

**Relocation Expenses
for Newly Appointed Members of Staff**

1. Objective of the Scheme

The scheme is intended to assist newly appointed members of staff who satisfy the eligibility criteria, with the costs associated with taking up a post at Royal Holloway.

2. Eligibility

An employee must be moving to a permanent residence that will be his/her main residence which can be either purchased or rented. Although there must be a change to their sole or main residence as a result of starting a new position, they do not have to actually dispose of the old residence.

This document sets out the terms under which the College may reimburse the costs incurred by staff taking up their first appointment with Royal Holloway and are moving their homes to a reasonable daily travelling distance (usually within a 30 mile radius) of the College site/campus at which their post is based. These provisions do not apply to new staff already living inside a 30 mile area at the time of their appointment.

Staff on fixed term contracts are eligible for relocation expenses in line with permanent staff as above but should note the repayment requirements under section 6.

3. Entitlement

On appointment with Royal Holloway eligible staff will be permitted to claim the following allowances; these allowances are subject to a total ceiling of one-fifth of the sum of basic annual salary and London Allowance or a maximum £8,000, whichever is the lesser figure. Please note section 5 covers the timeframe for making a claim and section 6 which covers repayment of relocation expenses if a member of staff then leaves Royal Holloway's employment:-

(i) Removal Expenses

Staff will be eligible for reimbursement of the cost of the removal of household effects, (including packing, unpacking, insurance and VAT) to their new address. Moves to and from temporary accommodation will also be covered.

Staff will also be eligible for reimbursement of the cost of storing their household effects for a period of up to six months (including insurance), where staff are in temporary accommodation. (Please note, storage costs cannot be claimed where the employee has no intention to move these effects to their new residence).

Similarly, staff will be entitled to reimbursement of the cost of removal of books and other personal possessions from their former place of employment to Royal Holloway.

(ii) Legal and Professional Fees

Staff will be entitled to reimbursement of the actual cost of legal, survey and estate agents fees necessarily incurred in selling or surrendering one home and acquiring another. This includes the conducting of appropriate searches in relation to the purchase of the new property and the payment of stamp duty.

Legal, survey and estate agents fees incurred can also be claimed where an intended acquisition or sale does not take place, either for reasons outside the control of the person acquiring the interest, or because that person reasonably decides not to go ahead.

(iii) Disturbance Allowance

Reimbursement can be claimed for expenditure incurred on such items as disconnection and connection of electricity, gas, water or telephone services, the renewal of curtains (where they do not fit the new property), the purchase of a cooker (where the current item owned is electric and a gas cooker is required for the new property (and vice versa)), and floor coverings (where they do not fit the new property).

For staff moving from outside the United Kingdom the purchase of adapters for electrical equipment, but not the purchase of new electrical equipment, can be claimed.

(iv) Lodging Allowance and Rental Costs

An allowance of up to £100 per week may be claimed for a maximum of 52 weeks if a newly appointed member of staff has to take up temporary residence locally whilst continuing to be responsible for the outgoings of another residence, or where the employee intends to move to permanent accommodation within a year of their start date at the College.

(v) Travel

Staff are eligible to claim for the cost of single economy rate travel for themselves, their spouse/partner, dependent children and under certain circumstances pets (please note that the cheapest form of transport should be used, unless an alternative form of travel has been authorised by the Human Resources Department) for their final move to the College.

Additional travel expenses may be approved to complete the relocation of a member of staff, however this should be confirmed in advance with the Human Resources Department.

Staff who take temporary lodging may be reimbursed the cost of one return economy rate travel ticket per month for six months for travel between their temporary lodgings and their other residence.

Staff who have not yet been able to relocate, and are temporarily continuing to live at their previous address, may claim their additional home to work travel costs for a maximum of six months. Travel will be reimbursed at the equivalent of the economy rate and to a maximum of £50 per week.

In addition, whilst looking for accommodation, staff will be able to claim economy rate return travel tickets for two trips for themselves and their spouse/partner plus accommodation costs (to a maximum of £50 per night) for a maximum of three nights per trip (please note subsistence will not be paid). All non-UK travel must be authorised in advance by the Human Resources Department prior to booking.

4. Non qualifying costs

The following costs **cannot** be reclaimed

(i) Additional Housing Cost Allowances

Where the employee has had to move to a more expensive area, e.g. the South East

(ii) Loss on sale of property

Costs associated with a property sale falling through, or a loss in the value of the property, or a reduction in the sale price of a property to facilitate a quick sale apart from as described in 3(ii).

(iii) Other costs

For example:

- Counselling services
- Redirection of mail
- Council tax bills
- Compensation for loss in value of season tickets
- Cost of joining new sports clubs
- Penalties for giving insufficient notice of child's withdrawal from school – loss of school fees
- Cost of buying new school uniforms
- Help towards an employee's spouse finding a job – career and education counselling/job search agency
- Home search facility
- Financial advice
- Nanny agency fees
- House cleaning on sale
- House cleaning on purchase
- Spouse's loss of earnings
- Help with starting a garden
- Transporting and kennelling for domestic animals (unless directly related to the actual family move from the old to the new location)
- Forfeited rent / termination of contract charges on current property

5. Regulations for Making a Claim

(i) Confirmation of Eligibility

Eligibility for removal and relocation expenses must be confirmed with the Human Resources Department before any costs are incurred. Staff requesting relocation expenses will be required to complete a Relocation Expenses Request form. See appendix 1.

(ii) Time Limit

The College requests that all claims for reimbursement must be made as soon as possible and usually not later than 12 months after an employee's start date at Royal Holloway. Claims made after this date will only be reimbursed in exceptional circumstances, for example staff relocating to the UK, and by prior agreement with the Human Resources Department.

All offers of relocation are subject to HM Revenue & Customs regulations. An employee is responsible for any statutory income tax and national insurance liability incurred as a result of receiving relocation expenses. As the relocation is job related, up to £8,000 is exempt from tax provided that certain conditions are met, including that the new property is the employee's main residence.

HM Revenue & Customs has also set a time limit on relocation. In order to get tax relief expenses must be incurred, or the benefits provided, and claimed before the end of the tax year following the one in which an employee starts their new job (a tax year runs from 6th April one year to 5 April).

(iii) Written Quotations for Removal Expenses (3(i))

Reimbursement will only be made following the receipt of three written quotations, which must be submitted to the Human Resources Department who will normally authorise acceptance of the lowest quotation. The College will not normally reimburse any sum in excess of the lowest of these estimates.

(iv) Reimbursement of expenditure under 3(i) to 3(v)

Reimbursement will be made following the receipt of a Relocation Expenses Claim Form which is available from the Human Resources Department. All relevant quotations and receipts must be attached to this form.

In exceptional circumstances the College may pay a company directly for removal under 3(i); however this must be discussed in advance with the Human Resources Department, and the removal firm made aware of the College's requirements in terms of invoices and terms of payment.

6. Repayment

- (i) Where a member of staff has claimed relocation expenses for temporary accommodation after indicating that they are seeking to purchase or rent a new main residence, but does not find a new main residence within the time limits of claiming relocation expenses then these expenses are required to be repaid to the College. Costs incurred are not eligible expenses under the scheme if an employee does not change their main residence in the defined time period.
- (ii) Members of staff in receipt of relocation expenses who leave Royal Holloway before completing three years' service, will be required to repay all or some of the relocation expenses paid as set out below.

Less than two years' service

Royal Holloway will reclaim all of the relocation expenses paid.

More than two years' but less than three years' service

Royal Holloway will reclaim part of the relocation expenses paid based on the total monies paid, less one-twelfth for every completed month of service after two full years have been served.

- (iii) Where required, repayment will be claimed via the College Payroll in the first instance. Other forms of repayment may be considered at the discretion of the Director of Human Resources and Director of Finance.

7. Variations

Relocation expenses are judged on a case-by-case basis and each employee's situation and circumstances will be unique. The College therefore retains discretion to tailor the relocation package to suit the particular circumstances and needs of each employee. However, the College will always act fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner.