



What can you claim for?

Generally speaking your expenses claim should include only actual costs you have incurred, and round sum "allowances" are not permitted. There are some exceptions to this and these are explained below. The expenses claim has to be prepared in relation to your practice's accounting year end, not for the tax year (unless your practice year end is 31 March or 5 April). The following notes about the most common types of expenditure will help you to complete the questionnaire.

Telephone costs

It can be difficult to judge how much you use your home phone for business purposes. If you have itemised bills and can show the costs of the business calls you have made, we can claim for the calls and a proportion of the line rental. If you have a line which is for business use only this would make your claim straightforward. In other circumstances we would expect the claim to be a nominal amount. Likewise, business use of your broadband and general computer use can be difficult to assess and we would recommend that you take a realistic approach to this.

A mobile phone is considered essential for a GP and as long as the private use is insignificant, then the whole cost can be allowed.

Locum cover

If you pay for locum cover when you are on holiday or maternity leave you can claim the cost as an expense unless it has been included and claimed in the practice accounts.

If you pay insurance premiums which are specifically for locum cover when you are sick or otherwise absent you can claim the cost of those premiums. You should be aware that if you make a claim on the policy the benefits paid to you will be taxable income. You cannot claim the cost of permanent health insurance which is designed to give you an income rather than covering locum costs. It is therefore important that you check what sort of policy you have.

Subscriptions

The cost of your membership of professional bodies is tax deductible provided that your membership is wholly and exclusively for business. Only include subscriptions that you have paid personally - if they have been paid on your behalf by the Practice they will already be reflected in your share of profits.

Training and courses

You can claim for the cost of attending courses and seminars which build on your existing knowledge and skills. The circumstances under which you can claim the cost of obtaining new qualifications are very specific indeed and you should provide full details.

Equipment

You can make a claim for capital allowances which cover the depreciation of equipment that you buy for work. If there is any private use of the item, such as you may expect with computers or cameras, you will need to let us know the percentage of business use.

Working at home

If you spend a significant amount of time working at home, perhaps making notes, CPD training or online research and you have a room set-aside for that purpose, you can make a claim for the additional costs you incur. To make a detailed claim you will need to record the total costs of running the home; mortgage interest, council tax, insurance, alarm maintenance, heating and lighting, the water supply. You then need to tell us the number of rooms in your house, the number of hours you work there each week and whether the room is used exclusively as an office, or used by you and your family at other times. This will enable us to calculate a percentage of total costs to claim as a business expense.



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As an alternative, if you work at home at least 25 hours per month HMRC will allow you to use a simplified method, as follows:

No. of hours worked	Amount to be claimed
25-50 per month	£10 per month
51-100 per month	£18 per month
100+ per month	£26 per month



Motor expenses

There are two ways to claim your motor expenses. You can record your actual business mileage for the year and claim a rate of 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p per mile for any excess over 10,000 miles. OR If you record all your motor expenses including fuel costs and also record your total mileage and your business mileage for the year we can calculate a percentage of your actual motor costs and claim that amount.

The second method requires more record keeping but may well result in a higher claim. It may be easier to keep track of fuel costs if you use a separate credit-card just for filling-up. You have the chance to change your claiming method whenever you change your vehicle but you can't chop and change each year with the same car.

Please tell us if you change your car.

Business mileage includes patient visits, travel to clinics and update courses and travel between branch surgeries. You can't claim the mileage for getting from home to your usual surgery or from home to any regular workplace. Ideally you should maintain a mileage log for the whole year but if you haven't done that, a log for a typical period of at least four weeks should be enough for us to calculate a reasonable claim. You should be aware, however, that the better and more complete your records, the less vulnerable you are in the event of enquiry by HMRC.

If you require any further information please contact us:



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