

Selwyn College Cambridge

Selwyn College Travel Policy

The College seeks to follow the University's lead in promoting sustainable travel policies. It therefore has drafted for review the following transport policy to inform decisions regarding all College funding for travel. The aim is to reduce the amount of non-sustainable travel undertaken for the College and/or financially supported by the College.

National and international business travel can play a part in achieving academic, research and education objectives of the College. However, it is important to note that in 2018/19, carbon emissions from the University's business travel were estimated to be at least 16,000 tonnes CO₂e, which is roughly equivalent to emissions from gas used for space and water heating across the University estate ([Environmental Sustainability report 2019](#)). Around 95% of this came from air travel (2018/19 data).

This policy covers travel that includes all domestic and international travel beyond Cambridge for research, education and business purposes related to the College or supported by the College, including through travel grants. It does not include travel between different parts of the University estate or commuting to/from home. It does not include student travel to/from the University at the start/end of term, but students are expected to take the policy into account and are strongly encouraged to follow the travel guidelines when making travel decisions.

Statement of Expectations

Fellows, staff and students are strongly encouraged to adopt climate conscious travel choices when undertaking College related travel.

The term "climate conscious travel" was first developed by the University of Edinburgh. It is achieved when the travel choices that staff and students make as part of their day-to-day work and study are informed by the environmental impact that they have, and preference is given towards virtual collaboration and lower carbon travel modes. With climate conscious travel in effect, the environmental cost of travel is prioritised over the financial cost and individual convenience, but not over individual safety considerations.

Essential versus non-essential travel

Fellows, staff and students should consider what travel is essential, and by whom, for supporting their and the College's academic, research, business and educational objectives.

The College recognises that virtual collaboration methods are not always an effective alternative to in-person interactions, and therefore some travel is essential for supporting academic, research, business and educational objectives.

The College also recognises that staff and students are best placed to form and evaluate their rationale for their travel emissions, but they should refer to the guidance listed below to determine whether a specific journey is essential for progressing their research, study or business objectives, and to help them to identify essential travellers. They should also discuss in advance of booking travel with those who approve travel within a College department¹, approve claims or

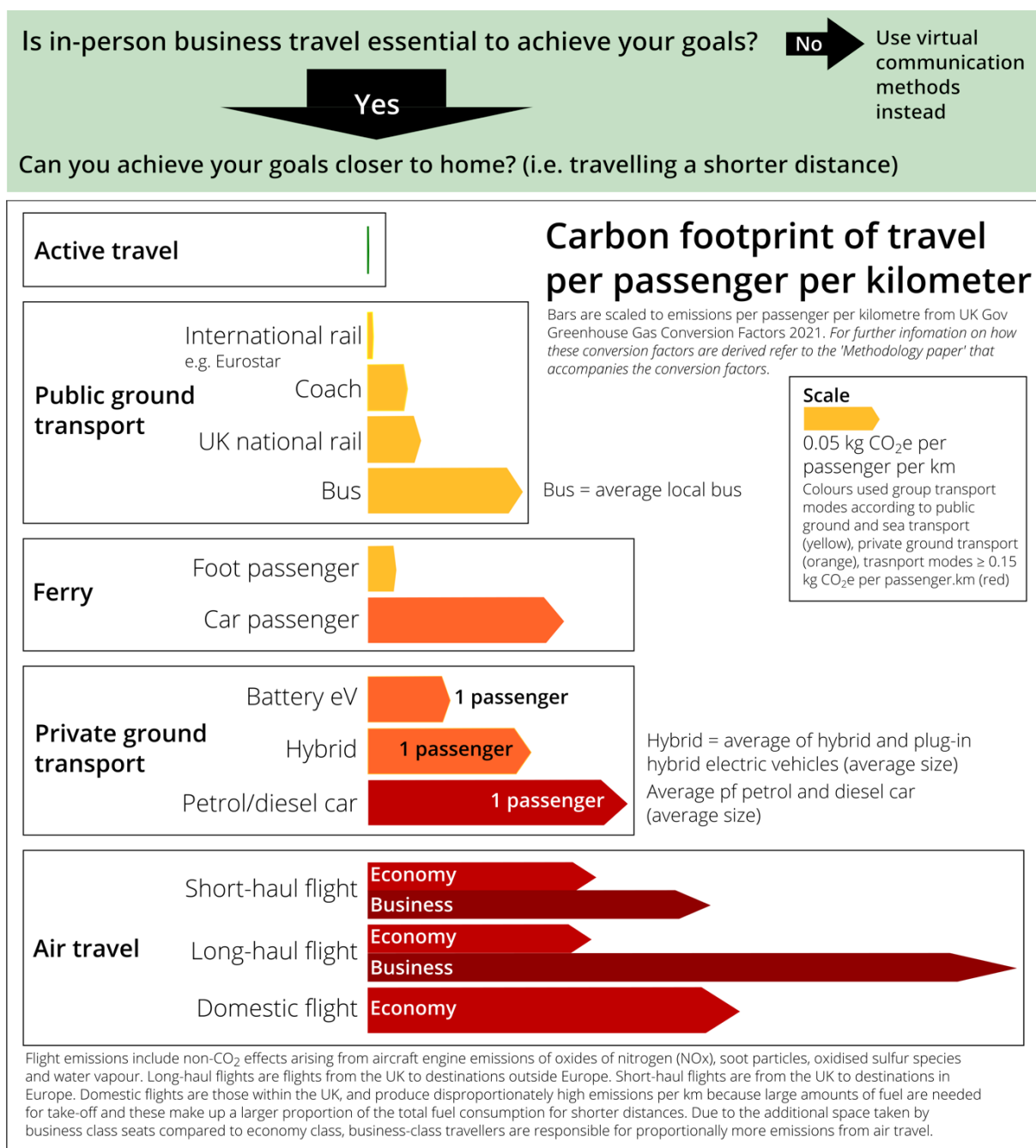
¹ For example, but not restricted to admissions, choir, development activities where the College books and pays for travel directly rather than individuals seeking reimbursement.

consider applications for travel funds whether their activity meets the guidance contained in this document. As part of this process the traveller must submit an estimate of the carbon footprint of their proposed trip(s). A useful calculator, recommended by the University of Cambridge Estates Sustainability team in March 2023, is found at <https://www.atmosfair.de/en/offset/flight/>

Generally, staff and students should avoid making regular, short-stay trips (especially on a regular basis), in particular journeys made by plane. Wherever possible², individuals should combine their needs to travel into fewer, longer-stay trips.

Preferred modes of travel

When it is essential to travel, staff and students should prioritise available modes of travel that have the lowest carbon impact. The carbon efficiency of different modes of travel is shown in the travel hierarchy pictured. These preferences will inform decisions on travel grants effective from



² The College recognises that combining trips may be difficult or impossible for those with caring responsibilities or certain disabilities or health conditions; these considerations, as well as any safety implications, should take priority where necessary.

the academic year 2023/24.

In addition to this, staff and students are strongly encouraged to follow the principles below:

- a. For local and national travel, where available, public transport should be chosen over car use.

For national travel, train and/or other public transport should be chosen over air travel.

- b. Train travel (including Eurostar and other international rail) should be chosen over air travel for travel to all European destinations that can be reached by rail within 12 hours from Cambridge.

There may be occasions when it is not possible to follow the above principles. Appropriate criteria for deviation from the travel hierarchy include:

- Safety considerations (e.g. in some countries/regions public transport may not be sufficiently safe).
- Caring responsibilities, where a longer time away would mean you are unable to make the trip.
- When following the sustainable business travel guidelines would be detrimental due to disability or health conditions.
- When contractual obligations from external partners (e.g. funding bodies) make following the travel expectations impossible.

There is a general presumption against Premium Economy and Business Class bookings, which are responsible for greater emissions than Economy bookings due to the allocation of more space on the plane. A case should be made to the Bursar or Master for exceptions to be made to this principle where, as an example, the flight is of more than eight hours and the traveller will be conducting College business within 24 hours of arrival.

Expenses

Staff and students may claim additional subsistence expenses (accommodation, food and drink) when travelling by a less carbon-intensive mode necessitates more travel time.

If a member of staff/student needs to incur additional expenses to allow them to work whilst travelling by a less carbon-intensive mode (e.g. roaming charges, internet connection charges), then they may claim these as expenses, provided it can reasonably be shown that these additional expenses were incurred as a consequence of utilising a less carbon-intensive mode of travel.

Air Travel

Economy class should be used. If the lowest available fare is not used, justification must be made to the Master or Bursar for another class to be used. Subject to the approval of the Master or Bursar, a Fellow or member of staff may travel premium economy or business cabin class if the flight is more than 8 hours. The Master and Bursar will seek such approval from the Vice Master.

Rail Travel

Rail travel is normally the most cost-effective option for travel to London. For longer journeys within the UK, compare time and cost factors (including subsistence rates) against car and air travel options. Second class should be used, although an individual may personally fund an upgrade of ticket. The cheapest appropriate tickets should be purchased, preferably booked in advance. Where possible, business should be arranged so that rail travel can take place in off peak periods.

Private Vehicle Travel

Private vehicles should only be used where it is impractical to use other methods of transport. Even

where use of a car is more cost-effective, the principles of this policy are that some extra costs may be incurred rather than travelling this way for purely financial reasons. The college will reimburse 55p per mile for the first 10,000 miles then 25p per mile thereafter. If however the individual chooses to travel by car when a more cost-effective method is available, the mileage claim is restricted to the cost that would have been incurred by using the most cost-effective option. A hire car may be used when there is no reasonable alternative, subject to approval by the Master or the Bursar. Claims may not be made for the cost of ordinary travel between home and college.

All claims for reimbursement should be submitted on the standard form (available on the intranet). No one shall authorise reimbursement of his or her own expenses. Claims should, whenever possible, be approved by an employee senior to the claimant. Claims for reimbursement of personal expenses by Fellows or heads of department must be approved by the Bursar.