

Criteria for civil servants and staff of subvented organisations to undertake overseas duty visits and the associated subsistence allowance

In general, overseas duty visits refer to the duties that staff of an organisation undertakes to represent his / her organisation in the furtherance of its activities overseas. Examples of overseas duty visits organised / approved by the Education Bureau (EDB) may include attending a conference / seminar to deliver a talk or present papers on the subject of education or visiting / attaching to an organisation for gathering information/ first-hand experience of educational policy issues directly related to the present duties of the officer to meet immediate operational need, etc.

In the school context, schools may arrange learning and exchange activities outside HK, such as teachers escorting students to participate in competitions, services, study tours, exchange programmes etc., based on schools' own development objectives and needs. Participation in these activities and nomination of responsible teachers are school-based decisions. Relevant arrangements in government and aided schools as well as institutions funded by University Grants Committee (UGC) are provided below:

Government Schools

Civil servants who participate in overseas duty visits which are organised by EDB and approved under the prescribed mechanism can be granted subsistence allowance to meet the relevant costs of board and lodging if they are not provided in the trip. Government school teachers are entitled to the same treatment as with other civil servants to draw subsistence allowance if they are approved to attend overseas duty visits.

Subject to approval by the School Management Committee, expenses on board and lodging of government school teachers accompanying students in school-based learning and exchange activities, if not provided in the trip, can be paid out of the school funds [surplus of Extended School-based Curriculum Grant (ESBCG)].

Aided Schools

Aided schools are provided with recurrent Operating Expenses Block Grant (OEBG) or Expanded Operating Expenses Block Grant (EOEBG) for deployment of resources

flexibly according to their own situations to meet the needs of students and school development. The School Management Committee / Incorporated Management Committee may approve expenses on board and lodging of teachers accompanying students in overseas learning activities, if not provided in the trip, to be charged to the surplus of OEBG/EOEBG on condition that the teachers' travel is related to discharge of duties and the expenses incurred are reasonable, necessary for educational purposes and met in a cost-effective manner.

Institutions funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC)

All UGC-funded institutions are autonomous with their own Ordinances and governing Councils. They enjoy autonomy in staff matters and are accountable for their decisions.

We understand from the institutions that, internal mechanism, rules and procedures are in place to handle the application of overseas duty visits by staff members and the related arrangements. All duty visit applications require approval by officers of suitable ranks, who will consider various factors, including whether the visit objective, duration, number and frequency of visits, the number of officers involved in the visit, whether the teaching / research / administrative duties of the concerned staff will be affected, and if there is proper corresponding arrangement to cover those duties, etc.

Generally, staff on duty visits is entitled to a subsistence allowance to cover reasonable and appropriate cost of accommodation and meals, in-town travelling expenses and other minor incidental out-of-pocket expenses, etc.

Education Bureau
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