

**Policy Title:** Travel

**Policy Owner:** Chief Financial Officer, Finance and Business Services Centre

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**Policy Code:** PL060 [ad027]

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## 1. INTENT

- 1.1. This document outlines the University's policy in relation to all Authorised University Travel, and should be read in conjunction with the [Travel Guidelines](#).
- 1.2. The intent of this policy is to:
  - Govern the circumstances in which travel is arranged and undertaken by University Travellers; and
  - Ensure that the University is able to discharge its duty of care obligations to persons undertaking Authorised University Travel.

## 2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

- All ECU staff;
- Council Members, Committees and Boards;
- External members of University Committees; and
- Other Individuals for whom the University is paying for intrastate, interstate or overseas travel.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Authorised University Travel	Travel undertaken on behalf of the University, (whether fully or partially funded, i.e. sponsored, by the University or a third party), for purposes directly associated with the functions of, and approved by, the University including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Study tours;</li><li>• Student recruitment;</li><li>• Overseas teaching;</li><li>• Partner institution activities;</li></ul>

TERM	DEFINITION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference and meeting attendance;</li> <li>• Visiting Fellows;</li> <li>• Approved consultancies; and</li> <li>• Approved research activities.</li> </ul>
Board	A Board established under the ECU Act or Statutes (except the Academic Board). This includes (but is not limited to): the South West Campus (Bunbury) Advisory Board; the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts Board; and the ECU Foundation Board.
Business Day	Any day spent undertaking formal business activities (including travel). Business activities should exceed three hours to qualify as a business day whilst on Authorised University Travel. Refer to Item 5.1 of the Travel Guidelines for further details.
Council Committee	A committee established by resolution of Council which reports to Council and which consists principally, but not exclusively of, members of Council.
Delegated Authority	The delegation that an individual holds as a result of the position they occupy at the University, conferred upon the individual for a specific purpose.
Dual Purpose Travel	Where private travel is not merely incidental, the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) classifies the travel as having a dual purpose (i.e. private and business) and would be subject to Fringe Benefits Tax.
External Member	A member of a Committee who is not an employee of the University.
High Risk Countries	Countries with a travel advice rating from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Level 2 "Exercise a high degree of caution", Level 3 "Reconsider your need to travel" and Level 4 "Do not travel".
Incidental Travel	Where the existence of private travel is purely incidental to the main purpose and does not affect the characterisation of the business related expenses.
Other Individuals	Individuals for whom the University has agreed to fund travel. This includes (but is not limited to) Students, Visiting Fellows, Consultants and Job Applicants.
Per Diem	A daily allowance paid to employees to cover all meals and minor incidentals while on international Authorised University Travel that is research related.
Private Day	Any day not considered a Business Day whilst on Authorised University Travel. Refer to Item 5.2 of the Travel Guidelines for further details.
Recovery Day	A day of physical recovery provided to approved travellers immediately following international long haul flights (in excess of 8 hours). Refer to Item 5.3 of the Travel Guidelines for further details.
Return Ticket	A ticket entitling a passenger to travel to the business destination and back again.

TERM	DEFINITION
University Committee	A committee of the University, other than a Council Committee, or a committee established pursuant to the Act, Statutes, by-laws, or rules of the University.
University Travel Agent	An agent that has been chosen through a market competitive process to deliver the best value travel agency services to the University.
University Traveller	Anyone who is travelling on University business arranged by the University.

#### 4. POLICY CONTENT

- 4.1. This policy applies to anyone who undertakes Authorised University Travel, irrespective of whether the travel is fully or partially funded (i.e. “sponsored”) by the University, or funded by a third party.
- 4.2. Subject to paragraph 4.5 below, it is expected that staff who undertake Authorised University Travel will utilise a University credit card to pay for travel related expenses. If you do not hold a University credit card you can, subject to approval from the cardholder, utilise the University credit card of a colleague or School/Centre Officer. Where no University credit card is available, only bona fide claims for travel-related expenses arising from Authorised University Travel will be reimbursed (refer to [Reimbursement Guidelines](#)).
- 4.3. Bookings for flights, accommodation and car hire for Authorised University Travel should be arranged through the designated University Travel Agent and paid for using a University credit card, unless the Authorised University Travel is funded and coordinated by a third party.

University Travellers are permitted to utilise Airbnb for both domestic and international accommodation whilst on Authorised University Travel in accordance with the conditions outlined in the Travel Guidelines.

- 4.4. Where available, Cabcharge Digital Passes or eTICKETS may be used for domestic taxi expenses for University related business if the traveller does not hold a University credit card (refer to [Travel Guidelines](#)).

Employees responsible for issuing Cabcharge Digital Passes or eTICKETS to University Travellers are governed by the conditions outlined in the Travel Guidelines.

- 4.5. In accordance with the conditions outlined in the Travel Guidelines, University Travellers may utilise Uber, a ground transportation service, for both domestic and international University related business. Subject to approval, travellers can be provided with access to ECU’s Uber for Business Account which allows travellers to charge their business travel directly to ECU (refer to [Travel Guidelines](#)).

- 4.6. Expenses incurred in connection with Authorised University Travel must be reasonable. Reference should be made to current ATO guidelines to determine reasonable expenses for accommodation, sustenance meals and incidentals expenditure (refer to [Travel Guidelines](#)). For the entertainment of guests whilst travelling on University business, refer to the University's [Entertainment and Catering Expenditure Policy](#).

For Research related travel, a per diem allowance can be claimed for international Authorised University Travel: if requested prior to undertaking the travel; the duration of the travel is between 21 and 90 days; and is approved by the relevant financial delegate. The per diem rates will be calculated at the rates specified in the lowest salary banding, in the applicable ATO Guidelines (refer to [Travel Guidelines](#)).

Where Research trips are more than 90 days, and where the sources of funding permit, FBSC may arrange a Living Away from Home Allowance, aligned with the ATO's limits, which will remove the need to acquit sustenance expenses. The Living Away from Home Allowance can only be offered if it satisfies the conditions to be exempt from Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT). The ATO set these conditions and FBSC will advise, on a case-by-case basis, if the conditions can be satisfied.

The University reserves the right to withdraw the option of a per diem allowance.

- 4.7. If the Authorised University Travel undertaken by staff members includes private travel which exceeds the University's determination of Incidental Travel, the travel will be considered as Dual Purpose Travel. Where the travel is deemed to have a dual purpose, the University will bear the cost of 50% of the total cost of a return ticket to the business destination, or the actual cost of a one-way fare to the business destination (whichever is lower). All staff members will be required to reimburse any additional cost incurred to ECU prior to the travel being undertaken (refer to [Travel Guidelines](#)).
- 4.8. Unless the terms and conditions of their employment provide otherwise, it is expected that employees undertaking Authorised University Travel which is fully or partly paid for using University funds will travel in Economy Class.

In some special circumstances, travel in Premium Economy or Business Class may be more appropriate (e.g. domestic flights in some developing nations or international travel involving "long haul" flights, e.g. eight hours flying time or longer). Such travel may be booked in Premium Economy or Business Class subject to approval by their Executive Dean/Dean/Director.

[Note: The above exceptions are strictly subject to the availability of funds.]

- 4.9. Approval to undertake Authorised University Travel and travel-related expenditure must be obtained in advance from the Delegated Authority, as specified in the table below.  
[Note: This approval hierarchy may be modified by exception only with the express approval of the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Destination	Schools	Centres
<b>Domestic</b>	Executive Dean* / Dean*	Director or equivalent
<b>International (excluding High Risk Countries)</b>		
<b>International (High Risk Countries)</b>	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor
<b>Dual Purpose Travel (Domestic and International)</b>	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor

\*Note: The Executive Dean may delegate approval of domestic travel to Associate Deans.

- 4.10. Travel by the Vice-Chancellor will be approved by the Vice-President (Corporate Services) for domestic travel or the Chancellor for international travel.
- 4.11. For members of Council and Council Committees and Boards, all forms of travel will be approved by the Director, Strategic and Governance Services Centre.
- 4.12. In order to avoid risks associated with business continuity, it is recommended that no more than two Senior Staff / Board / Committee Members from the same business area travel together.
- 4.13. For External Members of University Committees and Other Individuals, travel will be approved by the Executive Dean/Dean/Director with overall budgetary responsibility for the activity which necessitates the travel.
- 4.14. Requests for approval to travel are to be obtained in the following manner:
- Staff – via the [Travel Approval System](#) (TAS);
  - Non-staff (excluding students) – via the [Travel Approval Non Staff](#) form;
  - Students – via the [Travel Approval Student](#) form.
- 4.15. In extenuating circumstances, employees may apply for an exemption to requirements contained in this Travel Policy. All exemptions must detail justifications, be endorsed by the relevant Executive Dean / Dean / Director, the relevant Finance or Business Manager (FBSC), the Travel Administrator and approved by the Chief Financial Officer (refer to the [Request for Exemption from Policies](#) form under the Procurement of Goods and Services section). Please note that exemptions must be sought well in advance of anticipated travel and prior to expenditure.

## **5. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In relation to this policy, the following positions are responsible for the following:

### *Chief Financial Officer*

The Policy Owner has overall responsibility for the content of this policy and its operation in ECU.

### *University Travellers*

Staff are required to comply with the content of this policy and to seek guidance in the event of uncertainty as to its application.

## **6. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- 6.1. The policy is supported by the following Guidelines:
- [Travel Guidelines](#)
  - [Reimbursement Guidelines](#)
- 6.2. Other documents which are relevant to the operation of this policy are as follows:
- [University Credit Card Policy – PL066 \(ad041\)](#);
  - [University Credit Card Procedure](#); and
  - [Entertainment and Catering Expenditure Policy – PL247 \(ad087\)](#).

## 7. CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document, please contact:

Policy Owner	Chief Financial Officer Finance and Business Services Centre
All Enquiries Contact:	Travel Administrator
Telephone:	08 6304 2546
Email address:	<a href="mailto:travelrequests@ecu.edu.au">travelrequests@ecu.edu.au</a>

## 8. APPROVAL HISTORY

Policy Approved by:	Vice-Chancellor
Date Policy First Approved:	19/05/2004
Date last modified:	28/08/2019
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