

Financial Regulations and Procedures Updates and Reminders January 2021

As you are aware, the purpose of the University's [Financial Regulations](#) is to provide control over the totality of the University's resources and provide the University with an appropriate financial regulatory framework which ensures that resources are used with due regard to propriety, regularity and value for money. Alongside these the [Research Councils' Policy on the Governance of Good Research Conduct](#) outlines the expectation that applicants for and recipients of Research Council funding are expected to observe the highest standards of integrity, honesty and professionalism and to embed good practice in every aspect of their work.

All staff and departments are asked to exercise restraint at this challenging time for the University, and to postpone any non-critical expenditure.

During this period when many colleagues are working from home, a reminder to be particularly mindful of information that you send by email. Please password protect all personal or otherwise sensitive information. There is further guidance on working securely on the [Security and Information Management](#) website – This includes the [top ten points](#) to remember.

1. **Changes as a result of Covid-19 and Remote Working**

Whilst the University acknowledges that staff will have various and individual additional costs (e.g. heating and broadband) for home working, it is hoped that the reduction in staff travel costs will help offset any additional costs incurred by staff as a result of homeworking. Unfortunately the financial impact of Covid-19 on the University has been significant and therefore the University is unable to offer any financial support towards these costs. During this time, staff may be able to claim tax relief for some of the bills they have to pay due to the requirement to work at home on a regular basis. Eligible individuals should do this directly via [HMRC](#).

There is also [Covid19 Procurement Guidance for Departments](#) on the Procurement and Insurance Services webpages.

a) **Deliveries to Home Addresses**

Departments must not order goods for delivery to a home address using either University Supplier accounts or University purchasing / commercial cards (note the exceptions I-III below).

During this period there is a relaxation of FP16 so that departmental authorised purchases of essential items required to work from home can be made by individuals, paid for personally and reclaimed through expenses up to the value of £100. This facility is intended primarily to cover small, low value computer peripherals (e.g. cables) provided solely to facilitate home working. Private use must be insignificant. Departments and staff are expected to demonstrate restraint in requesting and authorising any such purchases.

Any request for at home working expenditure that exceeds the £100 limit must be referred to Finance Office for approval in advance via your Financial Regulations Champion who should obtain Departmental approval before forwarding the request to FinRegs@warwick.ac.uk.

Recommended IT equipment:

IT have created a list of [recommended Audio Visual products](#) that staff may need and they are available from approved suppliers.

There are separate processes for the following purchases:

- I. [Purchase of Laptops and Notebooks](#) which may require home delivery.
Note: IT have laptops in stock so should always be contacted in the first instance.
- II. [Furniture](#) required for Home Working and Home Delivery.
- III. [Purchase of Books](#) if Delivery to Home Address is Required.

b) Fraud

Unfortunately we do anticipate an increase in attempted fraud at this time. All staff are asked to be particularly alert to any unusual or suspicious activity or contacts purporting to be from customers or suppliers. Consider whether information from third parties is genuine and always check with Finance Office if you are unsure. See also, the [Fraud Risk Reminder](#).

c) Zoom

UIMEC has decided NOT to purchase a site licence for the video-conferencing application Zoom. Any exceptions are to be approved by IT. IT launched an [exceptions process](#) in December where someone needs something outside of a policy or process.

For Zoom, select "other" as the category.

For Zoom more generally, a few rules are applied (which will be managed by IT through their exceptions process). It cannot be used for teaching, staff meetings, internal engagement etc.

Commonly granted exceptions for the Zoom Webinar product are for external engagement and running external events where the department can run it themselves.

Please feel free to direct people to this process, explain they need confirmation from IT that it can go ahead, and that IT need to track when a user has an exception to use Zoom this way.

d) Travel

[Overseas Business Travel Insurance](#)

Only Business critical travel to countries allowed by FCDO is currently allowed. If the objectives of any business-related trip could largely be achieved by other means (such as video conferencing/ Microsoft Teams) then travel cannot be justified. This is both to support the University's planned cost savings in light of Covid-19 and to support the University's plans to help combat climate change and significantly reduce our direct and indirect carbon emissions.

Risk Assessments must be completed.

All overseas travel and accommodation must be booked through Key Travel, regardless of value, and all UK > £500. This is due to duty of care and H&S concerns – and enables the University to more easily identify travellers who may be affected by change in circumstances and offer support.

Extensions to business travel for personal reasons cannot currently be granted.

Cancellation, curtailment or repatriation as a result of Covid is no longer covered by insurance.

2. Financial Regulation Champions, FinRegs Requests and Training Reminder

Each Department/Centre/Activity has nominated one or more "[Financial Regulations Champion](#)". The role of these champions is:

- a) to be a first point of contact within departments for queries relating to the University's Financial Regulations and Procedures
- b) to take responsibility for disseminating information about the Financial Regulations and Procedures within their Department/Centre/Activity
- c) to submit approval requests where FinRegs approval is needed. [Approval requests](#) submitted by a Financial Regulations Champion will be assumed to have the support of the Head of Department and to have completed departmental internal approval processes. This approach allows departments to maintain an overview of their activity and support consistent decision making. FinRegs does not give

approval on specific use of grant funds and any queries as to whether expenditure is allowable under the terms of a grant should be directed towards the [Head of Finance \(Research\)](#).

- d) Information required when submitting some of the more common approval requests is found [here](#). If your Department would like to change the nominated Financial Champion(s) then please email FinanceOfficeAdmin@warwick.ac.uk.

Two training sessions are run twice a year on Financial Regulations and Procedures as part of the [Finance Office Training](#) available. Whilst aimed at staff new to the University or new to a finance/administration/FinRegs Champion role, they are open to all. The next [FP15/FP16 Training session](#) is scheduled for Wednesday 24 February 2021 – please email FinanceOfficeAdmin to book a place.

3. **Financial Procedure 1 - Conflict of Interest Reminder**

All members of staff must disclose a potential conflict to their HOD as soon as they become aware of it by completing or updating the FP1a form and submitting it to the HOD.

New members of Staff must be asked to complete an FP1a declaration form on taking up their appointment, along with FP10a (Request to Undertake Private Work) form/s if applicable.

All staff, both full and part time, of level 6 and above (or equivalent) and any staff in framework agreement levels 1a to 5 who are involved in purchasing goods or services or in a finance role must complete their FP1a form at least annually. This should be done at either the start of the Autumn Term or the start of the Spring Term. Nil returns are required if applicable for these staff.

The returns should be checked by the Head of Department (or designated deputy). The HoD's responsibility is to decide if the potential conflict represents an actual conflict which must be managed and if so, how. If potential conflicts are properly managed, activities can usually proceed, whilst conflicts which are not managed effectively may cause serious damage to the reputation of the University and/or the individuals concerned.

The HoD must document a plan to reduce, manage or eliminate the conflict and ensure the employee is clear about what must be done. Where the HoD has a potential conflict the responsibility must be passed to their line manager.

Departments must also check any private work and other appointments declared and request [FP10a](#) forms where not already provided (if the work/position is for more than one year, or ongoing, these should be reviewed and renewed at least annually).

HoD FP1a forms should be signed by their own line manager, or in the case of Academic HoD's, the Chair of Faculty. These **do not need to be sent to Central Finance**.

The HoD is required to submit a Departmental Annual Return (Form FP1b) by **31 March 2021** to confirm the process has been completed.

Please email Central Finance (FinRegs@warwick.ac.uk) by **31st March**:

- a) the Departmental FP1b form to confirm that the process has been completed
- b) **all** FP10a (Request to Undertake Private Work) forms

Note:

1. Reminders for FP1 declarations can be sent to all eligible individuals with a caveat that individuals on furlough should complete the return during their working hours, or on their return from furlough.
2. Please do not send FP1a (Conflict of Interest) forms to Central Finance.
3. HoD FP1a (Conflict of Interest) forms do not need to be forwarded to Central Finance but should be signed off by their line manager and retained in the department.

Conflicts declared relating to research must also, in compliance with the University's [Research Code of Practice](#), be disclosed to the [Director of Research & Impact Services](#).

FP1 (Conflicts of Interest) requires all staff to read and comply with the [Personal Conflicts of Interest Policy](#) and the University [Anti-Bribery Policy](#). As part of Warwick's requirement to comply with the UK Bribery Act 2010, an e-learning module on Moodle has been created to ensure members of the University have an awareness of anti-bribery guidance, and understand how to conduct University activities honestly, fairly and professionally. All members of staff are required to undertake the training [Anti-Bribery Essentials](#) within the first two weeks of their employment with the University, with a refresher every two years.

Please note departments are required to keep FP1a (Conflict of Interest) forms for three years. If using the online forms these will be overwritten when updated, so a download must be kept securely off line (in electronic or paper format).

4. Financial Procedure 10 - Private Work and Other Appointments - Reminder

FP10 includes the requirement for staff to request permission to do Private Work or Other Appointments. This should be done on an [FP10a form](#). There is no set time at which these forms should be completed, as the onus is on the individual to fill the form in as required, but you should add a reminder note to your Department's Annual request to complete FP1 forms. The FP10a forms, once completed by the individual should be passed to the HoD who should **answer Q1-11** and sign off. They should be sent to FinRegs@warwick.ac.uk for collation for the Group Finance Director, for signing. Please could the department add a sequential reference number to the forms prior to sending them in, to enable us to check we have not missed any. Thank you.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – Please be aware that the forms and returns above will contain Personal Data which should be collected, stored, or processed securely.

5. Financial Procedure 9 - Philanthropic Gifts to the University - Update

FP9 was updated in November 2020 in line with the University's Policy on the Solicitation and Acceptance of Gifts. All gifts to be processed through the Development & Alumni Engagement Office.

6. Financial Procedure 16 – Travel, Subsistence, Gifts and Hospitality - Update

Back in March, it was communicated by the Provost, Professor Christine Ennew, that, as part of the work of the new Climate Emergency Task Force, changes would be made to the University's travel policy.

The necessary review process was completed and amendments to FP16 approved by the University's Finance and General Purposes Committee. The updated procedure came into effect on 1 August 2020.

Summary of changes

Rail should be the default mode of transport for all UK and European journeys of up to six hours, even if the financial cost is higher than other forms of transport.

Furthermore:

Train travel

- Employees should travel by Standard Class. The option to request First Class travel for journeys exceeding two hours has been removed.

Car hire

- Road journeys exceeding 100 business miles per day should only be considered where travel by train is not a viable option, and a hired vehicle, rather than a private one, should be the preferred option.

Air travel

- UK air travel requires the approval of the HoD and should be notified to FinRegs@warwick.ac.uk via the FinRegs Champion, along with justification for the reason for choosing air travel.
- Air travel should normally be in Economy Class.
- A "Green Levy" of £15 will be charged to the Department for all UK and European flights.
- A "Green Levy" of £60 will be charged to the Department for all non-European flights.

Please note that the Green Levy will be a charge to a central departmental code and not to individual activity codes. It cannot be recharged to research projects.

The levy will be used to promote green initiatives across campus and thereby help reduce Warwick's carbon footprint across campus.

Please note the University still has restrictions on international travel in place due to Covid-19 as noted above. Full details and guidance are available on the [Overseas Business Travel Insurance](#) webpage.

Note the use of public transport may not be considered viable in the current situation.