

Environmental Management System

8.1.17 Business Travel Policy and arrangements

Issued: June 2023

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Review date:	June 2026
Clause Ref:	Ecocampus and ISO14001(2015): 8.1.17

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Sustainable Business Travel

1 Purpose

In 2019 the University declared a climate emergency and recognised the pressing need to move towards low carbon operations. This Business Travel Policy and arrangements has been developed to enable staff and students to significantly reduce carbon emissions as part of our “Path to Zero” ambition.

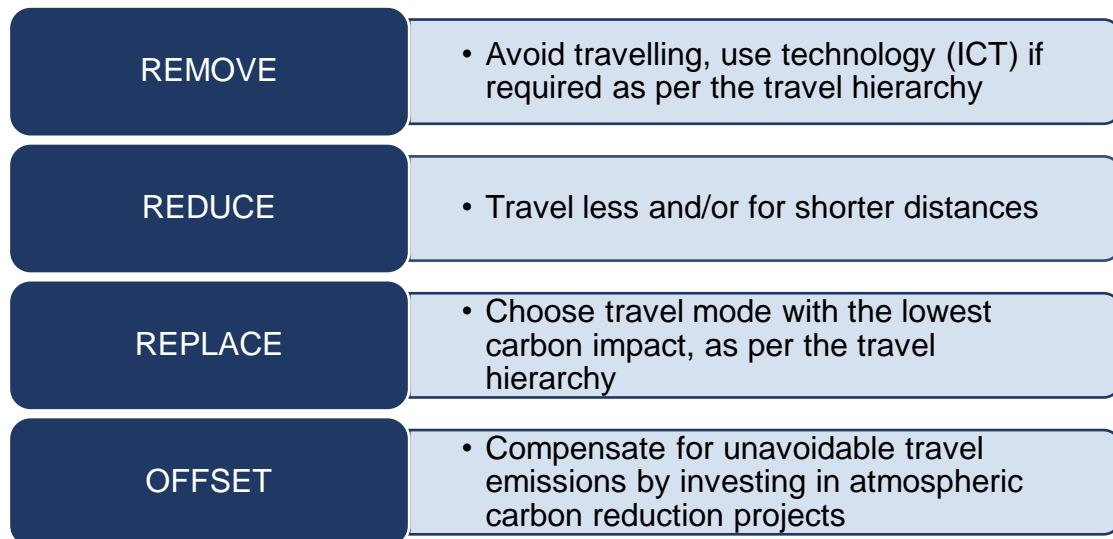


Figure 1 Our four step method for reducing travel related carbon emissions and impacts

2 Scope

This policy and arrangements applies to all staff, students and visitors (where Swansea University pay for their travel) who undertake business travel on behalf of Swansea University.

Other visitors, suppliers and contractors shall also be made aware of the Business Travel Policy and arrangements. They will be required to apply the travel hierarchy in the supply of goods and services, activities and operations undertaken on behalf of Swansea University. The responsibility for this lies with the key staff/student contact/host responsible for the particular activity (e.g. conference, workshop, meeting, contract, project, etc.).



Figure 2: The Travel Hierarchy

3 Definitions

Active travel: Making journeys by physically active means, like walking or cycling.

Business activities: Activities undertaken by university staff and students to achieve strategic targets and enhance the learning and research environment. This may include recruitment work, presenting at conferences, student placements and fieldwork, attending a viva, etc.

Carbon offsetting: Investment in projects with the primary purpose to reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere e.g. investment in carbon reduction technologies or carbon sequestration in organic matter or through other means. The University recognises offsetting is the weakest option in the travel hierarchy and should serve only to compensate the environment for unavoidable travel emissions once all other options have been exhausted.

Carer: A carer is anyone, including children and adults who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty,

disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. This includes those looking after children. The care they give is unpaid.

Climate emergency: As defined by the Oxford dictionary - a situation in which urgent action is required to reduce or halt climate change and avoid potentially irreversible environmental damage resulting from it.

Path to Zero: Swansea University's programme to reduce carbon emissions in Scope 1 and Scope 2 to zero by 2035, and additional targets to manage Scope 3 emissions.

Professional Service Unit (PSU): Administrative areas at the university.

Public transport: Transport (e.g. buses, trains) that are available to the public, charge set fares, and run on fixed routes.

Scope 1 (Direct emissions): Activities owned or controlled by your organisation that release emissions straight into the atmosphere. They are direct emissions. Examples of scope 1 emissions include emissions from combustion in owned or controlled boilers, furnaces, vehicles; emissions from chemical production in owned or controlled process equipment.¹

Scope 2 (Energy indirect): Emissions being released into the atmosphere associated with your consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling. These are indirect emissions that are a consequence of your organisation's activities but which occur at sources you do not own or control.²

Scope 3 (Other indirect): Emissions that are a consequence of your actions, which occur at sources which you do not own or control and which are not classed as scope 2 emissions. Examples of scope 3 emissions are business travel by means not owned or controlled by your organisation, waste disposal, or purchased materials or fuels.²

Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle (ULEV): term used to describe any vehicle that uses low carbon technologies; emits less than 0.075 kg of CO₂ / km from the tailpipe; and/or is capable of operating in zero tailpipe emission mode for a range of at least ten miles.

University fleet vehicle: Groups of motor vehicles owned or leased by the University, from within a Faculty/PSU or centrally held.

¹ [DEFRA Guidance on how to measure and report your greenhouse gas emissions \(Sept 2009\)](#)

4 Responsibilities

<p>University Sustainability Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the thematic action plans that relate to the Sustainability and Climate Emergency Strategy and Policy - including the Sustainable Travel Plan and the Climate Emergency Transition Plan: “Path to Zero”
<p>Sustainability Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Faculties and PSUs to embed this Policy and arrangements and the travel hierarchy into Faculty/PSU practice Work with Faculties and PSUs to set local targets related to carbon emissions from business travel as part of the Faculty/PSU Sustainability and Climate Emergency Action Plan Work with ISS to develop and maintain an up-to-date “Path to Zero” emissions dashboard – corporately and by Faculty/PSU - to enable business travel emissions, costs, and other parameters related to business travel to be monitored and reported Report quarterly emissions from travel to local Faculty/PSU Committees or local management meetings Report the University’s annual environmental performance to the University Sustainability Committee as part of the EMS Management Review. This will include carbon emissions related to business travel across the university and by Faculty/PSU
<p>Faculty/PSU Committee or Senior Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the implementation of this Policy and arrangements and the travel hierarchy across their Faculty/PSU Agenda quarterly updates of travel emissions from the Faculty/PSU Report on any use of non-approved university suppliers within the Faculty/PSU or UK flights Communicate performance to the wider Faculty/PSU Agree actions to ensure continual improvement
<p>Faculty/PSU Senior Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the implementation of this Policy and arrangements and the travel hierarchy across their Faculty/PSU Ensure the use of approved university suppliers/booking system for all Faculty/PSU business travel Agree annual travel carbon related targets as part of their local Sustainability and Climate Emergency Action Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have continued oversight of Faculty/PSU business travel targets and emissions and progress towards them quarterly/annually as reported to the Faculty/PSU Corporate Responsibility Committee
Line Managers / Other travel approvers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that this Policy and arrangements, the travel hierarchy, the Request for Approval to Travel Form (if overseas or involving a domestic flight) and the university booking system are utilised when approving university business travel by staff and students Take into consideration the individual’s needs when using the travel hierarchy e.g. Welsh language requirements, disabilities, access, carer status etc.
All staff, students and visitors²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise this Policy and arrangements, the travel hierarchy, the Request for Approval to Travel Form (if overseas or involving a domestic flight) and the university booking system

5 Related Documents

- **Sustainability and Climate Emergency Strategy 2021-2025 and Sustainability Policy 2020:** Document that sets out the strategic approach to corporate sustainability at Swansea University³.
- **Sustainable Travel Plan 2020-2025:** Document that details the University’s approach to travel for a set time, reviewed annually with targets and objectives in the Environmental Management System (EMS)³.
- **[F-E.8.3.1 Request for Approval to Fly/Travel Overseas](#):** Form used to purchase international travel/flights at the University.
- **[RBC-10101 Swansea University International Travel Policy](#):** Document detailing requirements for assessing international travel with regards to safety and insurance.
- **[Electric Vehicle and Charging Policy and Arrangements](#):** details provision of Zero Emission Electric Vehicles (EV) and charging facilities for university fleet and authorised persons to meet business-critical needs and legislative requirements.

6 Process

6.1 Travel Hierarchy Decision Tree

All travel undertaken by staff and students on behalf of the University are required to consider their travel in relation to Figure 2.

² Where Swansea University pays for their travel

³ These documents are available via the [Sustainability webpage](#).

The travel hierarchy (Figure 2) and decision tree (Figure 3

Figure 3: Decision tree

) are based on average travel and in order of preference for lower carbon emissions, however it is recognised these may not be the most efficient, accessible or safest way to travel in all instances and should serve as a guide for reference.

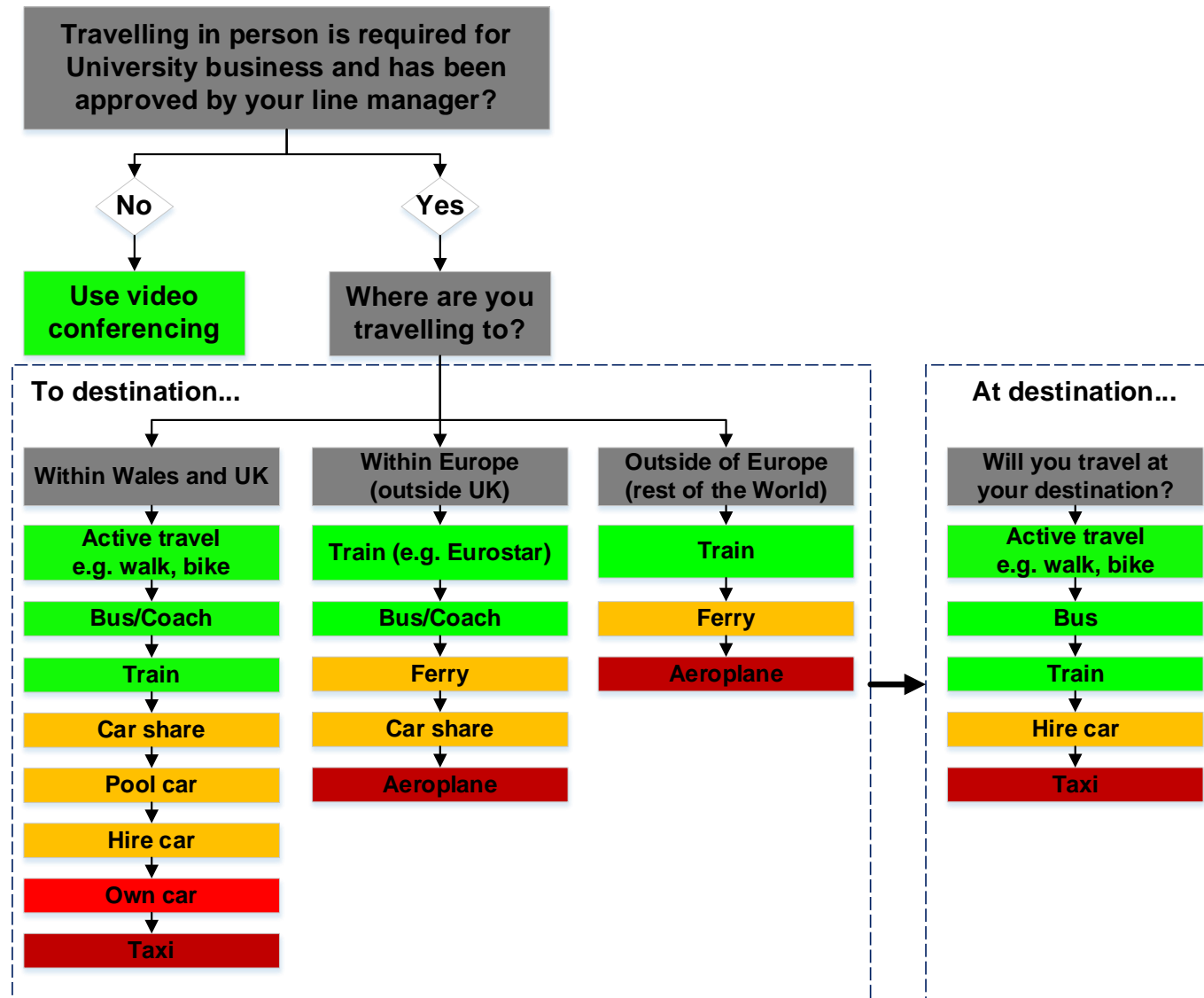


Figure 3: Decision tree

6.1.1 Avoid travelling

Use of technology to avoid travelling is the preferred option. Video conferencing facilities are available in Faculties and PSUs as well as through ISS⁴. Check with your local Information Services and Systems (ISS) team to understand Faculty facilities and with the Audio/Visual team for further services across the University⁵ (including PSUs). Staff also have access to Zoom conferencing, which can be used from their own computer or smartphone. More information on Zoom is available via the [ISS Zoom Conferencing webpage](#).

6.1.2 Active travel

Active travel has a minimal impact on the environment through staff and students walking and/or cycling to/from university business/engagements e.g. meetings. When using personal bikes to cycle to/from university business/engagements, staff can claim 20p per mile (refer to [Financial Policies and Procedures E.8 Expenses](#)). Staff and students are also encouraged to undertake active travel at their destination this may include walking and/or bike rental schemes e.g. Next Bike.

6.1.3 Public transport

Bus and train provide viable options for travel within Wales, the United Kingdom, and Europe and at the destination. Benefits of public transport can include:

- A smaller carbon footprint, lowering the environmental impact
- Ability to work and use time productively whilst travelling (e.g. WiFi on board Eurostar)
- Time of travel comparable with flying when whole journey time included e.g. check-in and waiting at airports
- Helps the University achieve its carbon reduction targets and goals⁶

For campus-to-campus bus journeys, Carnet (free day) tickets are available from each Faculty/PSU, who apply for them via Estates Admin. For details of other bus travel discounts available to students and staff, visit the [Travel By Bus webpage](#)⁷.

6.1.4 Car share

Car sharing with colleagues can reduce the environmental impact when travelling for work. Swansea University has a car share scheme called 'Travel Buddy' available on via our 'SWell' platform, which enables you to find others to car share with⁸. If the car share is utilising a hire vehicle Section 6.1.6 must be considered. If a member of staff is using their own vehicle for car sharing then refer to Section 6.1.7. If a taxi is utilised then refer to Section 6.1.8.

⁴ <https://conferencesandevents.swansea.ac.uk/conference-venues-swansea/>

⁵ Audio Visual Services at Swansea University: <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/it-services/av-enquiry/>

⁶ Sustainability team <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/sustainability>

⁷ Sustainable travel <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/sustainability/travel/>

⁸ Travel Buddy on Swell <https://swell.teamjump.co.uk/travel-buddy>

6.1.5 University fleet vehicles

All university fleet vehicles are to be 100% EV/Hydrogen. If a group requires a diesel/petrol vehicle, they will need to provide a justification for use and to be approved by Head of Faculty or Department lead prior to submitting to Finance.

Faculties/PSUs with their own vehicles to utilise them more efficiently and share, where possible.

6.1.6 Hire car

When staff/students are hiring a car for core business activities at the university, the following is required:

- Car hire to/from destination: If hiring a vehicle in the first instance request ULEV or where ULEV is not available or appropriate, request a vehicle with <math><0.090\text{ kg CO}_2 / \text{ km}</math>
- Car hire at destination: Car choice to be restricted to the lowest emission vehicle and not exceed $0.120\text{ kg CO}_2 / \text{ km}$ unless no other option is available

6.1.7 Own car

If a member of staff utilises their own vehicle, they are responsible for ensuring suitable business insurance, maintenance, MOT and type of driving licence appropriate for the vehicle driven are in place. For more information, refer to ROSPA Driving for Work guidance⁹.

6.1.8 Taxi

Taxis should be avoided where possible, due to the extra journeys the taxi will need to make to get to the requester and get back to their original destination. Where taxis are utilised request the lowest emission vehicle possible.

6.1.9 Flight

Flying should be avoided, in particular, flights within the UK. Where flying is the only option, the following aspects are to be considered to lower the environmental impact of the flight taken:

- Consider direct flights as landing and taking off use large amounts of fuel
- Consider daytime flights over night time as this reduces environmental impact¹⁰
- Consider the most energy efficient airlines¹¹
- Consider economy class

⁹ ROSPA Driving for Work: Using Own Vehicles

<https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/employers/work-own-vehicles.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.nature.com/articles/nature04877>

¹¹ Airline environmental policies are available on their websites

6.2 Integrated travel

Integrated transport may be used for one trip for example active travel to the train station and rail to the destination.

6.3 Safe and suitable travel

The safety and wellbeing of staff and students is of primary importance and this should be considered when choosing appropriate travel methods, in line with the International Travel Policy and any additional guidance issued by the University. For example, if someone is not comfortable, unable to access or it is not safe to hire and drive a car abroad then a taxi could be used. In addition, if the person is unable to participate in active travel other means should be utilised.

6.4 Smarter travel

Where travel is essential to university operations, staff should streamline their visits, as far as reasonably practical. This may include:

- Reducing the number of people attending conferences/events
- Making the trip multi-purpose by including visits to local institutions (for marketing and recruitment purposes) whilst on a conference/fieldwork/research

By streamlining trips the volume of travel can be reduced, whilst not impacting the outcome.

6.5 Unavoidable flights on university business

Where carbon intensive travel like flying is the only practicable mode of travel and is unavoidable, the University recognises this will have a significant environmental impact. As a result, the University will provide the Faculties/PSUs with guidance on methods through which they can offset the quantified emissions, via investment in recognised projects that will reduce carbon emissions or sequester carbon from the atmosphere. The University is currently developing a scheme by which this can be undertaken as part of the Sustainability and Climate Emergency Strategy and associated plans¹².

The offsetting procedure will be launched in due course, and this policy and arrangements updated accordingly. It will be an expectation that the offsetting procedure is adopted and utilised corporately, providing staff and students with guidance on preferred methods (airline or otherwise) of 'offsetting'.

6.6 Travelling as a Carer

If the member of staff or student is a carer, the following should be taken into consideration by the Faculty/PSU:

- Timeframes required for travel

¹² See Section 5 Related Documents

- Additional financial support required for temporary caring services to cover additional travel time

6.7 Further information and support

Staff and students can access further information and support through their Faculty/PSU Environment Officer or by contacting the Sustainability Team directly:

- Sustainability@Swansea.ac.uk

7 Relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals



8 Effects and Actions on Non Conformance

Complying with this policy and arrangements will result in:

- [Conformance with the requirements of EcoCampus and the ISO 14001:2015 standard.](#)

Departure from this policy and arrangements is addressed in the procedure [10.1 Nonconformity and Corrective Action](#).

9 Version Control

Date	Version	Update
27-Apr-21	1	Development of new Business Travel Policy and arrangements
29-Jun-23	2	Inclusion of SDGs, reference to Travel Buddy scheme and EV and Charging Policy. Update of committee titles.