

Vehicle Use Policy

Responsibility for policy: Director of Property Services

Approving authority: Vice-Chancellor

Last reviewed: November 2016

Next review date: November 2021

Application

1. This policy applies to all drivers of University of Waikato vehicles and rental vehicles.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this policy is to:
 - a. ensure that drivers are appropriately licensed and authorised
 - b. ensure that drivers are aware of their obligations and responsibilities with respect to the use of vehicles for University business
 - c. ensure that drivers are aware of safe driving and other good road safety practices, and
 - d. ensure that the University complies with fringe benefit tax rules with respect to the use of motor vehicles.

Related documents

3. The following documents set out further information relevant to this policy:
 - [Fleet Management Manual & User Guide](#)
 - [Health and Safety Policy](#)
 - [New Zealand Road Code](#)
 - [Private Vehicles for University Business Policy](#)
 - [Rental Vehicle Policy](#)
 - [Smoke Free Policy](#)
 - [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
 - [Student Discipline Regulations](#)
 - [Travel Policy](#)
 - [University of Waikato Fringe Benefit Tax Guide](#)

Related legislation

4. This policy takes account of the following legislation:
 - [Income Tax Act 2007](#)
 - [Land Transport Act 1998](#)
 - [Land Transport \(Road User\) Amendment Rule 2009](#)

Definitions

5. In this policy:

authorised driver means a staff member, student, contractor or other person who has been approved by the University Vehicle Fleet Manager to use a University vehicle for University business

child means a person under the age of 14 years

fringe benefit means a non-cash benefit that is provided by the University to a staff member in connection with their employment; such benefits are subject to taxation

off-road means an area that is not a formed road. It includes undulating terrain, bush tracks, beaches, and river-beds. It may or may not be a legal road. The legal definition of a road is set out in section 2(1) of the [Land Transport Act 1998](#)

rental vehicle means a vehicle rented by the University of Waikato for the purpose of conducting University business in accordance with the [Rental Vehicle Policy](#)

University business means any activity that a staff member is expected to undertake during the course of their work

University pool vehicle means a University vehicle that is available for short-term loan to authorised drivers for the purpose of conducting University business

University vehicle means a vehicle owned or leased by the University for the purpose of conducting University business; it includes pool vehicles and work-related vehicles but excludes prototype vehicles developed in the course of teaching and research

work-related vehicle as defined in the [Income Tax Act 2007](#) for the purpose of calculating fringe benefit tax means a University vehicle that has the following characteristics:

- the vehicle is not primarily designed to carry passengers, i.e. it is not a car, and
- the University's logo is permanently affixed to the vehicle and is prominently displayed, and
- the use of the vehicle to travel between home and work is a requirement of a staff member's employment, and
- the vehicle is not available for any private use other than travel between home and work.

Authorised drivers

6. Only an authorised driver may operate a University vehicle.
7. Only the University Vehicle Fleet Manager has the authority to approve authorised drivers.
8. Applications to become an authorised driver must be made to the [University Vehicle Fleet Manager](#).
9. All authorised drivers must hold a current valid New Zealand or overseas driver licence of the correct class; this licence must be available for inspection by the University Vehicle Fleet Manager and must be carried by the driver when operating a University vehicle.
10. If at any time and for any reason an authorised driver's licence becomes invalid (i.e. is suspended, expired or revoked), preventing the licence holder from driving a University vehicle, the license holder must advise the University Vehicle Fleet Manager immediately.

Responsibilities of the University Vehicle Fleet Manager

11. The University Vehicle Fleet Manager must:
 - a. ensure that drivers of University vehicles are authorised to do so and are recorded in the [University Fleet Management System](#)
 - b. ensure that University vehicles are maintained in a safe and roadworthy condition in order to ensure the safety of the driver, occupants and other road users at all times
 - c. ensure that registration, servicing, Warrant of Fitness, Certificate of Fitness and insurance requirements of all University vehicles are met
 - d. ensure that University vehicles are maintained and presented in a state that reflects the standards of the University, and
 - e. provide opportunities for driver training and education where appropriate.

Responsibilities of drivers of University vehicles and rental vehicles

12. Drivers of University vehicles or rental vehicles must:
 - a. hold a current driver licence for the class of vehicle they are operating
 - b. ensure that a vehicle booking is made through the [University Fleet Management System](#) before a University pool vehicle is used
 - c. follow safe driving practices (see Appendix 1 of this policy)
 - d. remove rubbish from the vehicle before it is returned to the University or the rental company
 - e. report vehicle defects to the University Vehicle Fleet Manager or rental company as soon as practicable
 - f. report to the University Vehicle Fleet Manager or rental company any incidents that result in damage to the University vehicle or rental vehicle, whether or not they resulted in injury

- g. comply with the [New Zealand Road Code](#) and all traffic laws, rules and regulations set out in the [Land Transport Act 1998](#) and the [Land Transport \(Road User\) Amendment Rule 2009](#)
 - h. obtain prior approval from their line manager for a University vehicle or rental vehicle to be stored at their home overnight prior to early morning travel on University business or overnight on the day of travel on University business, and notify the University Fleet Vehicle Manager of that approval in writing prior to travel
 - i. where required to store a University vehicle at their home for security and safety reasons as a condition of their employment, agree in writing that the vehicle will not be used for private use, unless such use is determined to be incidental as set out in clause 18e of this policy.
13. Drivers of University vehicles and rental vehicles must not:
- a. use alcohol, non-prescription drugs, recreational drugs or other intoxicating substances that exceed the legal limit or that are illegal while in charge of a University vehicle or rental vehicle; the use of prescription drugs prescribed by an approved New Zealand registered medical practitioner is permitted as long as it does not impair the ability of the driver to drive safely and within the law
 - b. drive a vehicle if suffering from fatigue or any condition which inhibits their ability to drive safely and within the law
 - c. use a University vehicle or rental vehicle for private use unless such use is determined to be incidental as set out in clause 18e of this policy.

Responsibilities of line managers of drivers of University vehicles or rental vehicles

- 14. Line managers must encourage safe driving practices and not require staff to drive under conditions that are unsafe.
- 15. A line manager must be satisfied that in their opinion the reasons given by a staff member under clause 12.h of this policy are valid before giving approval for a University vehicle or rental car to be stored at the staff member's home overnight prior to early morning travel on University business or overnight on the day of travel on University business; as set out in clause 17 of this policy, a University vehicle or rental vehicle held at a staff member's home overnight is subject to fringe benefit tax and, as set out in clause 20 of this policy, the tax will be charged back to the cost centre that incurs the liability.

University vehicles

- 16. University vehicles are provided for the purpose of University business only; use of a University vehicle or rental vehicle for private use is prohibited unless such use is determined to be incidental as set out in clause 18e of this policy.

Fringe benefit tax

- 17. A fringe benefit arises where a University vehicle is available for private use, whether or not it is actually used for private use, for example a University vehicle that is stored overnight at the home of a staff member is subject to fringe benefit tax.
- 18. A University vehicle is exempt from fringe benefit tax where:
 - a. it is a work-related vehicle, as defined in this policy, or
 - b. it is used to attend an emergency call-out essential to the operation of any University asset, infrastructure or service between 6.00pm and 6.00am Monday to Friday or at any time on a weekend or statutory holiday, or at any time if related to the health and safety of any person, or
 - c. it is used for out-of-town travel on University business for a period of at least 24 hours continuously, or
 - d. it is unavailable for staff use for at least 24 hours, e.g. if the vehicle is being repaired or is parked at an airport carpark, or

- e. its private use constitutes a minor or insignificant proportion of an overall journey on University business, i.e. incidental to a larger journey; for the removal of doubt, such use may constitute no more than 2km in total; private use that is more than incidental is subject to fringe benefit tax.
19. Data from global positioning systems installed in all University vehicles is used to assist in the monitoring of private use and for the calculation of any fringe benefit tax liability.
 20. Where fringe benefit tax applies, it will be charged back to the cost centre that incurred the fringe benefit tax liability.

University pool vehicles

21. Staff who are required to travel on University business commencing and ending at a University of Waikato campus must use a University pool vehicle whenever one is available rather than using a rental or private vehicle; University pool vehicles must be booked through the [University Fleet Management website](#). Further information may be obtained by emailing fleet@waikato.ac.nz.

Rental vehicles

22. The use of rental vehicles for University business is governed by the [Rental Vehicle Policy](#).

Private vehicles

23. The use of private vehicles for University business is governed by the [Private Vehicles for University Business Policy](#).

Transporting passengers

24. Children must not be carried in a University vehicle or rental vehicle unless by prior arrangement with the University Vehicle Fleet Manager.
25. Fare-paying passengers are not permitted to ride in a University vehicle or rental vehicle.
26. The picking up of hitchhikers is not permitted.
27. Passengers aged 15 years and over are responsible for making sure that they wear their own safety belts correctly and that they keep them fastened while the vehicle is in motion. The driver is responsible for ensuring that passengers under the age of 15 are using an approved child restraint or safety belt.
28. Drivers must not allow a third-party to drive a University vehicle or rental vehicle unless prior approval has been obtained from the University Vehicle Fleet Manager, or unless in an emergency.

Transporting animals and materials

29. Domestic (non-University) animals are not permitted in University vehicles or rental vehicles at any time.
30. Where University animals are required to be transported, they must be placed in an appropriate cage/container for transporting.
31. Materials being transported in University vehicles or rental vehicles must be secured against movement.
32. University vehicles and rental vehicles must not be overloaded in terms of weight or bulk.
33. Hazardous substances must be transported in compliance with the relevant regulations and standards – as a minimum, in compliance with the [Land Transport Act 1998](#) and the [Associated Rule: Dangerous Goods 2005](#), along with the New Zealand Standard 5433:2012 – Transporting Hazardous Substances on Land.

Smoking in University vehicles or rental vehicles

34. Smoking in University vehicles or rental vehicles is prohibited under the [Smoke Free Policy](#).

Use of mobile phones

35. Drivers must not use hand-held mobile phones whilst driving.
36. Drivers may use hands-free devices whilst operating a University vehicle or a rental vehicle, however they must comply with the relevant parts of Section 7.3A of the [Land Transport \(Road User\) Amendment Rule 2009](#).

Use of trailers

37. Before towing a trailer, the driver must ensure that the vehicle is capable of towing the trailer and that the tow ball and coupling are compatible.
38. The driver must ensure that any materials being transported on the trailer are safely secured against movement.

Use of forklifts and other specialist vehicles

39. Only drivers who have been appropriately trained and given prior approval by the University Vehicle Fleet Manager may use a forklift or other specialist vehicle.

Use of 4WD vehicles off-road

40. Only drivers who have been appropriately trained and given prior approval by the University Vehicle Fleet Manager may use a 4WD University vehicle or rental vehicle off-road.

Security

41. Drivers must ensure that the vehicle is parked legally and that doors and windows are locked when unattended. If the vehicle is held overnight, it should not be parked on the road if possible.
42. Personal items should not be left in University vehicles or rental vehicles; the University will not accept responsibility for any loss or damage to such items.
43. The University will not accept responsibility for damage to, or the theft of private vehicles parked on University grounds, whether or not vehicles are parked in designated parking areas; owners of private vehicles park at their own risk.

Payment of road tolls

44. Road tolls for University pool vehicles travelling on the Auckland Northern Gateway, Tauranga Takitimu Drive and Tauranga Eastern Link toll roads are billed to the University automatically. In all other cases, the driver is responsible for the payment of any road tolls and may pay by PCard or seek reimbursement through [Staff Expense Claims](#); the driver must retain all receipts for tolls to enable reconciliation of PCard charges or reimbursements.

Fines and penalties

45. Any parking fines or penalties imposed for speeding or traffic infringements are the responsibility of the driver. Any further charges incurred by the University as a result of the non-payment of fines are also the responsibility of the driver.

Breakdown procedures

46. In the event of a breakdown involving a University vehicle, the driver must:
 - a. take the vehicle to the nearest franchise garage for repair (or Firestone, if the breakdown involves tyres), and
 - b. report the breakdown to the University Vehicle Fleet Manager as soon as possible.
47. Repairs to University vehicles can be paid for by PCard, if appropriate.
48. In the event of a breakdown involving a rental vehicle, the driver must follow the procedures provided by the rental company.

Accident procedures

49. In the event of an accident involving a University vehicle, the driver (if able to do so) must follow the following motor vehicle accident procedures:
 - a. notify the Police if anyone is injured
 - b. obtain the name, vehicle registration, insurance details and make of any other vehicle involved
 - c. record details of what occurred including a plan of the accident site
 - d. if possible, photograph damage to the vehicles involved (e.g. mobile phone camera)
 - e. if required, arrange for the vehicle to be removed
 - f. report the accident to the University Vehicle Fleet Manager as soon as possible
 - g. report the accident using the University's [Accident Report Form](#) as soon as possible
50. In the case of an accident involving a rental vehicle, the driver (if able to do so) must follow the accident procedures set out in clause 49 of this policy, and notify the rental company as soon as possible.

Insurance

51. University vehicles and rental vehicles used in the course of University business are covered by the University's motor vehicle insurance policy.
52. In the event that a University vehicle or rental vehicle is involved in an accident or is stolen or damaged, the driver must complete an insurance claim form giving details of the accident or incident and forward it to the University Fleet Manager as soon as possible; the excess payable (or deductible) will be charged to the driver's school.

Responsibility for monitoring compliance

53. The Director of Property Services is responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy and reporting any breaches to the Vice-Chancellor.
54. Breaches of this policy by staff may result in disciplinary action under the [Staff Code of Conduct](#).
55. Breaches of this policy by students may result in disciplinary action under the [Student Discipline Regulations](#).

Appendix 1: Safe Driving Practices

The following information may be found on the [New Zealand Transport Agency](#) website:

Extend your vision

One of the most important things you can do to be a safer driver is to look well ahead of you when you're driving, so you can pick up potentially dangerous situations before it's too late.

The earlier you spot a potential hazard, the more time you will have to take evasive action. Rather than looking only as far as the vehicle in front of you when driving, you should actually be scanning the road in front to a distance of at least 12 seconds ahead of where your car is – that is, the place you will be after driving for 12 seconds.

As a rough guide, at 50km/h, 12 seconds is 166 metres or about two city blocks. At 100km/h, 12 seconds is 333 metres. This means at 100km/h you should look ahead as far as you can see.

Keep your eyes moving

Many people only look **ahead** of them when driving. This means they're not getting the full picture of what's happening on the road.

As well as looking ahead, you should also use your mirrors to look to the **sides** and **behind** often enough to be aware of surrounding traffic.

Moving your eyes regularly and concentrating on what's going on around you will also help you to stay alert on long journeys.

Create a safety cushion

You should create a 'cushion' of safety around your whole vehicle by making sure there is a safe distance in all directions between you, other vehicles and potential hazards.

This will give you and other road users more time and space to avoid any hazards.

- Create a cushion of safety **ahead** of you by maintaining a safe following distance. Use the two-second rule or the four-second rule when appropriate.
- Create a cushion of safety **behind** you by maintaining a safe distance between you and any following vehicles. If a vehicle is following you too closely, slow down, move over and let it pass as soon as you can do so safely.
- Create a safety cushion to your **sides** by keeping a safe distance from any hazards on your sides, such as driveways, parked vehicles, cyclists or children playing on the footpath.

Don't get distracted

It's easy to get distracted when you're driving. Things like music, talking passengers, passing scenery and roadside advertising can all divert your attention from your driving and the road.

You must learn to ignore distractions and concentrate on your driving when you're behind the wheel. If, for any reason, you must look away from the road, follow the pointers below:

- Check well ahead and behind for any potential hazards. Don't look away if you can see potential hazards.
- Remember if you do look away from the road make sure you don't go off course.
- Never take your eyes off the road for longer that is absolutely necessary. For example, while driving at 90km/h, if you took your eyes off the road for two seconds you will travel 50 metres.

Identify escape routes

Following the tips above will help you avoid many potentially dangerous crashes. However, despite all your best efforts, there may still be occasions when you find yourself on a direct collision course with another vehicle or other hazard.

For this reason, it is wise to identify possible escape routes all the time while you're driving. That way, if you find yourself in danger of a crash, you'll be ready to take quick evasive action.

Most escape routes will be to your left, so take note of what's on the left-hand side of the road as you drive. Ask yourself questions like:

- 'Is there a wide shoulder I could steer onto?'
- 'Can I steer off the road safely if I need to?'

If there are no safe escape routes, reduce your speed and increase your following distance so you can stop in plenty of time if a crash situation develops.

Prevention of fatigue

Road accident research shows that the longer a person drives without a break, the greater their level of fatigue. Poor sleep quality and other activities can increase fatigue and affect subsequent driving. Drivers need to be particularly aware of their fatigue levels between 3.00-5.00am and 3.00-5.00pm.

Fatigue impairs driving ability and causes slower reaction times, particularly when encountering unusual, unexpected or emergency situations.

When undertaking long distance travelling, drivers should factor in regular breaks – at least a 10 minute break every two hours. Factor these breaks into planned travel times.

Have refreshment breaks during a long journey too. Avoid large meals but have regular snacks and drink plenty of water.

On long journeys, share the driving with another authorised driver.