

NES Catering Guidelines

1. Introduction

NES wishes to ensure a robust control of all its expenditure including catering costs. In view of the significantly constrained financial environment and in response to suggestions through the staff efficiency suggestion scheme this Guidance Note has been implemented.

All Directors and managers are required to ensure the prudent disbursement of all NES funds and our expenditure on catering is regularly reviewed by the Business Group.

2. General Guidance

NES guidance is that it will not provide catering for internal staff meetings including meetings where other NHSS staff are present and internal staff training courses.

This Guidance applies to Board and Board Committee meetings. NES recognises however that there may be some limited circumstances in which the provision of tea and coffee and/or lunch is appropriate and they are set out below. Authorisation is required at Director level.

Attendance at meetings and events needs to be considered carefully and if catering is provided the practice should be to consider the amount required and under order (late apologies for absence are common).

3. Internal Staff Meetings

NES guidance is that it does not provide catering for internal staff meetings. It is recognised that due to the nature of our work staff may travel a considerable distance to attend such meetings and depending on the location external catering outlets might not be readily available. The Director may consider in these circumstances that refreshments in the form of tea and coffee are appropriate.

Directors may exercise their discretion to provide lunch however this should be by exception.

4. NES Meetings with NHSS Colleagues

Due to the nature of our work NES staff hold regular meetings with NHSS colleagues to undertake collaborative working and to seek stakeholder engagement. This includes meetings of our Partnership Forum. NES Guidance is that it does not provide catering for these meetings. The Director may consider providing tea/coffee if a considerable distance has been travelled to attend the meeting and catering outlets are not suitable or readily available.

Directors may exercise their discretion to provide lunch however this should be by exception.

5. Other Meetings

Due to the nature of our work, Directorates hold from time to time meetings with professional groups who may be independent contractors and give up their time either during working hours or in the evenings to attend meetings or courses. This guidance recognises that in these circumstances teas/coffee or a sandwich may be appropriate.

6. Internal Staff Training Courses

NES Guidance is that it does not provide catering for internal NES staff training courses. There may be limited exceptions depending on the location of the course. Any catering provision will require to be authorised by the Director of HR & OD.

7. Volunteering Policy

Under the terms of our Volunteering Policy, there is provision for support and the claiming of travel and subsistence expenses. These guidelines do not apply to events or meetings held under this policy.

8. Travel & Subsistence Policy

Under the terms of the Travel and Subsistence Policy, staff can claim reimbursement for lunch in certain circumstances. There is no change to this policy as a result of this Guidance and any contractual entitlements are not affected.

9. Review

These guidelines will be kept continually under review as part of our overall monitoring of expenditure in this area. It may be necessary to tighten the guidelines if financial circumstances dictate this is required.

**Director HR & OD
December 2010**