

Member Trustee Expenses

January 2024

A SSAS is a pension scheme run by Trustees, for the benefit of its Members. Most of the time, the Trustees are the Members. In the running of a SSAS, it is permissible for a Trustee to claim expenses incurred in relation to the running of a scheme.

This document outlines what is permissible for Member Trustees to claim as expenses from a Hayward Sestini SSAS, and outlines important considerations for scheme funds.

What can be claimed?

Fees in relation to the running of a pension scheme, any associated financial or legal advice. It should be noted here that even though the Professional Trustee fees for a scheme can be claimed from a scheme, it is far more cost effective to expense this via the sponsoring company, as it can be offset against tax, and allows the pension scheme to retain funds.

Property finders fees, RICS valuations, administrative costs for the set-up of investments are also permissible, as are ad hoc Trustee expenses around travel (for example, if Trustees in Manchester are visiting a scheme property in York, train fare or mileage would be a reasonable expense to reclaim.

What cannot be claimed?

Trustees cannot claim for networking groups, or training that does not provide a recognised qualification that will assist with the running of the pension scheme. This includes courses on how to convert property, how to invest funds, and education relating to assets a Trustee may want to consider as part of their scheme holdings.

There are two reasons for this, firstly, HMRC expect fair and reasonable expenses to be claimed by Trustees in relation to activity in respect of the running of the scheme only, to which 'education' or 'training' is too broad stroke to allow. Secondly, none of the courses or networking syndicates offer any information on SSAS investments that cannot be sought via the Professional Trustee or Administrator that the scheme member is already paying, via the HMRC Pensions Tax Manual, or the Pensions Regulator or Moneywise websites. There are also other useful resources, such as books available from Amazon, you tube channels, and web forums. All at which carry a cost fractional to that of some invoices we are presented with.

What does HMRC say?

[PTM133940 - Unauthorised payments: deemed or specific situations that are unauthorised payments: benefits in kind: work accommodation or supplies necessary for scheme administration - HMRC internal manual - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[PTM143200 - Other authorised payments: scheme administration member payments: rebated commission, adviser charging and consultancy charging - HMRC internal manual - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

HMRC are very clear that expenses can be claimed in relation to the management of the scheme, and fees for advice can also be claimed, including consultancy fees in relation to a transaction (for example, a property 'finders fee' paid to an agent) It also clarifies that expenses should be treated in the same way as employee expenses when paid from a Limited company.

Our Stance:

Expenses and costs of running the scheme, and costs incurred in relation to the management of scheme property, and legal fees are permissible. For all expenses, we will need copies of invoices, and where these have been paid on behalf of a scheme, we will require a copy of the invoice, and confirmation of payment, in order to reimburse the payee. In all cases, invoices should be addressed to the pension scheme.

No other invoices should be put forward for payment.

Trustees of a SSAS should be mindful that the scheme exists for the eventual benefit of its Members, and their nominated beneficiaries. Subscription to paid networking, or courses, or anything other than permitted expenses will lessen the value of a scheme's holdings. For example, paying £1,600 per year to subscribe to a property management seminar and newsletter will reduce the value of a scheme by £16,000 over 10 years. This equates to around 8 months of average retirement income.

When looking to seek guidance on permitted assets, the first port of call for a Member Trustee should always be their own scheme Administrator and Professional Trustee. Should more detailed and specific advice be needed, then a Financial or Tax Adviser should be considered.

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