

Useful links & Contacts

- The School's relocation policy can be found at: <https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/Policies-and-procedures/Assets/Documents/relPolNewSta.pdf>

Please note that the School's relocation policy is the main document for relocation claims. These FAQs are intended to complement the main document.

- To book a free and confidential relocation service consultation, available to all LSE faculty members moving to London, please contact Samantha Da Costa, Faculty Accommodation and Relocation Manager (s.e.da-costa@lse.ac.uk)
- To claim or check your eligibility for a relocation allowance, please contact the Finance Division at finance.division.frc@lse.ac.uk

What is a relocation allowance for?

Relocation allowances are awarded on a discretionary basis, to assist new starters with covering the costs of relocation to London, in order to commence their employment at LSE.

How do I know if I am eligible for a relocation allowance?

Your employment contract will say if you are eligible for a relocation allowance. Typically, staff must meet the following criteria:

- Hold an academic faculty position, i.e. associate professor, assistant professor, full professor or a permanent appointment to undertake research, teaching and civic duties **OR** hold a senior administrative, teaching and research post (salary bands 9 and 10)
- Hold a full-time position, or part-time position of at least 0.50 full-time equivalent hours.
- Be relocating your place of work **and** your main residence* from outside of London to London. This means relocating from more than 1 hour travel time to less than 1 hour travel time on public transport to London, with a reduction in travel time of more than 30 minutes (as per www.tfl.gov.uk or nearest equivalent available measure of travel time by public transport). London is defined as locations within the M25 ring road.

** For the purposes of relocation assistance, your existing **main residence** refers to the home in which you lived immediately prior to accepting your appointment with the University, and which was your permanent and habitual place of residence.*

How much is my relocation allowance?

Your relocation allowance will be based on 10% of your starting salary if you are relocating from Europe or 20% if you are relocating from elsewhere (capped at £25,000).

What can I claim for?

For detailed guidance on what you can claim for, please refer to section 4 of the School's relocation policy.

Some examples of eligible expenses that can be claimed are –

Tax-free expenses ('non-qualifying')

You will receive full reimbursement for these expenses and will not have to pay any income tax on these. Refer to **Do I have to pay tax on my relocation claims?** FAQ for further details.

Some examples are:

- Temporary accommodation
- The cost of packing, transporting, delivering and insuring your household contents
- Storage of your household contents for up to 6 months
- Professional fees associated with the sale of your previous home (outside of London) or purchase of a new home (inside London). Professional fees include legal fees, estate agent fees, surveyor fees, conveyancing fees and stamp duty.
- Professional fees associated with the initial letting of a property on an assured shorthold tenancy, such as letting agency fees, where you are a named tenant and the property will be used as your main residence in London. Security deposits and other refundable deposits related to rental accommodation may not be claimed under this Policy
- Visa application fees for your Spouse and Dependants (refer to **Visa** FAQ for more detail)
- The services of a relocation company for the removal and related insurance of household contents
- Single travel fares by the most economical means in standard class for you and your dependants (excluding pets) to permanently move from your existing main residence to London
- Travel costs (flight and accommodation) related to preliminary visits to London

Taxable expenses ('qualifying')

You will initially receive full reimbursement for these expenses but will have to pay income tax on these at the end of the tax year. Refer to **Do I have to pay tax on my relocation claims?** FAQ for further details.

Some examples are:

- Office Moves – using relocation companies or other means to transport the contents of your office (whereas relocating your household contents is tax-free)
- Orientation – specialist consultation and tour to provide services and information on residential suitability, schooling, housing, transportation, healthcare and other amenities
- School search – specialist consultation and appointments for the UK education system, suitable schools, and the application process
- Home search – specialist consultation, shortlisting and tour of suitable residential properties. Assistance with legal and practical aspects of moving into a new property
- Immigration Health Surcharge – as part of visa applications

What documents do I need to be able to make a relocation claim?

- You will need to complete, sign and date the relocation form which the Finance Division (finance.division.frc@lse.ac.uk) will send you
- You will also need to provide sufficient documentation (e.g. invoice, email confirmation, receipt, evidence of exchange rates etc.) as evidence for the claims you are making.

Do I have to pay upfront and get reimbursed later?

In most cases, you will have to pay upfront yourself and can then claim reimbursement once you have started employment at LSE.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to reimburse you up to 50% of your relocation expenses prior to you starting employment at LSE, upon submission of sufficient evidence of the costs incurred. However, this would need to be approved by the Chief Financial Officer.

We would recommend waiting to request reimbursement until you have started employment at LSE, as you will be able to claim in full (not just 50%) and you won't need to provide any additional documentation confirming your bank details, as we will already have them on our system to be able to pay your monthly salary.

When incurring costs yourself, please ensure you keep sufficient documentation (e.g. invoice, email confirmation, receipt etc.) so that you can provide these as evidence for the claims you are making.

There are 2 instances when the School will pay directly so you will not need to physically pay yourself. The School will arrange payment and deduct the costs from your overall relocation allowance. These are:

- Using LSE's temporary accommodation
- Using LSE's preferred relocation company (Elite Moving Systems)

Do I have to pay tax on my relocation claims?

Generally, you do not have to pay tax on your relocation claims, unless one of the following scenarios applies to you:

- Your relocation allowance is over £8,000. You will be taxed only on the amount above £8,000 (i.e. the first £8,000 is tax-free)
- Your relocation claim contains qualifying expenses. These will be taxed. Refer to **What can I claim for?** FAQ for further detail

Please note these rules are enforced by HMRC (the UK's tax authorities), they are not LSE's own rules.

At the end of the tax year (31st March) that your relocation claim has been made in, LSE's Tax Manager will contact you to provide a P11D form (which states the amounts received as a taxable benefit) and will explain how the income tax and national insurance contributions can be paid to HMRC.

What is the timescale for making my relocation claim?

HMRC (UK tax authorities) rules

Relocation expenses must be incurred and reimbursed before the end of the tax year (31st March) following the one in which your employment with LSE starts (current tax year +1). For example, if you commence employment with LSE on 1st September 2025, your relocation claim and all associated costs must be completed by 31st March 2027.

Seeking reimbursement – LSE rules

All expense claims made by LSE employees must be made within 6 months of incurring the expense, per LSE's Financial Regulations. This applies to relocation claims too.

You can make multiple relocation claims, it doesn't have to be done all in one go.

How does temporary accommodation work?

HMRC allow reimbursement for Temporary Accommodation **only where the employee intends to move to permanent accommodation**. Therefore we will require proof that you have indeed moved out after an appropriate period of time and have a new permanent address. We cannot pay for any rent or mortgage for your permanent accommodation.

There is no specific guidance from HMRC (the UK tax authorities) about how long 'temporary' is, but we consider around 6 months to be reasonable. Please note that you will be able to claim only up to

the value of your total relocation allowance, so if your temporary accommodation costs exceed this amount then we wouldn't be able to reimburse you in full. Alternatively, if your temporary accommodation does not exceed your relocation allowance, you can claim reimbursement for other relocation costs.

If you need assistance finding temporary accommodation, you may be interested in the School's own temporary staff accommodation subject to availability : <https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/faculty-accommodation> - this can be organised through Samantha DaCosta (S.E.Da-Costa@lse.ac.uk). We also recommend <https://www.sabbaticalhomes.com/>.

Can I use Airbnb as temporary accommodation?

LSE's Financial Regulations say the following about Airbnb:

Airbnb

- 75 The School does not encourage the use of Airbnb or other such operations as it cannot guarantee meeting its Duty of Care requirements to ensure the Traveller's safety in this type of accommodation.
- 76 Consideration should be given, and a risk assessment prepared if necessary, to whether the party offering the accommodation holds relevant insurances and the accommodation has been assessed for fire safety, building or wiring codes and has appropriate fire alarms, exits etc. Airbnb are not liable in the event of death or personal injury.

This means we do not encourage the use of Airbnb, and would instead recommend you book temporary accommodation through LSE's own accommodation subject to availability (<https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/services/faculty-accommodation>, and which can be organised through Samantha DaCosta - S.E.Da-Costa@lse.ac.uk) or through Sabbatical Homes (<https://www.sabbaticalhomes.com/>). However if you do end up booking through Airbnb, we would still be able to reimburse you as long as you have a valid receipt confirming the cost.

Visas

Your own visa sponsorship will be dealt with separately by the HR Visas team and they will be able to advise on covering the costs for your visa if you contact them at HR.Visas@lse.ac.uk . The relocation allowance is to cover other items associated with the move, so your own visa costs do not need to come out of this.

However, you can claim for the visa costs of your dependants out of your relocation allowance.

Relocation companies

If you plan to use the services of a relocation company, you will need to do one of the following:

- Obtain 3 quotes and provide these to me. We would expect you to choose the removal company that offers the lowest quote, unless you have a compelling reason not to – in which case, please let me know and I will need to approve the use of a more expensive company
- Use the School's preferred relocation company, Elite Moving Systems (EMS). You will not need to get other quotes if you use EMS. Samantha Da-Costa (S.E.Da-Costa@lse.ac.uk) will organise an introduction with EMS

Please note that if you use EMS, we will be able to pay them directly so you will not need to physically pay yourself. If you use another company, you will need to pay upfront yourself, and subsequently claim reimbursement.

General Queries

If you still have queries, please contact:

- Samantha Da Costa (s.e.da-costa@lse.ac.uk): accommodation, relocation companies, general
- the Finance Division (finance.division.frc@lse.ac.uk): eligible costs, making a claim, seeking reimbursement, general