

Reward and Recognition for People with Lived Experience Involvement (January 2026)

Introduction

People with Lived Experience (LE) choose to get involved in health and social care professional education and/or research because they want to make a positive difference to future practice. For many, knowing that they have contributed in this way is very satisfying but it is important to ensure that everybody who has been involved feels rewarded and recognised for their contributions. A good level of basic recognition is for people to be given thanks and feedback about their involvement – such as a verbal outline of how it has made a difference - along with being acknowledged in any subsequent minutes, reports, etc. Similarly, it is courteous to invite contributors to any formal celebrations of collective success.

Other ways in which we can help to develop and sustain committed working relationships with our public partners is by offering relevant training and personal development opportunities, along with providing access to library and computing resources, where these will support their continued involvement. An important overriding principle is that nobody should be made worse off because of their involvement with the School. We must aim to reimburse all agreed upon expenses in good time and should routinely offer a fee, as an additional form of reward and recognition. Optional receipt of this payment may serve to relieve the financial barriers to a diverse range of people contributing, while compensating them for their time and effort. Payment of a fee for public involvement does not confer employment status, but the rates set out in this policy are considered fair in reflecting the kind of activity being undertaken, having been devised to align with current best practice.

Offering a fee

It is good practice of Leeds Beckett University that a recognition fee should be offered for all prearranged contributions that those with LE make to the School's educational or research business. It is down to the individual with LE to decide whether to accept or reject this fee or to opt to donate it to a charity of their choice. Typical examples are:

- sharing their experiences and perspectives during lectures and seminars
- assisting with research design
- being a panel member during the recruitment and selection of students
- contributing to the assessment of students
- engaging in curriculum development work
- informing School research priorities
- presenting at a conference on behalf of the School
- being a member of a steering group, working group or committee
- developing course materials
- acting as a 'lay' panel member for course validation events

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There are some occasions when it would not be appropriate to offer a fee despite individuals with LE being present. Some typical examples are:

- public lectures, social gatherings, and consultations
- attendance at a student clinic as a service recipient
- involvement as a research participant (vouchers may be offered instead)
- conference attendance where this does not involve presenting
- when an individual is being paid to attend or reimbursed by another organisation

Fees tariff

Before any involvement can take place, colleagues must seek consent to offer a fee and/or expenses from the relevant budget holder, inform the Involvement Coordinator of the budget code being used and ensure that the fee offered is consistent with the following tariff (i.e., accurately acknowledges the level and nature of someone's contribution). If colleagues are unsure where the proposed activity fits within the tariff, they are advised to consult with the Involvement Co-ordinator or Development Lead for further guidance.

Lived experience payment/ reimbursement for those relating to the student experience.

Activity level	Fee
Level 1: This is the minimum fee offered for qualifying involvement activity not covered by other sections of the tariff, including when the involvement lasts for less than a full hour. E.g. storytelling or sharing personal perspectives within a lecturer's classroom teaching; sitting on an admissions interview panel; participating in a clinical skills practice session; attendance at involvement preparation meetings or training; invited representation of the Public Partnership Group (PPG) at open days; reading and commenting upon an abstract or reviewing other summary documents.	£12.50 per hour
Level 2: This is the payment rate offered for activities that require a degree of independent preparation, including where the activity lasts for less than an hour. The fee is inclusive of any independent preparation required e.g. reading and providing feedback about a research proposal; being a formal co-presenter within teaching or other face-to-face contact with students; attendance at strategic planning meetings or actively contributing to School committee meetings.	£25.48 per hour (August 2025 rates)
Level 3: This is the hourly payment rate offered for teaching tasks or activity requiring a significant degree of preparation and professionalism. It is inclusive of preparation and can only be offered	Comprehensive visiting lecturer rate at £54.16 per hour

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for up to 6 hours of total contributions per person during a single academic year.	(August 2025 rates)
Level 4: This fixed daily fee should only be offered on rare occasions where the high level of responsibility and preparation warrants it. Activities include being an independent 'lay' person attending as an external panel member; presenting as a named co-researcher at a conference.	Fixed fee £150 (£75 half day)

Please note:

These rates refer to student-focused interactions. These may differ from rates related to research-focused public and patient involvement and engagement activities.

Any activity exceeding the standard Level 1 provision shall require prior authorisation from the Head of Subject or the designated Budget Holder before any work is undertaken.

A Right to Work check may be necessary. This should be undertaken before the first session. This might need to be repeated on an annual basis.

Reimbursing expenses

Those with lived experience should be reimbursed for all out-of-pocket expenses that arise as a direct consequence their planned involvement in any activity for which a fee is normally offered, regardless of whether they have accepted that fee.

Travel and parking costs: should be the most economical available to provide safe and practical transport for the individual or group concerned.

Tickets: Standard class bus and/or train travel will be reimbursed where tickets or proof of purchase has been retained and produced with the claim.

Car Mileage: will be reimbursed at the rate of 25p per mile (at August 2025 rates). All claims must be consistent with the claimant having travelled to the campus from their home address (mileage claims are subject to checks).

Parking: Where a staff member or the Involvement Coordinator has been unable to secure a visitor or disabled parking space on campus, parking charges covering the period of involvement will be reimbursed. A ticket, receipt, or other proof of purchase must be presented with the claim form. The University does not reimburse or otherwise waive any parking fines, whether incurred off or on campus.

Taxis: If individual circumstances justify (e.g. reasonable adjustments to account for somebody's disability) taxis can be provided. All bookings must be in advance by an appropriate staff member using one of the University's preferred suppliers.

Subsistence:

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In accordance with University policy it is permitted to purchase refreshments (e.g., sandwiches, biscuits, hot or cold non-alcoholic drinks) if necessary due to the length or public facing nature of an event. Where possible these should be ordered by the staff member hosting such an event from the in-house catering service and charged to an appropriate programme budget or research project. Alternatively, if the activity is running across the course of a full day and it is impractical to supply refreshments via in-house catering then the contributors may be reimbursed for refreshments up to the value of £5 providing they keep receipts.

These financial reimbursements will take place from 1st January 2026 and reviewed annually.

Non-standard expenses

It is recognised that other costs may arise on occasion and that it may be appropriate for the School to cover these. For example, if an interpreter, paid carer or other equal access support is identified as being necessary but falls outside of the support a contributor has usual day-to-day access to, this should be discussed with the budget holder. All non-standard expense related issues should be resolved before involvement takes place, on a case-by-case basis.

Cancellations

If an involvement activity is cancelled at short notice (less than 3 days in advance) then steps should be taken to ensure that those with LE are not consequently rendered out-of-pocket. Formal notification of a cancellation and ensuring the reimbursement of any losses resulting from late notification is the responsibility of whoever requested the involvement, in consultation with the Involvement Co-ordinator.

Processing payments

The University currently processes payments to those with LE through a standard Claim Form. Information about an individual's tax status is collected using the form and influences if and how tax is deducted. Payments must be made through BACS into a bank, building society or Post Office account. We cannot offer cash payments, or donations to organisations in lieu of payment. Providing that advance notice of an involvement activity has been provided the Involvement Coordinator will work to:

- ensure an activity meets the fee payment criteria;
- ensure any fees offered are consistent with the tariff;
- confirm after the involvement event has taken place that the expected contributors were present;
- distribute Consultant Claim Forms for completion by confirmed contributors;

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- provide support to claimants in completing and returning forms;
- check that appropriate receipts have been presented for all expenses claimed;
- check claim forms for accuracy;
- forward completed forms for final payment processing by Finance.

If it is anticipated by the Involvement Coordinator that an individual is going to be heavily involved over the course of a month then a single claim form to cover several events may be issued. Payment can take up to a month to reach recipient accounts, depending on when a completed form is submitted.

The person with LE is responsible for ensuring that their claim forms are honest, accurate and returned to the Involvement Coordinator promptly. They are advised to keep an ongoing personal record of claims made, to help inform any queries about payments and to manage any issues that may arise in relation to their tax status or welfare benefits entitlements. The Involvement Coordinator or Development Lead will provide a written statement about what public involvement is, should this be required by the Department for Work & Pensions. However, the University cannot provide any personal advice regarding either tax liability or welfare benefits.

Citizens Advice & Law Centres (CAB)

The CAB provides information to anyone considering paid or voluntary work whilst in receipt of benefits. The centres are open from 9:30am to 3pm every weekday, except Friday (when they close at 1pm), and these operate on a drop-in basis. Local CAB branches are listed online: <http://www.cas.org.uk>.

National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Benefits Advice Service: This is a service open to members of the public who are involved in an NIHR organisation, or in a research project funded by the NIHR. See: <https://sphr.nihr.ac.uk/news-and-events/nihr-benefits-advice-service-for-public-involvement-in-research/>