return to the home country, if possible.

8.1 Medical Examinations

Depending on the host country (countries) arrangements, employees may be required to undergo a thorough medical examination before leaving the home country. This will allow time for the prescription of any drugs or the provision of any necessary treatment to be arranged before leaving. The University will pay the cost of the examination(s).

8.2 Inoculations and Vaccinations

Employees should take advice from their doctor on the inoculations and vaccinations recommended for the country of the proposed trip and make the necessary arrangements to have the recommended course. The University will reimburse this expense.

8.3 Dental Check-Up and Eye Testing

Before leaving for the trip, employees must have any dental check-ups and eye tests that would normally become due during the trip. The cost of the examinations will be borne by the employee.

As is the case with the policy in respect of medical matters, this element of the Policy is designed to encourage employees to take good preventative measures, with the help of practitioners known to them.

8.4 During The Trip

Private medical cover is provided for the employee. This is intended to supplement any suitable host country (countries) public facilities, and excludes non-essential treatment, for example, cosmetic treatment.

Emergency cover will be provided for illness and injury outside the host country (countries) while the employee is travelling on University business.

8.5 Personal Accident/Life Assurance

For the duration of the trip, cover is provided in accordance with the terms of the home country contract of employment and is based on normal home country salary.

9 Legal Matters

9.1 Passports

Employees must have a valid passport to enter the host country (countries) and any other countries as may be required to visit during the trip. All documents must be valid for at least the whole period of the trip. Employees are responsible for meeting the cost of obtaining a passport.

Employees should check the expiry date of their passport as some countries do not allow entry to passport holders when the document has less than six months to expire.

9.2 Work Permits/Visas and Other Consular Documents

All trips are subject to necessary Work Permits/Visas being granted. The University will make the application on behalf of the employee, and will meet the costs incurred.

10. Force Majeure

When circumstances in the host country are such that early evacuation is required, the University will make every effort, in conjunction with the relevant authorities, to assure a safe and effective evacuation.