# Sustainable Business Travel Plan

## Date published: July 2024

The following information can be requested in an alternative format if required via this e-mail address: green@cranfield.ac.uk.

## Travel on University Business
'Travel on University business' is defined as travel necessary for meeting the University's business needs which is paid for or reimbursed by the University and to meet the requirements of funders. This includes travel by staff, students or visitors for:
- attending meetings, conferences or to work elsewhere;
- field trips arranged by the University;
- research fieldwork;
- placements; and
- interviews.

This plan excludes the following travel:
- international students travelling to and from the University;
- home students' commute to the University;
- staff travelling between home and their normal place of work; and
- staff relocation flights.

Where travel is paid for by grant funding that stipulates additional travel requirements, these should be adhered to.

Whilst this plan does not include action to reduce emissions used by commuting, colleagues are encouraged to use active travel and public transport and to follow the university's car share guidance, set out in the Cranfield University campus Travel Plan linked her Sustainable travel and transport (cranfield.ac.uk).

## Considering Travel

### Choosing a Sustainable Option
Travel is responsible for a significant proportion of the University's carbon footprint.  To reach net zero by 2030 we will need to reduce our footprint from travel. We will still travel – but we will travel less, make more use of digital technologies to connect, and factor sustainability into the mode of travel we select.

Air travel contributes to global carbon emissions from fossil fuel use.  It can be challenging for research or professional staff to balance international network building opportunities with the requirement for air travel.

Download the EAUC Air Travel Justification Tool Kit (PDF) to help you reflect on your decision to fly to a conference and advice on alternatives.

Measures we are introducing to address the impact of travel include:
- encouraging a move from using flights to rail where possible - evidence suggests that up to a distance of around 500 miles, rail travel compares favourably in terms of travel time with travelling by plane and has a considerably lower carbon footprint;
- annually reporting flight emissions from University business travel to track and monitor emissions;
- encouraging virtual alternatives to travel;
- investing in digital technology to support reduced travel where possible;
- reducing travel overall and setting a flight emissions target; and
- engaging staff and students on the debate about sustainable travel.

**Travel Prioritisation**
All Business Units are required to consider and agree travel prioritisation to reduce aviation emissions taking the following into account:

- the reasons for travel;
- the environmental impact of travel, particularly of flights;
- the frequency of travel;
- fairness of access to travel; and
- the equality, diversity and inclusion considerations of travel (See annex 1).

Business Units should monitor and record their decision-making to enable equality analysis and reporting and, in case of queries or complaints, to be able to assess whether their decisions are fair and equitable and whether they have any unintended adverse consequences.

**Travel Decision Making**
As an environmentally conscious employer Cranfield University aim is to reach net zero by 2030.  This includes promoting virtual alternatives to travel where possible, but we do recognise that some travel will be needed.  Everyone travelling on university business must consider the following Travel Hierarchy when contemplating travel with the aim of reducing the environmental impact. Reasonable adjustments and exceptions for the protected groups may be applicable. Except in cases for reasonable adjustments or extenuating circumstances approved by line managers, economy class is expected.

Avoid travel - consider whether travel is necessary:
- Consider virtual alternatives

Reduce your travel – consider these possibilities:
- Combine trips
- Take fewer trips
- Choose less distant conference locations
- Minimise the size of the group

Travel without flying – consider alternatives for travel within the UK, to Europe, or within other countries:
- Rail (including sleeper trains)
- Coach
- Ferry
- Car(share)

When considering large groups travelling via pooled travel, business risk in the event of an accident should be taken account of.

Fly when there are no alternatives - and consider the:
- Route - flying direct is usually less carbon intensive
- Class of flight - economy class has the lowest emissions due to using less space:

| Class of travel | Emissions compared to economy class |
|---|---|
| Premium economy | 1.6 times |
| Business class | 2.9 times |
| First class | 4 times |

**Exceptions and Reasonable Adjustments**

In line with our values of Respect and Community we want to ensure our disabled staff feel included and have the same opportunities as all staff.   This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled staff (which may also include staff with long-term health conditions). Reasonable adjustments for disability could include adjustments to the mode of travel, class/comfort, route, use of public transport, or being accompanied by a companion/guide. Adjustments may also be made for those with caring responsibilities. Note that these are just examples; this is not an exhaustive list.

If an individual feels they do require a reasonable adjustment they should liaise with their line manager in the first instance. This is an opportunity to explain the situation clearly and suggest possible adjustments required. This will allow the line manager to understand how best to support the member of staff. Advice can be sought from the local HR team if a referral to Occupational Health is needed to seek more clarity on the disability and advise on adjustments/support required.

For further guidance see Disability Policy and Procedure for Staff (Equity, diversity and inclusion (cranfield.ac.uk))

**Calculating the Carbon Footprint of your Travel**

Several research funders now ask that you calculate the carbon footprint of travel activities in funding applications.

Carbon Footprint is a free and reliable travel carbon footprint calculator.

Tools such as Routerank can help you evaluate different travel options regarding time, price and sustainability, and we encourage you to give it a try.

**Off-setting the Carbon from your Travel**

Hard-to-decarbonise emissions can be compensated for, 'offset', by using greenhouse gas removal schemes, such as those that manage woodland or develop technologies to absorb

carbon dioxide. Some research funders including Wellcome and the RSE, require that costs for offsetting are factored into funding applications.

Carbon offsetting is being researched by our Scope 3 working group. If considering purchasing carbon offsets consult the Energy and Environment Team (Facilities) first, as they oversee the carbon reporting for the University. Contact email [green@cranfield.ac.uk](mailto:green@cranfield.ac.uk).

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**
An equality impact assessment has been completed and is summarised below. Mitigation has been incorporated and positive impacts for members of the protected groups have been identified in paragraphs about Travel Prioritisation and Exceptions and Reasonable Adjustments. Equality, diversity and inclusion considerations have been incorporated in the Travel Prioritisation section and see Annex 1.

Business units may need to make exceptions and accommodations on the basis of an individual's protected characteristics to take account of the needs and safety of the person travelling or to avoid direct or indirect discrimination. This could include:
- adjustments to the mode of travel, class/comfort, or route;
- use of public transport;
- travelling with a child, or bringing a companion to help care for a child;
- additional safety provisions to address specific needs of individuals from protected groups.

Exceptions may also be valid in cases due to medical conditions which do not amount to a disability (e.g. a short-term impairment such as a broken leg), where the requirements of the policy are impractical, in emergency situations, and in other exceptional circumstances.
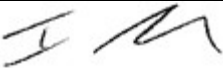
# Flight reduction targets

The University has set a target of reducing emissions from flights by 35% by 2035 against the 2018/19 travel baseline, as follows:
- a 20% reduction by 2024/25
- a further 10% reduction by 2030/31
- a further 5% reduction by 2034/35.

- To reduce flights, unless exceptions or reasonable adjustments are applicable:

  o Rail should be used for all domestic journeys under 7 hours. Exceptions include flights to Northern Ireland, the Shetland Islands or the Outer Hebrides. Flights are also permitted to the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.
  o Eurostar should be used for all journeys to Paris and Brussels – First class flights are not permitted.
  o Premium economy and business class flights require pre-approval by Business Units, with evidence retained.

- Business Units will be expected to meet this target considering:
  o prioritisation: determining travel that will be prioritised
  o carbon emissions: selecting flights with the lowest emissions
  o cost: balancing cost and carbon emissions
  o distance: reducing long haul flights responsible for the bulk of emissions
  o ticket count: reducing number of trips

- o class: encouraging economy class flights which have the lowest carbon emissions

## Document Control

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|---|---|
| Document Title | Sustainable Business Travel Plan |
| Document no | CU-SHE-PLAN-08 |
| Version no | 1 |
| Orginator name/document owner | Gareth Ellis |
| Professional Service Unit/Department | Facilities |
| Implementation/effective date | July 2024 |
| Date of last review and version number | N/A |
| Date of next review | July 2025 |
| Standards Reference | ISO14001 |
| Signature | |
| Name | Ian Sibbald |
| Title | Chair of Energy & Environment Committee |

## Document Review

| Version | Amendment | By | Date |
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