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 purchase orders being provided to suppliers before they supply goods/services for them to quote on invoices (see Guidance on University Purchase Orders)
2. Supplier Invoices being sent directly to departments (see Guidance on sending a Supplier Invoice to the University)
3. Signed agreement for services not in place when Departments have engaged self employed individuals

PAYING EXPENSES

Expenses Claims
1. Insufficient detail on claim explaining what it is for e.g. ‘conference’ does not explain the ‘business purpose’ of the claim
2. Submitting claims against closed or invalid cost centre or project accounts, especially research grants closed on specific date
3. Claims submitted more than 3 months after expenditure without an explanation for the delay
4. Claim forms not authorised
5. Not providing details of attendees for hospitality claims
6. Purchasing card holders not endorsing expenses claim if/why they haven’t used their University Purchasing card instead of expenses
7. Claimants not putting payroll or student number on the form, especially if putting a home address rather than a departmental address
8. Credit card/Visa slips submitted 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
9. Claimants not deducting a spouse’s share of hotel, travel, meal costs, etc.
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 Database to identify and use a contracted supplier for purchasing. See Guidance on Contracted Suppliers 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)

Cash Advances
1. Ensure sufficient notice is given when requesting a Cash Advance (see Guidance on Requesting a Cash Advance)
2. Ensure receipts and unspent funds are returned within 2 weeks of travelling or attending the event

Invoices and Income Collection
1. Where possible, a valid purchase order number should be sought before commencing work for a customer. 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)