

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES/PASSAGE & BAGGAGE

Arrangements for Provision of Split Passage Scheme

Introduction

The Split Passage Scheme (hereinafter referred to as the Scheme) was introduced with effect from 1 July 1991 with the objectives of encouraging annual leave and allowing more flexible leave passage arrangements to better serve eligible staff. Eligible staff herein refer to staff members whose appointment was offered before 1 January 2002. The updated policy and procedural arrangements in respect of the Scheme are set out hereunder.

Eligibility

1. The following staff members who are provided with passage in accordance with their terms of service may apply to join the Split Passage Scheme:
 - a. a staff member and his/her dependent family members whose salary is at or above the first point of the Government Directorate pay scale once every two years or as specified in his/her terms of appointment; and
 - b. a staff member appointed on overseas terms (before the Common Terms of Employment coming into effect) and his/her dependent family members on satisfactory completion of a tour of service.
2. Once the staff member has joined the Scheme, the same terms and conditions will apply to members of his/her family eligible for passages.
3. Staff who do not wish to join the Scheme will be provided with passage arrangements in accordance with their terms of service. However, once the staff member has applied to join the Scheme, the decision will be irrevocable for the duration of that tour of service.
4. A tour of service for the purpose of the provision of passage is normally 24 months unless otherwise stipulated in the Letter of Appointment for appointees on first appointment with either a three-year non-substantiated period or a three-year fixed-term employment, in which case the tour of service will be extended to tie in with the end of the non-substantiated/fixed-term period, exclusive of leave earned but not yet taken.
5. It is important to note that all passage taken under the Split Passage Scheme are advances against passage entitlements at the end of a tour of service, to the effect that any advances in excess of entitlement will be repaid to the University if the tour has not been completed satisfactorily.
6. **Procedural Arrangement**
 - a. The Finance Office will prepare a quoted price list of single trip and return airfares twice every year (i.e. February and August of the year) between Hong Kong and the following broad area zones:

Australia / New Zealand
Continental Europe
United Kingdom
Guangzhou
Shanghai

Beijing
Philippines / Taiwan
Indonesia / Japan
Singapore / Malaysia / Thailand
Hawaii
East Coast of North America
West Coast of North America

(Quoted price of single/return airfares for destinations other than the above zones will be provided by the Finance Office upon request.)

- b. Once a staff member elects to advance and split his/her passage entitlement after a completion of at least six months' service within a tour of service, a "passage allowance" in accordance with the quoted price list provided by the Finance Office will be set as the staff member's maximum entitlement within that particular tour of service. This "passage allowance" will be set in accordance with the approval date of passage arrangement given by the Human Resources Office before the travel and the prevailing quoted airfare at that time by the Finance Office. This allowance will not be affected by subsequent revision in the quoted price list of airfares.
- c. **The "passage allowance" for each tour can be divided into not more than two parts which are to be used towards the costs of two sets of passages.** Hence, a staff member will be allowed to make a maximum of two claims for payment to meet the cost of the two sets of passages.
- d. Savings from the "passage allowance" of a tour of service cannot be carried forward to the next tour.
- e. In planning leave passages, staff members should ensure that prior approval for leave has been obtained.
- f. Bookings for all leave passages under the Scheme should be made directly with the travel agents by the staff concerned. Following from that, a staff member should file an application with the Human Resources Office. The duly certified Application Form should then be presented to the Finance Office for settlement of the leave passages expenses by either one of the following ways :
 - i. Direct Payment - obtain a cheque payable to the travel agent by presenting the invoice, in which case any subsequent alterations cannot be entertained; and in the event that travel arrangements are cancelled and the University has already made out a cheque payable to the travel agent, all refunds will then be made to the University and the refund will be credited, where appropriate, to the staff member's passage balance; OR
 - ii. Reimbursement - make all payment first and then present the receipt with ticket stubs / counterfoils / boarding pass for reimbursement after the travel.

7. Routings

The Finance Office will not exercise any control over routings under this Scheme.

8. Coverage of Travel-Related Expenses

- a. The "passage allowance" will cover the following travel related expenses provided that the claims for which can be supported by receipts:
 - i. Airfare;
 - ii. Other surface travelling expenses - such as rail or ferry fare, and car mileage;
 - iii. Package Tours;
 - iv. Accommodation;
 - v. Meals and refreshments during the tour;

- vi. Facilities provided by the rented accommodation such as telephone, laundry, fitness and recreational facilities expenses;
- vii. Entertainment performance (e.g. concert, opera, movie, circus) provided during the tour;
- viii. Car-hire Charges - including the insurance premium, costs of fuel and extra items (e.g. baby seats, roof-racks, etc.) associated with car-hire;
- ix. Airport Departure Tax.

Relaxation of coverage extended to items 8a(v), (vi) & (vii) took effect from 1 February 2002.

- b. Common expenses incurred for the passage i.e. expenses which are incurred for more than one person, e.g. hotel charges for a double/triple room or car-hire expenses for the whole family, may be debited in any proportion to the passage accounts of those family members travelling together.
- c. The "passage allowance" **will not** cover the following expenses :
 - i. Travel insurance;
 - ii. Deposit or penalties required by the airlines or travel agents due to cancellation or change of itinerary.

9. Claim Procedures

Staff members will need to submit itemized original receipts for major items only, including airfares, accommodation and package tours. Staff members are however advised to retain the receipts for other items for six months from the date of claims and to produce them if necessary upon request from the Finance Office. Failure to produce receipts as required could result in the portion of allowance paid to staff relating to the items concerned to be recovered.

10. Unaccompanied Air Baggage

For staff appointed on overseas terms of appointment, baggage allowance will only be payable in the claim for payment to settle the last sets of passage within that tour of service. Savings from the baggage allowance of a tour of service cannot be carried forward to the next tour.

11. Arrangements when Leaving the University Service

- a. When a staff member referred to in par. 1 (a) above leaves the University service, his/her entitlement for the passage benefit from Hong Kong to United Kingdom will be calculated on a pro-rata basis up to and including the end date of his appointment in relation to a tour of service of two years.
- b. Staff members referred to in par. 1 (b) above who resigns before completing a tour of service shall be provided with homeward passage & baggage allowances on a pro-rata basis.

Staff members will be required to repay any advances to the University if the tour has not been completed satisfactorily or the advances claimed are in excess of entitlement.