



Finance & Procurement Office Frequently Asked Questions

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COVID-19 and subsequent working from home has raised several questions from staff and students around how they should continue to access the services of the Finance & Procurement Office.

In response we have provided the following stakeholder guidance and FAQs to provide clarity in a variety of circumstances.

Staff Expenses

In terms of COVID-19 and staff working from home the basic principles of the staff expenses policy remains in place. Before any individual makes a personal purchase, they should fully check with the department or College Finance Office that there is no alternative method available.

The expectation is that all standard purchasing options have remained operational. Where it is impossible or impractical to use standard processes small items of operational expenditure that would normally be excluded, may be claimable through the staff expenses process so long as there is a clear business need and that the cost of the item is less than £100, examples of operational expenditure may include ink cartridges or paper for home printer, a mouse for use with a laptop etc. this easement of the expenses policy does not extend to hardware that can be sourced via standard procurement processes.

General Procurement Questions

The current University Procurement Policy must be adhered to for all non-pay expenditure. The normal Policies, Procedures and Guidance and Financial governance must be complied with for all external purchases from our external Suppliers. For all urgent COVID-19 purchases please contact the Procurement Office for support and guidance.

1. Do I need to follow the University Procurement Policy, if I need to purchase items whilst working from home?

Yes, the Procurement Policy is still valid.

2. I have a requirement to start a new tender, how do I engage with the Procurement Office?

The contact details for the Procurement team are located in the Procurement Office web page, under contact details. You can contact the team members by their landline, email or using Microsoft teams.

3. I am a key stakeholder evaluating a current tender, what is the process for a consensus meeting?

Procurement will facilitate an online consensus scoring using Zoom or Microsoft teams.

4. My tender is at Contract signature stage how will this be signed to ensure there is no delay to raising a Purchase Order?

The Procurement team are utilising electronic signatures for all Agreements.

5. I have an urgent requirement for equipment which is solely required for COVID-19, what support is available from the University?

Please contact the Procurement team who will provide immediate guidance and support for your urgent requirement.

General Purchasing Card Questions

Purchasing Cards do not obviate the requirement to adhere to the normal procurement and financial rules as regards, for example, use of approved suppliers, request for quotes etc.

Only the named person on the Purchasing Card can use the card, it must not be borrowed or otherwise passed to anyone else for any reason whatsoever. Cardholders should refer to the Head of Procurement if they feel under any pressure from any source to breach this particular rule.

Purchasing Cards must not under any circumstances be used to facilitate personal purchases for the cardholder or anyone else even where the intention is to refund the amount paid.

Purchasing Cards holders must NOT use their Purchase Card for purchases when the Supplier is registered and active on Agresso.

1. How do I reconcile my transaction logs against the amount paid to RBS, as my Purchasing Card statement is sent by post to my work address? I am working from home; how will I receive a copy of my individual bank statement?

RBS will contact all Purchasing Card holders directly and will provide guidance and support to register them onto the RBS Cards Online system. This will enable online access to your monthly purchasing card statement. This statement can be downloaded in PDF format.

2. My line Manager normally reviews my paper copy of my bank statement and paper copy of my transaction log and on approval signs the transaction log. I would then send the both copies either by email or internal post to the Finance Office, how should this be processed while working from home?

Purchasing Card holders must send their individual bank statement and transaction log to their line Manager by email.

- Therefore, after review and approval by your line Manager, please ask them to forward the PDF Statement via email to Finance at finance-accountspayable@glasgow.ac.uk advising of their approval, which will replace the line Managers signature
- Reconciliation process timelines will remain the same for the submission to Finance by the 15th of the month (as standard), however, due to delay in accessing the information this month then 17th April is the updated deadline for submissions

This process will continue until further notice.

3. Can I use my Purchase Card rather than place a Purchase Order?

No. Purchase Orders must always be used in the first instance. Purchasing Cards are useful to purchase items which are usually "difficult" to procure, examples might be second-hand books, one off obscure items.

4. Can I place a Purchase Order to be delivered to my home address?

No. This is against the University Finance guidelines, home address cannot be used to purchase any items either using the University Purchase Order, E-Procurement or Purchasing Cards.

5. Can I purchase IT equipment using a Purchasing Card to be delivered to my home address?

No. Please contact your Institute, College or University IT department who will provide guidance and support.

6. Can I raise a Purchase Order on Agresso or raise an Order using my Purchasing Card for a desk top printer or printer toner cartridges for delivery to my home address?

No. Please contact your Institute, College or University IT department who will provide guidance and support. Alternative, please review the staff expenses policy.

7. I need to raise a Purchase Order however; the Supplier is not on Agresso?

A new Supplier request should be raised and will be reviewed and validated under the normal process.

8. My Purchasing Card has been left on Campus in my office, can I ask RBS to send another Purchasing Card out to my home address?

No. Please contact another Purchasing Card holder in your area for support until we resume back to normal working practices

9. My Purchasing Card expires in April 2020 or is due to expire during the current lockdown status, can I ask RBS to send the new Purchasing Card to my home address?

No. All RBS Purchasing Cards must be sent directly the University address for the attention of Procurement, who register and record the Purchasing Card details. The card is then physically handed to the Purchasing Card holder, with signatures obtained. Unfortunately, this process cannot be changed. Therefore, please contact another Purchasing Card holder in your area for support until we resume back to normal working practices

10. Can I reconcile a transaction log for a purchasing card holder who has left the University?

Yes, please contact the Procurement Office to obtain a copy of the RBS bank statement.

Student Expenses

Due to COVID19 and our current operating environment, we have adapted and updated the Student Expense Claim Process. This includes the method the Expense Claims are submitted to Finance Office Accounts Payable, the way the back-up information is provided and how we pay our Students.

So, what has changed?

- An updated Student Expenses Claim Form
- Student Expense Claim Form now includes a section for the UK Bank Account Details, as we will be paying Students to their Bank Account, opposed to by cheque (this will continue even when we are back to normal)
 - In the event a Student does not have a UK Bank Account and only an overseas Bank Account, then the Foreign Sundry Form should be used
- The Form includes separate tabs to:
 - provide guidance on how to consolidate the documentation including the approvals for payment
 - provide guidance on the options for back-up to validate the Student Bank Account Details we are paying to. The reason for this, is so that we can ensure we are paying the correct account details
- Approval Process:
 - As we cannot place hard signatures on Forms, then a form of E-signature is required for both Form completion and approval
 - The approval should come in the form of an email
 - Form has been updated to show the Head of Professional Service as the approver of the Expenses
- Submission of completed Forms, approvals and back up – these should all be submitted via Email to finance-accountspayable@glasgow.ac.uk
- Please title the Email Subject Header: **Student Expense Claim / Student GUID**

General Student Expense Questions

1. Does the Student have to wait until the University is back to “normal” before submitting their expenses?
 - No. Expenses can be submitted now, but via the updated process
2. Does the expenses relating to trips within the current COVID19 situation have had to have taken place prior to claim?
 - No

3. The Student Field Trip has been cancelled, can the Student claim back their costs associated with Travel and Accommodation they have booked themselves from the University?
 - The University will not automatically pay those expenses
 - A procedure note has been shared with the Heads of Admin and Heads of Professional Services, please refer to this on what is required

4. What can Student's claim back under the current COVID19 circumstances?
 - Nothing has changed in terms of what Student Expenses are permitted
 - At a recent cross-College working group on Student Expenses and the type of spend, the list pulled together was as follows:
 - o Meals, Hotels, Taxi, Train, Flights, Mileage, Car Hire
 - o Conference registration / event
 - o Training courses
 - o Visa charges, Website Domain costs, Printing, Courier, Proof Reading, Translator / Guides
 - If in doubt, please speak to your College Finance Team

5. Can I order goods for a Student and get them delivered to their home address?
 - No. For questions on non-standard Student Expenses, you should speak with your College Finance Team in the first place

The End