TRAVEL POLICY 2018

The Vice-Chancellor as delegate of the Senate of the University of Sydney, adopts the following policy.

Dated: 11 December 2017
Last amended: 29 February 2020
Signature: Dr Michael Spence

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1 Name of policy

This is the Travel Policy 2018.

2 Commencement

This policy commences on 1 January 2018.

3 Policy is binding

Except to the extent that a contrary intention is expressed, this policy binds the University, staff, students and affiliates.
4 Statement of intent

This policy:

(a) provides a framework for managing travel undertaken for University work or study, which supports:
   (i) traveller safety;
   (ii) efficiency;
   (iii) responsible financial management; and
   (iv) statutory and regulatory compliance;

(b) operates consistently with:
   (i) the University’s safety management system, as provided in the Work Health and Safety Policy 2016; and
   (ii) the Procurement Policy;

and

(c) reflects on the University’s values of:
   (i) respect and integrity; and
   (ii) openness and engagement

Note: See the University’s Strategic plan 2016-20.

5 Application

(1) This policy applies to all travel undertaken on behalf of the University or for the purposes of University work or study, which involves:
   (a) a trip of 100 kilometres or more from the traveller’s usual workplace; or
   (b) an overnight stay.

(2) This policy applies to travel funded by a third party, but travellers are also required to meet any additional requirements of the funding body.

6 Definitions

affiliate has the meaning provided in the Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates. At the date of this policy, that is:
   clinical title holders; adjunct, conjoint and honorary appointees; consultants and contractors to the University; holders of offices in University entities, members of Boards of University Foundations, members of University Committees; and any other persons appointed or engaged by the University to perform duties or functions on its behalf.

Dean means, as appropriate, Dean or Head of School and Dean or Dean (University School).
delegate means a person with appropriate delegated authority under the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority- Administrative Functions) Rule 2016.

fieldwork has the meaning provided in the Fieldwork Safety Standards. At the date of this policy, that is:

practical teaching and research activities carried out in the natural environment or community, away from the normal support networks of the University. Refer to Appendix B for examples.

head of administrative area has the meaning provided in the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016. At the date of this policy, that is:

head of Administrative area, which means a senior staff member, outside a faculty or University school, whose position is declared as such by the Vice-Chancellor in writing and recorded as such in the relevant human resources recordkeeping systems.

head of school has the meaning provided in the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016. At the date of this policy, that is:

means Head of School, which means:

• a head of a school within a faculty (including a Head of School and Dean within a faculty); or
• the head of an equivalent budget unit formally approved as such by the Provost.

Where appropriate, a reference to a HOS includes a reference to:

• the Director, China Studies Centre;
• the Director, Sydney Southeast Asia Centre;
• a Director, Brain and Mind Centre;
• the Director, University of Sydney Nano Institute;
• the Director, Centre for Translational Data Science;
• the Chief Executive Officer, John Grill Centre for Project Leadership;
• the Chief Executive Officer, University Veterinary Teaching Hospital; or
• the Director, University of Sydney Institute of Agriculture.

independent contractor has the meaning provided in the Workforce Engagements and Payments Policy 2016. At the date of this policy, that is

a party engaged directly by the University pursuant to a contract for services. This includes sole traders, companies or partnerships with whom the University enters into an agreement for the provision of specific individuals to supply specific skills, services or consultancy arrangements. It does not include individuals engaged through labour hire agencies.
manager means:

- **in the case of a staff member:** the person nominated by the University from time to time as the staff member’s supervisor, as recorded in the Human Resources information system;
- **in the case of an affiliate:** the University officer nominated as responsible for their engagement,
- **in the case of a student:** the relevant head of school.

procedures Means the *Travel Procedures 2018*

travel advisory Means formal advice about particular destinations issued by:

- the *Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*, or
- a commercial travel advice service engaged by the University, the details of which are published on the travel website.

7 General principles

(1) Travel approval is required for all travel.

(2) Where possible, communications technology should be used to minimise the need for travel.

Note: See *Environmental Sustainability Policy 2015*

(3) Subject to the provisions of this policy and the procedures, travellers must:

- (a) obtain best value for money;
- (b) use the lowest fare available at the time of booking, for economy class travel unless otherwise approved under sub-clause 7(6) or as prescribed in the procedures;
- (c) use a safe and reliable carrier;
- (d) take the most direct available routes;
- (e) plan travel such as to minimise time away from the University which impacts on team and operational requirements;
- (f) travel at times and on dates within a reasonable timeframe of the required departure and arrival times; and
- (g) arrange travel with a University approved travel management company and supplier.

(4) University travellers must conduct themselves consistently with all applicable University policies, including but not limited to:

- (a) *Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates*;
- (b) *Student Charter 2020*;
- (c) *Research Code of Conduct 2013*;
- (d) *Acceptable Use of ICT Resources Policy 2019*;
- (e) *Work Health and Safety Policy 2016*.

(5) Where appropriate, adjustments to travel arrangements must be made to accommodate the specific requirements of people with disability.
8 Travel safety

(1) Those planning travel must consider:
   (a) risks associated with:
       (i) destinations;
       (ii) modes of transport;
       (iii) work or study activities to be undertaken;
       (iv) individual characteristics of the travellers; and
   (b) any applicable travel advisories.

(2) Those planning travel to destinations classified by the University as ‘high risk’ or ‘very high risk’ must complete a travel risk assessment.

Note: Refer to the travel risk matrix in Schedule One, which sets out the travel risk levels.

(3) The Director, Safety Health and Wellbeing may develop travel safety guidelines, which will be published on the travel website. University travellers should comply with such guidelines where possible.

(4) Travellers must take all reasonable steps to remain contactable while travelling.

9 Insurance

(1) The University provides travellers with appropriate travel insurance, including emergency support. Details of cover are provided on the University website.

(2) Unless legally obligated to do so, the University will not provide insurance for:
   (a) personal travel;
   (b) accompanying persons; or
   (c) independent contractors.

10 Travel approval

(1) Travellers who require approval must obtain it before travelling, unless otherwise permitted by the procedures.

(2) Travel expenses incurred without prior approval may be classified as a personal expense.

(3) Travellers must obtain approval from:
   (a) their manager or other relevant delegate;

Note: if the amount to be spent exceeds the relevant manager’s delegation, then approval must be escalated to a position which holds the necessary financial delegation. See University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016.

and

(b) if the destination is international and the purpose of the travel is to conduct fieldwork, by the relevant head of school.
(4) If the destination is classified by the University as ‘high risk’, travellers must also obtain approval:
   (a) from the relevant
       (i) head of school;
       (ii) Deputy Vice-Chancellor; or
       (iii) Chief Financial Officer, Chief Information Officer; Chief Marketing Officer; Director Campus Infrastructure Services or Chief Human Resources Officer, as appropriate.
   or
   (b) as prescribed in the procedures.

(5) If the destination is classified by the University as ‘very high risk’, travellers must also obtain approval from, as appropriate:
   (a) Dean;
   (b) Deputy Vice-Chancellor, or
   (c) Vice-Principal (Operations).

   Note: The University’s determination of destination risk level is based on relevant travel advisories. See Schedule One of this policy.

(6) Where the person responsible for approving travel is not the person responsible for the nominated account from which the travel is to be funded, the approval of both must be obtained before travel expenses are incurred.

(7) A traveller may not under any circumstances authorise their own travel or reimbursement of their own travel related expenses.

(8) Those approving travel must consider:
   (a) the intended objectives of the travel, and their alignment with overall University objectives;
   (b) the timing and maximum duration of the travel permitted by their head of school or head of administrative unit to meet the work area’s operational requirements, such as coverage for absences.
   (c) risks associated with undertaking the travel;
   (d) proposed arrangements for communications between the traveller and the University; and
   (e) The availability of sufficient funding.

(9) Travellers may use personal funds or reward points to fund upgraded travel or increased travel expenses where this is not an approved University expense.
   (a) Such arrangements must be made independently of the University and not processed through University systems.

11 Travel bookings and itineraries

(1) Except where permitted by this policy and procedures, travel bookings must be made through University preferred suppliers.

(2) Personal preferences, airline memberships and reward program memberships (such as frequent flyer programs) are not themselves sufficient to warrant selection of a non-preferred supplier.
Note: See travel website

(3) Travellers must provide their manager with access to their current itinerary.

(4) Travel must be booked using one of the following methods, listed in order of preference.
   (a) the University’s online booking tool; or
   (b) the University’s appointed travel management company.

(5) In exceptional circumstances, travel may be booked through a non-preferred booking channel. Such circumstances include:
   (a) where the travel requires specific capabilities which the preferred booking channel cannot provide (such as fieldwork or where the activities need to be arranged as part of a conference supplied package); and
   (b) where a third party provider can provide cheaper pricing at the same level of safety and:
       (i) the preferred booking channel cannot match the quoted price; and
       (ii) this is evidenced in writing from the preferred booking channel (e.g. by means of a quote).

12 Associated leave

(1) University staff are considered to be at work while on approved University travel, including between periods of approved travel when it is impractical to return to their normal place of work. This does not include periods of personal travel when a staff member is on approved leave.

(2) The relevant manager may approve personal travel in conjunction with approved University travel, provided that:
   (a) the absence is not inconvenient to the staff member’s faculty, school or business unit;
   (b) the University will not incur Fringe Benefit Tax liability; and
   (c) the leave is approved consistently with the University’s standard leave booking process.

(3) If the personal component of the travel is more than incidental, this may result in the University being liable for Fringe Benefits Tax. For calculating Fringe Benefits Tax liability, the time away starts when the traveller leaves home or work and ends when they arrive back at home or work.

(4) The traveller must separately pay for all costs associated with personal travel, including travel insurance. These costs will not be paid or reimbursed by the University.

(5) If:
   (a) a trip involves personal travel which is 30% or more of the total days away; then
   (b) the staff member must personally also pay 50% of the airfares.

Note: See travel website for FAQ.
13 **Spouses, partners and dependants**

(1) The University will not pay for costs incurred for an accompanying spouse, partner or dependant unless:

(a) The travel is part of a program approved under the [Special Studies Program Policy 2015](#); or

(b) There are special circumstances and the costs are approved:
   
   (i) by the relevant Dean;
   
   (ii) by the Provost;
   
   (iii) by the Vice-Principal (Operations); or
   
   (iv) As prescribed in the procedures.

**Note:** Fringe Benefits Tax may apply to travel payments made by the University for accompanying spouses, partners or dependants.

(2) Travellers must ensure that University activities for which the travel has been approved are not compromised by the presence of an accompanying spouse, partner or dependant.

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14 **Travel expenses**

(1) This clause does not apply to travel which is part of a program approved under the [Special Studies Program Policy 2015](#).

(2) The University will pay for approved reasonable business costs for travel, conferences, meals and incidental expenses.

**Note:** Refer to the procedures for details of allowable expenses. See also the [Non-Allowable Expense Procedures 2018](#).

(3) Travellers must complete expense claims and acquittals in the manner prescribed in the procedures.

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15 **Responsibilities**

(1) **Travellers are responsible for:**

   (a) planning their travel, including appropriate controls to manage identified risks;

   (b) ensuring that there are sufficient funds in the nominated account/s to cover the cost of their travel;

   (c) reading relevant travel advisories;

   (d) assessing their own fitness to travel and obtaining necessary vaccinations;

   **Note:** The University will reimburse travellers for the cost of vaccinations required for their specific travel destinations, other than for vaccinations listed in the [National Immunisation Program Schedule](#).

   (e) possessing a valid passport, appropriate visas and complying with relevant immigration requirements;

   (f) providing true and complete information to relevant managers;

   (g) obtaining necessary approvals under this and any other applicable policy or procedures;
(h) ensuring that their manager has access to their current itinerary;
(i) establishing appropriate communication arrangements with their manager;
(j) managing costs and expenses responsibly and consistently with this policy and the procedures;
(k) retaining and providing all necessary documentation to support:
   (i) claims for expenses;
   (ii) acquittal of advances;
   (iii) grant reporting; and
   (iv) audit requirements;
(l) making appropriate arrangements for any allocated teaching or other duties that take place during their absence.

(2) **Travel approvers are responsible for** satisfying themselves that:

(a) The proposed travel:
   (i) is being reasonably incurred;
   (ii) is necessary to meet its intended objectives;
   (iii) is planned appropriately, including appropriate risk control measures; and
   (iv) is for appropriate University activities;
(b) the traveller;
   (i) is competent to undertake the travel; and
   (ii) has established appropriate communications arrangements;
(c) there are sufficient funds in the nominated account/s to cover the cost of the travel;
(d) the cost to the University is minimised;
(e) the duration and timing of the travel is appropriate, given University operational requirements.

16 **Administration**

(1) The Chief Financial Officer is the proposed administrator of this policy and the Chief Human Resources Officer is the administrator of clause 8. Formal policy reviews are the responsibility of, and must be initiated by, both jointly.

(2) The Chief Human Resources Officer, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer, may determine procedures relating to clause 8 or otherwise in relation to the management of travel risk and safety.

(3) The Chief Financial Officer may determine procedures relating to all other clauses of this policy.

17 **Rescissions and replacements**

This document replaces the Travel Policy which commenced on 1 October 2008, and which is rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document.
NOTES

Travel Policy 2018

Date adopted: 11 December 2017
Date amended: 29 February 2020
Date commenced: 1 January 2018
Administrator: Chief Financial Officer, Chief Human Resources Officer
Review date: 11 December 2022
Rescinded documents: Travel Policy
Related documents:
- University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016
- Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates
- Student Charter 2020
- Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Acceptable Use of ICT Resources Policy 2019
- Procurement Policy 2019
- Special Studies Program Policy 2015
- Research Code of Conduct 2013
- Workforce Engagements and Payments Policy 2016
- Work Health and Safety Policy 2016
- Special Studies Program Procedures 2015
- Travel Procedures 2018
- Non-Allowable Expense Procedures 2018
- Fieldwork Safety Standards
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2019-2024

AMENDMENT HISTORY

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<tr>
<th>Provision</th>
<th>Amendment</th>
<th>Commencing</th>
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<tr>
<td>Various</td>
<td>Minor Administrative Amendments, replace dependent with dependant</td>
<td>18 Jan 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>4(c)</td>
<td>Subclause added</td>
<td>10 September 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Change Description</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Definition of fieldwork added. Definition of head of school amended. Definition of temporary worker deleted.</td>
<td>10 September 2019</td>
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<td>9(2)(c)</td>
<td>‘or temporary workers’ deleted.</td>
<td>10 September 2019</td>
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<td>14(4); 14(5)</td>
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<td>29 February 2020</td>
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Schedule One

UNIVERSITY TRAVEL RISK LEVELS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>DFAT Travel Advisory</th>
<th>RiskLine Travel Advisory Risk Levels *</th>
<th>University Risk Levels</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>Exercise normal safety precautions</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exercise a high degree of caution</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reconsider your need to travel</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do not travel</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
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*Available through the University’s online travel and expense management system.