Outside Studies Program Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The purpose of this Procedure is to support the Outside Studies Program Policy.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure has the same scope as the Outside Studies Program Policy (OSP).

Section 3 - Procedure

Application Procedures

(3) Staff need to alert People & Culture via ucpeople@canberra.edu.au of their intention to apply.

(4) The OSP application will become available on their UC People Online dashboard under the heading “OSP Application 2020”.

(5) Applicants need to upload and submit a completed OSP application form. The application form can be found via the OSP intranet page or on the OSP application dashboard. The application will stay on UC People Online for future reference.

(6) Once completed online, applications for OSP are reviewed by the Executive Dean, who will be alerted to the completed application via automated email. Executive Deans will assess an application and make decisions determined on merit, and in accordance with the principles outlined in the Outside Studies Program Policy.

(7) It is recommended that the Executive Dean take advice as appropriate from the Heads of School/Heads of Discipline/Associate Deans/Directors of a Faculty when making OSP decisions.

(8) Applicants who wish to apply for financial assistance towards the cost of undertaking an OSP must include a budget estimate on the form specified as part of the application. Such applicants should attach to the budget a written quotation from the University of Canberra (University) approved travel agent for the travel costs.

(9) The full period of the OSP must be covered by an appropriate period of affiliation with a university, research organisation, industry body or a public or government agency. Typically, there is only one affiliation for the whole program. However, in the event of a collaborative project, justification for several affiliations will need to be provided. Written evidence verifying agreement(s) to the affiliation(s) must be provided either with the application or no later than 3 months prior to the commencement of the OSP leave (refer proforma Letter of Affiliation).

(10) The timing of an OSP is governed by operational considerations. An OSP must align where possible with a complete major teaching period (semester).

(11) When an application for OSP is not approved by the Executive Dean solely due to staffing or funding considerations, the Executive Dean will determine a time to undertake the otherwise meritorious OSP that is more

suitable to the Faculty and advise the staff member. This must be within 2 years of the OSP period requested in the initial application.

(12) Where an OSP application is not approved by the Executive Dean on its merits, the Executive Dean will inform the staff member and provide reasons. The staff member may only appeal on procedural grounds.

(13) The Executive Dean may suggest amendments to a proposed OSP before finalising the approval.

(14) In considering an applicant's track record, the Executive Dean will take into consideration the impact of a period of sustained leadership duties (e.g. Head of Discipline or Associate Dean).

Before Travelling on OSP

(15) Before proceeding on an OSP, staff members are required to read the:

a. Travel Policy; and
b. Travel Procedure

(16) Any variation and changes to the approved OSP must be submitted in writing to the Executive Dean for endorsement. Where a staff member wishes to defer an approved OSP (for example, from one year to another), a fresh application must be submitted, with the Executive Dean's approval.

Duration of OSP

(17) An OSP will normally be not less than 4 weeks and not more than 24 weeks in duration. The OSP is to be taken in a continuous period of 24 weeks plus 2 weeks or more for recreational leave. If the period of OSP has been shortened because of extenuating circumstances, the OSP is deemed to have been expended with no expectation of a carry-forward of leave remaining.

(18) A staff member is required to add a minimum of 2 weeks recreational leave and may add long service leave and/or leave without pay to the OSP, as approved by the Executive Dean. Applicants are required to apply via HR On-line for recreation leave, long service leave and/or leave without pay via the relevant form as soon as they have been notified by their Executive Dean that the OSP has been approved. Staff are advised to check with Finance & Analytics to ascertain whether Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) liability may be applicable where personal time is included as part of the authority to travel.

Suspension of University-related Duties

(19) Staff members undertaking an OSP must cease all University-related duties for the duration of their OSP. The Vice-Chancellor may approve continuing membership of University committees in special circumstances. Continuing membership of University Council will be subject to rules of Council. In all circumstances, OSP will be undertaken away from the University.

(20) Staff members who have been provided with a University corporate credit card should notify Finance & Analytics of their impending OSP. This will enable Finance & Analytics to reduce the transaction limit to $1 whilst on OSP. Such a step is aimed at minimising the risk of fraudulent activity should the corporate credit card be lost or stolen.

(21) No OSP associated costs should be paid using a University corporate credit card either before, during or after the period of OSP.

Outside Work During OSP

(22) Where a staff member is receiving or is expecting to receive income or financial assistance from sources outside

the University during or in respect of their period on OSP, the Outside Studies Program Policy will apply, and appropriate notification and/or approval must be sought. In such circumstances, the University may seek repayment of all or a portion of financial assistance or allocate less than the maximum financial assistance requested in the OSP application.

Location

(23) As part of the OSP Application, staff members are required to provide a detailed itinerary of their location's both nationally and internationally.

Financial Assistance

(24) Financial assistance is intended to be a contribution towards the cost of undertaking an OSP and there should be no expectation that the full cost incurred by a staff member in undertaking an OSP will be covered (refer Financial Assistance Explained). The assistance is related to the duration and location of the OSP. Accordingly, the maximum financial assistance provided by the University towards OSP-associated expenses is as follows.

For OSP within Australia		For OSP outside Australia	
Absence from ACT of less than 12 weeks	Absence from ACT of 12 weeks or more	Absence from Australia of less than 12 weeks	Absence from Australia of more than 12 weeks
Up to a maximum of $8,078	Up to a maximum of $10,771	Up to a maximum of $10,472	Up to a maximum of $12,716

(25) Part-time staff will be entitled to financial support on the same basis as full-time staff.

(26) An amount less than the maximum specified will be allocated on a pro rata basis where the funding available for OSP purposes is insufficient to meet the total financial assistance requested by all successful OSP applicants.

(27) For the purposes of OSP budget estimates outlined in Clause 8 above, "OSP-associated expenses" apply to the staff member only and are defined as: travel expenses, accommodation expenses, meals whilst travelling and expenses directly related to the conduct of the OSP. No amount may be sought in relation to any costs or expenses incurred for a person other than the applicant. The Executive Dean may determine that a component of the budget estimate as part of the application does not fall within the spirit of "reasonable OSP-associated expenses" and may decline to approve that component.

(28) Additional expenses incurred over and above the financial assistance granted will not be recoverable from the University.

(29) Financial assistance will not be provided under the OSP Policy to assist with the additional costs of attendance at conferences incurred or to be incurred during an OSP. A staff member may be supported from any separate Faculty funds or external source of funds for such purposes. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their intentions with their Executive Deans and confirm that separate funds are available in their Faculty to assist them.

(30) For approved travel to or between institutions outside the ACT, where a clear affiliation has been established, the staff member must obtain a written quotation from the University approved travel agent as part of their budget.

(31) For approved travel to or between institutions outside the ACT, where a clear affiliation has been established, the staff member must obtain a written quotation from the University approved travel agent as part of their budget estimate formulation. Unless the Executive Dean otherwise directs, the payment of financial assistance to the staff member proceeding on OSP will be:

a. available through a University provided Travelex card (which may be used as a Visa card for booking air travel

or as a debit card accessed through ATMs);

b. made in two instalments;
c. the first instalment will coincide with the booking of the air travel (preferably through the University's approved travel agent);
d. the second instalment will be made no sooner than two months before the proposed date of departure on OSP;
e. requests for a University Travelex card (or for funds to be loaded to a University Travelex card) must be lodged with Finance & Analytics at least two weeks before the card/funds are required. All requests must be accompanied by the OSP approval documentation; and
f. acquittal of the University Travelex card is not required for OSP-associated travel. However, the staff member may wish to retain the documentation for tax reporting purposes, for example, as evidence of the 'business' nature of the travel.

(32) OSP funds paid are taxable but will not be taxed at the time of payment. The amount paid will appear on the staff members Payment Summary as the payment of a travel allowance.

(33) The staff member will need to seek their own advice in relation to how this payment will impact their individual situation including the:

a. requirement to disclose the amount received as taxable income in their personal tax return;
b. ability to claim expenses against this income in their personal taxation return; and
c. required documentary evidence to claim these expenses in their personal tax return.

Variation to OSP

(34) Any variation and changes to the approved OSP must be agreed by the Executive Dean. Where a staff member wishes to defer an approved OSP (for example, from one year to another), a fresh application must be submitted for the Dean's approval.

Grievances

(35) A staff member whose application is not approved should seek feedback from their Executive Dean, with an aim to facilitate informal, early resolution.

(36) If the staff members concerns are not resolved, an employee may refer to the University's grievance resolution principles and procedure, as outlined within the Enterprise Agreement in force at the time.

Reporting Obligations to the University

(37) Within three months of return to the University after an OSP, a staff member will submit the following:

a. a short summary which gives an overview of the OSP outcomes;
b. a statement of the major objectives as set out in the original application (or in any subsequently approved modifications) and an evaluation of the extent to which the objectives of the program were achieved;
c. an assessment of the academic benefit(s) gained by the staff member and a statement of how this will impact on future teaching or research performance;
d. a statement of collaborations developed with other institutions or individuals and how these collaborations will be sustained;
e. a list of actual or expected publications, collaborative research projects developed, successful or submitted funding application and joint HDR supervision opportunities developed.

(38) Within six months of return to the University after an OSP, a staff member will present a seminar to the staff of

their Faculty. The University considers reporting to be an essential component of the OSP Policy.

Guidelines for Writing an OSP Report

(39) Refer to Guidelines for Writing an OSP Report.

Section 4 - Policies

(40) Refer Outside Studies Program Policy.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	18th April 2023
Review Date	18th April 2024
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	18th April 2023
Expiry Date	13th September 2026
Custodian	Michelle Moore Chief Operating Officer and Vice-President Operations Michelle.Moore@canberra.edu.au
Responsible Manager	Ethan Althofer Program Manager
Author	Ethan Althofer Program Manager
Enquiries Contact	Nick Markesinis Policy Manager --- Policy