



WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY
TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE
POLICY

POLICY LIBRARY ID

FIN: 07



TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE POLICY

Sponsor Division	Finance Division
Responsible Department	Chief Financial Officer

Related WSU Policies

Policy Name	
Delegations of Authority	
Supply Chain Management Policy	

Change History

Approval Authority	Council
Approval Date	27 February 2020
Effective Date	Immediately
Next Revision Date	January 2022
Number of Pages	16

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Zakuza', is written over a large, empty rectangular box.

Chairperson of Council: Mr T Zakuza

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	PURPOSE.....	5
2	POLICY OBJECTIVES.....	5
3	PRINCIPLES.....	5
4	APPLICATION.....	6
5	EXCLUSIONS.....	6
6	DEFINITIONS.....	6
7	RELEVANT POLICIES.....	7
8	TRAVEL BOOKINGS.....	7
9	AUTHORISATION.....	7
10	ACCOMMODATION.....	7
	10.1 ACCOMODATION SERVICE PROVIDERS.....	8
	10.2 STUDENTS TRAVELLING FOR SPORT ACTIVITES.....	8
	10.3 PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION.....	8
	10.4 LOCAL DAY TRIPS.....	8
	10.5 EXCLUSION.....	8
11	AIR TRAVEL.....	9
12	INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL.....	9
	12.1 AIR TRAVEL.....	9
	12.2 CAR HIRE & TRANSFERS.....	9
	12.3 ACCOMODATION.....	9
	12.4 SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES.....	9
13	LOYALTY PROGRAMS.....	9
14	MISSED FLIGHTS AND AFTER-HOURS SERVICE.....	10
15	SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES - LOCAL.....	10
16	ALCOHOL.....	11
17	TRAVELLER CASH ADVANCES - LOCAL.....	11
18	COST CONTAINMENT.....	11
19	CAR HIRE.....	11
	19.1 CAR HIRE SERVICE PROVIDERS.....	12
	19.2 FUEL CARDS.....	12
	19.3 CAR HIRE BOOKINGS.....	12
	19.4 VEHICLE GROUPS.....	12
	19.4.1 For City Driving.....	12
	19.4.2 Off-Road Driving.....	12
	19.4.3 For transporting a group of people.....	13
	19.5 AUTHORISED DRIVERS.....	13
	19.6 PASSENGERS.....	13

19.7	USE OF OWN VEHICLE	13
19.8	MISCONDUCT ASSOCIATED WITH HIRED VEHICLES.....	13
19.9	TRAFFIC FINES.....	14
19.10	INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS	14
19.10.1	Medical Insurance.....	14
19.10.2	Baggage Insurance.....	14
19.10.3	Car Insurance.....	15
20	ANNUAL INCREASES	16
21	NON-COMPLIANCE.....	16

1 PURPOSE

This policy deals with expenses incurred and that may be claimed in respect of both local and overseas travel for purposes of attending to University business, attending training workshops or attending approved academic and research conferences.

2 POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- a. specify the principles governing business-related travel; and
- b. empower employees to incur travel or travel-related expenses where there is a clear and genuine need to, whilst ensuring the University's duty of care is maintained, legal and tax obligations and sustainability commitments are met, and value for money is achieved.

3 PRINCIPLES

The following principles underpin travel, accommodation and hospitality expenditure decisions made on behalf of the University.

All travel expenditure decisions must:

- Have a justifiable official purpose;
- Be objective and impartial;
- Be made with integrity;
- Be moderate and conservative, having regard to the circumstances; and
- Be appropriate and in accordance with the cost-containment measures in all respects.

These principles are to be applied as a set. None should be applied alone, and none should be treated as more important than another.

All official trips have to be consistent with the operational needs of the University. The trip should not be undertaken to serve the personal interest or sole advantage of the individual.

Travel and accommodation expenditure should be economical and efficient, having regard to purpose, distance, time, urgency, personal health, security, and safety considerations.

Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy may lead to disciplinary actions.

Deviations from this policy must be properly recorded and authorised.

4 APPLICATION

This policy applies to the following:

- All employees of the University
- Contract workers employed by the University
- Guests of the University
- Members of University committees
- Members of Council
- Committee of Council
- Students travelling on Committee or University business

5 EXCLUSIONS

This policy does not apply to the use of WSU vehicles.

6 DEFINITIONS

Term	Definitions
Airbnb	www.airbnb.com an internet application enabling staying in private accommodation.
Common Monetary Area	Countries that border South Africa where the Rand is accepted as currency or where their currencies are pegged to the Rand – namely, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland.
Local Travel	Travel with South Africa and the Common Monetary Area.
International Travel	Travel outside the Common Monetary Area
Purco	Purchasing Consortium Southern Africa
SARS	South African Revenue Service
Travel Requester	An employee who intends to make use of travel services (including accommodation)
WSU	Walter Sisulu University

7 RELEVANT POLICIES

The following policies need to be consulted when applying this policy.

Delegation of Financial Authority

Supply Chain Management Policy

8 TRAVEL BOOKINGS

Travel bookings must be made through the University's Procurement Department or authorised officials (e.g. Personal Assistants). This is to ensure that the University obtains the best possible rates. Travel bookings include flights, accommodation and vehicle hire.

Where preferred suppliers for accommodation have been selected and approved, accommodation shall only be booked with the preferred suppliers.

Where applicable, the Procurement Department or the Travel Requester must compare rates / fares obtained against the best rates available for the day. The lowest rates / fares must be used unless there are compelling reasons why an alternative should be chosen. Where the lowest rate is not used, the reasons must be recorded and authorised by the Deputy Director of Finance (Campus) and Director of Finance (Institutional).

9 AUTHORISATION

Staff must fill in the Travel Requisition Form including a brief description of the purpose of the trip.

For local travel, the traveller's relevant line manager (level P6 or IMC member) must authorise the request. For international travel, the form must be authorized by the Vice-Chancellor or the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Travel bookings (including workshops) with a value exceeding R25 000 should be authorised by the Campus Rector/relevant DVC/VC and the CFO. Travel Bookings with a value exceeding R100 000 should be authorised by the Campus Rector/relevant DVC, CFO and the VC.

10 ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation will be provided on a full board basis (bed, breakfast and dinner) not exceeding that of a standard three-star hotel. Hotels, guest houses or Airbnb may be used depending on the circumstances.

The following will be considered for exception:

- a. Travellers can stay in the accommodation with higher star grading if the negotiated rate for a specific star grading is equivalent to a lower or less than the rate for the lower star grading the traveler is allowed to stay in.
- b. Travellers may make use of a higher star grading accommodation in event of unavailability of the approved star grading accommodation in close proximity to the visited location.
- c. Travellers may stay in a higher star grading accommodation if it is the most cost effective option when compared to a combination of a lower star grading accommodation with car hire or shuttle service.

In such cases the deviation should be approved by the Campus Rector (Campus)/relevant DVC/VC (Institutional).

10.1 ACCOMODATION SERVICE PROVIDERS

For intercampus travel and accommodation, the University shall appoint preferred service providers through the SCM process. Only the nominated service providers may be used. Accommodation bookings for inter-campus travel shall be made directly with with the approved guest houses, lodges and BnBs through the procurement department. In the event that the approved accommodation providers are fully booked, bookings can be made through travel agent for alternative accommodation.

10.2 STUDENTS TRAVELLING FOR SPORT ACTIVITES

The University Sports South Africa (USSA) rates and arrangements shall apply for students travelling on sport tours and activites.

10.3 PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION

Private accommodation (staying with friends or relatives) may be claimed at a flat rate which shall be set annually and approved by the CFO. This will not apply if the private accommodation is a secondary residence owned by the employee.

10.4 LOCAL DAY TRIPS

Day trips do not require the provision of overnight accommodation. Staff may not claim costs of meals on day trips.

10.5 EXCLUSION

Travel expenses may not be claimed for travel to and from an employee's usual residence or assigned office location at the University with the exception of payments made in respect of employment benefit packages.

11 AIR TRAVEL

Only economy class or equivalent may be utilised. Any upgrades are for the account of the traveller and may not be billed to the University.

Where possible, bookings should be made at least 2 weeks prior to travel to ensure access to discounted fares. Flexible tickets should only be bought in exceptional circumstances and will require approval from the Campus Rector or IMC member (Institutional) on submission of a motivation.

No more than 50% of staff travelling to the same meeting may travel on the same flight.

Where applicable, business must be concluded within one day to facilitate a return on the same day; thus saving the cost of accommodation.

12 INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

12.1 AIR TRAVEL

All employees must travel economy class and the most economical option should be used.

12.2 CAR HIRE & TRANSFERS

No car hire is allowed except in exceptional circumstances. Employees are to request transfers.

12.3 ACCOMODATION

Accommodation will be provided on a full board basis (bed, breakfast and dinner) not exceeding that of a standard three-star hotel.

12.4 SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

The University shall pay subsistence allowances for international travel based on on SARS approved rates. The allowances may be claimed in advance.

13 LOYALTY PROGRAMS

All travelers may join the loyalty programs on offer from airlines, accommodation establishments and car rental companies with which the University has agreements in place. Travelers can use the accrued benefits of such programs for their own benefit.

The fact that the traveler is a member of a loyalty program must not override the supply chain management principle to procure at the best possible price, unless otherwise determined by the

corporate agreement with the travel service provider. If this principle is violated, the traveler will be liable and the organisation may take disciplinary steps.

Certain loyalty programs require a once-off or an annual subscription fee. These membership fees will be for the traveler's own personal account and the organisation will not reimburse a traveler for any membership fees.

14 MISSED FLIGHTS AND AFTER-HOURS SERVICE

Travellers are responsible for any penalties and extra charges incurred as a result of missed flights or changes to flights unless such was caused by factors beyond the control of the traveller.

The University will monitor the additional costs incurred as a result of flight changes or missed flights.

After-hours bookings or changes to bookings should be authorised by the Deputy Director of Finance (Campus) and Director of Finance (Institutional). The after-hours service is expensive and should be limited to exceptional cases. Requests for after-hours bookings or changes to bookings may be declined if there are no good reasons for requesting the after-hours service.

15 SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES - LOCAL

Employees

A subsistence allowance to cover meals and incidental expenses will be paid for each night the employee is away from their home at a daily rate which will be provided by the Finance Department. The rates shall be based on the SARS rates and shall be updated annually.

Students

A subsistence allowance to cover meals and incidental expenses will be paid for trips/tours and over night stay at an the approved rate provided by the Finance Department. The rates shall be revised regularly in consultation with the ED: Student Affairs.

Should meals be provided at the accommodation establishment then the subsistence allowance will be reduced by the cost of the meals billed.

The University provides accommodation on a full board basis. A limit of R200 per person per night shall apply for dinner. No refunds shall be made directly to the traveller in the event that the cost of dinner is less than the allowance of R200.

Any excessive costs (costs which exceed the allowance) incurred will have to be justified and approved before being claimed. All vouchers must be provided to support such claim.

16 ALCOHOL

Alcohol consumed may not be claimed under this policy. Staff may include one or two soft drinks with meals where applicable.

17 TRAVELLER CASH ADVANCES - LOCAL

The Vice-Chancellor or a delegated official may approve an advance to cover out of pocket travel expenses. Such advance must be accounted for on trip return by means of receipts and slips. Excess unutilized cash advances must be returned to the university, otherwise, they will be recoverable from the traveller.

Accompanying Persons

The University takes no responsibility for accompanying persons who are not members of the University or have no relevant business for the trip in question.

18 COST CONTAINMENT

Attendance at external events, conferences, consultations, meetings is limited to 3 officials for the institution unless pre-approved by the Campus Rector (Campus/CFO) or IMC member (Institutional)

The following shall apply for internal meetings and workshops:

- External venues should only be used when internal venues are not available and the dates of the workshop are not flexible.
- Where external (or outside) venues are used, accommodation will only be provided for those travelling from other Campuses.
- Efforts should be made to minimise travelling and accommodation expenses.
- Staff travelling on the same route are expected to share transport.

19 CAR HIRE

Vehicles may only be hired from approved suppliers. With the exception of travellers with disabilities, only Group A or B vehicles or equivalent may be used. Campus Rectors and IMC members (Institutional) must approve the use of alternative class vehicles. Drivers must be employees of the University and have valid driver's licences without endorsement.

Where fleet vehicles are available (Campuses), a vehicle may not be hired. Accordingly, for travel between Campuses, a request for a hired vehicle should be accompanied by confirmation from the Transport Department that fleet vehicles are not available.

19.1 CAR HIRE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Car hire service providers will be determined through the SCM process on a regular basis taking into account special arrangements made through PURCO. Only the nominated car hire companies may be used. All bookings must be made through the Procurement Department to ensure that bulk discounts are obtained.

19.2 FUEL CARDS

Fuel cards for hired vehicles should only be requested in exceptional cases. The following will be required in applying for a fuel card for a hired vehicle.

- A motivation for the fuel card including estimate of distance to be travelled and the fuel card limit. No fuel cards will be issued for distances to be travelled less than 600km (return)
- The request for fuel cards should be authorized by the line Manager (P6 and above) and DD of Finance / Director of Finance.

19.3 CAR HIRE BOOKINGS

The Procurement Department or Personal Assistants will book a car where a vehicle is required in a town where the University does not have a Campus or where a fleet vehicle is unavailable for the purpose.

19.4 VEHICLE GROUPS

Employees making use of car hire facilities will only be permitted to hire vehicles in the following Groups:

19.4.1 For City Driving

Only Group B vehicles may be used. These are compact vehicles and are suitable for most circumstances.

19.4.2 Off-Road Driving

For off-road driving, Group M, K, L vehicles may be used.

These vehicles are suitable for off-road conditions and would typically be used engaged in field research in rural areas. They may not be hired for those driving on normal roads.

19.4.3 For transporting a group of people

For transporting a group of people, Group O or similar may be used.

This is a "Quantum" type vehicle and suitable for carrying up to 14 persons (including the driver).

The employee driving the vehicle is required to have a PrDP in addition to a Code B licence.

Deviation from the prescribed vehicles will require approval from Campus Rector and Director of Finance, on submission of a motivation supported by the line manager.

19.5 AUTHORISED DRIVERS

Only employees of the University who have a valid drivers license and has been authorised registered with the service provider may drive a hired vehicle (confirmation from the car rental company).

Should the driver be unable to continue driving for whatever reason then permission must be obtained for another person to take over the driving and the service provider advised.

19.6 PASSENGERS

Only authorised passengers may be transported in the vehicle.

It is expressly forbidden to pick up hitch hikers while using a hired vehicle. This applies even if the hitch hikers are students or otherwise associated with the University community.

19.7 USE OF OWN VEHICLE

The driver may apply to use his or own vehicle instead of hiring a vehicle. In such case the driver may claim mileage for the distance travelled at the approved reimbursement rate.

19.8 MISCONDUCT ASSOCIATED WITH HIRED VEHICLES

In terms of this policy misconduct includes the following:

- Driving the vehicle in an unsafe or reckless manner that could endanger those within the vehicle, other users of the road or the vehicle itself;
- Failing to return the vehicle by the due date;
- Failure to report any accident or damage to the vehicle to the vehicle hire company, University and police as is required;
- Driving the vehicle after the consumption of any alcohol or substance which could impair driving performance such as certain prescription medicines or narcotics;
- Allowing any unauthorised person to drive the vehicle;

- Deviating from the approved purpose for which the vehicle was made available such as incorporating private use which has not been authorised;
- Allowing unauthorised persons such as hitch hikers to travel as passengers in the vehicle;
- Failure to properly secure the vehicle when not in use.

19.9 TRAFFIC FINES

Any fines as well as administrative fees charged by vehicle hire companies in respect of those fines are for the driver's account and will be recovered from the driver.

Traffic fines will be charged to staff and should be settled within 30 days. These amounts may be recovered from remuneration due to the employee by means of a deduction in the month that the amount is billed or the month following.

Drivers who collect an excessive number of fines will not be permitted to make use of the vehicle hire facility.

19.10 INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

19.10.1 Medical Insurance

In the case of sickness or injury during a domestic trip, the traveler is responsible for his or her own medical expenses, subject to the rights of the traveler in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, No. 130 of 1993.

For international travel, the University will arrange insurance cover that includes medical and other related travel expenses, especially where proof of such is an entrance requirement.

The University may reimburse the traveler for expenditure in respect of medical insurance, provided that proof of payment of the expenditure is attached to the claim.

The employee may be reimbursed for actual medical expenditure incurred during or as a result of an official journey abroad, that is not covered by medical insurance, provided that proof of payment of the expenditure is attached to the claim: Expenditure for medication will only be reimbursed upon production of a prescript by a medical practitioner.

19.10.2 Baggage Insurance

In the case of damage to or loss of a traveler's property (excluding vehicles), the the traveller will be compensated through the applicable baggage insurance with the airline.

19.10.3 Car Insurance

The University shall bear damage and accident risks related to University fleet or rental vehicles. Where a traveler sustains bodily injury or death arising from a motor vehicle accident in South Africa, the traveler may be entitled to claim from the Road Accident Fund.

The University self-insures vehicles rented for official purposes through its insurance broker. The traveler must decline all waivers the car rental company offers.

In the event of an accident, the traveler must notify the car rental company immediately and report the accident within 12 hours at the nearest police station to obtain a case number. The traveler is also required to prepare an accident report which needs to be submitted to the line manager (P6 or above) for approval.

The Deputy Director of Finance shall submit a claim to the insurance broker on receipt of claim from the car hire company within 30 days from the date of accident, for claims greater than R7 000 (excess). Costs less than R7 000 shall be borne by the University if it is determined from the accident report that the driver was not negligent. Where the driver admits that he/she was negligent or it is determined through a hearing/disciplinary process that a driver was negligent, costs less than R7 000 will be recoverable from the employee. The determination shall be made by the Transport Department.

The Deputy Director of Finance shall process payment to the car hire company on receipt of the accident report approved by the Transport Department (P6 or above).

Private vehicles utilised for official trips should be insured by the owner of the vehicle. Wear and tear on the vehicle including the replacement of tyres due to mileage is included in the rate per kilometer as determined by the Tariffs for the use of Motor Transport as determined by the SARS prevailing rate.

The University has travel insurance cover for employees, council members and students travelling on University business. The travel insurance covers the following:

- Emergency medical and related expenses
- Personal accident
- Baggage, trade samples, personnel effects, travel documents, money and credit cards and baggage delay cancellation and curtailment
- Hijack, kidnap and wrongful detention

In any instance of a claim, the first point of departure would be to claim from the service provider (Airline). It is only where the costs aren't recovered 100% that a claim can be submitted to their underwriter.

20 ANNUAL INCREASES

Amounts and limits in this policy may be amended from time to time or annual through an instruction from the CFO's office.

21 NON-COMPLIANCE

Non-compliance with the provisions of this policy or any abuse of the provisions contained therein may result in disciplinary measures being taken against the employees concerned.