

OUTSIDE STUDY PROGRAMME PROCEDURE

PURPOSE

This procedure describes the responsibilities of administering and managing the Outside Studies Programme ('OSP').

OSP is designed to provide academic staff an opportunity to pursue research and other scholarly work to enhance the staff member's development, extend the body of knowledge in their chosen field and improve their research performance.

Approval of OSP is not automatic. It is conditional upon a number of factors including the needs of the University, the merit of the proposal and the staff member's capacity to make effective use of the opportunity.

OSP should lead to one or more of the following outcomes:

- the creation of new publications;
- new research grant applications;
- strong international research collaborations or research student and staffing exchanges;
- development of a relevant new field of research or scholarship;
- innovations in teaching, for example major curriculum;
- career development for an early career researcher; and
- completion or substantial progress towards completion of a PhD.

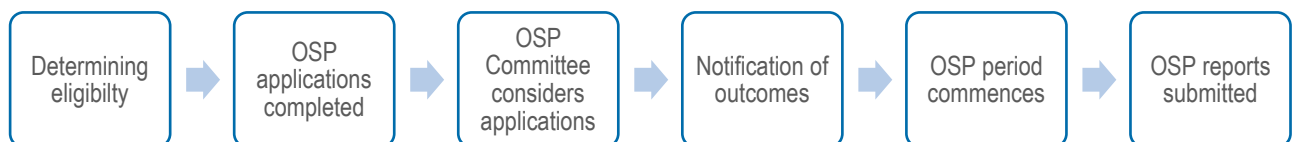
SCOPE

This procedure applies to all Australian fixed term and continuing academic staff, including education-focused staff of the University ('us', 'our' or 'we') and herein are collectively referred to as 'you' for the purpose of this procedure.

This procedure does not apply to casual, sessional, adjunct and conjoint appointees.

PROCEDURE STATEMENT

1. Overview of process for OSP



2. Eligibility for OSP

2.1 Normally, you are eligible to apply for OSP if you are an academic staff member and:

- have completed three years of continuous service, or two years' service where prior service has been formally recognised; and
- are meeting the minimum requirements of the academic performance framework; and
- have a current myPlan, which complies with the requirements of the [Performance Development Process: Academic Staff procedure](#).

2.2 Following a period of OSP you are not normally eligible to apply for another period of OSP unless you have completed three years of continuous service since the last OSP period.

- 2.3 If you are a grant supported staff member an OSP application will only be considered if the funding rules of the research grant permit and the department or administrative unit is prepared to provide the required funding.
- 2.4 Deans, associate deans and heads of unit shall not take prolonged leave of any kind during a term of office, except under special circumstances and unless there is a suitable deputy available. Special consideration for OSP will be given following the completion of the term of office.
- 2.5 If you are an academic staff member or a senior library staff member and you entered into an employment contract with us prior to 1978, it may contain a formal provision for the granting of study leave. This provision will continue to be taken into account when considering an OSP application.

OSP prior service recognition

- 2.6 We will recognise continuous previous paid full-time or part time prior service with 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 institution and the University and does not apply if you are paid from external funds.

Note: Further details about prior service recognition and OSP can be found in [clause 61 of the Monash University Enterprise Agreement \(Academic and Professional Staff\) 2014](#).

3. Complete the OSP application

- 3.1 The OSP round occurs annually in approximately March to April for periods of OSP to be taken in the **following calendar year**.
- 3.2 You need to consult your performance supervisor and head of unit early in the process to notify them of your intention to apply for OSP.
- 3.3 Your [OSP Application](#) must contain the following information:
 - proposed details of your OSP;
 - a justification of the length of absence (normally up to six months duration, including any other associated periods of approved leave);
 - detailed information of other employment in which you propose to engage while on OSP, such as visiting appointments;
 - anticipated research outcomes (e.g. number and details of publications or conference presentations to be published or submitted);
 - a copy of the report from any previous OSP (where relevant); and
 - performance development plans either myPlan for at least the current and previous year.
- 3.4 We encourage you to include any relevant personal circumstances which may facilitate an assessment of your achievements relative to opportunity.
- 3.5 In special circumstances, the OSP Committee may consider applications for a maximum period not exceeding 12 months (including any other associated periods of approved leave). Applications need to demonstrate significant benefit to the University.
- 3.6 Teaching purpose OSP applications will only be considered if there is a research and scholarship component in the application.

OSP applications for PhDs

- 3.7 Where the primary purpose is to obtain a PhD, you must be from a department where it has not been possible to recruit an individual with a PhD because of the development of the particular discipline, campus or research strength. It must also directly benefit the University and result in either completion or substantial completion of the course of study.
- 3.8 Your application must include specific information of the progress to be made in completing the PhD.
- 3.9 Approval of an application for OSP for the purpose of completion of a PhD will be restricted to once only.
- 3.10 At the completion of the OSP, your supervisor is required to confirm that the reported progress has been achieved. Non compliance may result in future OSP applications being refused.

Leave

- 3.11 You are required to specify the domestic and/or international OSP leave to be taken as part of the [OSP application](#).
- 3.12 If your annual leave balance is nearing 30 days (or pro-rata for part time staff), you must either take annual leave prior to commencing OSP and/or incorporate annual leave into your OSP period of absence prior to returning to your normal duties. Please refer to the [Annual Leave Procedure](#) for further information.
- 3.13 You are expected to include 10 days of annual leave (or pro-rata) which is normally accrued in a six month period, in your application. If your OSP application is approved, Monash HR will process this leave directly from the application.

Travel grants

- 3.14 If your OSP includes an overseas component (excluding New Zealand), you are eligible to apply for a travel grant of up to \$5,500.
- 3.15 If your OSP is undertaken wholly within New Zealand or Australia but outside of Melbourne, you are eligible to apply for a travel grant of up to \$2,500.
- 3.16 You are required to include an estimate of travel expenses at standard University rates in your application.
- 3.17 The OSP Committee will consider the reasonable expenses likely to be incurred by you and your estimate of expenditure to determine the amount of each individual grant.
- 3.18 Travel grants will be paid through the University's payroll system and are normally paid at the beginning of the period of leave.
- 3.19 Faculties have the discretion to provide flexible funding arrangements to suit both faculty priorities e.g. supporting early career researchers and individual circumstances.
- 3.20 You must abide by the International travel (Australian-based staff) Procedure or the Domestic travel (Australian-based staff) Procedure, while on OSP.

Obligations following OSP

- 3.21 Following a period of OSP you are required to continue in the employment of the University for a minimum period, equivalent to the period of the OSP.
- 3.22 If you fail to return to employment or do not comply with the provisions of this procedure, you may be required to repay any salary or grant paid for the OSP. The amount to be repaid will be pro rata of the stipulated shortfall in service.

Submit your OSP application

- 3.23 Your performance supervisor is required to comment and endorse your application, forwarding it to the head of unit or director.
- 3.24 The head of unit will detail how the academic obligations of the faculty/centre/institute, including teaching, examining and supervision of research students can be satisfactorily met during your absence.
- 3.25 The system automatically forward the application to Monash HR.

Late applications

- 3.26 The OSP Committee Chair may agree to accept a late OSP application where there are relevant exceptional circumstances however, late applications will not be accepted within two weeks of the OSP Committee meeting date.
- 3.27 If a request for a late application is received the Chair will consider:
 - if the request is supported by the relevant area/department; and
 - the reasons provided for the late submission request e.g. acute illness, loss or bereavement, hardship or trauma.
- 3.28 Where the Chair has approved acceptance of a late application, you should include their approval with the details of your request (including details of relevant exceptional circumstances) to Monash HR who will then provide you with access to submit your application.

4. OSP Committee

- 4.1 The OSP Committee will include diversity, with a minimum of one-third female and one third male representation. Members are appointed for a two year term (renewable for a further term).
- 4.2 Alternate members may be appointed by the dean or director for non-faculty areas where a committee member is absent from the University for a protracted period.
- 4.3 Committee members applying for OSP will usually stand down from the committee for that year. In cases where this is not practicable, the committee member who is applying for OSP must absent themselves for the part of the meeting during which a decision is made on their application.
- 4.4 Monash HR will act as secretary to the OSP committee.

OSP Committee constitution

- 4.5 The dean will appoint an OSP Committee for faculty applications.
- 4.6 Committees for non-faculty areas will include:
- the director or equivalent (or nominee) as ex officio chair; and
 - at least one invited senior academic staff member from a faculty.
- 4.7 Applications from Peninsula campus may include a member appointed by the dean from the peninsula campus.

Confidentiality

- 4.8 Confidentiality is required of all persons involved during and post the OSP process, which will be emphasised by the Chair at commencement of the meeting.
- 4.9 Access to all papers is restricted to those directly involved in the assessment process. Following the final OSP Committee meeting, all papers are to be returned to the secretary.

Conflict of interest

- 4.10 Potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest must be declared to the chair at the commencement of the OSP process. If a committee member is uncertain, advice should be sought from the chair prior to the meeting.
- 4.11 The chair is responsible for ensuring that no declared conflict of interest can influence or be perceived to influence the outcome of the application. The chair shall require the committee member to withdraw from the committee's deliberations on any matter where there is an unresolved conflict of interest.

Note: Examples of conflicts of interest include; a committee member who is supervising a candidate's post-graduate study, or a committee member who is a friend of the candidate as well as a co-worker.

The Committee reviews applications

- 4.12 When reviewing applications, the OSP Committee will consider:
- if the proposed program is justified in terms of the expected research benefit to the staff member and the University;
 - if the proposed travel overseas or within Australia is appropriate to the OSP;
 - if the length of absence is justified by the requirements of the OSP;
 - if you have a proven and sustained record of productivity, impact and excellence in research, education and engagement, and are meeting the relevant academic performance standards for your current level;
 - your research track record and the outcomes and academic merit of any previous OSP;
 - any relevant personal circumstances that will facilitate an assessment of your achievements relative to opportunity; and
 - if there is a reasonable expectation that you will continue in the employment of the University at the end of the OSP, for a minimum period equivalent to the period of the OSP.
- 4.13 Where the OSP Committee cannot reach agreement on an application, the final decision will be made by the OSP Committee Chair.

5. The outcome of your OSP application

- 5.1 The chair will notify you of the decision of the OSP Committee via email. Your performance supervisor and head of unit and dean or director will also receive a copy of the outcome letter.
- 5.2 Where your application is successful, you are required to adhere to your approved programme as outlined in your outcome letter.
- 5.3 Where your application is unsuccessful, you should seek feedback before lodging a future application. The chair or a representative appointed by the chair will provide you with written advice and is encouraged to meet with you, to outline the areas of your application that require strengthening. This advice should be included in your performance development plan.

Review of the OSP committee decision

- 5.4 You should seek the advice of the dean or director before applying for a review.
- 5.5 If your application for OSP is not successful you may lodge an application for a review on the basis that there has been a procedural irregularity substantial enough to result in material disadvantage to you. You must lodge an application within seven days of being notified of the committee's decision.
- 5.6 The application must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the OSP Committee. The OSP Committee must then reconvene and consider the request for review within fourteen days of the request being received.

Changes to approved OSP

- 5.7 OSP timetables, projects or proposed outcomes may need to be varied between the time of approval and the commencement of OSP. You should complete and submit an [OSP Alteration Request](#) to Monash HR to alter your approved OSP plan.
- 5.8 The Committee chair will consider your request and will seek approval from the OSP Committee for proposed substantial change(s) as appropriate.
- 5.9 You need to allow sufficient time for an alteration request to be considered by the Chair and/or Committee.
- 5.10 You may jeopardise subsequent applications for OSP if you do not seek prior approval from the OSP Committee for substantial changes. Examples of substantial changes include:
 - deferment of OSP for a period of up to 12 months;
 - reduction of the international component of OSP (and consequent effect 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 previous proposed elements of the OSP;
 - variation to travel and accommodation arrangements (particularly those that are supported by OSP travel grants); and
 - receipt of additional income from the staff member's home school/department to support travel to conferences whilst on OSP.
- 5.11 Minor changes to OSP may be approved by the Chair without referral to the committee. An example of a minor change is travel dates change by two days, but does not fall outside the approved OSP period.

Deferment of OSP

- 5.12 In special circumstances you may renegotiate the timing of an approved OSP. You must complete and submit an [OSP Alteration Request](#) to Monash HR.
- 5.13 The OSP Committee may approve a deferral of up to 12 months in consultation with you and the head of unit (where applicable).
- 5.14 If you are seeking a deferral of longer than 12 months you will need to re-apply for OSP in the next appropriate application round.
- 5.15 Where you have been requested to withdraw or defer your OSP, and you have suffered financial loss as a result, we may provide you with financial assistance. If there is a dispute over a financial claim, the matter will be submitted to the chair of the OSP Committee for a decision.

6. The OSP period

Performance development plan

- 6.1 You are required to include the objectives of undertaking OSP and supporting documentation on the outcomes of the OSP in your performance development plan ([myPlan](#)).

Salary and Superannuation

- 6.2 Your salary will continue to be paid during the period of the OSP.
- 6.3 You may be eligible for an advance payment of salary. You should apply for this on your [OSP application](#) (if relevant). Advance payment of salary (along with your normal salary) will normally be credited to your bank account in the pay period immediately prior to the date the leave commences.
- 6.4 If you received payment from an organisation other than the University, you are required to adhere to the [Paid Outside Work procedure](#).
- 6.5 Normal superannuation contributions will be maintained.

Travel grants and Tax

- 6.6 Income tax is not deducted from the travel grant. However, we will record the grant as an allowance on your annual payment summary. This is considered taxable income by the Australian Tax Office (ATO). In most cases the OSP will be deemed by the ATO to be work related and deductions for airfares, accommodation and incidental costs will offset against the taxable grant.
- 6.7 You should maintain a travel diary and collect receipts for expenditure during the period of travel for your personal tax records.
- 6.8 You must seek your own independent tax advice as it applies to your OSP circumstances and the appropriate substantiation of expenditure.

WorkCover & personal accident insurance

- 6.9 You are covered by WorkCover insurance while on OSP. Under the Accident Compensation Act 1985 ("the Act"), you are entitled to claim compensation for an injury or illness arising out of or in the course of employment, whether in Victoria or outside Victoria, your employment relates to the injury or illness.
- 6.10 We maintain a Monash Travel Insurance policy for you for short term business trips with a maximum duration of six months. The cover is in effect whilst you are travelling and residing outside Australia on authorised University business and includes associated holiday travel undertaken during the OSP. The policy is in force 24 hours a day until you return to your normal residence or place of employment.
- 6.11 If you intend on staying in one country for a period exceeding six months, you should contact the Insurance Services Office.
- 6.12 A Certificate of Insurance as evidence of personal accident insurance for visa or other purposes can be obtained online by completing the insurance travel request form on the [insurance website](#).

7. OSP report

- 7.1 You must complete and submit an OSP Report detailing the work completed during the period of absence within two months of returning from OSP.
- 7.2 Once complete, you should forward your OSP Report to your performance supervisor to confirm or otherwise comment on whether the objectives of the OSP have been achieved.
- 7.3 The OSP Reports will then be formally submitted to Monash HR.
- 7.4 Future OSP applications will not be considered if a previous report has not been submitted.
- 7.5 Monash HR will coordinate the receipt and collation of OSP reports for the OSP Committee for noting.

8. Breach of procedure

- 8.1 We treat any breach of our policies or procedures seriously. We encourage reporting of concerns about non-compliance and manage compliance in accordance with the applicable Enterprise Agreement or contract terms.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Performance Framework

A framework that 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. The Framework identifies criteria for each category and examples of evidence that help address achievement of each criteria. It encourages a focus on developing and demonstrating outcomes and/or impact across all categories and includes evidence of both quantifiable metrics and qualitative material. Faculty or discipline specific performance research standards include minimum and aspirational performance standards.

Achievement(s) relative to opportunity

Is an evaluative framework in which the overall quality and impact of achievements is given more weight than the quantity, rate or breadth of particular achievements. Assessing achievements relative to opportunity involves giving consideration to circumstances, arrangements, career histories and overall time available to the staff member. This in turn allows appropriate evaluation of achievements in relation to:

- the quantum or rate of productivity,
- the opportunity to participate in certain types of activities, and
- the consistency of activities or output over the period of consideration.

Achievement relative to opportunity is a positive acknowledgement of what a staff member can and has achieved given the opportunities available and is not about providing "special consideration" or expecting lesser standards of performance.


Conflict of interest

Refers to 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. This refers 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. For further information refer to the [Conflict of interest procedure](#).

Dean or director	The dean/Pro Vice-Chancellor and President (Monash University Malaysia) or director of the faculty or centre or, where applicable, a person acting as his or her nominee. Where a dean decides to nominate for the purposes of this procedure, the dean remains responsible for the decision of the nominee and any committee that chaired by the nominee under this procedure.
Education-focused candidate	Is a staff member who is employed on an education-focused contract of employment and is characterised by educational innovation and leadership in educational design and delivery.
Head of unit	Head of an academic or administrative work unit, for example Head of School, Head of Department, or equivalent or, where applicable, a person acting as their nominee.
myPlan	An online performance planning tool that supports academic staff and supervisors to manage the performance development cycle.
Outside Study Programme (OSP) Committee	The Committee is responsible for receiving and considering applications for OSP. OSP Committees are chaired by the dean or director.
Performance development portfolio	Evidence or material that supports the staff member's claims of progress made and goals achieved such as awards received, articles published, teaching evaluation results, books or chapters written and any other relevant evidence. These documents may be stored electronically within the Portfolio Attachments section of the staff member's performance plan in myPlan.
Procedural irregularity	The University has not followed a process that is articulated in this procedure.
Pure	The University's research management software which provides information for Monash staff on their research grants, research agreements, research outputs and research achievements.
Relevant personal circumstances	May include family responsibilities (for example child rearing, elder-care, illness of a partner or dependant), a temporary or permanent disability, relevant cultural expectations or circumstances, periods of part-time working and/or absences due to ill-health or injury.

ADMINISTRATION

Parent policy	Probation, performance and promotion
Supporting policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment conditions • Equal opportunity • Ethics Statement • Integrity and respect • Leave and wellbeing • Pay, benefits and entitlements • Recruitment and appointment
Supporting procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict of Interest (Including Conflict of Interest in Research) procedure • Paid Outside Work procedure • Performance Development Process: Academic Staff procedure • International travel (Australian-based staff) procedure
Supporting documents	<p>Enterprise Agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 61 - OSP - Transferability of Service <p>Documents and Forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Performance Standards • Assessment of achievement relative to opportunity • Insurance Services Office • Performance Development Process: Academic Staff • OSP Alteration Request • OSP Application Form • OSP Report Form
Legislation mandating compliance	



Responsibility for implementation	Head of Unit
Approval body	Chief Human Resources Officer
Procedure owner	Director Talent, Equity & Development
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