



Guidance on ... the most misunderstood, or ignored, Financial Regulations or Procedures

The following is a list of the most commonly misunderstood, ignored or abused Financial Regulations and Procedures. The content has been provided by those staff within the Department of Finance whose responsibility it is to process documents, and ensure good governance and financial business practice is in place. The aim of producing this list is to help all staff identify the areas in which by better understanding of, or compliance with, the University's Financial Regulations we will achieve greater efficiency in our business processes.

PAYING SUPPLIERS

Payments

- 1 No University Purchase Order (PO) has been provided to suppliers before they supply goods/services. ie A PO number must be quoted on Supplier Invoices (see [Guidance on University Purchase Orders](#)).
- 2 Goods Receipting not being undertaken in a timely manner, thus causing workflow messages and unnecessary delays to invoice payments, putting the University at risk of reputational damage from increased volumes of supplier complaints.
- 3 Supplier Invoices being sent directly to departments (see [Guidance on sending a Supplier Invoice to the University](#)).
- 4 A signed Agreement for Services has not been put in place when Departments have engaged self-employed individuals/contractors. See the relevant [HR Guidance](#) and our [Payments Decision Tree](#).

PURCHASING CARD EXPENDITURE / REIMBURSED EXPENSES

- 1 Insufficient detail in the Purchasing Card narrative or on the Reimbursed Expenses claim explaining what it is for e.g. 'conference' does not explain the 'business purpose' of the claim.
- 2 Coding expenditure against closed or invalid cost centre or project accounts, especially research grants that have already been closed on specific date.
- 3 Purchasing Card approvals or Reimbursed Expenses Claims completed late ie submitted more than 3 months after expenditure was incurred.
- 4 Not providing or recording the full details of all attendees for hospitality events.
- 5 Purchasing Card holders not endorsing any Reimbursed Expenses claim showing why they haven't used their University Purchasing card instead of expenses.
- 6 Credit card/Visa slips submitted with reimbursed expenses claims rather than fully itemised receipts. Credit/debit card receipts cannot be accepted as they do not itemise goods and services purchased, nor do they show the VAT element of the purchase. Departments are responsible for retaining HMRC compliant invoice documents to support all Purchasing Card expenditure.

BUYING AND PROCUREMENT

Purchasing

- 1 Not obtaining approval for Expenditure over £5000 (excluding VAT) on Purchasing Cards. See also the main Financial Regulations on Purchasing Card Expenditure. ([Expenditure-Paragraph 14](#))
- 2 Not checking the [Suppliers Information/Contracts Database](#) to identify and use a contracted supplier for purchasing. See Guidance on Contracted Suppliers in [SIA 17](#). [SIA 16](#) also confirms that; “Unless there are special circumstances, it is mandatory for Departments to use the contracts (or framework agreements) for the purchase of goods and services indicated by the University’s Procurement team on the University’s [web site](#).”
- 3 Not following Quotation and Tendering thresholds when placing orders See Guidance on Procurement Thresholds in [SIA 17](#).

INCOME OFFICE

Paying in Income

- 1 Ensure the correct VAT code is used on a Paying In Form (see [VAT Codes for Income](#))
- 2 Be sure that the 4 R’s are referred to before coding income as expenditure (or vice versa) (see [How Finance Works](#))

Invoices and Income Collection

- 1 Where possible, a valid purchase order number should be sought from the customer before commencing work for them. The purchase order number should then be recorded on any invoices issued for that work (see [Guidance on How to Raise a Sales Invoice](#)).
- 2 Departments should issue a credit note as soon as they are aware that an invoice was issued incorrectly; customers will be chased for payment of the invoice unless this is done.
- 3 Do not raise an invoice for any item sold through [The Online Store](#).

Tuition and Exam Fees

- 1 Departments should complete Student Change of Status forms on a timely basis. Failure to do this results in the student, or their sponsor, being charged the incorrect fee (see [Guidance on Status Types](#))

TRAVEL AND BUSINESS EXPENSES

Advances of Expenses

- 1 Ensure sufficient notice is given when requesting an Advance of Expenses (see [Guidance on Requesting a Cash Advance](#))
- 2 Ensure receipts and unspent funds are returned within 2 weeks of travelling or attending the event for which the Advance was requested.

PORTABLE MEDIA DEVICES (Phones, Laptops, iPads etc)

Asset Registers

- 1 Departments should record the acquisition, location and eventual disposal of ALL Portable Media Devices on their Asset Register. See paragraph 4.1.4 from [SIA 19](#), “Property, Leases, Rates and Equipment.