

TRAVEL POLICY



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Approved by Council: 25 Nov 2015

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Related Documents

University of Divinity Act 1910 section 5 (d)

Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986 (Cth)

Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 (Cth)

Delegations Policy

Health and Safety Policy

1. Rationale and Objectives

This Policy establishes eligibility and criteria for payment or reimbursement of travel costs undertaken by members of the University on University business. It aims to support the effective conduct of business by members of committees of the University and by University Employees.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to employees of the University, and members of the Council, the Academic Board, and the Committees of the University, where the travel is funded by monies under the control of the University of Divinity Council.
- 2.2 External experts providing services or advice to the University may also be eligible for reimbursement of travel costs in accordance with this policy.
- 2.3 This policy does not apply to staff or students of the University's Colleges undertaking travel funded by University Research Grants.

3. Principles

- 3.1 The University is committed to supporting travel by its members where that travel is essential to the governance or operation of the University.
- 3.2 The University takes all reasonable steps to ensure that members engaged in approved travel are safe and that neither they nor the University incur undue loss.
- 3.3 The University ensures that funds are available to meet the travel expenses of members of its Council, Academic Board and committees where fulfilment of their duties requires significant travel.
- 3.4 The University promotes engagement in the higher education sector by its senior leadership and academic staff by providing support for attendance at conferences and participation in networks.

- 3.5 The University ensures that travel arrangements are such that the most efficient and cost-effective use of University resources is achieved.
- 3.6 Anticipated travel costs incurred by members of Council, Academic Board, and Committees must be included in the University's annual budget.
- 4. Guidelines for travel**
 - 4.1 General Travel
 - 4.1.1 Travel should be planned as far as possible in advance to take advantage of cheaper fares and allow flexibility in the time of travel to obtain best value for money.
 - 4.1.2 All travel must be approved prior to booking, in accordance with section 7 of this policy.
 - 4.1.3 All travellers are expected to take the most cost-effective means of travel available, where it is reasonable to do so, and should undertake a cost comparison between available modes of transport prior to booking.
 - 4.1.4 Travel should be booked and paid for by the OVC. Where this is not possible, costs initially paid by the traveller may be reimbursed on presentation of receipts.
 - 4.1.5 Business-related travel may be joined with travel for private purposes where it does not result in an additional unrecovered cost to the University.
 - 4.2 Public transport
 - 4.2.1 Where practical, public transport should be used.
 - 4.3 Car
 - 4.3.1 A private car should be used only when it is a faster and cheaper alternative to public transport or a hire car. For vehicle reimbursement claims, acceptable supporting documentation would be a copy of entries in a Vehicle Log.
 - 4.3.2 The cost of private mileage should be justified against the cost of hiring a car, prior to a journey taking place. For any journey over 150 kilometres, the hire car option should be taken if possible.
 - 4.3.3 Claims for petrol supplied for the hire car must be accompanied by receipts and show suitable deduction for any travel taken for personal purposes.
 - 4.3.4 Parking infringements and fines for traffic violations will not be reimbursed.
 - 4.4 Taxis and Rideshare Services
 - 4.4.1 Taxis or rideshare services should be hired only where public transport is unavailable or when there are special circumstances such as: significant inconvenience; unfamiliar locations; when travellers are carrying heavy or bulky packages or luggage; safety issues; or when, for reasons of economy, it is more economical for a group of people to travel together in a taxi or rideshare service than to use public transport.
 - 4.4.2 Wherever possible, taxis should be pre-booked at a fixed rate.
 - 4.5 Air

4.5.1 Only economy class airfares are permitted, unless prior approval for a different class of travel has been obtained from the Vice-Chancellor; or, in the case of travel by the Vice-Chancellor, the Chancellor. Relevant circumstances may include journeys exceeding 10 hours of flying time and insufficient time to rest before work commitments.

4.5.2 The University does not fund airline frequent flyer program memberships or memberships to airline clubs. Travellers are entitled to claim individual frequent flyer points when travelling for University purposes.

5. Accommodation and subsistence

5.1 Choice of accommodation options are based on price, location and fitness for purpose. Accommodation costs must not exceed \$300 plus GST per night.

5.2 No charges relating to mini-bars (other than for water), hotel phones or film-hire may be reimbursed.

5.3 Employees travelling on business may claim for a maximum of \$30 plus GST per meal, up to a maximum of \$90 plus GST in a 24-hour period. All expenditure must be supported by receipts. Unspent allowances may not be carried over and accumulated.

5.4 Employees may claim for one alcoholic drink with their lunch or evening meal, as part of 5.3.

5.5 If an employee stays with friends, colleagues or family when travelling on business, \$60 for bed and breakfast and \$90 for dinner, bed and breakfast may be claimed, using standard expense claim procedures. GST does not apply.

6. Entertainment

6.1 All entertaining must be on a modest scale. The names of all persons entertained must be listed when submitting receipts of purchase.

6.2 When entertaining on behalf of the University, purchase and consumption of alcohol must be kept to a reasonable level, and undertaken responsibly in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy.

6.3 Use of expensive restaurants is to be avoided wherever possible. If there are reasonable grounds for using a high tariff restaurant, prior approval from the Vice-Chancellor must be obtained.

6.4 Working lunches are not reimbursable for employees entertaining each other, except when it is necessary to order sandwiches or similar food during seminars and meetings, or with prior approval from the Vice-Chancellor.

7. Approval of travel

7.1 Approval of travel may be granted via email, via online booking request to the University's preferred travel agent, or through the Travel and Conference Application Form.

7.2 All travel by University employees must fall within the University's annual budget and must be approved by the relevant supervisor in accordance with the Delegations Policy.

In exceptional circumstances, as outlined elsewhere in this policy, the additional approval of the Vice-Chancellor may be required.

7.3 All domestic travel for the Vice-Chancellor must fall within the University's annual budget and must be approved in accordance with the Delegations Policy. Travel costs exceeding \$5,000, or any international travel, must be approved by the Chancellor.

7.4 Travellers must confirm that unspent funds are available in the relevant budget before confirming booking arrangements.

8. Safety and Insurance

8.1 When considering international travel, travel security advice must be obtained from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade or the University's preferred travel agency. Travel to high-risk areas must be approved by the Vice-Chancellor and may only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

8.2 The University must provide reasonable insurance cover for persons undertaking travel on behalf of the University. The University holds a corporate travel insurance policy that covers all travel approved under the terms of this policy.

8.3 The corporate travel policy is applicable while travelling to the following extent:

- a) all days where the traveller is engaged on University business
- b) all days where the traveller is being transported to and from locations necessary for University business
- c) all weekends (or equivalent) where there is a necessary pause between days as defined in sub-clauses a) and b)
- d) in the case of international travel, a total of three days appended to the beginning or end of a trip where the traveller has taken approved leave from University business.

8.4 The traveller is responsible for arranging insurance cover for any additional days of travel outside those described in clause 8.3 unless arrangement is made and approved in writing with the Vice-Chancellor.

8.5 In exceptional circumstances the corporate travel insurance policy may be applied beyond the terms of this policy or any pre-approved arrangement at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor.

8.6 Travellers are responsible for making themselves aware of terms of the corporate travel insurance policy and behavioural expectations therein in relation to arrangements for travel insurance, any Fringe Benefits Tax implications, health care, safety, loss of belongings or University assets, and travel itinerary changes.

8.7 Travellers are responsible for ensuring that the terms of the corporate travel insurance policy for the type of travel in which they are engaged are not breached.

9. Claiming travel expenses

- 9.1 Claims for travel reimbursement should only be required where the traveller is not able to access online bookings through the University's preferred travel agency or a University of Divinity credit card.
- 9.2 Approved claims for travel are reimbursed on production of receipts for the expenses claimed.
- 9.3 All claims for payment or reimbursement of travel expenses must be submitted to the OVC on the approved form, with supporting documentation, no later than fourteen days after the date on which the travel occurred.
- 9.4 For University employees, a travel diary or similar-record of all international journeys, and of domestic journeys where the time away from home is more than five consecutive nights, must be maintained to substantiate to the Australian Taxation Office the genuine business purpose of the travel undertaken. Failure to do so brings the potential risk of the University incurring substantial financial penalties. Items that must be recorded include:
- a) the nature of the activity
 - b) the day and approximate time the business activity began
 - c) how long the business activity lasted
 - d) the name of the place where the traveller engaged in the business activity.

10. Procedures

- 10.1 The Vice-Chancellor may determine procedures for the implementation of this Policy.

11. Review Date

- 11.1 This policy is to be reviewed no later than 31 December 2030.