

## Federation travel expenses policy FAQs

### 1. Travel

***How will the changes in the policy regarding eligibility for first class travel be communicated to colleagues?***

This has been communicated via an email to stakeholders detailing the updated policy. When developing the policy, stakeholders were consulted and this was signed off by the Federation board.

***Will first class be offered to travellers when booking?***

No, a standard fare will be offered to all travellers in the first instance. It is up to the traveller to request first class travel. This will only occur when the total journey time (including work or home journey to the final destination) is greater than 2.5 hours, as outlined in the policy.

***Does the journey time include the traveller's full journey time including the time it takes to get to and from the train station? If so, how can this journey time be ascertained and checked?***

It is based on home/office to final destination time (that is total journey) and not the duration of the rail journey alone. We will trust the self-declaration of the claimant in these situations.

***What happens if someone is travelling from their office (not from home) to the train station and then to London?***

In this circumstance, we would assume their office is home and calculate journey time from this point.

***For pre-planned meetings, are delegates expected to only book advance fixed time tickets as these are substantially cheaper, especially in first class?***

Yes, unless there is a good business reason not to.

***If my meeting finishes early can I book myself onto an earlier train or flight?***

No. If you wish to change the ticket then it is at the cost of the traveller and will not be reimbursed by Federation. If there are exceptional circumstances (e.g. the meeting has been cancelled by the host while en route) that would necessitate a change, the traveller must contact the appropriate Federation administrator, medical secretary or committee manager.

***If I am located close to an airport which would significantly reduce the time needed to take out of my NHS commitments may I still book flights from this airport even if they are not the cheapest available?***

*Time factors as well as the cost of travel and any associated accommodation will be taken into consideration when a booking is requested. Appropriate training will be provided for staff to ensure travel bookings continue provide the most cost effective and convenient solution for both the organisation and the traveller.*

***Are the London Underground and taxi fares covered under the policy?***

Underground tickets should be purchased along with rail tickets where appropriate. If rail tickets are not required, underground tickets should be purchased and claimed through the Expenses system.

Taxis should only be used in instances where public transport methods are not deemed appropriate.

## 2. Hotel accommodation

***The new maximum spend per night on hotel rooms is lower than the rate that Diversity negotiated for us with our preferred hotel. How can we get around this?***

Booking as far in advance as possible is strongly recommended in order to comply with the limit. Where there are exceptional local circumstances (e.g. hygiene and security considerations) that may necessitate a higher rate these may be considered subject to prior approval.

For meetings hosted in London, we have secured a corporate rate for rooms with breakfast included with the [Melia White House Hotel](#) in Albany Street, which will cater for all of our accommodation needs and is in accordance with the travel and accommodation policy.

Going forward, attendees will book their accommodation directly with the relevant administrator, medical secretary or committee manager in CPD, MRCP(UK) and JRCPTB respectively, who will then liaise with the Melia White House Hotel to confirm the booking. Please note that this only applies to bookings to be made from February 2019 onwards. We are unable to amend or rearrange any existing bookings.

For meetings hosted in Edinburgh and Glasgow we have secured corporate room rates including breakfast with a number of four star hotels that meet the limit of £150 per night in accordance with the travel and accommodation policy.

***If overnight accommodation is capped at £180 (in London) for all College business, is it acceptable for clinicians to organise their own accommodation and claim back up to the £180 allowance?***

No, the difference between the actual cost of the accommodation, if it is lower than the £180 limit the difference cannot be claimed back. Any costs over and above the £180 limit (£150 outside London) per night must be covered by the claimant. All bookings should be made through our travel provider, Diversity, wherever possible.

***Do all incidental personal costs need a receipt to expense?***

Yes, all should be receipted.

### 3. Meals

***Will pre-dinner drinks and wine with dinner be provided at executive board meetings?***

Yes. Drinks will be provided at evening functions and networking events that take place after executive board meetings and other Federation committee meetings where specified. Dinners held elsewhere after such meetings, i.e. away from the three Royal Colleges of Physicians should not exceed the maximum £40 per head limit.

Alcohol purchased in other situations or locations will not be reimbursed.

***If lunches/dinners for boards held at RCP London are above the expense limit for lunch and evening meals, will delegates need to make up any additional cost or organise their own food for such events?***

No. The cost of RCP London meals should be assumed to be acceptable and the convenience of holding dinners at the venue should be taken into account when booking.

#### **International PACES dinners**

***Can alcohol beyond that provided at the Federation Dinner be reimbursed if examiners purchase it?***

No. Those organising the Federation dinner should however ensure that a reasonable but not excessive amount of alcohol is provided at table for all attendees. This should be in the order of one aperitif and one half of one bottle of wine per person provided with food.

Alcohol purchased in other situations or locations will not be reimbursed.