

TRAVEL POLICY

Purpose and Context

This policy has been developed to support the operational activities of the University of Huddersfield. The University recognises the need to undertake travel both in commuting to its properties and to undertake University operations locally, nationally, and internationally.

As a major employer and daily travel destination in Huddersfield the University recognises its influence and impact on the environment in Kirklees from its operational activities.

To meet its needs the following policy, associated plans and procedures shall be followed to limit the negative environmental and financial impact of these activities, promote more sustainable options, and to improve the well-being of all involved.

This Travel Policy is designed to deliver the following policy commitments from the Universities overarching Environmental and Sustainability Policy

“5.1. Enable students, staff, and visitors to campus to utilise active or sustainable travel methods in their journey. This includes enabling the adoption of Electric Vehicles through campus infrastructure and collaboration with partner organisation e.g. Kirklees Council

5.2. Reduce the emissions from operating the universities fleet of owned and leased vehicles and increase the adoption of Electric Vehicles in campus operations.

5.3. Encourage the use of active and sustainable travel methods for journeys undertaken by staff and students in our operational activities, utilising technological solutions and avoiding air travel where possible.”

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, students, affiliates, and visitors to the University of Huddersfield

1 Travel for University business and academic activities

The University recognises the importance of building and maintaining international relationships in the pursuit of academic development and growth in line with its strategic goals. The University also recognises the environmental impact air travel has in the climate emergency and seeks to minimise and mitigate its contribution towards the associated climate change emissions.

- The University requires a justification and decision process to be undertaken before a flight will be approved. Firstly, to access the Individual, Social and Material benefits for attending the event. Secondly to determine if an alternative, lower carbon method of travel is available.
- Where air travel is undertaken, a cost relative to the carbon emissions per passenger of the journey shall be sur-charged internally within the University. This sur-charge will be used to fund direct carbon reduction, research leading to carbon reduction, or in a certified off-setting scheme that at minimum equals the emissions from the flight.
- Where air travel or long-distance journeys are undertaken the opportunity to meet with other higher-education institutions or partner organisations should be undertaken to increase the benefit gained by the trip.

- The University shall provide access to electronic communication and conferencing facilities to encourage the use of remote meetings where possible.
- Where feasible, conferences, meetings and events hosted by the university will offer access to participants via online video software e.g., Microsoft Teams.
- Where vehicles are hired from external companies for university business, or provision to students on placement, a low emission vehicle or ultra-low emissions vehicle option shall be selected.

2 Use of University owned/leased vehicles

- The University operates a small fleet of vehicles, predominantly associated with managing and maintaining its Queensgate campus and other properties. As each vehicle powered by fossil fuels reaches replacement, an assessment will be undertaken to determine if a viable lower carbon emissions option is available. Where feasible an ultra-low emissions vehicle shall be selected.
- University owned/leased vehicles shall be regularly maintained to ensure good working order and efficiency
- Drivers of University owned/leased vehicles shall receive training on driving efficiency to reduce fuel consumption

3 Promotion of active travel

- Facilities will be provided on campus for students and staff who wish to undertake active travel to and from the campus including walking, running, cycling and use of e-bikes. Including access to changing facilities, lockers, and secure cycle storage.
- The University will provide staff with the opportunity to utilise Cycle to Work (C2W) salary sacrifice scheme(s) for purchasing bicycles, adapted cycles, cargo bikes and e-bikes for commuting.
- The University will support local partnerships aimed at increasing cycling and use of e-bikes in the Kirklees district. In partnership the University will seek to implement an e-bike hire scheme available to University students and staff.

4 Promotion of lower carbon travel options in commuting

- The University shall encourage and enable attendees to campus to utilise lower carbon methods of travel including public transport, electric vehicles, and car-sharing where feasible.
- As new initiatives are developed to reduce the carbon emissions associated with commuting to the university, the Car Parking Regulations shall be updated to enable and reflect them.
- The University shall engage with, and lobby, Kirklees Council, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, and the West Yorkshire Mayors office to improve access to the Universities campus through public transport services, encouragement of active travel and traffic management schemes. This includes the location and routes of services, access to live service information, and access to travel schemes e.g., MCard.
- The University recognises the impact that commuting may have on a student welfare, attainment, and employability. The Commuter Students Working Group shall be supported

- with the aim of identifying the need for, and providing well-being facilities for students, working with transportation stakeholders, and timetabling activities to minimise impact.
- The University shall implement a salary-sacrifice scheme to incentivise staff to purchase/lease ultra-low emissions vehicles (ULEV)

Appendix 1:

Section 8 of the Travel Risk Assessment asks for sustainability considerations to be detailed for your proposed trip. It is asked that you clearly detail your sustainable travel in accordance with the following:

Staff members wishing to travel are required to:

- confirm that consideration has been given to sustainable travel;
- provide justification for the decision reached on how to travel, and
- outline the steps that will be taken to minimise environmental impact and maximise trips.

Information should be provided to confirm that the following has been taken into consideration, as applicable:

- All travel options have been explored, and the rationale behind choosing the travel option(s) decided upon has been included. Staff members should attach to their application the schedule of travel options considered (including flight options) and provide evidence of having selected a 'green' flight option, if possible.
- The possibility of using an electric vehicle or ultra-low emissions vehicle for journeys by road has been explored.
- Options available to attend/present virtually at international events have been explored and, if travelling is the only option, whether there are any realistic, non-air travel alternatives.
- All opportunities to maximise a proposed domestic or international trip, e.g. networking, additional meetings and/or undertaking other School/Service business have been considered. Staff members should consult with the Associate Dean International and/or Director to see whether there may be any additional opportunities to add value to the proposed trip before applying.
- All alternative funding sources have been explored (please see examples below):
<https://www.britsoc.co.uk/opportunities/bsa-early-career-conference-bursary-award/>
- Where more than one member of staff has applied to attend the same event, why this is necessary.

Staff members should note that domestic/internal flights are deemed appropriate only in very exceptional circumstances (if approved, notification must be given to the Procurement/Insurance team so that carbon tax can be applied). To help to minimise environmental impact, the traveller is encouraged to consider rail and/or travel by road as alternatives to flying.

Travel Risk Assessments will be audited at Financial Year End or when deemed appropriate, therefore it should be clearly documented on part 8 of the TRA to show that the points above have been considered.

POLICY SIGN-OFF AND OWNERSHIP DETAILS	
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Approved by:	Senior Leadership Team
Date Approved:	29 June 2023
Next Review due by:	June 2025
Author:	Deputy Vice Chancellor
Owner (if different from above):	
Document Location:	https://www.hud.ac.uk/media/policydocuments/Travel-Policy.pdf
Compliance Checks:	Staff and student travel surveys Mechanism to be developed with Schools to monitor business travel-related finance and carbon emissions
Related Policies/Procedures:	Environmental and Sustainability Policy

REVISION HISTORY			
Version	Date	Revision description/Summary of changes	Author
V2.0	September 2023	Appendix 1 included. Sustainability consideration to Travel Risk Assessment	Head of Procurement
V1.0	June 2021	First draft of new policy	Deputy Vice Chancellor