

From: UFS Communications
Sent: 03 April 2020 16:46
Subject: COVID-19 Finance Departmental Guidance Issue 11
Attachments: FIG Dept FAQ final.2 02Apr20 (002).pdf; FIG Expense policy addendum final.2 02Apr20 (002).pdf

Dear All

Please find today's round up of news from the Finance Division. Key Contacts are asked to share with staff in their areas.

- [Expenses policy addendum](#)
- [FAQs for University departments and institutions regarding spending-related matters](#)
- [Ordering items/equipment to be delivered to a home address](#)
- [Shared Services Status update](#)
- [VPN essential maintenance 08:00–09:00 Sunday 5 April](#)

This information will also be available from the [Finance Division website](#). However, if you have any additional queries please do continue to contact the Help Desk on 01223 (7)65999 or at UFS_enquiries@admin.cam.ac.uk

COVID-19
FINANCE DEPARTMENTAL GUIDANCE – ISSUE 11
3rd April 2020

Treatment of costs incurred during the current period of disruption

Two new pieces of guidance regarding an addendum to the Expenses Policy and FAQs surrounding spending during the current period of disruption caused by the coronavirus outbreak have been published and were sent yesterday to Heads of Institutions, Chairs of Faculties, Secretaries to the Schools and Faculties and Departmental Administrators:

[Expenses Policy addendum.](#)

It is anticipated that University staff may personally incur additional expenses as a direct result of the impact of the Coronavirus outbreak, in order for them to continue working during the current exceptional circumstances. This policy sets out the University's position in relation to such costs in order to assist staff, whilst providing Departments with a set of best practice guidelines to follow. This is to ensure that all staff are treated equitably and that the University uses resources efficiently.

These measures will take effect from 16 March 2020, to 30 June 2020 to cover the predicted peak period of the outbreak. They may be extended for a further period, or varied, if necessary.

During this period, staff will be able to claim for any reasonable, incremental (additional) costs incurred in relation to the items set out below ('Eligible Costs'). Claims should be made and authorised in accordance with the procedures set out in the University's existing expenses policy and, for the avoidance of doubt, ***all such costs should have been pre-approved by the appropriate authorised approver.***

Eligible Costs should only be approved where, as appropriate,

- i. they have been necessarily incurred as a direct result of the Coronavirus outbreak, and to enable continued working during the current exceptional circumstances;
- ii. reasonable steps to mitigate the cost have been taken;
- iii. they cannot otherwise be recovered (*e.g.* through travel insurance); and
- iv. they are reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances that gave rise to them.

Claimants are reminded that the University is a charity, and that claims should only be for amounts which an external observer would not regard as an unnecessary or excessive use of charitable funds.

Further guidance on what costs are may be considered as eligible, or not, are attached and are also available from the [Finance Division website](#).

FAQs for University departments and institutions regarding spending-related matters

The current temporary cessation of business as usual across the University is expected to result in significant changes in costs and revenues for departments and institutions. Additional costs may be incurred beyond those budgeted – for example, as a result of homeworking, disrupted travel plans or cancellation of conferences and events. Revenues may be reduced in the near or longer term from trading income, research grants or other sources. Departments should seek to save costs – for example, where activities/expenditure such as conferences or consumables are now not going ahead.

Under these exceptional circumstances, the University recognises that departments may need to spend funds beyond the limits set down in Financial Regulations^{[1][2]}, or funder's conditions, to meet exceptional costs and to continue to pay staff in accordance with University policy, despite any short-term reduction in revenue streams or funder expenditure eligibility issues. Departments will also want to know how consequent budget shortfalls will be met from different funding sources.

The broad impact of the Coronavirus outbreak and the need to support the University's institutions and their staff through this period will inevitably result in some deterioration in the University's financial position. Departments are strongly encouraged to identify and promote opportunities to save costs to offset this impact and to support the financial capacity of the University to deliver its long term mission.

[1] Financial Regulation Chapter B 4.2 "Heads of Department shall ensure: that funds available for spending are not exceeded"
<https://www.finance.admin.cam.ac.uk/policy-and-procedures/financial-regulations/b-heads-department>

[2] The Vice-Chancellor has approved a temporary derogation from Financial Regulations to the extent necessary to enable departments to act in accordance with this guidance

[A series of FAQ](#) have been designed to provide initial guidance in relation to these matters and to address the issues that we are currently aware of. Some matters will require longer-term consideration and guidance may develop accordingly. This guidance is a temporary measure, specific to impacts on the University for the duration of the coronavirus outbreak only.

Ordering items/equipment to be delivered to a home address

Before raising an order

It is anticipated that employees, who have not previously worked from home, may require additional equipment in order to facilitate appropriate and safe working. We would expect the following principles to be followed in respect of any additional spend:

- Employees should discuss, and agree, any requirements with their line manager or departmental administrator;
- The department would determine whether there are any appropriate assets/equipment, currently held at that university, which can be made available to the employee;
- Where no such assets/equipment are available, the department should purchase these directly ideally through (i) placing a Marketplace order ; (ii) a preferred supplier will be owned by, and remain the property of, the University.

Selecting your supplier

Before raising an order please check as to whether your supplier is operating as normal, able to deliver to your home address, the likely lead times and any additional costs. Procurement Services have reviewed the position of all Marketplace and Preferred Suppliers and you can check the position of an individual supplier on their website at : <https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/purchasing/> You can also find on their website a list of all preferred suppliers and their assigned category and contract managers should you wish to contact them with any queries.

When raising the order on UFS

Please add an attachment to the requisition when checking out, prior to approving the purchase order, that details the delivery address to be used. Details of how this can be done are available [here](#) for anyone unfamiliar with the process.

Delivery

If delivering to the University ensure that arrangements are made to ensure the safe receipt of goods. Equipment for research should not be delivered to home addresses, nor should chemical or biological reagents. Not only would this be against current guidance but the University's insurance policy does not cover such work at home.

Shared Services Status Update

It is great to report that with hard work, determination, help from the wider division and all of you in the departments that Shared Services are now fully back on track and processing work received within the last two working days. If you have held work back or have been processing work yourselves to help out

the team, please start sending work back through to us for processing. Obviously, it will all need to be scanned so a quick reminder on what we can accept in terms of authorisation and coding along with guidelines on how work should ideally be sent to us is available from [the website](#).

VPN essential maintenance 08:00–09:00 Sunday 5 April

UIS will be carrying out essential maintenance on the University's VPN service between 08:00–09:00 on Sunday 5 April. Users may have difficulty connecting or maintaining a connection during this period. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

This will be the first in a regular series of vulnerable periods for the VPN, which UIS intend to schedule between 08:00 and 09:00 every Sunday until further notice. The VPN is a critical system for the University during the coronavirus outbreak, so are keen to ensure it is maintained regularly and configured to provide an optimal service.

Sent to UFS Email Distribution Group and the UFS Key Contacts email Group

* For All queries regarding this UFS communication or if you have a problem with the format please email UFS_enquiries@admin.cam.ac.uk
