IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON NON-EMPLOYEE EXPENSE CLAIMS

Bank Details - Background

As previously notified there is now a requirement for non-staff to provide bank details each time they claim expenses or non-Siebel paid fees are payable.

The reason for this is twofold.

1. In order for UK SBS Ltd to effectively manage the database of suppliers all claimants are now recognised within Oracle as 'one time vendors'. This means that claimants are not linked to a supplier record and therefore not linked to the associated bank details.

2. There is an option for Research Councils to hold a database of bank records which would enable the appropriate details to be added to submitted claims. However, in order to comply with Data Protection regulations there are a number of very strict guidelines that need to be followed. The position of the Records Management teams across the Research Councils is that whilst this option is not ruled out for the future it is not one that is being pursued at this moment in time.

UK SBS Ltd are reviewing their process for paying non-employee expense claims and new advice will be issued to staff should any of the above change.

Guidance for Staff

- **Confidential Data**

  The new arrangement means that claimants will be submitting confidential information which means that there is a responsibility placed on all of us to ensure that this information is kept secure and in line with data protection guidelines.

  Whilst Research Council staff are aware of their Data Protection responsibilities through the annual Data Protection and Information Assurance training, Polaris House does have a number of visitors and contractors on site so it is your responsibility to ensure that claims are kept secure before they are submitted to the PSU. When you are processing the claims and carrying out the associated checks (see below) please be aware of the confidential nature of the data being handled, claims should therefore not be left unattended on desks or in trays and should always be kept secure overnight.

  When sending claim forms to PSU your options are:

  - Bring them to the Risk & Assurance team in PSU by hand and leave them with a member of the team. If none of the team are available the claims should not be left on their desks but left in the post-box fixed to the column adjacent to the team.

  - Claim forms can be sent through the internal mail in a sealed envelope marked 'Official-Sensitive'.

  Provided that staff comply with the above they are covered in respect of their own personal responsibilities under the Data Protection Act. The post room and UK SBS will have their own policies and procedures in respect of Data Protection and the handling of confidential data.

Any deliberate miss-use of data will be subject to existing disciplinary arrangements.

PSU are very aware of their own responsibilities and have adopted the policy which can be found at **Annex 1**.

- **Checking**

  Whilst PSU will be undertaking some sample checks on claims it is your responsibility to make the following checks before submitting to PSU:

  - The form has been signed by the claimant;
  - Full bank details have been provided.
  - Original receipts have been provided.
  - The claim adds up and reconciles to the submitted receipts.
  - Complies with your Council's travel policy for costs incurred up to 31/12/13.
  - Complies with the harmonised travel policy for costs incurred 01/01/14.
  - Account codes have been entered in the relevant area.
  - Claims have been authorised.

  PSU will e-mail you to inform you of incomplete claims and you will be given the option of either coming down to the PSU and correcting the claim or asking for the claim to be returned to you.

- **Claim Forms**

  The claim form has now been harmonised for use within AHRC, EPSRC and ESRC. You will note that the form now contains wording covering Personal Details which is required under the Data Protection Act 1998. This form will be made available on eSpace, ESRC/AHRC Share Point and should now replace any copies of the old version held on local networks. This form should be used from immediate effect but any 'in-flight' claims submitted on the old form should be accepted and processed.

- **Non-Siebel Fees (ESRC and EPSRC only)**

  The new form has been designed to allow the payment of fees to be paid alongside the T&S being claimed, but should only be used for those fees which are not paid through Siebel. The person within the Council who is processing the claim should indicate in the 'For Councils use only' section of the form the number of half days to be paid and the appropriate amount. The fees will then be paid into the same bank account as the T&S element of the claim.

If you have any questions in respect of any of the above please e-mail:

Neil.cooper@esrc.ac.uk

Annex 1

Processing Non-Employee Expenses claims within PSU

This document sets out PSU's compliance with the 8 principles in relation to the retention of non-employee expense claim forms.

Data must be:

1. ***Fairly and lawfully processed***
   There is a valid business reason to keep the data. PSU receives original claims and receipts in order to upload expenses to the More4Apps application.

2. ***Processed for limited purposes***
   The purpose of receiving the claims is to process expense claims, and provide evidence for auditors' purposes.

3. ***Adequate, relevant and not excessive***
   Data held within an expense claim such as name, bank details, address and signature is classified as personal data, and keeping this amount of data is not considered 'excessive'.

4. ***Accurate***
   Non-employees fill out the forms themselves, and are therefore responsible for it being accurate at the time of completion.

5. ***Not kept for longer than necessary***
   Retention periods for expense claims are:

   ***Original** records:*

   - *current financial year +1 year prior (stored in PSU)*
   - *6 years prior claim forms (stored in offsite archive facility)*

6. ***Processed in accordance with individuals' rights***
   Claims are completed by the claimants so they are responsible for providing the correct data. Claimants are aware of the form requirements, understand that PSU collect and hold the information, and accept that the information retention isn't going to cause them 'distress'.

7. ***Kept secure***
   All staff authorised to handle this data must be up to date with their Annual Information Assurance training. Claims should not be left unattended on desks or trays and should always be kept secure overnight. They are treated as confidential files.

8. ***Not transferred to non-European Economic Area countries without adequate protection***
   Current & Prior Financial Year expenses claims will not leave Polaris House. Archived claims will be protectively marked and sent to UK based archive facility.