

# SPECIAL STUDIES PROGRAM PROCEDURES 2015

**Issued by:** Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor  
**Date:** 10 December 2015  
**Last amended:** 6 June 2018(administrative amendments only)  
**Signature:**  
**Name:** Professor Stephen Garton

---

## 1 Purpose and application

- (1) These procedures are to give effect to the Special Studies Program Policy 2015 (“the **policy**”).
- (2) These procedures apply to:
  - (a) academic staff who are eligible for special studies leave; and
  - (b) the management of special studies leave.

## 2 Commencement

These procedures commence on 1 February 2016.

## 3 Interpretation

- (1) Words and phrases used in these procedures and not otherwise defined in this document have the meanings they have in the policy.

**Note:** See clause 6 of the policy

- (2) In these procedures:

**ATO** means the Australian Taxation Office, whose website is [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au).

## 4 Applications for SSP

- (1) Applications will be called for once in each semester unless the faculty has elected have only one application round per year.
- (2) Staff considering applying for SSP should discuss this with the relevant Head well in advance of the submission date for applications.

- (3) Staff seeking approval for SSP must:
  - (a) apply using the [Special Studies Program Application Form](#) found on the HR forms website; and
  - (b) submit the form to the relevant Head by the closing date nominated by the faculty.
- (4) Late applications must not be considered.

## **5 Heads' reports**

- (1) The relevant Head must prepare a report for the faculty SSP Committee on each application received.
- (2) The report must comment briefly on each of the following issues:
  - (a) which other members of the area will be away during the period, providing names and dates of absence;
  - (b) what arrangements can be made for the applicant's the teaching, supervision and administrative duties;
  - (c) the extent to which the functioning of the applicant's area would be impacted;
  - (d) the academic value of the proposed SSP to:
    - (i) the applicant;
    - (ii) the area; and
    - (iii) the University; and
  - (e) whether the proposed SSP will achieve the objectives of developing, maintaining or improving employment related skills, knowledge and competencies.
- (3) In preparing the report, the Head should consult relevant senior members of the area, and should list those consulted in the final report.

## **6 Financial support**

- (1) The University will provide financial contributions to SSP in the amounts, and for the purposes, specified in the Schedule to these procedures. This includes contribution towards:
  - (a) an economy class, advance-purchase return airfare; and
  - (b) living expenses for SSP taken overseas or outside NSW.
- (2) Staff may normally draw their travel and living expenses up to six weeks prior to departure.
- (3) Staff may elect to be paid fortnightly during their SSP at half the normal rate, with the remaining portion payable in advance.
- (4) Staff taking SSP may apply to vary the amount of income tax withholding that is deducted from their salary during the period of SSP.
  - (a) Staff seeking to vary their rate of income tax withholding must apply for, and obtain, an appropriate notification from the ATO which sets out:
    - (i) the approved revised rate of income tax withholding; and

- (ii) the period for which it is approved.

**Note:** The form for obtaining ATO approval is called the [PAYG withholding variation application](#), and is available from the [ATO website](#). The application may take up to two months for the ATO to process, so staff must ensure that it is lodged well in advance of commencing their SSP.

- (b) The staff member is responsible for obtaining the approval.
  - (c) Variations to the amount of tax withholding will not be processed by the University until the HR Service Centre receives the notification from the ATO.
  - (d) Staff members whose tax withholding amounts are varied are responsible for meeting the ATO deduction substantiation requirements in order to support their tax return for the relevant tax year.
  - (e) If the term of an SSP spans two financial years, it may be necessary to make application to the ATO for a revised withholding rate for both financial years.
- (5) Amounts paid by the University towards travel costs and living expenses:
- (a) will be paid without deduction of taxation instalments, and will be shown in the "Travelling or Other Allowances" section of the Payment Summary to enable a staff member to claim travel expenses against these payments;
  - (b) require the retention of receipts against expenditure; and
  - (c) will be taxed where they are not offset by allowable expenditure.
- (6) Staff should seek their own taxation advice if they have any further queries on taxation matters.
- (7) The levels of financial support listed in the Schedule must be reviewed every two years by the Office of the Provost and approved by the University Executive.

## 7 Reporting after SSP

- (1) The staff member must submit their written report to the Head within one month of return to regular duties.
- (2) Where appropriate, this can be followed with a subsequent report documenting outcomes.
- (3) After considering the report, the Head must provide it to the faculty SSP committee together with written comments about the extent to which the stated objectives have been met.
- (4) Staff may be asked to resubmit if their report is considered unsatisfactory.
- (5) The Head must provide a copy of the report to the HR Service Centre for placement on the staff members file.

## 8 Rescissions and replacements

This document replaces the *Special Studies Program Procedures* which were adopted on 10 October 2006 and which are rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document:

## NOTES

### Special Studies Program Procedures 2015

Date adopted:	10 December 2015
Date registered:	
Date commenced:	1 February 2016
Date amended:	6 June 2018 (administrative amendments only)
Administrator:	Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Review date:	1 February 2021
Related documents:	<i>Intellectual Property Policy 2016</i> <i>External Interests Policy 2011</i> <i>Outside Earnings of Academic Staff Policy 2010</i> <i>Special Studies Program Policy 2015</i> <i>Travel Policy 2018</i> <i>Work Health and Safety Policy 2016</i> <i>Travel Procedures 2018</i> <i>Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016</i>

---

## AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
Related documents	Updated reference	23 August 2016
6(7)	Changed reference to Senior Executive Group (SEG) to University Executive (I.E.)	27 October 2016
Related documents	Update Travel Policy to Travel Policy 2018	6 June 2018
Related documents	Update Travel Procedures to Travel Procedures 2018	6 June 2018

Related documents      Update Work Health and Safety Policy 2012 to Work Health and Safety Policy 2016      6 June 2018

Related documents      Update Work Health and Safety Procedures 2013 to Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016      6 June 2018

## SCHEDULE A

Type of financial support	Amount
Airfare/travel	<p>A\$1000 for travel in Australia, the Pacific and South East Asia</p> <p>A\$1000 for other forms of travel within Australia</p> <p>A\$2800 for travel elsewhere overseas</p>
Living expenses	Up to \$800 per month (pro rata) for overseas and outside NSW
Support for family members (per person)	<p>A\$700 for travel in Australia, the Pacific and South East Asia</p> <p>A\$1500 for travel elsewhere overseas</p>