

DeGroote Experience Fund

Expense Policy

The DeGroote Student Experience

The DeGroote Experience Fund was created by generous donors who wanted students to have exposure to experiential learning that augments their classroom learning.

To receive reimbursement of your expenses (up to the approved funding allocation), it is important that you read and understand the details on eligible expenses and receipt submission.

Expense Categories:

- Transportation (including long-haul bus, train, taxi, airfare, parking)
- Accommodation
- Event Registration Costs
- Miscellaneous (please include details for reimbursement consideration) – use this category only if no other category is appropriate

Eligible Expenses (for more information, see Expense Categories below):

- Event/Conference Registration
- Transportation, Parking (GO Transit fares are only eligible for reimbursement if part of long-haul travel)
- Accommodation (Airbnb is not an eligible accommodation expense. Accommodation must be an accredited accommodation establishment)
- VISA (when required for international travel)

Non-Eligible Expenses:

- Alcohol
- Meals
- Upgraded amenities (i.e. Business class airfares or train fares, and/or preferred seating on flights)
- In-room services (movies, mini-bar, room service)
- Travel insurance (If travelling outside of province, it is recommended that you purchase travel insurance for your trip)
- Vaccines (vaccines may be required if you are travelling internationally)

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DEF Process:

Application Process:

1. Submit a DEF application jmcclea@mcmaster.ca and copy def@mcmaster.ca.
2. Once the DEF Committee has reviewed your funding request, the approved expenses will be updated and a confirmation email will be sent to you.

Post-Event Process:

3. Attend the event. Keep all original receipts and the agenda/itinerary of the activity.
4. Update the actual expenses for your DEF application via email to def@mcmaster.ca. Best practice is to submit DEF documentation (Learning Report and expenses) within one month of attending the event.
5. Submit any photos along with your Learning Report to def@mcmaster.ca.
6. Submit digital receipts to def@mcmaster.ca and all hard copy original receipts to either:
 - DSB 104 – Student Experience: Grad Programs Office (Attn: Jennifer McCleary)
 - RJC 333 – MBA Student Experience Office, depending on your campus.

To speed up the reimbursement process, see the [DEF Expense Submission Checklist](#). Please note, screenshots are **not accepted** as expense documents.

7. Please send an email to def@mcmaster.ca with your mailing address where the reimbursement cheque should be sent. In the subject line, please follow this template [First Name Last Name – Event Name - Event Date (Degree Program)]

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FAQ:

1. Can I receive funding in advance of my event?

No. All expenses are reimbursed post-event. Students are asked to follow the DEF expense submission process, along with additional documentation and their Learning Report.

2. What is a Learning Report? Do I need to submit one to receive my reimbursement?

A Learning Report is a thoughtful reflection (minimum one page) as an acknowledgment of the school's support. This report summarizes your experience and includes your key learnings and memories. A Learning Report is **required** to receive reimbursement. (see [DEF Learning Report Guide](#))

3. Where do I submit my Learning Report?

The Learning Report must be submitted and approved by **L'naya Russell, Director, Finance and Administration** before reimbursement can be processed. Email russel14@mcmaster.ca and copy def@mcmaster.ca.

4. Is there a deadline to submitting documentation for reimbursement?

To ensure that your reimbursement is processed in a timely matter, the best practice is to submit DEF documentation (Learning Report and expenses) within **one month** of attending the event. Please note that documentation submitted more than 3 months post-event may not be eligible for reimbursement. Contact def@mcmaster.ca if you have questions regarding the timing of your post-event submission.

5. My expenses are greater than the approved funding allocation. Will I receive more funding?

To be considered for reimbursement above the approved funding levels, a written detailed explanation on the overspending is required. Contact **L'naya Russell, Director, Finance and Administration** with your request for reconsideration of your revised funding level.

6. Can I submit my redacted credit card statement alone for my expense documents?

Unfortunately, submitting a credit card statement or slip on its own is not sufficient. Expense documents **must** include the receipt (hard copy or electronic copy) which indicates the date and details of the transaction, as well as the method of payment. A credit card statement is needed as proof of payment as well. Scans of receipts are accepted. **Screen shots of receipts or statements are NOT accepted.**

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FAQ (Continued):

7. What happens if I lose an original receipt? Do I no longer receive funding?

If you misplaced an original receipt, please submit the credit card statement or credit card slip, together with the [Missing Receipt Form](#).

8. How long until I receive my reimbursement?

Reimbursements may take up to 20 working days to process, however, normal turnaround time is two weeks. Once processed, a cheque will be issued and sent to the mailing address provided (unless you are currently a McMaster employee).

9. Will I be excused from classroom requirements or employment work days because of the event that the DEF has approved?

It is your responsibility as a student to take into consideration the academic requirements you have during the time you would like to participate in this experiential activity. The events approved by the DEF are not school mandated and cannot be used to excuse yourself from school work, participation in assignments and/or class, or work for those on work term.

At the time of seeking DEF funding, please include details of whether you are currently in an academic or work term.

For students on an academic term, it is recommended that discussions with faculty whose courses will be missed take place pre-DEF request to ensure you understand any grade implications for missing class time.

For students on work term, the DEF committee will normally decline funding requests for events that require students to miss work days. Please seek activities hosted on weekends or identify an event for when you return to campus.

Any other questions? Just email def@mcmaster.ca