

Direct email to purchasing card holders from DoF

Dear colleagues,

I would be grateful if you could take 10 minutes to read this annual update for all University of Sussex purchasing card holders. The paragraphs are marked as 'Essential Reading' and 'Guidance' to help you navigate the information.

The email contains reminders on:

- the annual purchasing card declaration
- when a purchasing card should and shouldn't be used
- the change in requirements to attach receipts
- using Amazon Business to get value for money
- how we can help with card security.

Essential Reading: Purchasing card annual declaration – Action Required

All card holders are required to renew their purchasing card declaration annually. This declaration confirms that they understand their purchasing card obligations and will comply with the relevant rules.

Please read the attached and reply to this email with 'I accept the declaration' to confirm that you accept the obligations.

Essential Reading: Purchasing card security

To ensure the security of your University purchasing card and to protect the University against fraud:

- Purchasing cards must only be used by the named card holder.
- Cards no longer required must be destroyed and the [Finance Service Desk](#) informed.
- If you are not currently using your card, but you will be in the future, notify the [Finance Service Desk](#) who can temporarily set the card limit to zero and reactivate when required.

Essential Reading: When to use your card to get value for money

In light of the continuing financial challenges facing the University from COVID-19, all staff have a responsibility to ensure any spending is mandatory or essential to the operational continuity of the University and that they have the budget holder's permission to purchase.

University purchasing cards help us to ensure value for money in many situations and should be used when:

- the purchase is from a one-off from a supplier not already set up on the finance system
- the supplier only accepts card payments
- the purchase is from the University's managed travel provider to secure the price on offer
- you cannot access the University's finance system at the point when the purchase is needed.

If you are spending on any of the below you **should not** use your purchasing card:

- Fuel for personal vehicles (not hire vehicles) – the out of pocket expenses process should be used
- Purchasing from a contracted or approved supplier – the purchase order process should be used
- Any purchase relating to individual workers, such as engaging a Personal Services Company, Agency, individual consultants etc. – the purchase order process should be used.

Essential Reading: Unauthorised expenditure

It is **never** acceptable to use University funds to pay for:

- Day-to-day living expenses (e.g. toiletries, clothing, newspapers and snacks)
- Traffic fines
- Usual travel (between home and usual place of work)
- Gratuities (except when the culture is such that paying a gratuity is seen as an integral part of the cost of receiving a service)
- Formal attire (dinner jacket or ball gown costs to attend formal functions)
- Care costs (childcare costs, kennel/cattery costs or vets' fees and similar expenditure)
- Alcohol - except in these specified instances:
 - visitor hospitality, staff leaving events and student welcome/leaving events within the financial limits set for these activities
 - other University events with a clear business purpose that are open to all staff if authorised in advance by the Director of Finance
 - where alcohol is served at a conference or event with a clear business purpose and is included within the attendance fee
 - for the above examples only when expressly permitted by the funder if the purchase is made from research income.
- Personal gifts (such as flowers and chocolates)
- Staff parties (except leaving parties and University staff parties open to ALL staff)
- Subscriptions to professional bodies and academic/learned societies - except in these specified instances:
 - an individual's membership is an expressly stated contractual condition of a course accreditation, or a research or other funding award the University is dependent upon
 - membership is corporate, or where the individual is a member because they represent the University in their specific role.

Essential Reading: Unauthorised usage

Purchasing cards must only be used by the named card holder. Card holders are responsible for all purchases made using their card. If purchases are made which are not compliant with the [Purchasing Policy](#), the University may take steps to recover these costs at the discretion of the Director of Finance.

Essential Reading: Attaching receipts as proof of purchase

Receipts, or an alternative proof of purchase, must be attached to the purchasing card coding task within the finance system to enable prompt review and authorisation from the budget holder. Proof of purchase is needed for HMRC and research funders and attaching this electronically removes the need to keep paper receipts.

If you can't access these currently, or there is no proof available, the card holder and the authoriser must record why this is and attach this record electronically in the finance system. If you wish to attach proof of purchase later the [Finance Service Desk](#) can help you with this.

Attaching proof of purchase line by line in the finance system is clearer and easier for authorisers and auditors and should help reduce queries regarding your spend. Guidance on how to do this, as well as how to code purchasing card tasks is on our [website](#). Alternatively, please contact the [Finance Service Desk](#).

Guidance: Using Amazon Business to get value for money

In July we launched Amazon Business for purchase card holders, making it easier and quicker to buy certain items within current spend guidelines. Amazon Business is a useful marketplace to purchase a diverse range of low value, miscellaneous items through a single University Amazon Prime membership, as opposed to multiple areas paying for their own Prime memberships/delivery. Benefits include:

- Free next day delivery on Prime items
- Business-only savings and quantity discounts
- Improved business purchasing experience
- Dedicated customer support to streamline the return process on orders
- Smile Charities – Amazon will donate on eligible purchases

The suppliers you use will automatically meet University compliance and value for money requirements, and we have access to a powerful reporting tool which enables us to understand trends and identify areas of opportunity for strategic Procurement to make further value for money improvements.

To find out more please visit our [Amazon Business web page](#) or contact the [Finance Service Desk](#).

Guidance: The Barclaycard Portal

Card holders are set up by default to receive statements electronically on the finance system, however the [Barclaycard Portal](#) also allows you to view your statements online.

If you have any questions regarding purchasing cards, please see our [training guide](#) or contact the [Finance Service Desk](#).

University of Sussex Purchase Card Holder Annual Declaration

***DECLARATION** – By accepting responsibility for a University purchasing card you confirm that you are familiar with, and will abide by, the Purchasing Policy and Purchasing Card Guide that can be found on the Finance web pages. This includes completing tasks in accordance with deadlines.

I understand that all card usage must be in accordance with the University Financial Regulations, policy and procedures. Any card purchases which do not meet the appropriate requirements for the use of University funds will be considered unauthorised and action may be taken to recover the cost from me personally at the discretion of the Director of Finance.

Failure to abide by the Purchasing Policy or the processes outlined in the

Purchasing Card Guide **may result in cards being withdrawn from use.**