



Credit Card Policy

Finance Office

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All policies and policy related documents and forms are subject to amendment. Please refer to the UCD Governance Document Library website for the official, most recent version.

1. Introduction

The use of a University credit card can be a secure and convenient method to process certain transactions. However, the possession of a University credit card also creates a duty of care on the part of the cardholder to the University to ensure that the card is always used appropriately and responsibly. The policy of the University has always been to keep the number of credit cards in issue to a minimum and ensure they are only issued where there is a clear justification for their use. Almost all University expenditure is routed through the main payment and expense systems and this should continue to be the case. Credit cards represent an additional payment option for expenditure which cannot be processed through these systems.

2. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that clear guidelines and instructions are in place in relation to the issue and use of credit cards held on the central UCD credit card account and those of UCD subsidiaries. The purpose of the policy is as follows;

- To ensure that cards are only issued in response to specific business needs.
- To ensure there is a transparent approval process in relation to the issuing of UCD business credit cards.
- To confirm the process of reporting, coding and approving credit card transactions to be followed by cardholders and authorisers.
- To detail the responsibilities of card holders and those approving credit card expenditure.
- To detail the consequences of any misuse of a University credit card.

3. Card application process/ Requests for credit cards

All requests for UCD credit cards should be submitted via email to the Bursar or Director of Financial Management by the line manager of the faculty/staff member requesting a UCD business credit card. No credit cards can be issued or set-up without the approval of the Finance Office.

The application should include the following information.

- The business case for a credit card.
- Confirmation that the line manager will approve, on a monthly basis, all expenditure charged to the credit card. In the event of non-approval of a particular transaction, that they will, in the first instance, request that the expenditure in question be refunded to the University by the card-holder.
- The credit limit required on the card and the justification for the limit.
- The card type requested and the justification.
- The cost centre to which transactions on the card will be charged.
- Confirmation that the credit card policy will be followed at all times.

4. Approval

Approval for the issue of a credit card rests with the Bursar. Approval will only be given in cases where there is a clear business need for a university credit card.

5. Credit card Account

All credit cards will be issued on the central UCD credit card accounts currently held with AIB. Balances on the card are cleared by direct debit each month.

6. Security and Responsibility of card holders

Cardholders must be conscious of the need to manage their card in a financially responsible manner and in accordance with University policies.

- Cards should always be kept in a secure location and the card number and security numbers should never be disclosed to any third parties.
- Cards should not be lent to other faculty/staff members.
- The cards must never be used to incur expenditure which could bring the University into disrepute.
- Lost or stolen cards should immediately be reported to the credit card company and the Finance Office advised.
- Where the cardholder becomes aware that a transaction which they have not authorised appears on their credit card account, they should immediately advise the credit card company and Finance Office.
- The cardholder is responsible for the transactions on any card issued to them.
- In cases where a cardholder is leaving UCD or retiring or moving to a new role, the card authoriser and Finance Office should be informed. The card will then be cancelled.

7. Responsibility of Card Authorisers

When presented with a summary credit card template to approve, the approver should, before signing, ensure they are satisfied that the expenditure represents valid university business expenditure. By signing the template, they are confirming that they approve of the expenditure charged by the cardholder to their UCD business credit card.

If the authoriser is not prepared to authorise a particular credit card template presented for authorisation, they should in the first instance query any transactions which give rise to their concerns.

Authorisers should not sign the monthly template unless they are satisfied that all transactions on the card are valid business expenses.

8. Authorisation of credit card transactions

Responsibility for the authorisation of monthly credit returns will normally follow the following template.

Cardholder	Authoriser
President	Chair of Governing Authority
Registrar & Principals	President
Heads of Schools	Principals
Heads of Units	Reporting VP
Faculty/staff members	Heads of Schools/Units
Finance Managers	Bursar/Line Manager

The Finance Office will maintain a schedule of all card holders and authorisers.

9. Credit limits

The authorised limit on UCD credit cards will generally be in the range €3,000–€10,000 depending on the business usage of the cards. Limits should be kept as low as possible but can be increased temporarily to deal with specific events or transactions.

10. Card types

The current card provider provides three types of cards at the following annual cost.

- Classic €19.05
- Premier €100
- Executive €200

The standard card issued should be the Classic card. Requests for the more expensive cards, which provide some benefits for those travelling overseas on a regular basis, should be made as part of the application process. Any request for the more expensive cards should set out a clear justification for the card selected.

11. Procedures in relation to the use of university credit cards.

- All expenditure charged to the card should relate to UCD business. No personal expenditure should be charged to the UCD credit card.
- All expenditure on UCD business cards should be compliant with UCD's Hospitality and Travel Policies.

- Flights should normally be booked through Club Travel rather than by card.
- Cash should never be withdrawn using the card.
- The card should not be used to purchase computers, equipment, or other materials which would normally be purchased through the University's purchasing system. An exception can be made for low-value internet purchases.
- When the card is used to pay for restaurant or other entertainment expenses, the event or purpose of the entertainment and names of those attending should be detailed. Cardholders should ensure that any accommodation and entertainment expenses are necessary and represent value-for-money for the University.
- Certain cards can be issued on condition that they are not used for entertainment and travel or may be issued conditional on other restrictions which will be confirmed when issuing the cards.
- In the event of limited or non-use of a credit card over a period of time, the Finance Office, on recommendation of the Bursar, will cancel the card.

12. Misuse of University credit cards

Misuse of the card will lead to the cancellation of the card. The decision to cancel any credit card will be at the absolute discretion of the Bursar. Misuse of the card will be considered to include the following:

- Charging of personal expenditure to the card. (In the event of the accidental charging of any personal expenditure to their UCD card, cardholders should immediately refund the University in respect of any such expenditure.)
- Charging expenditure to the card which should go through Eprocurement.
- Withdrawing cash on the card.
- Charging entertainment expenses or other expenditure which could bring the University into disrepute.
- Failing to submit monthly transaction reports on a timely basis.

13. Sanctions for misuse of University credit cards

- Any employee found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action as per Statute 28, the University Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

14. Vouching and Coding procedures

- The Finance Office will forward a copy of the statement each month to the cardholder.
- A standard excel template (Appendix1) reporting all transactions during the month should be prepared by the cardholder. The total cost of the expenses listed on the template should agree with the total monthly charge on the credit card. Itemised invoices and receipts should always be attached to this memo. It is not sufficient to use the charge detailed on the statement as the back-up to the purchase.
- The template allows each individual transaction to be coded to the correct charge and analysis codes but it is not a journal instruction. The monthly card direct debit payment will be charged to the cost centre confirmed on issuing the card under analysis code 83408 (Visa account). A monthly journal instruction should be sent

each month to account.queries@ucd.ie clearing out charges to this code and allocating them to the most relevant account codes and where necessary switching the expense to cost centres other than the one receiving the direct debit charge. This will ensure all credit card expenditure is correctly analysed and charged rather than being grouped under one heading.

- Card holders should write a brief explanation of the expense incurred beside every item listed on the credit card statement. This is to ensure that in the event of a Freedom of Information request, the statements will document the purpose and background to each expense.
- This narrative should be signed by the cardholder confirming all expenses incurred relate to University business
- The template should then be authorised by the appropriate signatory once they are satisfied the expenditure can be approved.
- The completed template and attachments should be returned to creditcardexpenses@ucd.ie
- All credit card expenditure is subject to internal and external audit review by UCD's Internal Audit office, Revenue, the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General and the university's statutory auditors.

15. Time limit for the return of monthly credit card transaction templates

- The monthly credit card template should be returned to the Finance Office within 30 days of the receipt of the monthly statement.
- In the event of consistently late or non-submission of monthly returns, the card, subject to the confirmation of the Bursar, will be cancelled.

16. Cards held by Finance Managers

Where there is a business need, credit cards can be issued to College Finance Managers for general use across a College. This ensures a central card is available for College faculty and staff to pay for transactions which can only be processed by card. Issuing cards to Finance Managers reduces the number of cards in issue, provides an accessible card service to a wide area and is an effective way of controlling card numbers and ensuring the accurate coding of card transactions.

17. Credit cards held by employees of UCD subsidiaries.

This policy will also apply to cards issued to employees of UCD subsidiaries.

18. Freedom of information

Transactions on UCD credit cards can be disclosed under Freedom of Information legislation. Cardholders should be aware that any transactions can be subject to public scrutiny. Transactions on UCD credit cards are examined in detail by the audit team from the Comptroller and Auditor General.

19. Policy History

This Policy was approved by the UMT on 1 Feb 2022.

UNIVERSITY MONTHLY CREDIT CARD EXPENSE ANALYSING SHEET

Statement Date:	<i>Office use only</i>
Card Owner:	Date Received :
Cost Centre:	Date of Spend :
	Statement Date:

**** Note: Any items of hospitality must be accompanied with List of attendees and their role**

Transaction Date	Line Transaction Detail	Amount in £	Receipt?	Additional Information on Transaction	Cost Centre	ANALYSING Code
1	05/05/2021					
2	05/05/2021					
3	07/05/2021					
4	11/05/2021					
5	12/05/2021					
6	17/05/2021					
7	24/05/2021					
8	24/05/2021					
9	25/05/2021					
10	25/05/2021					
11	27/05/2021					
12	27/05/2021					
13	31/05/2021					
14	31/05/2021					
15	31/05/2021					
16	31/05/2021					
17	02/06/2021					
18	02/06/2021					
19	02/06/2021					
20	03/06/2021					
21	03/06/2021					
22	03/06/2021					
Total Transactions in Month						

Date	
Signed by Credit Card Owner	
Signed by Authorising Signatory	