

Business Purpose Documentation

Please note in order to classify purchases, or expenses as Business expenses, Brandeis University requires users to detail the Business Purpose of the expense.

Definition: A business purpose justifies how an expense is appropriate and reasonable, and how it supports and/or advances the goals and objectives of the University.

The University must ensure that all transactions (e.g., supplier invoices, travel expenses/reimbursements, p-card expenses payments, requisitions, etc.) have written information within the transaction documentation to justify the purpose served by the expenditure. Procurement & Business Services therefore requires clear documentation of this justification. If not clearly documented, the department may be asked to provide additional details. Failure to provide this information may result in additional delays approvals and/or payment.

Purchases and/or reimbursements made on behalf of the University must include detailed information that addresses the following:

- **What** is being purchased?
- **Why** is the purchase necessary and is it reasonable and appropriate for the University?
- **Who** is the person that requested or needs the purchase?
 - For events, this will include the audience or list of attendees. (i.e. If the Expense category selected prompts the user to provide the Name of Attendees and/or this information is shared elsewhere on the report line (i.e. Description field etc) that information does not need to be reentered).
- **How** does the expense benefit the University? Expenses that appear to be personal or provide a benefit to an individual must include a written explanation of how they are business related.
- **Where** is the event/activity taking place? If travel is included, provide the benefit to the University for sending the individual(s) to the event/activity.
- **When** is the event/activity taking place? Include all dates associated with this event/activity expense, especially when including travel time.

The documentation must provide reconcilers, approvers, and auditors the information required to fully understand the intent of the purchase or service and how it relates to the overall mission of the University. The information is the basis for a determination of allowance or non-allowance of the expenditure. Financial transaction approvers are both responsible, and accountable for determining whether expenses comply with the business purpose provided and if they are necessary to conduct University business.

Please note, for University Expense Report this detailed information may be entered in a variety of different fields based on the expense category etc. For example, when selecting Business Meals, you will be prompted to provide information regarding alcohol purchases, and the names of attendees. This information does not also need to be entered on the business purpose field if captured in these special fields.

Some Samples of Expense types and appropriate details are below

| Type of Expense | Insufficient Business Purpose Description | Information to Include for the Type of Purchase | Appropriate Business Purpose Description |
|------------------------|--|--|---|
| Meal for job candidate | Candidate for Assistant Dean of Students dinner | Name of candidate, and the position/job title, A list of attendees or number of attendees if over 10 and their Affiliation to the university. | Interview dinner for candidate Mary Smith for Assistant Dean of Students position, Dinner included 12 folks all from the Office of Student affairs. |
| Research supplies | Supplies needed for analysis | Clarification of the supplies and project where the supplies will be used. | Supply XYZ needed for analysis on PROJECT NAME. |
| Purchase | 100 custom imprinted hats to use as swag for Department Name | The reason for needing the items must be clear, along with the flyer/program that shows these are for the event and not purchased to be given away as gifts. The cost of these items should be minimal with no monetary value to the recipients. | 100 custom imprinted hats to be used as promotional items for the NAME OF EVENT to be held by DEPARTMENT NAME on DATE to promote department to AUDIENCE. Flyer/program is attached to backup documentation. |
| Membership fees | 2024 NACADA membership for EMPLOYEE NAME | Why the membership is necessary for the individual and how it benefits the mission of the university. | 2024 NATIONAL ACADEMIC ADVISING ASSOCIATION membership for EMPLOYEE NAME to increase his/her ability to assist students as an academic advisor. |
| Conference | AMA Conference | Include the attendee, start and end dates of travel. If a student is traveling, it is necessary to provide an explanation of how the University benefits. | EMPLOYEE NAME to attend the 2024 American Marketing Association Conference in San Francisco, CA, August 4-6, 2024 for professional development. |
| Business meeting | Pizza for monthly lunch, 08/01/2024 | Provide the agenda/details of the meeting, the date and location where the meeting took place, and a list of attendees or number of attendees if over 10 and their affiliation. | Monthly meeting on MM/DD/YYYY to collaborate on SPECIFIC RESEARCH and UP COMING ITEMS within the department. List of attendees attached to backup documentation. |

| Type of Expense | Insufficient Business Purpose Description | Information to Include for the Type of Purchase | Appropriate Business Purpose Description |
|------------------------|---|--|---|
| Business entertainment | Pizza for student participation 07/28/24 | A flyer/program should be included along with a description of the event and how it benefits the mission of the University. | Pizza will be provided to encourage participation in a survey to assist the Student Union with feedback regarding what events would be beneficial for students for academic year 2024/2025. The goal of this event is to hear from students on what types of events they would like to see at the Student Union in order to bring students together and provide them with an activity to allow themselves an opportunity to meet and network with other students. MM/DD/YYYY. |
| Decorations | Decorations for employee appreciation | Include the attendees and the flyer/program for the event as backup for purchasing decorations to clarify the event is not personal in nature. | Decorations for employee appreciation event to be held on MM/DD/YYYY at LOCATION. Flyer/program and list of attendees attached to backup documentation. |