

What expenses are eligible under the plan?

Principles

- The Faculty Professional Expense Reimbursement Plan is a reimbursement plan rather than an allowance. The University provides its best effort to ensure that reimbursement of expenses under the plan, as a non-taxable benefit to faculty, is accepted by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Should reimbursement of expenses be deemed otherwise by CRA, the University of Waterloo will not be held responsible or liable for any claim whatsoever arising therefrom.
- The expense must be for business purposes¹ only and excludes expenses which are personal in nature (i.e. personal effects for travel or field trips). A business expense must be directly related to the performance of teaching, research and professional duties.
- The plan is a reimbursement plan requiring the claimant to provide proof of purchase and payment² for each item. Normally, an original invoice/receipt provides the necessary documentation. Where the claimant requests reimbursement for travel costs based on kilometres or meal costs based on per diems, proof of purchase and payment are not required.
- An expense originally paid for by the University and subsequently reimbursed is not eligible under this plan. Examples include photocopying, telephone calls, telephone features, etc.
- No expense may be charged to different or additional account numbers. For example, no expense may be split between the Faculty Professional Expense account specified on the claim form and any other account.
- No out-of-pocket expense may be claimed for reimbursement by any other process (i.e. travel claim or request for payment) or program (i.e. Moving Expenses) and charged, in whole or in part, to the Faculty Professional Expense Plan.
- Requests for advance of funds are not permitted. This includes prepayments for items where the goods or services will be received in the future. Examples include, but not limited to, prepayment for books or subscriptions, airfare, or conferences. If eligible, the expense may be claimed in the period (typically the next claim period) when the goods or services are received. The nature of the program as a reimbursement for goods or services received is important from a tax perspective.
- All goods purchased under the plan are the property of the University.

¹ The phrase “business purposes” is used synonymously with the phrase “University teaching and research”.

² Additional information about proof of purchase and payment is available on the Finance website: <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infofin/Policy/guideline.html> in the section “Frequently Asked Questions”.

Eligible Items

- Membership fees for professional associations or learned societies related to member's discipline are eligible. The membership period must begin or end in the claim period. As specified in the Memorandum of Agreement, membership fees related to the Faculty Association are ineligible.
- Fees for professional development, such as conference or course registration fees are eligible.
- Books, journals, subscriptions or other similar professional publications are eligible. The item must be received in the claim period.
- Costs to prepare and complete scholarly manuscripts (i.e. page fees, print charges, etc.) are eligible.
- Computer and connectivity equipment used for business purposes are eligible. Due to merging technology, the list of eligible equipment is more inclusive and defined more broadly. Examples of eligible equipment include computer monitor, CPU, printer, laptop, blackberry, cell phone, personal digital assistant, etc.
- Supplies related to day-to-day business activity are eligible. Eligible supplies are expendable in nature. Examples of eligible supplies include office supplies, software, and business cards. Furniture for University or home use is ineligible.
- Travel to attend relevant scholarly conferences, conduct scholarly work or expenses related to business networking are eligible. Eligible items must be consistent with Travel Policy 31 and the travel checklist on the Finance website. Prepayment of travel expenses is not permitted under this plan. Travel by personal vehicle must be substantiated by detailed information including dates, destinations, distance and purpose. Eligible networking expenses must be substantiated by an original receipt, identification of attendees and the purpose of the networking event.
- Usage fee for cell phone, internet access or conferencing services is eligible where the usage is primarily for business purposes. If the usage is not primarily for business purposes or the usage plan is a family plan, only the portion related to University business is eligible. The maximum business portion for a family plan is 50%.

Endorsed by: Dean's Council

May I split an expense between Faculty Professional Expense and another account?

- No expense may be split between Faculty Professional Expense account and other accounts, such as a research project travel account. For example, a single expense may not be split 50% to Faculty Professional Expense and 50% Research Project Expense.

- Each expense claimed under the Faculty Professional Expense Reimbursement Plan must be allocated entirely to the expense account (i.e. object 6570) for this program.
- No expense claimed under another reimbursement program (i.e. Travel or Request for Payment) may be allocated, in whole or in part, to the Faculty Professional Expense Reimbursement Plan.
- For example, if several expenses for a trip are eligible under the Faculty Professional Expense program and a Research Project determine which receipt(s) you will submit under the Faculty Professional Expense Reimbursement Plan and which one(s) you will submit on a travel claim.

What is an original receipt?

What is the appropriate documentation for on-line purchases?

- Print the electronic document that indicates the date, supplier, the nature and cost of the item(s), applicable taxes, GST Registration number, if applicable, and method of payment.
- If the method of payment is not noted on the receipt attach documentation that indicates payment. For example, if paid by credit card attach a copy of your credit card statement highlighting the specific transaction. You may obliterate any information on the credit card statement not relevant to the specific transaction.

What is the appropriate documentation for recurring expenses paid by pre-authorized payment?

- Expenses, such as recurring monthly internet access fees, are often paid by pre-authorized payment to a credit card or bank account.
- The supplier or service provider provides paper or electronic invoice of each charge. The method of payment is indicated on the invoice. Submit the invoice for each period claimed. Internet service providers provide electronic access to accounts so that the invoice may be printed.
- In the event that no invoice is available and payment was by credit card, please submit a copy of your monthly credit card statement and highlight the specific transaction. You may obliterate any information on the credit card statement that is not relevant to the specific transaction.

Will my original receipt(s) be returned?

- No, all original receipts must remain with the claim and are retained in Finance.

What happens when expenses exceed the allowance?

- The reimbursement will be either the maximum allowance or the total of actual expenses, whichever is less.
- The amount of expenses that exceed the allowance are carried forward for up to three years.

Why is my claim adjusted?

Below are some reasons why your claim may be adjusted. The list is not exhaustive.

- Your claim is adjusted for any expense that does not relate to the period for which you are entitled to reimbursement. For example, the original receipt may be dated prior to or after the period for which reimbursement is entitled.
- Your claim is adjusted for any expense where you ordered but did not receive the goods. For example, you may order goods on-line on April 29th of the current year with a delivery date of May. Although you may pay for the goods upon ordering there is not expense (i.e. realized benefit) until the goods are received. The expense (i.e. realized benefit) must occur within the period for which reimbursement is entitled.
- Your claim is adjusted for any expense where you did not include an original receipt. Photocopies of original receipts are ineligible
- Your claim is adjusted for ineligible expenses.

When will I be reimbursed?

- Finance processes the claims in the order received.
- Typically, claims submitted to Finance by April 16th and are correct, complete, accurate and authorized are processed within two weeks from receipt of the claim in Finance.
- Claims received after April 16th may experience a delay and not be processed for 6-8 weeks.
- Claims which require clarification or adjustment are processed as exceptions and will experience a delay.

From whom can I obtain additional information?

- Most departments assign an individual who will assist with inquiries and/or review claims.
- The Faculty Financial Officer or Executive Assistant may provide assistance.