

# OUTSIDE STUDY PROGRAM (OSP) PROCEDURE

## SCOPE

This procedure applies to all fixed-term and continuing academic staff of the University.

This procedure does not apply to casual, sessional appointments (including periodic academic employment and fixed-term variable (Monash PhD students), adjuncts and conjoint appointees.

For the purpose of this procedure, references to 'the 'University' includes staff at Monash University Australia, Monash University Malaysia and Monash Suzhou.

## PROCEDURE STATEMENT

The [Outside Study Program](#) (OSP) provides a period of release from normal academic duties to undertake research, education and engagement while being paid your substantive salary. It is a planned program of work intended to align with the strategic direction of the University, Faculty and Unit so that staff can significantly contribute to the strategic direction. OSP is intended to:

- enhance personal scholarly development, knowledge, skills and experience in the academic discipline;
- provide access to resources;
- build deep and extensive engagement in international and domestic partnerships and collaborations with industry, government, non-government organisations and/or other universities;
- contribute to excellence in research and education;
- enhance the standing of the Faculty (School in Malaysia or Centre/Institute in Suzhou), the Unit and the staff member; and
- increase the international and domestic standing of the University.

OSP may be undertaken internationally and/or domestically, normally up to a six-month uninterrupted period.

OSP does not constitute leave, and staff are still employed by the University whilst on OSP. It is an approved program of work that is not undertaken during a staff member's regular University duties. As staff remain an employee of the University during their OSP, they must continue to comply with University policies, procedures and related documents.

Participation in OSP is via a competitive application process, and approval is not automatic, even if you meet the eligibility criteria. The number of applications approved in a calendar year may be limited by the funds available and depend upon the nature/quality of the applications received.

## 1. Eligibility

1.1 Staff are eligible to apply for OSP if they are a fixed-term or continuing academic staff member and:

Type of Application	Conditions	
First OSP Application	The staff member has completed three years of continuous service at the time of their first OSP period commencing unless otherwise agreed in accordance with their employment contract. <b>Note:</b> two 'years' continuous service where prior service has been formally recognised – refer to clause 1.8 below.	The staff member is meeting the minimum requirements of the <a href="#">Academic Performance Framework</a> as determined by their Faculty, and they have a current and approved myPlan/PDP in place.
Second or subsequent application	When the proposed OSP commences, the staff member has completed three years of continuous service since concluding their last period of OSP.	

1.2 Staff may not be eligible if they:

- are under a formal performance management/improvement plan;
- have breached the [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#) and associated procedures;
- have breached the [Ethics Statement Policy](#); or
- are under formal investigation.

1.3 Staff in the probation phase of their employment are ineligible to apply for or be awarded OSP unless otherwise approved by the Dean.

1.4 Staff members who have received written notification that:

- their probation has been confirmed via an Academic Probation Review; or
- they have been promoted or directly appointed to a higher position during their probation period are eligible to apply for and be awarded OSP.

1.5 OSP cannot be used to undertake study for fulfilment of a university degree (including PhD).

1.6 Academic Leaders such as Deans, Deputy Deans, Associate Deans, Heads of Unit and Deputy Heads of Unit can only participate in OSP during the term of their office under special circumstances.

1.6.1 Academic Leaders who are absent on OSP leave for more than four weeks will not be eligible to continue receiving their Academic Leadership Allowance for the full duration of their OSP leave (including for periods of annual leave).

**Note:** Special consideration for OSP applications will be given following the completion of the term of office.

1.7 The University will consider OSP applications if the staff member is a grant-supported staff member where the funding rules of the research grant permit and the department or administrative unit approves the required funding. Staff must seek advice from the Monash Research Office (MRO), grant holder or the relevant Head of Unit.

### Prior service recognition

1.8 For staff in Australia employed under the [Enterprise Agreement](#), the University will recognise continuous previous paid full-time or part-time prior service with other Australian higher education institutions as qualifying service when considering an application for OSP. Eligibility for recognition of service will depend on continuity of employment between the other institution and Monash and does not apply if staff were paid from external funds.

**Note:** Further details about prior service recognition and OSP can be found in the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

## 2. Preparation to apply

2.1 Applications can be submitted during the annual designated period ([as communicated by the University from year to year](#)) for OSP commencing in the following calendar year.

2.2 Staff should consult with their performance supervisor and Head of Unit (Department Head as relevant) to discuss their intention to apply for OSP and make a record of this conversation in their performance development plan.

2.3 In special circumstances, applications for a maximum period of 12 months (including other periods of approved leave) may be considered; however, they would need to demonstrate a significant benefit to the University.

2.4 Applications should address, where applicable:

<a href="#">Achievement(s) relative to opportunity</a>	The University recognises that staff experience a range of professional, personal and other circumstances and will therefore take achievements relative to opportunity into account. Achievement relative to opportunity is a positive acknowledgement of what the staff member has achieved, given the opportunities available to them. Achievements are assessed relative to the particular circumstances. Further information can be accessed on the <a href="#">Achievement Relative to Opportunity website</a> .
<a href="#">Annual leave</a>	Staff are required to include their proposed annual leave during the OSP period. This should include a minimum of 10 working days of annual leave (or pro rata for part-time), normally accrued in six months (pro rata for part-time staff). If the OSP application is approved, staff must submit their annual leave request for the agreed dates via ESS in Australia and Malaysia or via Enterprise WeChat in Suzhou. For staff in Australia with annual leave balances nearing 30 days (or pro rata for part-time staff), staff must either take annual leave before commencing OSP and/or incorporate annual leave into their OSP period before returning to normal duties.

Travel grants	Staff can apply for a travel grant to support their OSP as below:		
	Campus	Domestic	International
	Australia	Normally up to AUD 2,500 <i>(within New Zealand/Australia but outside of Melbourne metropolitan area)</i>	Normally up to AUD 5,500
	Malaysia	Normally up to RM 10,000	Normally up to RM15,000
	Suzhou	Normally up to RMB 3,000	Normally up to RMB 10,000

**Note:** The Dean or Head of School (in Malaysia) or Vice President – Operations (in Suzhou) (or authorised budget approver) may also approve grants. Staff are required to include an estimate of travel expenses in their application.

The OSP Committee will consider a staff member's likely reasonable expenses and estimate of expenditure to determine the amount of each grant.

Travel grants are paid through the University's payroll system in Australia or via Finance in Malaysia or Suzhou normally in the pay period before OSP commences. In exceptional circumstances, the Dean or Head of School (in Malaysia) and Vice President - Operations (in Suzhou) may approve to release the funds earlier.

Should the OSP be cancelled/delayed, the University may require the staff member to return the travel grant.

All University funded travel must comply with the [Staff and Student Travel Policy](#) and the [Staff Travel Procedure](#).

**Note: Staff** must obtain their own independent financial advice to determine any tax implications.

### 3. Supervisor and Head of Unit Recommendation

- 3.1 The performance supervisor and Head of Unit (where relevant) will recommend to the OSP Committee whether OSP should be granted as part of the competitive process. In making their recommendation, they will consider the following:
- whether the projected outcomes and academic content of the proposed program of work will benefit both the staff member and the University in terms of research and scholarly activity and provide significant benefit, including likely improvements in research and/or teaching;
  - whether the staff member has developed a workload plan that has included OSP for this period;
  - that the staff member is, overall, satisfactorily meeting the required performance standards (relative to opportunity);
  - the proposed program of work justifies the OSP period requested;
  - whether the teaching and other duties (e.g. graduate research supervision) can be covered without unreasonable additional duties for other academic staff;
  - timing of leave causes minimum disruption;
  - appropriate annual leave is included during the period of OSP;
  - that at the end of OSP, the staff member will continue employment with the University for the equivalent period of OSP taken; and
  - whether the staff member meets the eligibility criteria.
- 3.2 In making a recommendation, the Head of Unit will attest that:
- outcomes of any previous OSPs have been considered in recommending the current application;
  - the workload can be covered; and
  - the academic obligations of the Unit, including teaching and assessment and supervision of research students can be satisfactorily met during the absence.

### 4. Submitting the application

- 4.1 Lodge the completed and signed application with the required supporting documents:
- Australia and Malaysia: [online](#)
  - Suzhou: via email [osp-suzhou@monash.edu](mailto:osp-suzhou@monash.edu)

4.2 The application for OSP should comprise the following:

- a completed [OSP application form](#);
- a copy of any OSP report (including outcomes) from the last OSP (where relevant);
- Research achievement record (the report will cover the last 3 years for all Faculties other than the Faculty of Arts which is the last 5 years);
- any Faculty or School or Centre specific required documents (if applicable); and
- up to three pages of supporting evidence (optional). For example, but is not limited to invitation letters, appropriate contracts, and collaborative agreements/plans.

**Note:** A CV is not required to be submitted as part of an application for OSP.

4.3 It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure that their application is complete. Incomplete applications may not be considered by the Faculty (at the University's discretion).

4.4 After the application is submitted, Monash HR will attach a summary of the Student Evaluation Record (if applicable) (min one 1 year - max three 3 years) to the application.

4.5 Where there is a formal process underway, or there has been a prior adverse finding in accordance with clause 1.2, the University will withdraw the application.

### Late or out-of-round applications

4.6 Late or out-of-round applications will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Requests for late or out-of-round applications must be submitted to the Chair of the OSP Committee for determination. Ensure exceptional circumstances have been detailed.

## 5. Application considered

5.1 When reviewing applications, the OSP Committee will consider the proposed program of work against (but not limited to):

- alignment with the University, Faculty (School in Malaysia or Centre/Institute in Suzhou) and Unit strategy/objectives;
- the opportunity to accelerate research;
- the strength of the leadership component to advance the University;
- the potential to elevate the performance of the individual;
- the needs of the Faculty (School in Malaysia or Centre/Institute in Suzhou) or Unit (e.g. staffing and budgetary constraints);
- the likely capacity of the staff member to use the opportunity effectively;
- if any proposed travel is appropriate to the OSP goals;
- if the staff member has a proven and sustained record of productivity, impact and excellence in research, education and engagement (as relevant) and are meeting the relevant academic performance standards for their current level; and
- any relevant personal circumstances.

## 6. Committee constitution

6.1 The Dean (Australia), Head of School (Malaysia) or Vice President – Operations (Suzhou) will appoint the OSP Committee with a minimum of four members (including the Chair). They may appoint additional members or members external to the Faculty and/or School as deemed appropriate.

### Non-Faculty applications

6.2 To form an OSP Committee, the Non-Faculty OSP Committee Chair is:

- Australia – The Director of an Institute/Centre (equivalent to the Dean in Australia);
- Malaysia – The relevant Vice President; and
- Suzhou – not applicable.

6.3 In Suzhou, the OSP Committee will consist of the Chair and at least three invited senior academic staff members from a Faculty or School or SEU-Monash Joint Graduate School or Research Institute in Suzhou.

### Committee representation

6.4 The University should strive for a membership with a broad representation of staff from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The University commits to aspiring for a minimum representation of 40% women and 40% men required. In exceptional circumstances, the Chair may request the Provost or Pro Vice-Chancellor (in Malaysia or Suzhou) to vary or waive the requirement.

6.5 An HR representative(s) may attend the OSP committee meeting to provide administrative and procedural support.

## Decision-making authority

- 6.6 The Dean (Australia) or Pro Vice-Chancellor (in Malaysia or Suzhou) is the final decision maker for the outcomes of OSP applications, considering the OSP Committee members' recommendations.
- 6.7 Should the Dean/Pro Vice-Chancellor nominate an alternative Chair (other than themselves), the Dean/Pro Vice-Chancellor remains responsible for the decision of their nominee within the parameters of this procedure.

## Responsibilities of committee members

- 6.8 Committee Chairs are expected to complete [Inclusive Leadership training](#), and committee members are strongly encouraged to complete it.
- 6.9 Committee members are expected to:
- provide a fair and objective assessment;
  - ensure the discussion is restricted to matters relevant to the application;
  - ensure they do not benchmark and compare against the achievements of other staff members;
  - not act as an advocate;
  - avoid comments of a personal nature; and
  - to have completed the relevant [Mandatory Compliance Training modules](#). For example, Equal Opportunity and Achievement Relative to Opportunity.

## Declaration of interest

- 6.10 Before or during the proceedings of an OSP committee meeting, the Chair (or nominee) may call from committee members for declarations of interest that may impact, or may be perceived to impact, their ability to perform their role in the promotion committee. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that declarations of interest cannot influence or be perceived to influence the application outcome. For declarations made by the Chair, HR will assist with adjudication by the Provost (or their nominee), who will determine an outcome to manage the conflict.
- 6.11 Where an interest is declared, the Chair/nominee may determine the following:
- the declaration of interest is sufficient, and no action is required; or
  - further management as appropriate.
- 6.12 If a committee member is uncertain whether a conflict exists, advice should be sought from the Chair before the meeting.

## Confidentiality and privacy

- 6.13 Information contained within the application is used to assess applications and data reporting purposes. Further detail is available in the [Monash Employee Data and Privacy Collection Statement](#) and the [Privacy at Monash](#) website.
- 6.14 All deliberations of the committee are confidential. All materials are restricted to those directly involved in the assessment process. Following the final meeting, access to materials will be removed (and any hard copies must be returned to HR or destroyed in confidential bins).

## 7. Application Outcome

- 7.1 Monash HR will notify staff in writing of the outcome of their OSP application. The performance supervisor and Head of Unit will receive a copy of the outcome letter.

### Successful outcome

- 7.2 Where the application is successful, the staff member must adhere to your approved program of work as outlined in their outcome letter.

### Unsuccessful outcome

- 7.3 Where the application is unsuccessful, staff are encouraged to meet with the Chair (or nominee) to discuss feedback. Staff are encouraged to discuss the outcome with their performance supervisor and use this feedback to inform their performance development plan for a future OSP application.

### Review of Unsuccessful Outcome

- 7.4 A review of an unsuccessful outcome may be requested only on the grounds of a procedural irregularity substantial enough to result in material disadvantage to the staff member.



- 7.5 Before requesting a review, staff must have sought feedback from the OSP Committee Chair or their delegated nominee as per clause 7.3 above.
- 7.6 To request a review, staff must submit their appeal in writing within seven working days of receiving notification of the decision to Monash HR via [hr-osp@monash.edu](mailto:hr-osp@monash.edu). The submission must demonstrate a procedural irregularity resulting in a material disadvantage in the OSP decision that has occurred.
- 7.7 The OSP Committee Chair will consider the request and respond within 21 working days of receipt of the appeal.

## 8. Conditions during the OSP period

- 8.1 During the OSP period, the following applies:

Performance development plan	Record the OSP objectives, supporting documentation and the outcomes in the performance development plan (myPlan).
Salary and superannuation	The salary (and normal superannuation/statutory [Malaysia] and [Suzhou] contributions) will continue to be paid during the period of OSP.
Travel grants	<p>For staff going on OSP in Semester 2, they must indicate the financial year the grant will be paid.</p> <p>Staff should maintain a travel diary, collect receipts for expenditure during the travel period for their personal tax records, and provide this information as part of their OSP report submission.</p> <p>Travel grants in Malaysia or Suzhou are reimbursed through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">SAP Concur</a> for Malaysia staff; or</li> <li>• Suzhou Finance Team <a href="#">claim process</a> for Suzhou staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> The University does not provide financial or taxation advice, and staff are strongly encouraged to obtain independent advice.</p>
WorkCover & personal accident insurance	<p>Australian staff are covered by WorkCover insurance while on OSP.</p> <p>Under the Accident Compensation Act 1985 ("the Act"), staff are entitled to claim compensation for an injury or illness arising out of or during employment, whether in Victoria or outside Victoria.</p> <p>The University maintains a Travel Insurance policy for short-term business trips with a maximum duration of six months. For more information, refer to the <a href="#">Staff Travel Insurance intranet site</a>.</p> <p>Suzhou staff are covered by Labor insurance while on OSP.</p> <p>Malaysia staff are covered by staff insurance while on OSP.</p>
International OSP	Staff must meet the entry and visa requirements of all countries they visit, transit through or work in. Australian staff must ensure that they have a valid passport that is not due to expire within six months of the last day of planned travel. Refer to the <a href="#">Staff travel procedure</a> for more information.

## 9. Obligations following OSP

- 9.1 Staff must submit a [written report, and it must include](#) the following:
- the details of the OSP proposal (from your OSP application);
  - how has the staff member achieved the goals/activities of the OSP proposal;
  - how any financial support provided was spent (including receipts/invoices);
  - how the program of work aligned with the Monash strategic plan and/or enhanced the standing of the University, the Faculty or School, the Unit and yourself; and
  - other achievements during the program of work.
- 9.2 The report must be submitted within two months of returning from OSP. The performance supervisor will review the report and confirm whether the objectives of the OSP have been achieved and whether the report is acceptable. Performance Supervisors must provide a copy of the report to the OSP Chair. Staff in Australia and Malaysia can lodge [online](#), and staff in Suzhou to send via email to [osp-suzhou@monash.edu](mailto:osp-suzhou@monash.edu).

- 9.3 If staff fail to submit an acceptable report within two months of return:
- staff may be required to reimburse funds received from the University in relation to the OSP;
  - unless extenuating circumstances are deemed acceptable by the University, staff will be ineligible to apply for a future OSP period or a promotion; and
  - ineligibility to apply for OSP and promotion applications will remain in place whilst the report has not been submitted and/or until the report is deemed acceptable by the University.
- 9.4 The report submitted will be used in considering future applications for OSP; therefore, the University recommends staff keep a copy for reference in completing future OSP applications.
- 9.5 Staff may be required to meet specific Faculty/School or Centre obligations following a period of OSP. For example, deliver a presentation or speak at a seminar.
- 9.6 Evidence of a successful period of OSP may include the following:
- Completion of high-quality research outputs (specify publishing venue/s and dates as relevant)
  - Achieving competitive grant income or other forms of research income (specify key dates/rounds as relevant)
  - Development of a sustained research partnership/collaboration as evidenced by activities such as joint publications, joint research income and/or joint PhD supervision
  - Development of strategic learning or teaching initiatives that will lead to significant and sustained programs of enhanced course viability and reputation
  - Building deep and extensive engagement in national and international partnerships and collaborations with industry, government, non-government organisations and/or other universities
  - Enhancing the standing of the University (domestically and internationally), the Faculty (School [Malaysia] or Centre/Institute [Suzhou]) and the Unit;
  - Enhancing personal scholarly development, knowledge, skills and experience in the academic discipline
  - How does the proposed OSP support the Faculty strategies/objectives?

### Return to service requirement

- 9.7 Following a period of OSP, staff must continue in the employment of the University for a minimum period equivalent to the period of the OSP (excluding any personal leave period).
- 9.8 If staff fail to return to employment or do not comply with the material provisions of this procedure, staff may be required to reimburse any salary or grant paid in association with the OSP. The amount to be repaid will be pro rata of the stipulated shortfall in service.

## 10. Amendment or Deferral of OSP

- 10.1 To make changes to approved OSP or to apply to defer the timing of an OSP period for up to 12 months, staff must submit an [OSP Alteration Request](#) (Australia and Malaysia) or in Suzhou via email to [osp-suzhou@monash.edu](mailto:osp-suzhou@monash.edu), as a priority to ensure accurate records and payroll can be maintained.
- 10.2 The performance supervisor or Head of Unit (or Head of Department as relevant) may approve minor changes such as travel date variances of up to two weeks. Staff must obtain written approval before the change comes into effect.
- 10.3 The relevant OSP Committee Chair (or nominee) will consider significant changes as appropriate. Staff must consider allowing sufficient time (e.g. three weeks) to consider and determine their request.
- 10.4 Significant changes may include (but are not limited to):
- deferment of OSP for a period of up to 12 months (see below);
  - reduction of the international component of OSP (and consequent reduction on the travel grant);
  - substantial changes in location for part of the period of OSP;
  - introduction of new initiatives (with new proposed outcomes) into the OSP;
  - omission of previously submitted elements of the OSP;
  - significant variations to travel and accommodation arrangements (particularly those that are supported by OSP travel grants);
  - or
  - receipt of additional income from the University to support travel to conferences whilst on OSP.

### Deferment of OSP

- 10.5 In special circumstances, staff can apply to defer the timing of their OSP period for up to 12 months by submitting an [OSP Alteration Request](#). The Chair may approve deferrals of up to 12 months in consultation with the staff member, your supervisor and the Head of Unit (where applicable). Deferrals of over 12 months will require reapplication in a future OSP.

- 10.6 Where the University has requested a staff member to withdraw or defer their OSP, and they have suffered financial loss, staff should raise this with the OSP Committee Chair for consideration. If there is a dispute over a financial claim, the matter will be submitted to the Dean (Australia) or Pro Vice-Chancellor (in Malaysia or Suzhou) for a decision.
- 10.7 Where OSP has been deferred or cancelled, staff may be required to return any travel grant monies paid to them by the University. Where OSP has been deferred, payment will occur at an appropriate time per this procedure.

## 11. Breach of procedure

- 11.1 The University treats any breach of policies, procedures and schedules seriously. The University encourages reporting of concerns about non-compliance and manages compliance in accordance with the applicable Enterprise Agreement, relevant instrument of appointment and/or applicable contract terms. A failure to comply with this procedure may result in action by the University. Such action may include disciplinary and other action up to and including potential termination of employment for employees and cessation of other engagements for other persons.

## DEFINITIONS

Academic Performance Framework	The <a href="#">Academic Performance Framework</a> articulates high-level expectations for academic performance, adopting a consistent approach across the three categories of Research, Education and Engagement, against which all academic performance will be measured.
Conflict of interest	A situation where a conflict arises for an individual between two competing interests. These are often, but not exclusively, interests of public duty versus private interests. Referring to a reasonably perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest. Conflicts of interest can involve financial or non-financial interests of the staff member and the interests of a business partner or associate, family member, friend or person in a close personal relationship with the staff member. Refer to the <a href="#">Conflict of Interest</a> procedure.
Enterprise Agreement	The Enterprise Agreement means the <a href="#">Monash University Enterprise Agreement (Academic and Professional Staff) 2019</a> .
Head of Unit	For the purposes of OSP, the Head of Unit refers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia faculty: Head of Unit is the highest-level position reporting to the appropriate Dean</li> <li>• Australia non-faculty: Director of Institute/Centre</li> <li>• Suzhou: Director of Institute/Centre</li> <li>• Malaysia: Head of School</li> </ul>
Institute or Centre	For the purposes of this procedure, reference to an Institute or Centre as those which are centrally reporting, such as MSDI, MUARC or VBDI.
myPlan/PDP	An online performance planning tool that supports academic staff and supervisors to manage the performance development cycle myPlan for Australian staff and PDP for Malaysian or Suzhou staff.

## GOVERNANCE

Parent policy	<a href="#">Probation, Performance and Promotion</a>
Supporting procedures	<a href="#">Performance Development Process: Academic Staff</a>
Supporting schedules	N/A
Associated procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Conflict of Interest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Paid Outside Work</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Performance Development: Academic Staff</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Annual Leave</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Staff Travel</a></li> </ul>
Related legislation	<p>Accident Compensation Act 1985</p> <p>Social Insurance Law of the People's Republic of China</p>
Category	Operational



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