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TRAVEL BOOKINGS, ACCOMMODATION, ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES

Section	Human Resources		
Approval Date	18.10.2014	Approved by	Directorate
Next Review	09.02.2019	Responsibility	Chief Operating Officer
This review	09.02.2017	Key Evaluation Question	6

PURPOSE

To ensure that travel, accommodation and rental vehicle bookings are made efficiently, and that reimbursement of costs is set at a level appropriate and in line with approved NMIT allowances. Travel, accommodation and associated costs must be wholly necessary for the purposes of NMIT business. As a government and student funded organisation, NMIT is publicly accountable and obliged to use its resources in a responsible manner.

SCOPE

This Policy:

1. Relates to all domestic and international travel and accommodation associated with NMIT business.
2. Provides guidance on procedures, other associated costs and the current maximum levels of spend.
3. Covers travel and accommodation associated with work or development with NMIT-relevant organisations, which must have prior approval by a primary manager (Directorate member, or Head of Department).
4. Covers travel and accommodation associated with travel for NMIT business purposes, including staff development activities.

DESIGNATED TRAVEL MANAGEMENT COMPANY

NMIT is party to the All-of-Government (AOG) Travel Management contract which requires us to book through our contracted Travel Management Company (TMC). The AOG contract delivers savings which are not available by 'booking direct'.

NMIT's designated Travel Management Company is Orbit Travel Nelson. Travel, accommodation and rental vehicle bookings must be done through NMIT's contracted TMC.

All travel bookings should be made online with Orbit Travel Nelson, unless there are very good reasons not to.

RESPONSIBILITY

CE/primary manager	Approve travel within budget limitations.
Chair of NMIT Council	Reviews and approves CE travel, accommodation, allowances and expenses
Chief Operating Officer	Reviews and approves the designated Travel Management Company.
Designated Programme Area/team travel coordinator	<p>Arranges travel and accommodation for staff within their programme area/team.</p> <p>Raises Unimarket purchase order for approval by the relevant budget holder, except for professional development and training which is processed by HR.</p>
Designated Travel Management Company	<p>Books travel, accommodation and rental vehicles as required.</p> <p>Confirms travel and provides tickets to the designated team travel coordinator.</p> <p>Sends tax invoices for payment.</p> <p>Provides consolidated travel information and reports on a monthly basis.</p>
Director of Finance and Business Improvement	Issues travel cards for international travel.
Finance	Processes supplier invoices and staff reimbursements, matching them to approved Unimarket purchase orders and making payment.
POD	Raises Unimarket purchase orders for travel and accommodation associated with approved professional development and training activities, and provides order numbers to NMIT travel coordinators to be entered in Orbit Online, or provided to Orbit Travel
Staff approved to travel	Complete travel/accommodation arrangements through the designated travel coordinator in their Programme Area/team.
Staff member	Raises Unimarket purchase order for reimbursement of business expenses incurred personally and provides a copy of the approved order, together with all receipts to Finance.

PROCEDURE

Travel, accommodation and rental vehicle bookings must be made through NMIT's designated Travel Management Company (Orbit Travel Nelson).

Bookings should be made as soon as the need to travel is known, to take advantage of cheaper travel rates.

Prior to booking, approval to travel must be obtained from a primary manager.

For NMIT business raise a requisition in Unimarket for approval by budget holder. Once approved, travel may be booked through the designated Travel Management Company.

For travel associated with professional development, approval must be obtained by completing the PDP1 (Professional Development Agreement) form published on the Intranet (Human Resources). Once approved, Human Resources will provide Unimarket order numbers which must be provided to the designated Travel Management Company and/or supplier when the booking is made. Provisional travel details may be obtained through the designated travel coordinator via the Orbit Online booking system for the Department Area/team for approval by the budget manager.

The travel coordinator completes the travel bookings through the designated TMC, 'receives' the travel documentation and provides it to the staff member travelling and 'receives' the order through Unimarket on receipt of travel documentation.

NATIONAL TRAVEL

This covers all staff who are travelling within New Zealand on NMIT business.

Allowances are paid from the team or professional development budget as appropriate.

Prior approval from the primary manager is required, or Director if the travel is for Professional Development purposes.

When a staff member does not return to their place of residence in the same day, lunch, dinner and breakfast can be included with the accommodation booking through the Travel Management Company by the charge back process, or by staff reimbursement submitted via an approved Unimarket purchase order, including **receipts**.

a) **Accommodation Allowance:**

City accommodation up to \$220.00 + GST per night

Non-city accommodation up to \$175.00 + GST per night

Costs incurred above these rates are payable by the staff member unless approved by the relevant Director or Chief Executive in the case of a Director claim

\$30.00 if staying privately (no receipts required).

Note: Bookings made for accommodation through the Travel Management Company are often cheaper as they are at a government rate.

The production of receipts to prove actual and reasonable expenses is necessary when claiming accommodation allowances.

b) **Meal Allowance:**

Breakfast up to \$20

Lunch up to \$20

Dinner up to \$40

Costs incurred above these rates are payable by staff member.

Note: Where accommodation includes meals, the meal allowance is not payable.

The production of receipts to prove actual and reasonable expenses is necessary when claiming for meal allowances. Staff members must be mindful of expenditure on alcohol in line with sensitive expenditure/perception.

The allowance is not payable:

When the staff member leaves and returns to their place of residence in the same day. In such cases actual and reasonable expenses are reimbursed at the discretion of the primary manager.

c) **Travelling**

Staff who require transport to a venue as part of approved duties may use the following, stated in order of NMIT preference:

- i) An NMIT vehicle.
- ii) The cheapest convenient method of transport if NMIT transport is not available. Receipts are required.
- iii) A rental vehicle in certain cases (see notes 1. & 2. below).
- iv) Their own vehicle (see note 3. below).

NOTES

- 1. A rental vehicle may be used for travel where no alternative exists and providing primary manager approval is obtained.
- 2. The designated TMC can provide quotes on rental vehicles and a charge back facility is available in most cases.
- 3. Staff using their own vehicle for travel will be reimbursed the amount per kilometre as specified in their employment agreement.
- 4. For further information on the use of NMIT vehicles or rentals see the Staff Handbook published in Public Folders (Human Resources).

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

This covers all staff who are travelling internationally on NMIT business.

International travel must be approved by the staff member's Director, with final sign off by the Chief Executive, prior to booking.

All travel by staff will be economy class, unless approved otherwise by the Chief Executive.

All travel by the Chief Executive will be economy class, unless approved otherwise by the Chair of NMIT Council.

The travel itinerary should take account of the stresses involved with long distance travel.

The designated Travel Management Company will make bookings for international flights and accommodation.

A charge back facility is not always available for international travel and accommodation through the designated Travel Management Company. Please check with the TMC prior to booking. A credit card may be required to guarantee bookings (even when a charge back facility is available).

Reimbursement is via the same process for national travel in New Zealand (as described above).

ACCOMMODATION ALLOWANCE

Reimbursement is for reasonable accommodation at the discretion of the Director or primary manager.

The production of receipts to prove actual and reasonable expenses is necessary when claiming accommodation allowances.

MEAL ALLOWANCE

Reimbursement is for reasonable meal expenses at the discretion of the Director or primary manager.

The production of receipts to prove actual and reasonable expenses is necessary when claiming for meal allowances.

PER DIEM

Per diem covers incidental personal costs such as phone calls home, drinks, snacks, personal sightseeing etc. associated with travel.

It does not cover personally incurred work-related costs which should be claimed as staff reimbursements e.g. accommodation, breakfast, lunch and evening meal, transport to and from appointments etc.

The daily per diem rate to cover incidental travel costs which may arise and to cover the inconvenience of being away from home is calculated as follows:

Relevant amount x the number of days away including travel days

The relevant amount is \$50 less tax

This amount will be paid with the employee's salary by payroll following the submission of an Expenses Reimbursement claim (published on the Intranet (Finance) which has been approved by the relevant budget holder.

This will be deemed to fully compensate the employee for any inconvenience associated with international travel.

OTHER TRAVEL-RELATED COSTS

NMIT **will** reimburse for the following **business-related** travel costs **on production of receipts**:

Visas; vaccinations; passport renewals; airport taxes; and excess baggage.

NMIT **will not** reimburse specific personal expenses such as in-house movies, mini bar, or other special hotel facilities such as gyms or hairdressers.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL CARDS

Before embarking on international travel, staff should obtain a Worldwide Travel Assistance card from the Director of Finance and Business Improvement, which provides information and a number to ring in the case of emergency.

LOST LUGGAGE

Claims for lost luggage should be made to Finance immediately on return. It is helpful if staff have digital photographs of items contained in their luggage.

AIRLINE LOYALTY SCHEMES

Staff members travelling for the purposes of NMIT business must not influence the choice of airline with which they travel in order to accumulate personal travel benefits.

BUDGETING

Directorate, Heads of Department and other budget holders must allow sufficient funds for travel and accommodation expenditure within their annual budget.

INSURANCE

NMIT's travel insurance covers staff for all domestic and international travel.

RISK

All staff travelling internationally on NMIT business should check the website www.safetravel.govt.nz to determine that it is safe to travel to their expected destination.

Travel should either not be undertaken or should be deferred to destinations identified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade as high or extreme risk destinations. The Chief Executive will make the final decision on staff travelling internationally if there is any risk involved.

REFERENCES

INTERNAL

Professional Development Application Procedure

EXTERNAL

Taxation (Annual Rates, Employee Allowances, and Remedial Matters) Act 2014
Land Transport Act 1998