



# STEP Academy Trust

## Trustee and Governor Expenses Policy

**Date of Policy:** Spring 2016

**Review:** Autumn 2020

It is important for the diversity of the STEP Trust Board and Strategic Governing Bodies and good governance, that a wide range of people are encouraged to become Governors and Trustees.

School governance in England is rooted firmly in the principle of voluntary service. The government is committed to maintaining and promoting this principle for governors and trustees of academies. This is in line with charity law and corporate governance practice in other parts of the public sector.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Education (Governors' Allowances) Regulations 2003. These regulations give Trusts and Governing Bodies the discretion to reimburse expenses from the STEP Academy Trust's annual budget allocation to governors for certain out of pocket expenses which the Trustees and Governors incur in carrying out their duties. STEP Academy Trust believes that reimbursing Governors' and Trustees expenses, in specific categories as set out below, is important in ensuring equality of opportunity to serve as Governors and Trustees for all members of the community and so is an appropriate use of academy funds. The specific items allowable reflect this objective.

Trustees and Governors will be able to claim reimbursement of expenses providing the expenses are incurred in carrying out their duties, as a Trustee, Governor or representative of STEP Academy Trust.

It is good practice for a Trustee or Governor to agree the anticipated cost of any expenditure which is to be reclaimed with their Chair before incurring such expenses. However any expenditure which in total exceeds £25.00 **MUST** always be pre-approved by their Chair prior to being incurred. It is appreciated that in exceptional occasions this may not be possible and that cost may be incurred before prior approval is obtained

The following process and principles will apply to the approval of expenses:

1. The actual cost must be notified to the Chair within a week of incurrence, and
2. A claim for reimbursement must be submitted to the Chair on a STEP Expenses Form within four weeks of the expense being incurred.
3. A receipt is required in order to obtain a refund.

In cases where the above principles have not been followed, the claim will be forwarded to the STEP Operations and Audit Committee for review. If the Committee decides not to approve an

expense then the claimant will be notified in writing of the reasons the expenses have not been approved and the claimant may then appeal in writing to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, whose decision is final.

In the case of a Chair of a Strategic Governing Bodies or Chair of STEP Academy Trust reclaiming expenses, the authorisation process would be via the Operations and Audit Committee.

Governors will be able to claim for the following, on a case-by-case basis::

- Childcare or baby sitting allowances (excluding payments to a current/former spouse or partner or children);
- Cost of care arrangements for an elderly or dependent relative (excluding payments to a current/former spouse or partner or children);
- The extra costs they incur in performing their duties either because they have special needs or because English is not their first language;
- The reasonable cost of travel relating only to travel to meetings/training courses at fixed rates which do not exceed those rates as determined by the HMRCHMRC and which do not exceed the specified rates for STEP Academy personnel;
- Mileage will be calculated according the shortest route to and from the required destination;
- Reasonable travel and subsistence costs, payable at the current rates specified by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, associated with attending national meetings or training events, unless these costs can be claimed from the LA or any other source;
- Reasonable telephone charges, photocopying, stationery, postage etc;
- Any other justifiable expenses which have been incurred.

The Governors and Trustees of STEP Academies acknowledge that they are providing a voluntary service and that:

- Governors/trustees will not be paid an attendance allowance,,
- Governors/trustees will not be reimbursed for loss of earnings.

All claims for reimbursement must be accompanied by proof of expense, typically a thirparty receipt. In the rare instance that a receipt is unavailable, the claimant must put in writing the reason for the lack of evidence, which will be considered by the approving body.

Claims will be subject to independent audit and may be investigated by the STEP Audit Committee if they appear excessive or inconsistent.

Annually a schedule of all expenses reimbursed to either Trustees or Governors will be submitted to the Operations and Audit Committee for review.

## TRUSTEE/GOVERNOR EXPENSES CLAIM FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Description of Costs</i>	Amount

**I confirm that this claim relates to: costs incurred in attending an agreed training/meeting/conference event and/or the cost of agreed purchases made on behalf of STEP Academy Trust.**

Signed by  
claimant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I sanction payment of this claim**