

Business travel toolkit

2019-20



Introduction

Academic and business travel is an integral part of University life, but it also has significant impacts – in particular on the levels of carbon emissions driving climate change.

Thinking differently about travel can reduce these impacts while maintaining the essential value of the University's connections with the outside world.

This toolkit offers guidance and practical tips for staff and students on making more sustainable choices when considering the need to travel for work or study.

It is based on a simple three-step hierarchy for promoting sustainable travel:

- One.**
- Two.**
- Three.**

The hierarchy recognises the [relative carbon intensity](#), as well as the time and cost implications, of different travel options.

In addition to this guidance, an [interactive decision tree](#) is available to signpost staff through the process of selecting the most appropriate business travel option.

This advice should be read in association with University policies relating to business travel, notably the [Travel and Expenses Policy](#) and [business travel procurement guidelines](#).

The information in this toolkit was up to date at the time of publication (November 2019) but is subject to change as University policy on business travel develops. Please check the [business travel pages](#) of our website for any updates.



One

Reduce the need to travel.

The easiest and most effective way of reducing the impacts of business travel is not to travel.

There are two main ways this can be done, either by engaging remotely, for example by video conference, or by co-ordinating travel plans to reduce the overall number of trips.

Video-conferencing

Video-conferencing may not be suitable for every type of meeting but with technology improving all the time, it is becoming easier and more acceptable as a way of working together without travelling.

Host organisations for many conferences and other meeting now offer a remote participation option, so it is always worth enquiring before planning to attend in person.

If your department is planning to host a conference of its own, there are several options for using virtual conferencing to reduce its travel footprint. A Quick Guide to Hosting a Virtual Conference is available to download from [our website](#).

Further guidance on organising your own phone or video conference for any type of meeting is available from [Unified Comms](#).

Co-ordinating travel plans

Even when some travel is necessary, it may be possible to reduce emissions by cutting the total number of trips. This can be done by co-ordinating your travel plans in advance, for example:

- avoiding repeat travel to the same destination by bundling several trips into one, staying overnight if necessary to schedule multiple meetings;
- limiting the size of your group when travelling together with colleagues to the same event or destination; and
- checking with colleagues if anyone else is planning to travel to the same place and could represent your interests, or if you could do the same for them.



Two. Switch to sustainable travel

Choosing to walk, cycle or take public transport can significantly reduce the impacts of travel and these sustainable options don't necessarily have to take more time, or cost more. This can apply equally to local, UK domestic and even international travel.

Local travel

Most travel between University sites and elsewhere in Bristol for meetings etc should be possible by on foot, by bike or by bus:

- Walking and cycling directions to all University buildings are available via the [online Campus map](#)
- Stoke Bishop and Langford are connected to the main Clifton campus by the [Bristol Unibus U1 and U2 services](#)
- Information on other local travel options including links to online journey planners is available on the [University's transport plan webpages](#)

If local travel by car or van is unavoidable (e.g. when transporting bulky equipment between University buildings), staff should follow [the University's transport plan](#) to decide which type of vehicle to use.

UK domestic travel

[Rail booked through the University's contracted travel supplier](#) should be the preferred option for all journeys beyond the Bristol area within mainland Britain.

Going by train removes the strain of long-distance driving and might not take much longer door-to-door than a domestic flight, allowing for the time needed for check-in, boarding and airport transfers.

[University policy](#) allows first class rail travel for journeys over three hours where the intention is to work for the duration of the train journey, making travel time more productive.

Combined with cheaper advance fares available through the University's travel supplier, rail travel quickly becomes more competitive in terms of overall cost relative to both driving and flying.

And it's worth remembering that even if your destination isn't close to a railway station, [booking a hire car](#) at the other end can make taking the train most of the way the obvious choice.

If going by car is unavoidable or demonstrably cheaper than rail (for example if you're carrying bulky equipment or travelling as a group), staff should use [the University's transport plan](#) to decide which type of vehicle to use.



Two.

Switch to sustainable travel

Choosing the right vehicle

The first choice if you need to drive on University business should always be to use an existing departmental pool vehicle.

If a suitable pool vehicle isn't available, renting a vehicle through the University's contracted provider Enterprise should be the next option.

Enterprise offers a [car club option](#) which is most cost-effective for journeys of up to around 100 miles within a single working day. Vehicles are available at dedicated on-street car club bays around Bristol, including several close to the main Clifton campus, and in other cities around the UK.

For longer journeys or overnight, [hiring a vehicle is the preferred option](#). With delivery and pick-up from home or work address, renting is just as convenient as using a private car. Enterprise offer a range of commercial vehicles for hire in addition to cars and vans, but larger minibuses may be hired through [other approved suppliers](#).

Fleet hierarchy

1. Departmental pool vehicle
2. Enterprise Car Club (for journeys of up to 100 miles within a single working day); or Enterprise Rent-a-Car (for longer/overnight journeys)
3. Staff-owned private vehicle

The highest option in the hierarchy should be used subject to availability of a vehicle appropriate to the journey purpose for the time required.

IMPORTANT NOTE:
Anyone driving under the University's motor insurance cover (including in a vehicle hired through Enterprise Rent-a-Car) requires an authorisation to drive from their department. Additional requirements apply to staff using their own vehicles for work-related journeys.

Visit the [motor insurance page](#) of the University website for further information.

International travel

Despite the availability of cheap air travel, rail remains a viable choice for reaching many destinations in northern Europe.

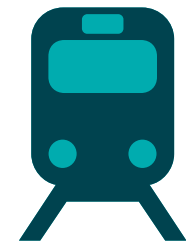
[Eurostar has direct services](#) from London to Paris, Brussels, Lille, Lyon, Amsterdam and Rotterdam with connections to around 100 other European destinations. With arrivals at city centre stations, door-to-door travel time by train may compare well with flying, especially from any London airport.

[University policy](#) allows first class rail for journeys over three hours, so the value of the time spent working in comfort on Eurostar could make the total journey cost competitive when compared with flying (especially if the time and money spent getting to, from and through the airport is taken into account).

For destinations beyond northern Europe, air travel remains the most viable option, unless time and budget constraints allow for [more adventurous choices](#). If flying is unavoidable, air travellers are encouraged

to [choose their mode of transport](#) through their choice of fare class, route and airline.

Whether by rail or air, all [international business travel](#) should be booked through the University's contracted travel provider which can advise on the best options for saving time, money and carbon emissions.



Three.

Improve the efficiency of travel

Even if you have to drive or fly, there are numerous ways of improving the efficiency or otherwise limiting the environmental impacts of your next business trip.

For car journeys:

- Choosing the vehicle with lowest available emissions rating is a good start. Even if there's no EV or hybrid option, [the CO₂ emissions](#) of some larger petrol or diesel-powered cars can be more than double those of the most efficient model in real-world driving conditions.
- Car-sharing with colleagues travelling to the same meeting or event should be an obvious option for saving money as well as cutting emissions.
- Research shows that [simple eco-driving techniques](#) can improve fuel efficiency by up to 15% and are likely to improve safety as the same time. Slowing down, driving smoothly and switching off when idling are all proven ways of reducing emissions when driving.
- Finally, there are several ways your department can improve the environmental performance of all the road transport it uses for University purposes, whether it operates fleet vehicles of its own, or makes regular use of hire vehicles or staff-owned

vehicles. A Quick Guide to Greening your Fleet Operations is available to download from [our website](#).

For air journeys:

- [University policy](#) allows higher classes of air travel under specific conditions, in particular for certain long-haul flights. But flying business class can double the emissions per passenger when compared with economy on the same flight because of the extra space needed on the aircraft, so staff are encouraged to use discretion within the bounds of policy to limit their carbon footprint.
- Air travellers may also be able to limit their carbon footprint of their flight by flying non-stop. It has been estimated that up to [25% of aircraft emissions come from taking off and landing](#), including taxiing to and from the runway, so taking a direct route will save CO₂ as well as time.
- Even on the same route, it may be possible to reduce emissions further by opting for the airline with the [most fuel-efficient fleet](#). The [University's travel](#)

[management company](#) can advise on selecting the most carbon-efficient air travel option.

- Carbon offsetting is widely promoted as a tool for limiting the climate impacts of air travel. The University is developing its policy on offsetting as part of a broader carbon reduction plan. This will seek to ensure that any chosen offsetting schemes are procured compliantly and that their emissions savings are both verifiable and additional to those required to meet global climate goals. Meanwhile the University cannot endorse or fund contributions to any particular carbon offset scheme.

For all journeys:

- Time permitting, it may be possible to undertake additional University work as part of the same trip, helping to maximise its value and reduce the need for further travel. This might involve attending additional meetings, events or site visits related to your own area of work during the same trip, or with others in advance.