

1. General

The purpose of expenses payments is to recompense Council Members (CMs) and other authorised persons for money spent while carrying out voluntary work in pursuit of the aims of the society that they would not otherwise have spent in the normal course of affairs.

Expenses cannot be paid in recompense for time expended in pursuit of the aims of the society.

CMs and others have a responsibility to provide value for money for the society and must seek the best-value prices available that are consistent with wider social and environmental objectives.

This policy was agreed at an AGM held on 5th January 2023 and replaces all earlier versions.

2. Eligibility and authorisation

2.1 Eligibility

Expenses may be claimed by members of the BSECS Council undertaking voluntary work in pursuit of the aims of the society, or by any person or persons authorised by the Council who is or are doing voluntary work in pursuit of the aims of the society.

Where authorised by the Council, fellows and bursary recipients may also claim expenses to the extent authorised by the Council.

Contractors and others doing paid work for the society should normally submit an invoice for payment rather than an expenses claim.

2.2 Authorisation

All claims for over £100 must be authorised in advance by the President and/or the Treasurer. The President and the Treasurer must authorise each other's claims in advance where they are likely to be over £100;

EXCEPT claims for scheduled travel to meetings where a record of attendance is kept, for example to Council meetings or the AGM, which do not need to be authorised in advance except where they exceed £200.

Claims for over £500 should not normally be authorised solely by the President and/or the Treasurer and should be referred to the Council, for discussion either at a meeting or by email.

If you need an authorisation for a claim over £100 (or £200 for travel expenses as above), please send it to the Treasurer in the first instance.

3. How to claim your expenses

3.1 Timeliness of submission

Expenses claims should be submitted as soon as possible after they have been incurred. A claim that is more than three months old will only be paid in exceptional circumstances.

3.2 The expenses claim form

All claims must be made on the official expenses claim form. The claim form must be completed fully and accurately, must be signed and dated, and must be sent to the Treasurer. Claims that are not made on this form will be returned unpaid.

EXCEPT you do not have to submit expenses claims for registration and accommodation at BSECS conferences when the fees are paid directly by BSECS. See §6 below.

3.3 Receipts

All claims must be supported with original or electronic copies of receipts and/or tickets. E-tickets for flights and rail travel are acceptable. If claiming for mileage, the postcodes of the origin and destination of your journey must be included. Claims that do not include receipts (or postcodes in the case of mileage claims) will be returned unpaid.

3.4 Payment of expenses

Expenses will normally be paid by direct transfer to your bank account. You must supply your bank account details with your expenses claim. Expenses will normally be paid within 28 days of receipt of the claim.

Making payments by cheque is time consuming and costs the society extra. Please only ask for payment by cheque in exceptional circumstances.

4. Help with expenses

If you have a problem or a query when completing your claim, you should contact the Treasurer in the first instance.

5. Travel and Accommodation

5.1 Travel within the UK

Reasonable travel expenses may be claimed for journeys taken within the UK in pursuit of the aims of the society. You may claim for Council meetings, the AGM, 'awaydays', the annual conference, the postgraduate conference, and any other meetings called by BSECS that are considered essential for the management of the society, without further authorisation, up to a value of £200.

You may also claim for journeys to meetings held with other organisations with which the society has important business. Authorisation must be obtained in advance if the cost of such meetings is likely to exceed £200.

All travel claims must demonstrate that you have sought best value for the society as well as the most environmentally sustainable option consistent with best value.

5.2 Travel outside the UK

Reasonable travel expenses may be claimed for journeys taken outside the UK in pursuit of the aims of the society. You may claim overseas travel expenses when you are travelling as a delegate from BSECS to an international organisation.

International travel should normally be authorised in advance if the cost is likely to exceed £200.

All travel claims must demonstrate that you have sought best value for the society as well as the most environmentally sustainable option consistent with best value.

5.3 Accommodation

You may claim up to £150/night for accommodation when attending a Council meeting that you are not able to travel to and from in the same day. If your journey requires two nights' accommodation, please contact the Treasurer for approval in the first instance.

5.4 Travel Guidelines

The following guidelines apply:

Local transport	You should aim to use public transport for local journeys, including buses, light rail, trams, and underground trains.
Coaches	You may use coaches for longer journeys. Where possible, you should book in advance to get cheaper rates.
Trains	<p>You may use trains for longer journeys. Where possible, you should book in advance to get cheaper rates.</p> <p>You may travel first class at the expense of the society where the following three conditions are met: a) the journey is more than 500 km or more than 5 hours in scheduled duration; b) the first-class fare is not more than double the standard fare; c) the total fare is not more than £200. To claim for a first-class fare, you must provide evidence (such as a printout from a booking website) of both the fare you are claiming for and the fare that would have been charged for the same journey in standard class.</p> <p>If you wish to travel first class for shorter journeys, you may do so. The Society, however, will only pay the standard fare. When you submit your claim, please provide evidence (such as a printout from a booking website) of both the fare that you actually paid and the fare that would have been charged for the same journey in standard class. You will be refunded the amount of the standard fare.</p>
Air	<p>You may use air travel for longer journeys. Where possible, you should book in advance to get cheaper rates.</p> <p>For environmental reasons, where possible, you should consider surface travel in preference to air travel.</p>
Motor vehicle travel	You should use public transport where possible. If travel by motor vehicle is unavoidable, you may claim at the rate of 30p per mile. The distance will be calculated using an online journey planner (normally http://www.theaa.com/route-planner/index.jsp) from the postcode of your origin to the postcode of your destination.
Cycle travel	Journeys made by bicycle or other human-powered vehicle can be claimed at double the rate of journeys made by motor vehicle: 60p per mile. The distance will be calculated using an online journey planner (normally http://www.theaa.com/route-planner/index.jsp) from the postcode of your origin to the postcode of your destination.
Taxis and minicabs	Where possible, you should avoid the use of taxis. Claims for taxi fares will only be honoured where it can be shown that there was no viable public transport alternative, that time was a genuine overriding concern, or that you were carrying luggage or materials that would make public-transport travel unviable.

6. Registration, meals, and accommodation at BSECS conferences

6.1 Registration

You are not required to pay registration fees for the annual conference or for the postgraduate conference. Since these fees will be paid by BSECS directly, there is no requirement to complete an expenses claim form. You MUST, however, register for the conference in the normal way.

6.2 Meals and accommodation at the annual conference

While most CMs are required to pay for their own meals and accommodation at the annual conference, the following CMs are not required to pay for meals and accommodation:

President

Vice-President

Treasurer

Executive Secretary

Conference Facilities Organiser

Conference Academic Organiser

Early Career Representatives

Any other Council member whose participation the Finance Committee agrees is essential to the smooth running of the conference.

Since the cost of meals and accommodation will be paid by BSECS directly, there is no requirement to complete an expenses claim form.

6.3 Expenses at the BSECS Postgraduate and Early Career Conference

BSECS will cover the cost of registration, accommodation and meals for the Postgraduate and Early Career Representatives at this conference. The Finance Committee will allocate a fund for the expenses of CMs who wish to attend this conference. Those CMs may claim from this fund up to an amount agreed by the Council and in accordance with other expenses policies.

7. Registration, meals, and accommodation at other conferences and events

You may claim the cost of registration, conference meals, and accommodation at conferences and events run by other organisations only when you are present at the event as an official delegate or representative of BSECS. Claims for meals should be limited to those meals that are part of the conference programme. Claims for the costs of attending such events should normally be authorised in advance if the cost is likely to exceed £100.

8. Stationery and office consumables

Only members of the Executive Committee can routinely claim for stationery and other office consumables. Executive Committee members may be required to demonstrate the need for such items, particularly with high-value items that may also have a personal use such as printer ink cartridges. Other CMs performing specific ad hoc tasks may also claim for stationery and consumables, but such claims should be authorised in advance. All claims should normally be authorised in advance if the cost is likely to exceed £100.

9. Meals, subsistence, and entertainment

Expenses cannot normally be paid for individual meals and entertainment.

EXCEPT when attending other conferences as a BSECS delegate as in section 7, above.

10. Other goods and services

Occasionally, CMs may need to purchase other goods or pay for other services than those specified above. Only Executive Committee members can routinely claim for such items, and they may be required to demonstrate the need for such purchases. Other CMs performing specific ad hoc tasks may also claim for other goods and services, but such claims should be authorised in advance. All claims should be authorised in advance if the cost is likely to exceed £100.

11. Expenses associated with BSECS Criticks

A fund of £200 is to be put aside each year for Criticks reviews to apply for on an ad-hoc basis to cover costs associated with travel and access to events and exhibitions. The size of this fund will be subject to review by the Finance Committee. In the case of travel, costs must be unavoidable. In the case of access, the venue must have first been contacted by the relevant sub-editor to ascertain whether press tickets are available. Reviewers should first discuss their requirements with the Criticks Editor, who must also support any such application.